

## **Dr. Alvin Mars**

Dr. Alvin Mars is Senior Consultant to the President of JCC Association of North America for Education Development. He recently retired as Director of the Mandel Center for Jewish Education of the Jewish Community Centers Association of North America, a position he assumed in July 2002.

Alvin Mars was born and educated in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He is a graduate of the Akiba Hebrew Academy, received a B.A. in history from Temple University and a B.H.L. in education and Hebrew literature from Gratz College. He studied at the Hebrew University and the Hayim Greenberg Institute in Jerusalem. In 1970 he received his Ph.D. in education from Dropsie College, with minor concentrations in comparative religion and Hebrew literature. Dr. Mordecai M. Kaplan sponsored his doctoral thesis. Dr. Mars received rabbinical ordination in 1995.

In Philadelphia, Dr. Mars served as the Youth and Educational Director of Beth Sholom Congregation in Elkins Park and as Headmaster of the Solomon Schechter Day Schools, where he was instrumental in founding the northern branch of the school. He was also the Founding Director of the Department of Education of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College. Dr. Mars later held high-level positions at the University of Judaism, The Brandeis-Bardin Institute in California, and the American Hebrew Academy.

Among his many local and national professional associations and memberships, Dr. Mars was founding chairman of the Association of Institutions of Higher Learning for Jewish Education, the coordinating council of all universities and colleges in the United States and Canada with programs in Jewish education. He has written articles on subjects such as curriculum integration, peer coaching, reflective practice in Jewish education, and the history of the Shanghai Jewish community.

Dr. Mars was the Leo Honor Fellow of Jewish Education at Dropsie College from 1964 to 1970 and was named the Camp Ramah Medallion Honoree in 1985. He was awarded an honorary doctorate in Pedagogy from the Jewish Theological Seminary in 1989 and received the Distinguished Alumni Award at the 100th anniversary convocation of Gratz College in 1995.

Alvin and Marilyn Mars have three married children and nine grandchildren.

