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Discovery seminar breaks record

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The Discovery Seminar held March 10 at the Scottsdale Center for the Arts broke attendance records, becoming the largest held in the program's history since it began in 1986.

The typical crowd is 200-300, said Rick Probst, director of Discovery in New York. The previous record was 430 people in Las Vegas, "so they smashed the record" with more than 650 attendees.

About 30 Discovery Seminars are held nationwide each month, he said. Monthly events in New York typically attract about 300 people.

Discovery Seminars are presentations that combine psychology, philosophy, history and computer science to take the audience on a three-hour voyage into the "whys" of being Jewish, according to a press release. The seminar's mission is to "provide people with the opportunity to explore the wisdom and significance of their Jewish heritage."

The program was sponsored by the Phoenix Community Kollel and Aish Hatorah Scottsdale.

"These guys did an amazing job," Probst said. "They literally came up with eight or nine or 10 ways of doing marketing and attracting people and it was incredible."

"With affiliation in our community so low, Discovery is an opportunity for Jews to find meaning and pride in being Jewish," said Rabbi Zvi Holland of the Phoenix Community Kollel. "We have set a goal for ourselves to show Discovery to at least 10,000 Jews by 2005."

A follow-up to the program, "Discovery: The mini-series" will be held at 7:30 Wednesdays at Aish Hatorah Scottsdale, 14435 N. Scottsdale Road, #100.

Topics are what the Torah has to say about love and relationships on March 26, with Rabbi Yakov Bronsteyn; Shabbat on April 2 with Rabbi Zvi Holland; and Freedom on April 9, with Rabbi Ariel Shoshan.

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