



History of Exchange

Petach Tikva, Israel
Chicago's Sister City Since 1994

Chair: Daniel Shure

1994

September

Focus: Signing Agreement

The Honorable Giora Lev, Mayor of Petach Tikva, Israel and a delegation traveled to Chicago to sign a Sister Cities agreement establishing Petach Tikva as Chicago's 16th Sister City.

1995

Focus: Culture

Mayor Lev hosted Cardinal Bernardin and a delegation of members from Chicago's Jewish Federation and the Petach Tikva Committee. Their tour included a visit to the newly dedicated Chicago Square in Petach Tikva.

Focus: Culture

A delegation from the Jewish Federation traveled to Israel and participated in the dedication of Chicago Square in Petach Tikva.

1999

Focus: Government

Chair Dan Shure and Committee Member Dan Lichenstein met with the Mayor of Petach Tikva to discuss future projects.

Focus: Government

The Petach Tikva Committee welcomed Yoram Holzman, Chair of the Chicago Committee in Petach Tikva.

2000

Focus: Culture

The Petach Tikva Committee and the Consulate General of Israel to the Midwest co-sponsored a performance by Israeli pop star Aviv Geffen, who played to a packed house at the Chicago Cultural Center.

Focus: Culture

The Israeli Film Festival traveled to Chicago for the first time in its sixteen-year history. The festival showcased nearly 40 cinematic works. In support of the festival's Chicago debut, the Petach Tikva Committee sponsored the screenings of two award-winning films by Israeli filmmakers--Vulcan Junction, directed by Eran Rikilis and Yana's Friends also directed by Arik Kaplun.

2001

Focus: Government

Petach Tikva's Mayor Ohayon traveled to Chicago to get acquainted with the city. He visited with representatives from Streets and Sanitation and other city departments. While he was here, he inaugurated a yearlong project titled Visual Letters—a collaborative art exhibition by patients of Children's Memorial Hospital in Chicago and Schneider Children's Hospital in Petach Tikva. The project will culminate in a 50-piece exhibition to open in approximately one year at the Chicago Children's Museum child.

2002

April 4

Focus: Education

Visiting Israeli Improv Group performed at Avondale Elementary School, a participant in the Sister Schools Abroad Program.

2003

July 17

Focus: Culture

Mark Damisch, Mayor of Northbrook, IL performed a piano concert to benefit the Petach Tikva Committee and to kick off his summer tour in Israel.

August 1-9

Focus: Culture

Mark Damisch performed throughout Israel, including Petach Tikva, Lev Hasharon, Lod, Bat Yam, Yehud and Kiryat Gat. This tour was a part of Mr. Damisch's continuing mission to promote harmony and peace through music to countries throughout the world. The Petach Tikva, working in conjunction with the Jewish Federation.

September 13-20

Focus: Education & Religion

The Warsaw and Petach Tikva Committees worked in concert to organize the weeklong visit to Chicago of Reverend Weksler-Waszkinel, a Catholic priest who learned, as an adult, of his history as a hidden child and Jewish heritage.

The Reverend shared his story and his personal cause of improving Jewish-Catholic relations to over 1000 people in the Chicago area. While in Chicago, Reverend Weksler-Waszkinel met with two Jewish-Catholic dialogue groups, high school students, members of the Congregation Ezra-Habonim and with the general public.

2004

February 1-7

Focus: Government

The Petach Tikva Committee arranged several meetings for the visit of Yoram Holzman, Chair of the Chicago Committee in Petach Tikva, to Chicago. Mr. Yoram met with leaders of the Jewish Federation and attended a reception with Petach Tikva Committee Members.

2005

April 26

Focus: Culture

Working in collaboration with The Chicago Public Library, The Consulate General of Israel to the Midwest, the Vilnius and Petach Tikva Committees hosted the Chicago premiere of Ponar, a documentary film by Racheli Schwartz at Harold Washington Library's Cindy Pritzker Auditorium. "Ponar" is the amazing, true story of the 1943 song competition held in the Vilna Ghetto (Vilnius, Lithuania), told sixty years later through the eyes of the contest winner and Holocaust survivor.

2006

May

Focus: Government

Mayor Daley traveled with a CSCI delegation to Israel in May. Sister City activities included a tour of Petach Tikva and a visit to the Community Center on Chicago Street, which was built with funds from the Jewish community of Chicago. Highlights of the trip included meetings with national security officials, an Ethiopian youth center and a luncheon in Petach Tikva for 140 top business leaders in Israel.

