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LEADERS ASSEMBLY, THE ONLY CONFERENCE OF ITS KIND
Foundation for Jewish Camp Convenes Over 500 Community Members

Jersey City, NJ (March 15, 2010) – Several hundred nonprofit camp staff and lay leaders, philanthropists, and community professionals gathered together over the last two days for a stimulating and invigorating gathering filled with groundbreaking research findings, innovative new program announcements, and exciting introductions. **Leaders Assembly**, a national biennial conference, is organized by the **Foundation for Jewish Camp (FJC)**, the only public organization dedicated to supporting and advocating for nonprofit Jewish overnight camps in North America.

Skip Vichness, chair of the FJC Board of Directors, expressed, “Jewish camping is in the vanguard of creating strong Jewish identities and providing transformative experiences for campers and staff. At no time has it been stronger and never has the future been brighter.”

The 2010 conference, held at the Westin Jersey City Newport in Jersey City, NJ, addressed the opportunities and challenges facing the field of nonprofit Jewish camp and the Jewish community. This year’s theme, *Keys to the Cabin: Unlocking a Changing World*, emphasized new areas of growth for individual camps and the entire field, empowering attendees to see themselves as “keys” to the success of the Jewish camp endeavor, while learning the “keys” to reach that success in these uncommon times.

The opening plenary featured speaker Mitch Joel, a digital marketer, author, entrepreneur, blogger, visionary, and branding guru...and a nonprofit Jewish camp alumnus! Described as a "rock star of digital marketing" and "one of North America's leading digital visionaries" by *Marketing Magazine*, Joel is one of North America’s leading digital marketers and president of Twist Image—an award-winning digital marketing and communications agency. His first book, *Six Pixels of Separation*, is a business and marketing best-seller. Joel, a much sought-after speaker, has addressed many high-profile companies including Google, Wal-Mart, Starbucks, Microsoft, Procter and Gamble, Hewlett Packard, and more. He wowed attendees at Leaders Assembly about the power and future of digital marketing as it applies to Jewish summer camp. Joel began by explaining that "the key to online digital marketing is to figure out who you are targeting, not just getting your message out to as many people as possible as in the past."

FJC’s newly appointed CEO Jeremy J. Fingerman also made his debut at Leaders Assembly. The former president of Campbell Soup Company and CEO of The Manischewitz Company introduced himself to the crowd of enthusiastic attendees and discussed his vision. “The camping movement plays a critical role in the path to a stronger Jewish future. We do so, one kid at a time, one family at a time, one community at a time,” explained Fingerman. He introduced *One More Kid*, a call to action based on his belief in the ripple effect of one child attending Jewish camp and affecting his/her family, friends, and community. He encouraged the audience to join him over this next decade in devoting themselves to the pursuit of getting more kids to camp, one by one.

The Foundation revealed more exciting news from the findings of its newly unveiled market research study. This type of research, common in the private sector, is the third in a series conducted by the Foundation. Focusing on the Midwestern camp market, the study was created to determine how Jewish camps are perceived in the eyes of parents, particularly intermarried families – families in which one parent is Jewish and the other is not. The main findings identified that it is the level of a family’s Jewish engagement that predicts Jewish camp attendance. Families also noted and appreciated the effectiveness of camp as an educational tool, highlighting that financial aid can make a difference in their decision to choose Jewish camp, particularly for families who are less Jewishly engaged.

Fingerman also announced a new partnership between FJC and The PJ Library called “PJ Goes to Camp.” Created by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, The PJ Library sends Jewish-content books and music monthly to children ages 6 months to 8 years. The new partnership allows members to receive \$1000 toward their first summer at camp without geographical restrictions. As with the FJC Campership Incentive and JWest Campership Programs, families can apply at www.onehappycamper.org beginning March 25, 2010.

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The Foundation for Jewish Camp (FJC) is the only public organization dedicated solely to nonprofit Jewish overnight camps. FJC employs a variety of strategies toward a single goal: to increase the number of children in Jewish summer camps. To this end, the Foundation creates inspiring camp leaders, expands access to and intensifies demand for camp, and develops programs to strengthen camps across the Jewish spectrum in North America. Through strategic partnerships on local and national levels, FJC raises the profile of Jewish camp and serves as a central resource for parents and organizations alike. FJC works with more than 150 camps, 70,000 campers, and 10,000 counselors across North America to further its mission. www.jewishcamp.org