



VISION *in* ACTION

EVALUATING JDC ENTWINE'S CONTINUUM
of SERVICE AND ENGAGEMENT

JDCENTWINE.ORG | JANUARY 2017

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OUR MISSION

“To catalyze the current generation of young Jewish adults — in North America and increasingly in other centers of Jewish life around the world — to view global Jewish awareness, connection, and responsibility as core to their identity.”

** For a fuller version of some of these reflections please see:*

<http://ejewishphilanthropy.com/jewish-service-jewish-values-and-the-power-of-evaluation/>

INTRODUCTION

BY SARAH EISENMAN



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A NOTE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

“Vision without implementation is hallucination” – I recently came across this quote, one of those passing online inspirational nuggets of wisdom, and actually took pause. Because it so perfectly summed up our last eight years engaging young Jewish adults.

Since 2008, JDC Entwine has built an on-mission brand, created a continuum of programs connected with over 18,000 young adults, and grew a lay leadership structure that engages hundreds of young Jews. We are now the largest global Jewish service program provider, and, on top of that, we have grown our budget more than tenfold to approximately \$5 million each year. Great, right?

Well, sure, it does feel good to observe the enthusiasm, emotion, and life-changing moments our participants experienced: stories of young people changing career paths to serve the Jewish community; others meeting their partners and having families; and countless stories of young adults, never engaged with Jewish life, now realizing they had found a Jewish community to call home. But what did we really know about our participants? Who they are, why they had come to us, and what had changed for them since becoming involved? Could we intentionally re-design a program to achieve a stronger outcome? And if our model did have value, were there real learnings that we could contribute to the broader field?

In truth, we had been so focused on existing and growing, that we actually couldn’t answer these questions with absolute certainty. Vision without implementation might be hallucination, but surely implementation without hard investigative facts is just as fleeting.

Through this extensive external evaluation conducted by Rosov Consulting – generously supported by the Jim Joseph Foundation – we’ve come to learn about ourselves in reality, in data, and not only in our kishkes. We’ve also identified trends and opportunities that are hopefully helpful to other organizations seeking to create lasting relationships and impact the hearts, hands, and minds of young people, as Rosov Consulting so aptly labeled our three evaluation categories. After this evaluation we feel certain that:

- **The young people we often refer to as “unaffiliated” and “unengaged” actually want intense Jewish experiences and relationships.**
- **Jewish service can create and catalyze Jewish values.**
- **Young people need space to grow and it’s important to design an engagement continuum with pathways to deepen involvement over time.***

Engaging in an extensive evaluation has been a marathon. On the upside, whatever I thought was intentional in our program design before is only half of what we can do now, equipping a team of creative minds with real information. The downside: it can truly be difficult to challenge our assumptions about the intentionality and real impact of our programs, especially when funding is an ongoing pressure. Yet we are committed to absorbing these learnings, seizing key findings to further catalyze young Jews on their path to loving their people and traditions. And, yes, even with some necessary visionary hallucinations along the way.

Thank you for reading and (hopefully) dreaming with us,

Sarah

Entwine is a multi-faceted initiative that offers a spectrum of opportunities for Jewish engagement and humanitarian service abroad.

BACKGROUND



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ABOUT ENTWINE

JDC Entwine was formed in 2008 by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), with the vision of building future Jewish leadership by engaging young Jewish adults in global Jewish and humanitarian needs. Entwine offers diverse opportunities for young adults to become involved with global issues and to cultivate a sense of belonging to, and a feeling of responsibility for, the Jewish people. Entwine's explicit purposes is to catalyze the current generation of young Jewish adults — in North America and increasingly in other centers of Jewish life around the world — to view global Jewish awareness, connection, and responsibility as core to their identity.

Entwine is a multi-faceted initiative that offers a spectrum of opportunities for Jewish engagement and humanitarian service abroad. The flagship options include:

- **Insider Trips**, a week long travel and humanitarian service experience;
- **Multi-Week Global Jewish Fellowships**, a 4 to 8-week volunteer service placement in one community, working individually or as part of a group with other volunteers;
- **Year-Long Global Jewish Service Corps (JSC)**, an opportunity to volunteer overseas, facilitating and creating innovative programs for communities over an extended period of time;
- **Learning Networks**, local community-based peer-led programs, such as events, trainings, and workshops focused on education and engagement and on building communities of young Jews who are interested in global Jewish issues.

