



Contacts:

Joann Anand | JSDD's WAE Center
270 Pleasant Valley Way, West Orange NJ 07052
973-272-7152 | janand@jsddmetrowest.org

Rabbi Mary Zamore | Temple B'nai Or
60 Overlook Rd, Morristown NJ 07960
973-539-4539

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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JSDD's WAE (Wellness, Arts, Enrichment) Center will be a visible component in this February's Shabbat Shalem observances at eight MetroWest organizations and synagogues. Shabbat Shalem, Shabbat made "whole and complete" by the inclusion of all of its members, is celebrated nationally during Jewish Disability Awareness Month each February.

Artwork created by WAE Center members will be displayed as part of B'nai Or's "The Spirit of the Human Family" exhibit, which is co-sponsored by the Morris Area Clergy Council. The show opens on Feb. 23 with a community-wide reception, 5-6:30 p.m., followed by an interfaith Purim celebration. The exhibit draws upon the many talented artists in congregations throughout the Morris area. This show focuses on inclusion, what brings us together and the spirituality we share. Seventy-five percent of the proceeds from the sale of any of the art will be contributed to the Community Soup Kitchen, with the remaining twenty-five percent going to the artist.

"The WAE Center is an ideal partner as we seek to raise awareness of how communities can foster inclusion," said Rabbi Donald Rossoff, of Temple B'nai Or, one of the synagogues that has reached out to the WAE Center for inclusion in its celebration of Shabbat Shelem.

The WAE Center, located in West Orange, is an alternative learning center for adults with disabilities. It operates under the auspices of Jewish Service for the Developmentally Disabled of MetroWest, Inc. (JSDD), a partner agency of Jewish Federation of Greater MetroWest NJ. The WAE Center offers artistic, wellness and enrichment opportunities to people of varying abilities in an atmosphere that supports and inspires creativity and fosters unconditional acceptance and respect between participants and facilitators. Humanistic principles are used to guide members in building a greater capacity for a full and rich life, regardless of starting point.

While inclusion is something that occurs naturally in so many congregations year round, during Shabbat Shalem synagogues and Jewish organizations help raise the level of awareness throughout the surrounding community. Details of programming at each MetroWest location can be found at www.metrowestABLE.org.