August 22

Focus: Media

"Israel in the Spotlight: Media, Commerce & National Identity, From a Journalist's Perspective" Dan Bielski, director of the newsroom at the Israeli National Radio, was the speaker for a luncheon and discussion in an exclusive, in-depth look at the current situation in Israel. Bielski will examine how media plays a vital role in Israel's public perception, and will expose an Israeli perspective Americans haven't seen.

September 11

Focus: Culture

Actor Sirak M. Sabat, from a featured film from the Israeli Film Festival, will speak to a group of young people who are all studying Theater Arts. The class is a Chicago Public Schools Program called the Advanced Arts Education Program at Gallery 37.

November 7**Focus: Culture & Education**

Yitzhak Rabin: Analysis of Israel's Military & Political Leader. Yitzhak Rabin: Analysis of Israel's Military & Political Leader. A dynamic and engaging speaker, Yoav Gelber is one of Israel's foremost authorities on the Israeli Defense Forces and political leadership. Sharing both scholarly insight and personal anecdotes, Professor Gelber illuminated Yitzhak Rabin's life and how even today, eleven years after Rabin's tragic assassination, his legacy continues shaping our future. This project was in collaboration with the Consulate General of Israel.

November 13**Focus: Education**

The symposium marked the 80th birthday of the renowned Czech writer, filmmaker, and Holocaust survivor Arnost Lustig. The University of Illinois at Chicago and the Chicago Sister Cities International Program celebrated Lustig's contributions to global culture with a program of films and presentations by scholars from Europe and the United States.

This program was presented by The Jewish Studies Program, the Department of Slavic and Baltic Language and Literature at the University of Illinois at Chicago, and The Prague Committee and the Petach Tikva Committee of Chicago Sister Cities International Program.

November 24-25**Focus: Culture**

The Petach Tikva Committee collaborated with Global Rhythms 2 hosting Shekatak, a music and dance troupe from Israel (the Israeli version of "Stomp") in Chicago.

2007**March 20-27****Focus: Music**

The Petach Tikva Committee set up a delegation of students playing at the Petach Tikva wind instruments' orchestra. Scheduling of the delegation's concerts in Chicago consisted of performances for school students in the various schools and during the evening the delegation performed in front of the various Jewish Congregations at the Community Centers.

June 12**Focus: Culture**

The Consul General of Israel to the Midwest presented Jenner Academy of the Arts with trees and greenery as goodwill project that connects the city of Chicago with the State of Israel in honor of Israeli Independence Day. This project representing both Chicago and Israel and would be maintained as a permanent "gift" to the city of Chicago. Consul General of Israel Barukh Binah, Deputy Consul General Andy David, and Chicago Alderman, Walter Burnett (27th ward) were in attendance.

2008**January 18****Focus: Education**

In partnership with the Consulate General of Israel in Chicago and the Petach Tikva Committee, Arts Midwest brought an Israeli musical group, Esta, for a workshop and performance at Blaine Academy. Esta is a multi-ethnic Israeli ensemble whose fusion of world, rock, and jazz music draws on the diverse cultures of Israel, combining Mediterranean, Balkan, African, Asian, Celtic and Western influences.

June 30

Focus: Arts & Culture

The Amman and Petach Tikva committees of CSCIP co-hosted a reception and concert performed by pianist Mark Damisch. The event was a send off to Mr. Damisch's Middle East tour, which included visits to Amman and Petach Tikva.

August 5

Focus: Business

The America-Israel Chamber of Commerce Chicago, in cooperation with the America-Israel Economic Forum and the Petach Tikva Committee hosted an event highlighting business and community development in Beit Shemesh. The evening featured Daniel Vaknin, Mayor, Beit Shemesh, Zvi S. Wolicki, The Beit Shemesh Hi-Tech Forum, Meir Malka, Director, International Relations, Beit Shemesh and Stella Valter, Deputy Mayor, Beit Shemesh.

August 26

Focus: Business

The American Israel Chamber of Commerce Chicago, American Israel Economic Forum, and the Petach Tikva Committee of Chicago Sister cities International invited guests to join for a Networking and Discussion of Business and International Media in Israel featuring Director of the Newsroom at the Israeli national Radio.