ABOUT THE STUDY

In 2014, Entwine received a generous grant from the Jim Joseph Foundation to support the continued expansion of select programs, to track and evaluate Jewish identity and service learning outcomes produced by the programs, and ultimately to develop Entwine's internal capacity for ongoing self-assessment and learning.

In April 2015, Rosov Consulting was commissioned to carry this evaluation and capacity building efforts. The study included three separate, but closely related, components:

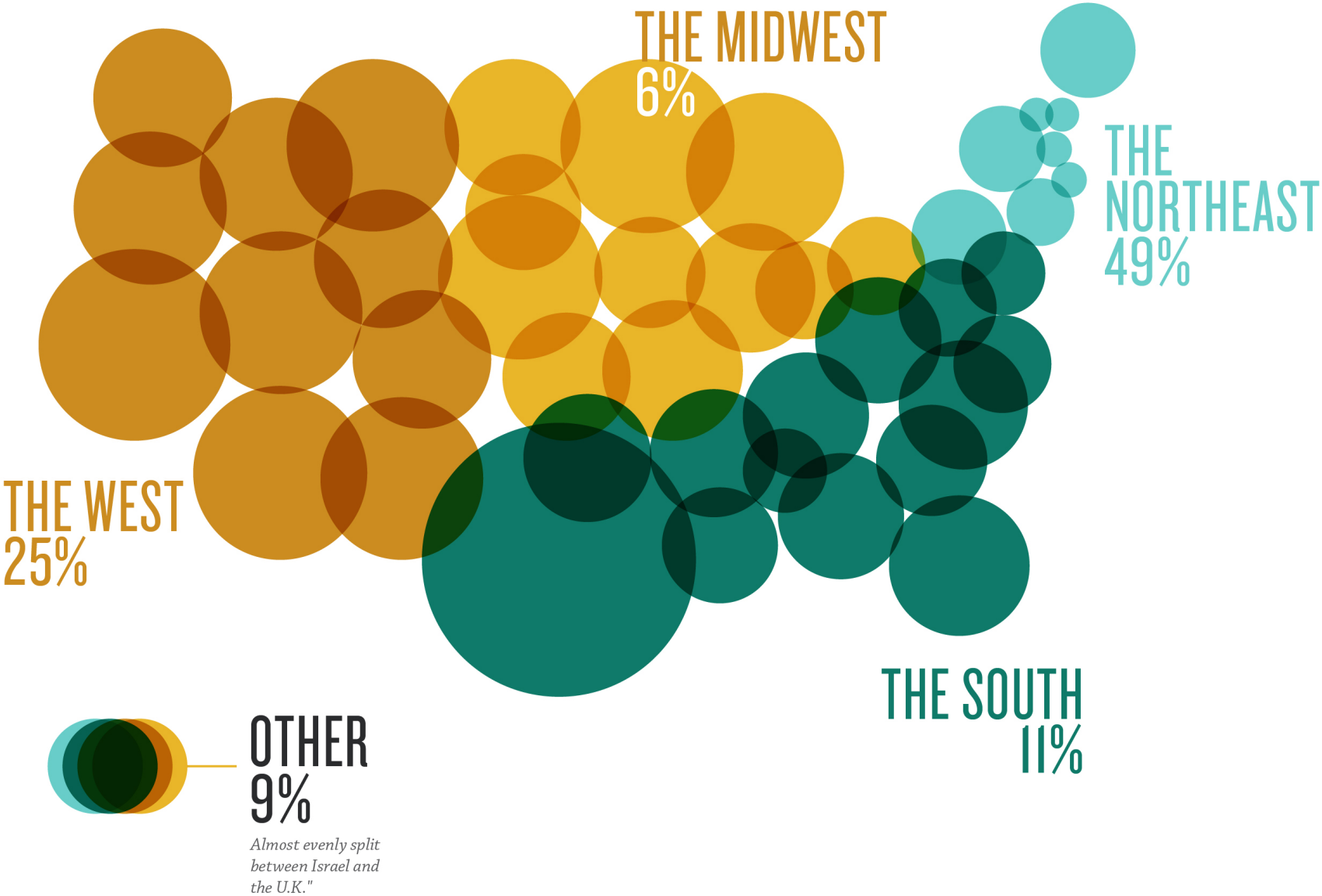
- **An alumni study of Entwine trip and fellowship participants who were involved in the program between 2008 and January 2015.**
- **A real time study of trip and fellowship participants between June 2015 and February 2016.**
- **An assessment of Entwine Learning Networks across the country**, encompassing leaders, participants, and trip-alumni non-participants in various communities.

