

For Immediate Release:

Students Complete Mural with Residents of The Jewish Home

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FAIRFIELD – Though their ages are worlds apart, art drew together students of the Hillel Academy, Fairfield, with residents of The Jewish Home for the Elderly of Fairfield County. Side by side, they created a nine-foot long mural depicting key themes in Jewish history.

“When the students and residents painted the mural together the decades of difference disappeared,” said Miriam Duskis, Art Therapist at The Jewish Home. “As the students and residents selected brushes, chose colors and identified images from their shared heritage, the focus was not on what separates us but on what brings us together.”

Accompanied by Nancy Fitzpatrick, Hillel Academy Administrator, the sixth, seventh and eighth graders visited The Jewish Home regularly as the site for their Mitzvah Project, their Good Deed Project. For the past two years, these students came to the Home and helped residents in wheelchairs travel from one part of the Home to another. This year they were eager to become involved on a deeper level.

The students began their Project in January 2009 by interviewing the residents with whom they would be creating the mural. After establishing rapport they collaborated to generate ideas and designs. The final brush strokes were added on May 18, 2009 when the students inscribed the mural with a Hebrew verse, “Remember the days of old... (ask) thine elders and they will tell you” (Deuteronomy 32:7). As the final brushstrokes dried, Ida Rollin presented each student with an “Awesome Artist” Certificate signed by the residents.

The mural will be on display at Hillel Academy until mid-June and then will hang permanently at The Jewish Home.