
YALDEINU ANNOUNCES 2011 JEWISH INTERNATIONAL SUMMER CAMPING EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

TORONTO – August 22, 2011 – Yaldeinu, a charitable organization dedicated to providing formal and informal Jewish education to children and young adults in Israel and developing countries recently concluded its fourth summer camping exchange program.

The July-August programs included 12 participants; six from Israel and six from Guatemala at Camps Gesher in Belleville, Ontario.

“The Israeli participants – all underprivileged children from the south of Israel – qualified for the program by excelling in their studies and showing a commitment to their respective communities. They had never traveled outside Israel and would not have had the opportunity to do so without Yaldeinu. Once again, we thank our lead sponsor for the Israeli camping experience, the International Christian Embassy of Jerusalem, lead by Donna Holbrook, said Michael Ettedgui, Founding Director of Yaldeinu.

For the first time, Yaldeinu sponsored children from Guatemala in partnership with the Prosserman JCC in Toronto. The Guatemalan children belong to the Casa Hillel community in Guatemala City, a group of families who converted to Judaism some years ago. “Seeing those six kids gain so much Jewish experience, pride, knowledge and confidence was as much a transformative experience for me as it was for them. Their lives have been forever changed” said Rabbi Elyse Goldstein, Director of Jewish programs and Kolel at Prosserman. “Living in a Catholic country makes it hard for us as teens to be different. And because we are converts, not even the other few Jews accept us into the community so being with so many other Jewish children, who welcomed us was the best thing we have ever experienced” said Lorena Guterriez, 17. This program was made possible by a generous donation in memory of Clara and David Nightingale, who were members of the Reform Jewish community for over 60 years. “Their love of Judaism and desire to help those in need inspired this gift” Said Elyse Goldstein.

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About Yaldeinu

Yaldeinu (Our Children) is a grassroots charitable organization dedicated to preserving the traditions and ideals of Judaism by providing formal and informal education to a myriad of Jewish children in various parts of the world. Headquartered in Toronto, Canada, Yaldeinu’s activities are divided into two categories: Jewish day school education and Jewish camping.