

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY  
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

College of Human Sciences  
Department of Curriculum and Instruction

January 30, 2009

Deborah A. Batiste  
Project Director, *Echoes and Reflections*  
Anti-Defamation League

Dear Deborah A. Batiste,

I would like to take this opportunity to express my utmost gratitude and deepest appreciation for the opportunity you have provide me and my peers in your organization and support of the Yad Vashem Educators Study Tour in Jerusalem at the beginning of this month.

"Moving," "emotional," "enriching," "life changing," "transformative," "identity enhancing," "one of the best experiences of my life," "I can't believe that I am a part of this," "I will remember this experience for the remainder of my life," these are some of my reflections both during and since my return from Jerusalem. From the moment I met the study tour participants at Newark airport, to our days at Yad Vashem discussing essential themes with brilliant world renown scholars, writers, activists, and survivors, to evenings touring historic sites in Jerusalem, to our meals together processing what we had experienced and forging bonds, and to our tear filled good byes upon arriving back in the United States, I understood that what I was experiencing was something so important, so life changing, so personally momentous that it is something that will continue to make a deep and indelible impact on my life, my teaching, and my understanding of humanity's capacity for compassion and for terror.

Words truly cannot express what I have gained from this experience, and for my gratitude for you making this all possible. I would also like to thank the remarkable folks at the Anti-Defamation League, in particular Deborah Batiste and Ed Alster, for their tireless work in organizing the tour, and the care, warmth, and humor they provided throughout the process, to the extraordinary folks at Yad Vashem, to Ephraim Kaye, Stephanie McMahon-Kaye, Shulamit Imber, Richelle Budd-Caplan, for their hospitality, their brilliance, and their inspiration, to the folks who developed the groundbreaking *Echos and Reflections* curriculum, and to all my new best friends, my peer educators, whom I will always remember, and whom I look forward to working with in our efforts to attain the goal of "never again."

Thank you all so much for one of the greatest experiences of my life,

  
Warren Blumenfeld, Ed.D.