



For Immediate Release
October 6, 2011

CONTACT: Joann Anand
JSDD's WAE Center
973-272-7152 | janand@jsddmetrowest.org

Drumming Up a Big Sound: Japanese Taiko Drumming Takes Center Stage in Verona

What: All Ages Concert –Soh Daiko Drummers
When: Sunday, Nov. 6, 7 p.m.
Where: Congregation Beth Ahm of West Essex
56 Grove Avenue Verona, NJ 07044
Admission: Free, accessible and open to the public

OCTOBER 5, 2011 – Taiko Drumming, an art form developed in Japan, is believed to date back to ancient times when a village determined its borders by the furthest point from which villagers could hear the sound of the Taiko, the big drum. Listening to Taiko now, one imagines these villages must have extended for miles, because if sound has size, Taiko music is huge.

For the second concert in their 2011 Global Beat Series, Jewish Service for the Developmentally Disabled's WAE (Wellness, Arts and Enrichment) Center is teaming up with Congregation Beth Ahm of West Essex to bring one of the most well known Taiko drumming groups on the East Coast to Verona.

The concert on November 6 at 7 p.m. at Beth Ahm, 56 Grove Avenue, Verona, features the New York based group, Soh Daiko. Much more than just percussion, Soh Daiko's presentation also features the visual element of movement and choreography, requiring the physical strength, endurance, and energy that makes taiko such an exciting performance experience. Integrating bamboo flutes, brass bells, conch shells and gongs to create a plethora of unique sounds, their repertoire includes both traditional and original compositions. They have performed at celebrated venues that include Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, the American Museum of Natural History, and Radio City Music Hall. The group has also been featured on Public Television's *Sesame Street*, *Reading Rainbow*, and National Public Radio's *All Things Considered*, and with artists such as Korn, Rob Thomas, and Kanye West.

Taiko was first introduced in the United States in the 1960's by Seiichi Tanaka, a drum master from Japan. Since then, a particular American form of Taiko has developed which fuses Japanese tradition with American techniques and styles. A typical show combines powerful rhythms on various sized drums with whirling movement to create performances that are both startling and invigorating.

JSDD WAE Center's Global Beat Series, now in its sixth year, is made possible in part by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts and administrated by the Essex County Division of Cultural and Historic Affairs. Operating under Jewish Service for the Developmentally Disabled, The WAE Center is an alternative learning center located in West Orange that provides artistic, educational and health enhancing opportunities to people with disabilities. For more information please call JSDD's WAE Center at (973) 272-7152 or email janand@jsddmetrowest.org or Monica@waecenter.org.