

**The United Synagogue of
Conservative Judaism**



The 2009

**Solomon Schechter Awards
for Synagogue Excellence**

**GUIDELINES and CRITERIA
for**

Israel Masorti Affairs

*to be presented at the
Biennial Convention
December 6-10, 2009*

Jerry I. Klibanoff
Committee Chair

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Carole Korowitz
Biennial Convention Chair

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Biennial Convention Vice-Chair

Rabbi Paul Drazen
Biennial Convention Director

Raymond B. Goldstein, PhD
International President

Rabbi Jerome M. Epstein
Executive Vice President

Solomon Schechter Award Guidelines

Please review and follow these guidelines when applying for a Solomon Schechter award. Entries must be in our hands by the deadline of 5:00 pm Eastern time, Monday, April 17, 2009.

1. United Synagogue's Solomon Schechter Awards program recognizes congregations, not subgroups or affiliates. Therefore, please be sure that all entries are submitted by the congregation. We do not accept submissions from separate departments, programs, or people from the congregation.
2. Multiple entries are allowed but only one entry per award category. Please choose the category for each entry based on the printed guidelines and criteria, and indicate that category on the application.
3. You may put more than one entry in a box, but each entry must have its own application. You may copy the application form [or download the application from www.uscj.org] if you need more application forms.
4. Entries are accepted and judged based on your responses to the guidelines and criteria in each of the award category. We provide guidelines and criteria to simplify the application process and to help the judges to evaluate entries. *You need not respond to every item in the guidelines.* You may describe your entry in narrative form; be sure to include samples of all supporting materials. We encourage materials be submitted in *green formats*. Provide as much in electronic [CD or DVD] media as possible. The web site awards must be submitted in electronic form.
5. **Only congregations in good financial standing as of JUNE 30, 2009 are eligible to receive an award.**
6. Each entry must meet the basic criteria stipulated for its award category. To win an award, an entry must demonstrate extraordinary characteristics or unusual and outstanding aspects that go beyond the expected norms. Entries within award and congregational size categories are compared to each other.
7. We plan to award one gold and one silver award for each congregational size division for each category.
8. **Please note: Materials submitted will not be returned.** All submissions become the property of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism for its use. United Synagogue reserves the right to use materials from the submissions, in whole or in part, with appropriate credit, in materials to be produced or distributed by United Synagogue
9. Award-winning entries will be on display at United Synagogue's biennial convention in December 2009. We strongly encourage representatives from the award-winning congregations to attend the convention to accept the awards and to share information about the programs.
10. Applications **must** include an executive summary (**with a maximum of 2-3 brief paragraphs**) on the summary form sheet on the reverse side of the application.
11. The application must be signed as indicated on the application form.
12. Applications and supporting materials must be shipped by delivery services that allow for package tracking (such as Federal Express, USPS Priority Mail or UPS). Materials **MUST** be in our possession by the deadline of **April 17, 2009**. Entries, which include application, supporting material and summary, must be sent to:
Solomon Schechter Awards - The United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
Rapaport House – 10th Floor
820 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10017

For additional or clarifying information, please talk to our staff consultant, **Aaron L. Kischel**, at the **New England office of United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism**
Phone: 617-964-8210 e-mail: kischel@uscj.org

IV. PROGRAMS

ISRAEL/MASORTI AFFAIRS

The importance of Israel to Jews everywhere and the historical identification of the Conservative Movement with the Zionist ideal are to be highlighted for this award.

There are two categories in this section.

A. Special programming in honor of Israel's 60th anniversary.

B. Other Israel / Masorti programming.

1. Describe the structure of your congregation's Israel Affairs committee.
2. Describe the Israel Affairs and programs to promote aliyah held since May 2007. These may include a program or programs to foster participation in Mercaz, the Masorti Movement: the Shirley and Jacob Fuchsberg Jerusalem Center, *Kibbutz Hanaton*, *Garin Nitzan*, *Moshav Shorashim*; Jewish National Fund, Israel Bonds and other activities to support Israel. Include supporting documentation available, with descriptions.
3. How has the congregation promoted its members' personal ties with Israel, i.e. promotion of tourism, study, volunteer efforts, sabbatical year in Israel, establishment of a second home in Israel and aliyah? Has the congregation sponsored trips to Israel?
4. Please describe programs designed to enhance Israel - Diaspora relations.
5. In addition to programs sponsored by the congregation for the congregational constituency, please list those programs in which the congregation participated in the larger community, indicating the dimension of participation.
6. Please indicate what special programs were observed for:
 - a. Yom HaZikaron
 - b. *Yom Ha'Atzmaut*
 - c. *Yom Yerushalayim*
 - d. other commemorative dates in terms of Israel promoting membership in Mercaz/USA, Mercaz/Canada and the Masorti movement.
7. Please indicate the role of professionals and laity in developing and implementing programs described.
8. If not covered in the above, please enclose copies of any publications produced by the congregation which related to Israel Affairs and *aliyah*.

Please feel free to add whatever information you feel would be relevant in terms of evaluating the congregation's Israel Affairs program since May 2007.