

**The United Synagogue of
Conservative Judaism**



**The 2009
Solomon Schechter
Awards
for Synagogue Excellence**
GUIDELINES and CRITERIA
for
Koach/College Students

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

Jerry I. Klibanoff
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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

III. FOR ALL AGES

KOACH/COLLEGE STUDENTS

KOACH was created in recognition of the critical need to reach out to our college age student population as they make the transition into young adulthood. Awards will be given to congregations which have designed innovative programs and approaches for maintaining contact with our young people during their college years.

1. Is there a KOACH Liaison Committee in your synagogue? What is the scope of its activities? What professional involvement and support is extended to this committee? Is there a synagogue staff member assigned to the committee?
2. What activities does your congregation offer collegians at nearby college campuses? Describe your greatest successes in terms of (a) the program, (b) publicity, and (c) recruitment of students.
3. What is the involvement of your rabbi and professional staff with the Conservative Jewish population on the local campus? Does your rabbi or other professional staff visit campuses where there are a significant number of collegians from your congregation? Describe the nature of these visits. How often do they occur?
4. What are the most creative, popular programs that your synagogue has designed for its own college students? Have students been responsive? Have the programs been evaluated?
5. What is the budget for collegiate activities within the congregation budget? Please provide details.
6. What is the most creative/successful communication that you have with your collegians?
7. Do you provide financial support for students who attend the KOACH Kallah and other conferences?
8. Do you recognize student accomplishments through the synagogue bulletin or Shabbat service?
9. Has your congregation developed an "aggressive" method of collecting the email addresses of its collegians as close to the beginning of the year as possible? Please describe. Have you shared email addresses with KOACH?
10. Describe any special religious/cultural/educational programs that attract the participation of college students from the community.
11. Does your synagogue offer free High Holiday tickets to collegians at nearby universities? Does it offer free synagogue membership to local collegians? How does it publicize these special services?
12. How does your congregation prepare its high school juniors and seniors for making Jewishly informed choices in their college selection process? How does the rabbi of your congregation acknowledge the life cycle transition of your high school seniors as they prepare themselves for college? Have you used KOACH's "*Lekh-Lekha*" ceremony for graduating high school seniors?
13. Does your congregation offer any scholarship programs to its collegians? Please describe.
14. Does the synagogue and/or rabbi maintain regular contact with collegians via e-mail? How often? What kind of material is sent?
15. Please submit all supporting documentation that will help us in valuating your response to the above.