Both the alumni and real time studies employed a combination of quantitative (surveys) and qualitative (focus groups and interviews) methods. The Learning Network assessment used qualitative methods (focus groups), with supplemental quantitative data that was obtained through the Alumni survey.

Entwine participants and alumni come from across the United States, with a small but growing International base as well. While nearly half live in the Northeastern states, our alumni base in the Western states is rapidly growing. Our newly based London network is growing our participant base in the U.K.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Geography



“Since my first JDC trip I am constantly thinking about global Jewish life. The trip opened my eyes to Jewish life outside of the sheltered American community I grew up in. I have become extremely interested in bringing this realization to other college students and young professionals and it affects my work as a Jewish professional on a daily basis.”

INSIDER TRIP COLLEGE

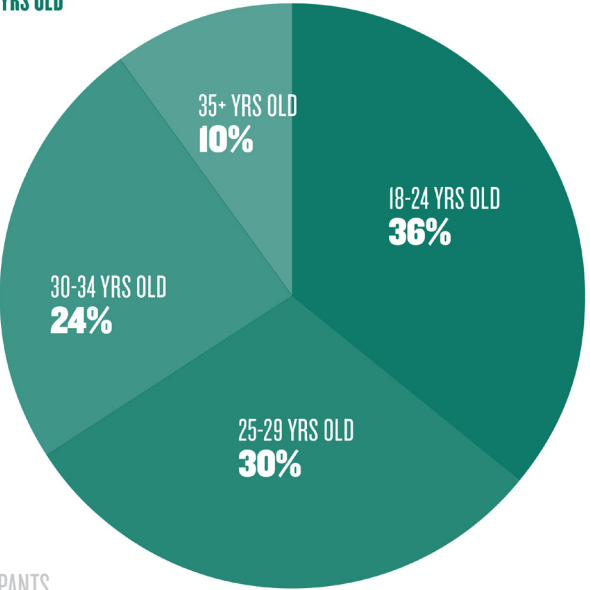
DEMOGRAPHICS

Age, Identity, Profession



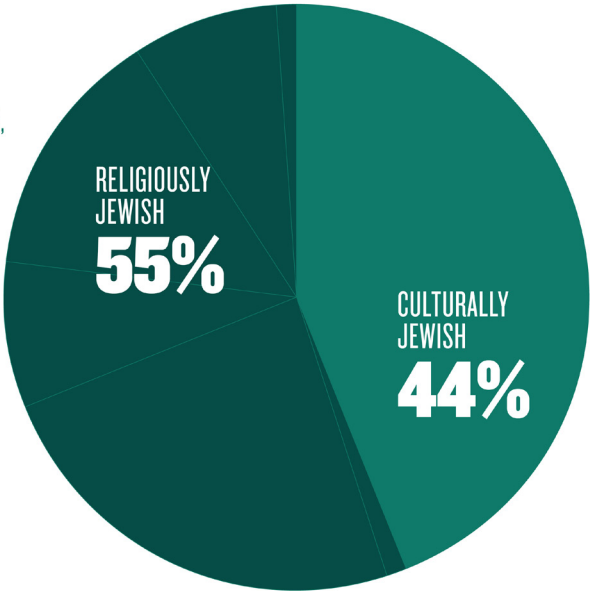
PARTICIPANTS RANGE: BETWEEN 18 AND 38 YEARS OLD
AVERAGE AGE: 27 YRS OLD

WOMEN: 65%
MEN: 33%



AGE OF PARTICIPANTS

CONSERVATIVE 24%
REFORM 14%
RELIGIOUSLY JEWISH,
OTHER 9%
ORTHODOX 8%
NOT JE WISH 1%



JEWISH IDENTITY



19%
BUSINESS/
FINANCE/
MARKETING



15%
JEWISH
COMMUNAL
WORK/
SERVICE



12%
PUBLIC
SERVICE/
POLICY



9%
PHYSICAL
HEALTH/
MEDICINE



9%
ENGINE-
ERING/
HIGH TECH



9%
HIGHER
EDUCATION



9%
LAW



7%
ARTS



6%
SOCIAL
WORK/
MENTAL
HEALTH

PROFESSIONS

KEY LEARNING

NEARLY 20% OF THOSE WORKING IN JEWISH COMMUNAL SERVICE SAY THEIR CAREER CHOICE WAS INFLUENCED BY THEIR ENTWINE EXPERIENCE.