October 26

Focus: Arts

The Petach Tikva Committee, in collaboration with Jerusalem Chamber Music Festival, sponsored the North American debut of Israeli composer Avner Dorman's chamber orchestra piece with the Chicago Chamber Musicians. The piece, entitled Jerusalem Mix, featured a mix of Christian, Jewish and Muslim musical traditions and Avner's 2004 sonatas. The October concerts with the Chicago Chamber Musicians featured CCM's first collaboration with the prestigious Jerusalem Chamber Music Festival.

November 26

Focus: Culture

The Petach Tikva Committee and the Israeli Consulate to the Midwest held an event in remembrance of Yitzhak Rabin at the Chicago Cultural Center. Asher Susser was the guest lecturer and honored Rabin as he explored Israel's place in the new Middle East.

2009

March 29

Focus: Arts & Culture

Silk Road Theatre Project and the Petach Tikva Committee of Chicago Sister Cities International presented Petach Tikva Night at Pangs of the Messiah followed by a special discussion with playwright Motti Lerner.

April 24**Focus: Government**

The Honorable Dani Swisa, General Manager of Petach Tikva visited Chicago.

May 4-5**Focus: Environment**

The Petach Tikva Committee of Chicago Sister Cities International co-sponsored an environmental symposium that was hosted by American Associates, Ben Gurion University of Negev.

May 6**Focus: Culture**

In collaboration with the Consulate General of Israel to the Midwest and UniVerse of Poetry, the Petach Tikva Committee of Chicago Sister Cities International presented "This Year in Jerusalem: Celebrating Israel through Poetry & Song." This celebration of Israel Independence Day featured narrations of the lyrical and heroic story of Israel through poetry readings.

May 12**Focus: Film**

The Petach Tikva Committee of Chicago Sister Cities International and the Consulate General of Israel to the Midwest presented a kick off for the 2009 Chicago Festival of Israel Cinema in an encore screening of "Desperado Square", winner of five Israeli Academy Awards.

June 30**Focus: Arts & Culture**

The Petach Tikva Committee in conjunction with Chicago Sister Cities International and in collaboration with the Amman Committee sent pianist Mark Damisch off on a musical tour of the Middle East.

Included on his tour were the Sister Cities of Amman, Jordan and Petach Tikva, Israel. This event helped encourage international cooperation and communication between Israel and the Middle East.

August 26**Focus: Business**

The American Israel Chamber of Commerce Chicago, American Israel Economic Forum, and the Petach Tikva Committee of Chicago Sister Cities International held a Networking and Discussion forum for Business and International Media in Israel. This featured Director of the newsroom at the Israeli National Radio.

October 1-4**Focus: Medical**

Dr. Hain Gutman from Rabin Medical Center, Israel participated in the Lynn Sage Breast Cancer Symposium – Sister Cities Medical Initiative.

October 26**Focus: Culture**

The Petach Tikva Committee of Chicago Sister Cities International in collaboration with the Jerusalem Chamber Music Festival sponsored the Northern American debut of Israeli composer Avner Dorman's

Chamber Orchestra piece with the Chicago Chamber Musicians. The piece, entitled *Jerusalem Mix*, featured a mélange of Christian, Jewish, and Muslim musical traditions.

November 4

Focus: Music

The Petach Tikva committee participated in the “Israel: Sing It!” concert honoring Yitzhak Rabin’s legacy of peace tolerance that featured 3 former Israeli “American Idol” contestants.

2010

February 18

Focus: Film

The Petach Tikva Committee in conjunction with the Lucerne Committee of CSCI hosted a screening of the film, Brothers” at the Chicago Cultural Center. There was an audience discussion with the director following the screening.

February 26

Focus: Gender

The Petach Tikva Committee participated in Women in Israel – the myths, the reality and the gender view of the Israeli economy with Ella Gera, Israeli Feminist and Womens' Rights Advocate.

