

They Came for the Art; They Came for the Music

JSDD's Wellness, Arts, Enrichment (WAE) Center wrapped up its 2011 Global Beat Series on December 8 at B'nai Shalom with a lively Latin rhythm performance by Los Ciegos del Barrio. The event combined the concert, for the very first time, with a silent auction featuring a large selection of WAE Center artists' original art work and a kosher wine tasting.



[Caption] JSDD Executive Director Linda Press (left), who was the successful bidder in a very brisk silent auction, WAE Center Director Marilynn Schneider, Diane Klein of UJC Metrowest, and JSDD Board Member Larry Rein with Los Ceigos del Barrio, who brought a new appreciation of Latin rhythm to the community.

Onstage, the New York based group Los Ciegos Del Barrio, literally translated as “The Blind Boys of the Neighborhood,” delivered a wide variety of music including: cumbia, bachata, Reggaeton, salsa, and meringue. Early into the performance, the audience was up on their feet dancing.

The musicians, all legally blind, have always been determined never to let their disability get in the way of their spirit as they entertain audiences around the United States and internationally. That same spirit is demonstrated daily by the members attending the WAE Center, an alternative learning center in West Orange operating under Jewish Service for the Developmentally Disabled to provide artistic, educational and health enhancing opportunities to people with disabilities.

“Los Ciegos del Barrio are passionate about their art. Their music comes from deep within, just as the art created by our WAE Center artists does,” said Marilynn Schneider, Director of JSDD’s WAE Center. “Both groups are rightfully proud of their creativity and accomplishments and are eager to share them with the world. “

JSDD WAE Center’s Global Beat Series will open its seventh season in the Spring of 2012. The series 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.