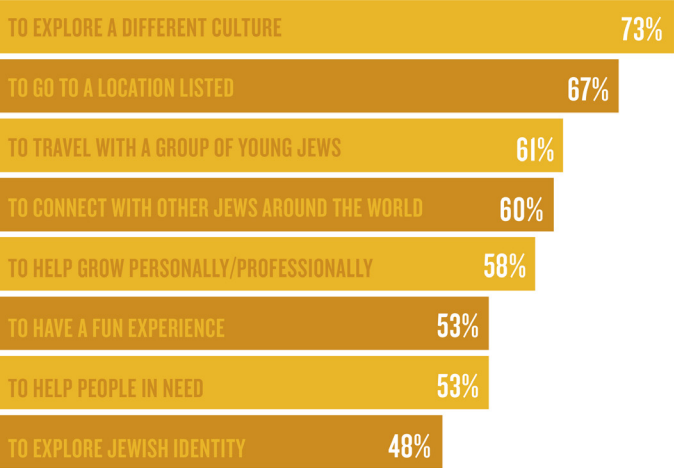
“[The Insider Trip]
really instilled in me
the importance of
Tikkun Olam and helping
global communities.”

INSIDER TRIP PARTICIPANT

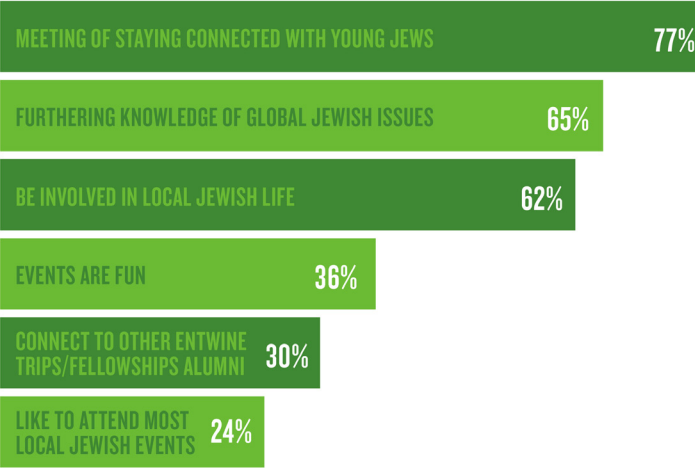
MOTIVATIONS
TO PARTICIPATE



INSIDER TRIPS



LEARNING NETWORKS



MULTI-WEEK & JEWISH SERVICE CORPS

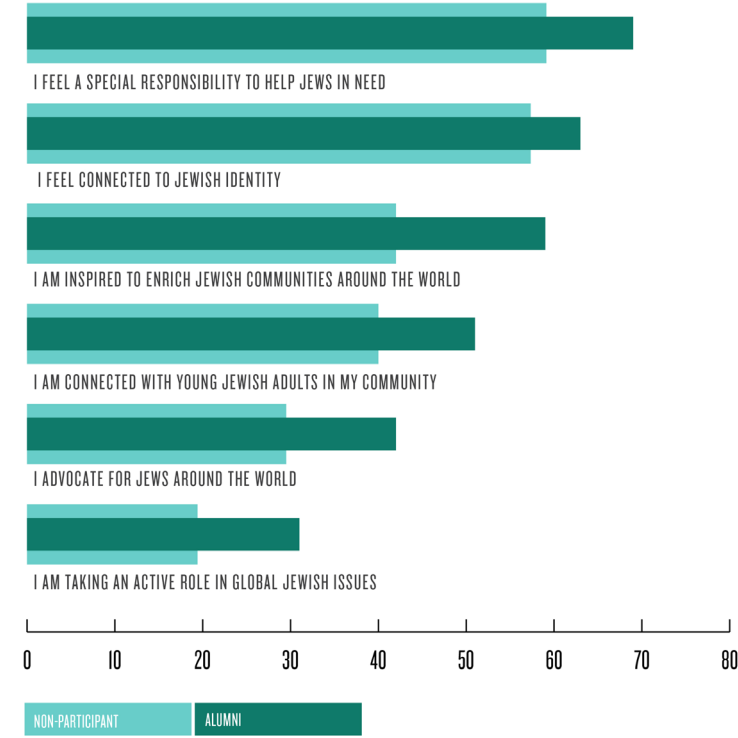


“I learned how important it is to stay connected to other communities. I could see that I was making an impact just by showing them that other people around the world care about them. Now, any time I can talk about my experience, I share with others and educate them so they can understand how other people live abroad.”

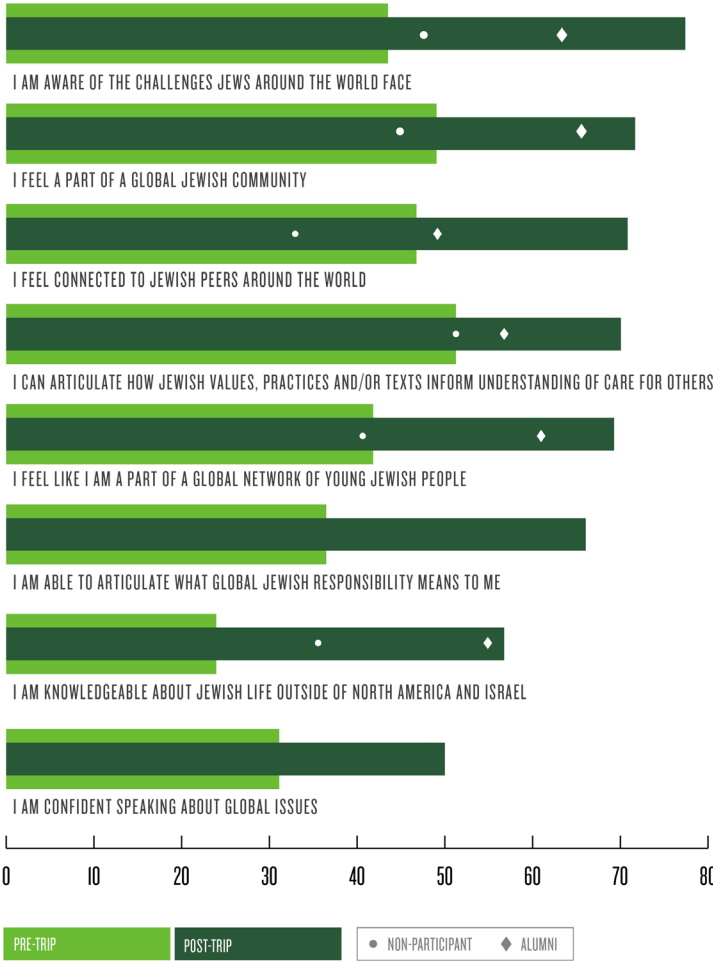
MULTI-WEEK FELLOW

OUTCOMES OF PARTICIPATION

Identity, behavior, knowledge-based questions.



