SPERTUS PRESENTS **BUILDING COMMUNITY**
A DISPLAY OF CHICAGO’S JEWISH HISTORY
IN WINDOWS OF THE
JEWISH UNITED FUND / JEWISH FEDERATION OF METROPOLITAN CHICAGO

(CHICAGO) Beginning in September, pedestrians on Monroe Street will be able to get an up close look at Chicago's Jewish history. *Building Community*, a display presented in conjunction with the ongoing Spertus exhibit *Uncovered & Rediscovered: Stories of Jewish Chicago*, will be on public view in the windows of the Jewish United Fund/Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago’s headquarters at 30 S. Wells Street. It will run through November 1, 2011.

The story of Jewish communal life in Chicago began in the 19th century, with the growing community building institutions to care for its needy, ill, orphaned, and aged, and to benefit the general public. These early settlers established a pattern that continues to this day, when Chicago’s Jewish population of more than 270,000 benefits from a sophisticated network of organizations addressing material, social, health, religious, and educational needs.

“There could be no better place to spotlight this proud history than in the window of the Jewish United Fund/Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago,” says Spertus Curator Ilana Segal, who researched and selected materials from the Spertus collections for the display. “JUF is Chicago’s largest Jewish philanthropy and has been a key agent for improving the quality of Jewish life in Chicago for more than 100 years.”

Fifty reproductions of archival artifacts will be shown in enlarged format photographs and video, with corresponding information about highlights of Chicago’s Jewish history, presenting a “window” into the significance of our city’s Jewish community. These include:

- 1845 document about Chicago’s first Jewish cemetery
- 1895 commemorative pendant from the Knights of Zion
- 1903 photograph of a cooking class at the Chicago Hebrew Institute
- 1924 photograph of graduating class of College of Jewish Studies, predecessor to Spertus
- 1948 photograph of Chicago’s Celebration of Israeli Independence
- 1971 photograph of The ARK from the year of its founding
- 1998 photograph of Walk with Israel celebrating Israel’s 50 years of statehood

*Uncovered & Rediscovered: Stories of Jewish Chicago* is an exhibit series that explores the Chicago Jewish experience. Through 2012, the exhibit unfolds in a series of intimate chapters, each on display for several months in the ground floor vestibule at Spertus, Chicago’s center for Jewish learning and culture, at 610 S. Michigan Avenue. *Uncovered & Rediscovered* uses Spertus’ rich and varied holdings to tell tales of Chicago’s Jewish pioneers and politicians, artists and anarchists, authors and entrepreneurs, and even Jewish boxers. This exhibit is free and open to the public, 10 am- 5 pm Sunday-Thursday.

(MORE)
ABOUT SPERTUS

Spertus is a center for Jewish learning and culture that invites people of all backgrounds to explore the multifaceted Jewish experience. Spertus inspires learning, serves diverse communities, and fosters understanding for Jews and people of all faiths.

Founded in 1924 as Chicago’s College of Jewish Studies, Spertus today offers an innovative, non-denominational array of specialized and public programming, grounded in Jewish thought, inspired by Jewish values, and resolutely relevant to people’s lives.

Spertus offers accredited graduate-level degree programs in areas that are critical to the Jewish and wider communities—including Jewish studies, leadership training, and nonprofit management. Recognizing that learning is sparked by many points of entry, programming at Spertus also includes cultural and continuing education offerings, such as lectures, seminars, exhibitions, concerts, and films. Partnerships and collaborative relationships in the Jewish, academic, philanthropic, and cultural arenas further allow Spertus to serve as a portal for diverse learning opportunities.

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Spertus is a partner in serving our community, supported by the JUF/Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago.

For more information, please visit spertus.edu.

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