April 27

Focus: Arts & Culture

“Encountering Israeli Literature: A Conversation with Dalya Bilu and Eshkol Nevo.” The Petach Tikva Committee welcomed to Chicago two of Israeli literature’s luminaries - Dalya Bilu and Eshkol Nevo - to discuss the explosion in Israeli fiction writing with moderator Rachel S. Harris, assistant professor of comparative and world literature at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

April 30

Focus: Education

Breakfast program with 10 Young Women Entrepreneurs from Jordan and Israel and Charles E. Tucker, Jr., B.A., J.D., Executive Director International Human Rights Law Institute. This Young Entrepreneurs Program focused on entrepreneurs from Israel and Jordan who traveled to the United States for a training program that includes workshops, site visits, job shadowing, cultural activities and networking.

October 21

Focus: Music

The Petach Tikva Committee partnered with the Festival of Israeli Cinema and hosted the Opening Night screening of “A Matter of Size” and subsequent reception in the Chicago Cultural Center.

2011

March 28

Focus: Business & Culture

Cultivating Jewish-Arab Business Development, featuring Helmi Kittani, Director of the Center for Jewish-Arab Economic Development. This program highlighted the involvement of Israel's Arab sector in hi-tech businesses, the economic history of the Israeli Arab sector, Arabs in hi-tech, opportunities and obstacles, employment vs. entrepreneurship, cultural barriers, financing availability and initiatives for future success.

Private Equity Investing in the West Bank with keynote speaker, Bashar Masri, Chairman of the Board of Massar International and Founder of Siraj Fund Management Company, the world's first dedicated Palestinian private equity fund, the Siraj Palestine Fund, a private equity fund comprised of direct equity investments in viable start-up, distressed, SME and relatively large enterprises across various economic sectors. Mr. Basri discussed Rawabi, the first Palestinian planned community, which will eventually be home to more than 40,000 Palestinians.

This program was hosted in cooperation with America-Israel Chamber of Commerce Chicago, The Arab-American Business and Professional Association, Government of Israel Economic Mission to the Midwest, Israel-America Chamber of Commerce (Tel Aviv).

October 28

Focus: Film

The Chicago Festival of Israeli Cinema opened with a night that shed light on Global autism with the screening of Israeli film "Mabul". The film invites international comparisons about socialization, attitudes towards autism and followed by a gala reception presented by the Petach Tikva Committee of CSCI.

December 24

Focus: Culture

The Petach Tikva Committee held a "Chanukkah Party" at Tzar Chicago.

2012

August 6-10

Focus: Culture

The 7th Annual Chicago Sister Cities International Festival transformed Daley Plaza into an international village filled with merchants, food, music, and dance from Chicago's 28 Sister Cities. Merchant Designs by Tova sold traditional Israeli souvenirs representing the culture and heritage of Petach Tikva.

October 27

Focus: Arts & Culture

The Petach Tikva Committee sponsored the Festival of Israeli Cinema - Mexican Film & Salsa Party with various Israeli and Mexican organizations at Thorne Auditorium of the Northwestern University Law School.

2013

July 2

Focus: Education

The Petach Tikva Committee of CSCI sponsored a lecture at the America-Israel Chamber of Commerce titled "Diversity and Inclusion in Academia and Employment in Israel," featuring Amos Shapira, President of the University of Haifa at Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone, P.L.C.

August 5-9

Focus: Culture

The 8th Annual Chicago Sister Cities International Festival transformed Daley Plaza into an international village filled with merchants, food, music, and dance from Chicago's 28 Sister Cities. Merchant Designs by Tova sold traditional and authentic Israeli merchandise representing the culture and heritage of Petach Tikva.

2015

July 2

Focus: Business

The Petach Tikva Committee sponsored a lecture at the America-Israel Chamber of Commerce titled "Diversity and Inclusion in Academia and Employment in Israel," featuring Amos Shapira, President of the University of Haifa at Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone, P.L.C.

August 5

Focus: Business

The Petach Tikva Committee in conjunction with the America-Israel Chamber of Commerce Chicago; the Federation of Israeli Chambers of Commerce; the Government of Israel Economic Mission to the Midwest; the Industrial Council of Nearwest Chicago; the Illinois Small Business Development Center and Metro Chicago Exports presented a business & networking seminar to learn about export opportunities and to find customers in Israel. The featured presenter was Uriel Lynn, President of the Federation of Israeli Chambers of Commerce.

2016

May 14

Chicago Sister Cities International hosted a Eurovision Song Contest viewing party at Old Crow Smokehouse. Since 1956, the Eurovision Song Contest has been one of Europe's most popular television programs and one of television's longest running music shows. Over 200 people came to cheer on their country.