Entwine participants showed incredible gains across a host of measures focused on identity, knowledge, and behavior. We tested our alumni against a control group of non-participants, noting a legion of significant differences, but we also tested our participants both before and after going on an overseas experience. This pre-/post- testing method is a gold standard for showing impact, and again we saw outcomes shift significantly among participants in our programs.



“I had such a powerful experience on my first Entwine trip to India. I wanted to continue to build upon the existing momentum we had created while abroad.”

WEST COAST
LEARNING NETWORK LEADER

OUTCOMES MULTIPLIED THROUGH CONTINUED EXPERIENCE



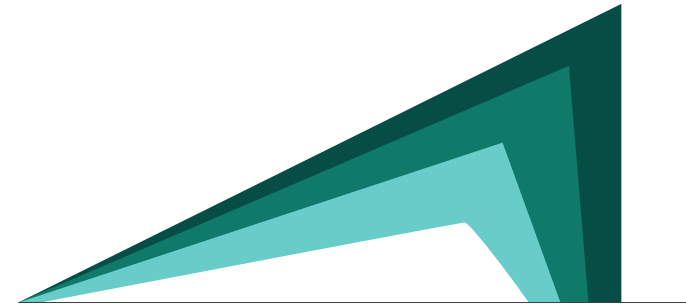
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TWO OR MORE EVENTS
ONE EVENT

LEARNING NETWORKS

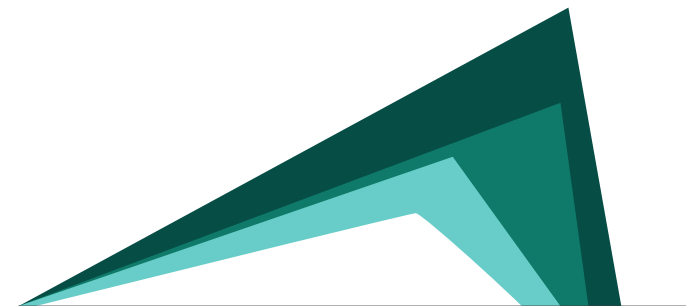
We found that outcome scores are significantly higher among those who attend two or more events. Repeat participation leads to greater engagement and learning.



TRIP CHAIRS (LEADERSHIP)
MULTIPLE TRIPS
SINGLE TRIP

TRAVEL EXPERIENCES

Outcome scores are also significantly higher among those who traveled with Entwine more than once, and yet higher among those who volunteered to lead a group of peers as a trip chair. Again, a repeated experience has greater impact on a participant, as does engagement in leadership roles.



LEARNING + TRAVEL EXPERIENCE
TRAVEL EXPERIENCE
LEARNING NETWORKS

COMBINED EXPERIENCES

While we see higher impacts among our travelers than among our network participants, we found outcome scores to be the highest among those who participate in the continuum of Entwine experiences—travel and learning networks combined. Engagement of our travel alumni through our peer-led learning networks multiplies the initial investment and results in the greatest impact.

“The Entwine trip made me realize how as a Jewish community, we can be organized on a global level to help communities around the world. That opened my eyes to possibilities of doing good work beyond my local community.”

INSIDER TRIP YP

OUTCOMES

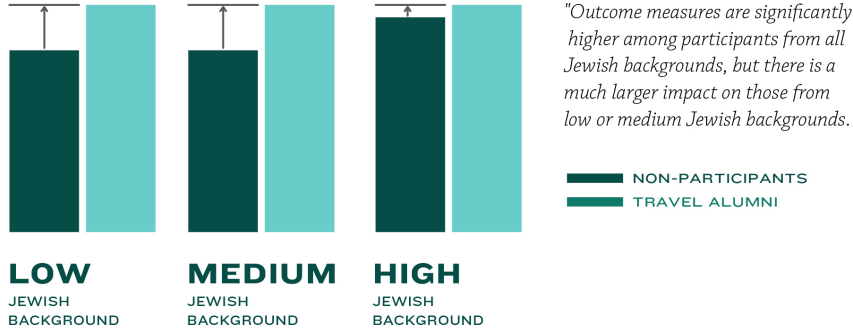


FOCUS GROUPS SURFACED ADDITIONAL OUTCOMES AMONG OVERSEAS EXPERIENCE PARTICIPANTS:

- STRONGER CONNECTIONS WITH OVERSEAS COMMUNITIES
- SENSE OF CONNECTION WITH OTHERS THROUGH CELEBRATION
- SERVICE WORK IS PERSONALLY MEANINGFUL
- STRONGER SELF-CONFIDENCE AND COMPETENCE

EIGHTY FIVE %

OF TRAVEL-GOERS WOULD LIKE TO JOIN ANOTHER TRIP OR FELLOWSHIP.



The outcomes that remain strongest over time are related to knowledge and identity measures, while behavioral outcomes are not as “sticky” in the long term. Therefore, providing continued opportunities for engagement and action is key to ensuring long-lasting outcomes across the board.

“The meetings and events have ignited a passion I didn’t know was there before, and led me to seek out leadership roles so I can better understand our Jewish communities around the world.”

TEXAS LEARNING NETWORK LEADER

OUTCOMES



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ROUGHLY
90%

OF ENTWINE'S AUDIENCE IS LIKELY TO PARTICIPATE IN NETWORK EVENTS, THOSE WHO TRAVEL ARE SIGNIFICANTLY MORE LIKELY THAN NON-TRAVELERS (53% VS. 33% "VERY LIKELY").

**I'M TOO BUSY.
WHEN IS IT?
WHERE IS IT?
WHAT IS IT?**

The biggest obstacles to Learning Network attendance include the difficulty of fitting events into busy schedules, and a lack of awareness of Learning Network activity in a participant's community.

**GLOBAL
SHABBATS**

Among event types, participants were particularly attracted to Global Shabbats.

FOCUS GROUPS SURFACED ADDITIONAL OUTCOMES AMONG LEARNING NETWORK PARTICIPANTS:

**INCREASED KNOWLEDGE
ABOUT JDC AND GLOBAL
JEWISH ISSUES**

**INCREASED OPPORTUNITIES
TO TAKE ON LEADERSHIP ROLES AND BE
ACTIVELY INVOLVED
IN JEWISH LIFE**

**STRONGER CONNECTION
TO LOCAL COMMUNITIES
THROUGH LEARNING NETWORKS**

“I don’t think I would be as confident as a leader if I hadn’t participated in this trip. I had the opportunity to lead multiple sessions as well as be a part of this transformational journey for the student participants which in itself was extremely transformational and educational for me.”

INSIDER COLLEGE TRIP

OUTCOMES

AMONG THOSE WHO HAD NEVER DONE SO BEFORE

MY ENTWINE EXPERIENCE INSPIRED ME TO...

...GET INVOLVED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN JEWISH LIFE IN MY LOCAL COMMUNITY



...CONSIDER PURSUING LEADERSHIP ROLES IN JEWISH LIFE IN MY LOCAL COMMUNITY



...CONSIDER PURSUING LEADERSHIP ROLES RELATED TO GLOBAL JEWISH ISSUES



NOT AT ALL A LITTLE BIT SOMEWHAT A GREAT DEAL

ENTWINE INSPIRES INVOLVEMENT IN LOCAL JEWISH LIFE AND LEADERSHIP.

Nearly 40% percent of participants in Entwine programs were not previously involved in their local Jewish communities, yet show us by their participation with us that they are interested in Jewish experiences. Of those not previously involved in Jewish life, two-thirds were inspired by their Entwine experience to become involved in their local communities as well. Our programs also inspire young Jews to take on leadership roles in Jewish life, and of those who hadn’t previously held any leadership positions, about 80% were inspired by their Entwine experience to do so, either within their local communities or related to global Jewish issues.

CONCLUSIONS



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WE HOPE YOU HAVE ENJOYED THIS SNAPSHOT OF ENTWINE'S IMPACT. WHILE THIS INFORMATION IS ALREADY CHANGING WHO WE ARE, WE WONDER IF IT CAN CHANGE OTHERS.

This study should help other organizations, lead to greater action, or inspire new ways of reaching young people. Please join us in considering these calls to action:

1. Can the organized Jewish community change how we think about those young people we refer to as 'unaffiliated'? This evaluation shows that even those on the fringe of Jewish life are seeking out very intense Jewish experiences. Perhaps it is us, the organized community, who needs to re-affiliate ourselves?
2. Can we grow Jewish service? Clearly this evaluation demonstrates that Entwine's Insider Trips and Fellowships lead to a host of value-based identity outcomes and the desire among alumni to be involved and lead in Jewish life. Jewish service is catalytic and transformational; let's do more of it!
3. How do we build a continuum of Jewish pathways? This evaluation confirmed for Entwine that our strategy of building a continuum of programming (reinforced by our approach to recruitment, selection, and capacity investments) has legs. We must expand our investment not only in the catalytic experiences, but in the continuum and pathways that follow these young people for the years to come.
4. How will we create the leadership space for the many talented young people engaging with us and others? This evaluation shows that not only do our service alumni want to be involved in Jewish life, they want to lead. Are these thousands of rising leaders being tapped into? We believe that they are likely the key to solving some of the Jewish community's largest challenges. Let's create the space for them.

Words cannot do proper justice to the critical importance of this evaluation to JDC Entwine and how the Jim Joseph Foundation's passionate dedication to this work has fundamentally strengthened our ability to impact Jewish young people.

We have built something meaningful for young Jewish adults and are today re-engineering ourselves to be that much more impactful. We hope others can join us in this pursuit of learning, changing, and boldly doubling-down where we need to.



**WE HAVE BUILT SOMETHING
MEANINGFUL FOR YOUNG
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