SCHECHTER #1 IN ISRAEL

Behind Every Face is a Jewish Story

Annual Report 2017-2018





Israelis of all ages engage in Schechter education



17,000 attend Neve Schechter events in Tel Aviv

91 students in 5 Schechter Rabbinical Seminary programs







The Schechter Institutes, Inc. is a not for profit (501-c-3) organization dedicated to the advancement of pluralistic Jewish education. The Schechter Institutes, Inc. provides support to four non-profit organizations based in Jerusalem, Israel and forms an educational umbrella that includes:

- Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies, the largest M.A. program in Jewish Studies in Israel with 400 Israeli students and 1,683 graduates.
- Schechter Rabbinical Seminary is the international rabbinical school of Masorti Judaism, serving Israel, Europe and the Americas.
- TALI Education Fund offers a pluralistic Jewish studies program to 50,000 children in 318 Israeli secular public schools and kindergartens.
- Midreshet Yerushalayim provides Jewish education to Jewish communities throughout Ukraine.
- Midreshet Schechter offers adult Jewish education Bet Midrash frameworks throughout Israel.
- Neve Schechter-Legacy Heritage Center for Jewish Culture in Neve Zedek draws 17,000 Tel Avivans every year to concerts, classes, cultural events and art exhibits.

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SCHECHTER #1 IN ISRAEL Behind Every Face is a Jewish Story

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Letter from the Chair



Dear Friends,

Rabbi arrested in Haifa for performing non-Orthodox wedding! Western Wall agreement falls apart!

The year in headlines emphasizes the enduring value, continuing need for and essential role of The Schechter Institutes in Jewish life and in Israeli society. Our vision is to make Schechter the "address for pluralistic Jewish life in Israel." The results are clear. Each year, tens of thousands of children and adults, secular and religious (of all denominations or streams), are connecting to Judaism through our programs. And each year the numbers are growing!

The Schechter Institute for Jewish Studies continues to conduct the largest M.A. program in Jewish Studies in the country. Over the last few years, it has expanded from primarily training teachers to attracting a wider audience of Jewish professionals and lay leadership. The emphasis

has moved from a strictly academic environment to one that is more "practical" or applied Jewish Studies. In addition, we now are offering more non-degree programs to help satisfy the thirst for adult education in both Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

This year, we also established an annual conference series together with the Jewish Theological Seminary about Israel-Diaspora relations. With hundreds of participants, the conference overflowed, with people standing in the halls and becoming as engaged as the speakers. Controversial positions? Yes. Dialogue? Yes. Thought provoking? Yes. We will continue with our second conference in spring 2019, seeking to forge the basis for a renewed Israel-Diaspora partnership that recognizes each other's needs.

The Schechter Rabbinical Seminary also continues to grow. Enrollment is up and we inaugurated the new Ashira program promoting Jewish renewal through music, to glowing reviews. Based on feedback thus far, SRS is working on the development of an app for Synagogue Music to aid both musicians as well as ba'alei tefilla (prayer leaders) throughout the world. It will emphasize the many diverse strains of Jewish music found in our tradition.

TALI, our educational arm for school children, also made significant progress this past year. Working with the Ministry of Education, TALI entered into a common initiative fostering Jewish studies in the schools across Israel. Furthermore, we continue to innovate and grow our offerings for high school students with the addition of TALI's new 10th grade program. Outside of Israel,

TALI is working with the Ministry of Diaspora Affairs to train teachers at Jewish day schools throughout South America. Year-long online courses will be given, with study in Israel during summer breaks.

Midreshet Schechter provides adult education throughout Israel and at our Neve Schechter campus in Tel Aviv. In the next year, we expect to break ground on an expanded facility to provide more classroom/programming space as well as a TALI pre-school. The head of our Israel Adult education programs, Rabbi Dubi Haiyun, practices what he preaches; he was recently arrested in Haifa for performing a non-Orthodox wedding.

In Ukraine, our schools and congregations continue to grow in size and we are thrilled to slake the continuing thirst for Jewish knowledge and connection.

We continue our successful efforts to promote Jewish pluralism in Israel through our many programs, and trust that next year's headlines will be more positive.

Saul I. Sanders

Chairman of the Board
The Schechter Institutes, Inc.

Letter from the President



This past year was not a good year for religious pluralism in Israel. The low point was reached when Schechter Rabbinical Seminary graduate Rabbi Dubi Haiyun of Kehillat Moriah in Haifa was detained for questioning by the Haifa police for the "crime" of performing the wedding of a couple which the Haifa Chief Rabbinate did not wish to perform.

Nonetheless, I am quite optimistic about the future of religious pluralism in Israel. First of all, if the Rabbinate in Haifa asked the police to question Rabbi Haiyun, it means that they are scared of the competition. Indeed, 20-25% of young couples now get married outside the Chief Rabbinate. Furthermore, all surveys done during the last ten years show that approximately 50% of secular Israelis want to learn more about Judaism. They want to know what the secular public school system in Israel neglected to teach them. They want to learn about Jewish history, culture and tradition, or – to use the rabbinic phrase

(Avot 3:1) – "to know whence we came and where we are going".

Indeed, Rabbi Haiyun's *other* job epitomizes this thirst for Jewish knowledge. He runs our Midreshet Schechter network of 27 adult education courses for 700 adults throughout the country every week.

Similarly, the Schechter Institute continues to run one of the leading M.A. programs in Jewish Studies in the State of Israel, including the new Bible track, Judaism and the Arts, Marpeh – which includes a CPE certificate – and the Maccabee track for JCC workers.

The Schechter Rabbinical Seminary is also thriving. In addition to the Ordination, Mishlei and JTS programs, the SRS runs the Torah Lishma (Torah for its own sake) program, the new Ashira program to train Jewish music leaders for Israel, and the Derakhim Facebook project to promote religious pluralism in the State of Israel.

The TALI Education Fund now provides Jewish education to 50,000 children every year. In addition to 318 elementary and pre-schools, new programs include the TALI 10th grade project in Jewish Thought and four new textbooks for grades 3-6 being used by approximately 70 non-TALI schools throughout the country.

Neve Schechter in Tel Aviv continues to run the very successful Jewish Art Gallery, the "70 Voices music project", and the Bar/Bat Mitzvah project (83 this past year!) – serving 17,000 people every year. This year, we will open a second Torah Lishma program at Neve Schechter in conjunction with the SRS.

Midreshet Yerusalayim Ukraine continues to run a very successful network of schools and synagogues in Kiev, Chernowitz, Odessa, Berdichev, Uzhgorod and Kharkov; Camp Ramah Yachad Ukraine; the Ramah Family Camp; and the Annual Teachers' Seminar.

I would like to conclude with a parable about the wicked King Ahaz found in *Ruth Rabbah* (ed. Vilna fol. 2b): "...If there are no kids, there are no goats; if there are no goats, there is no flock; if there is no flock, there is no shepherd!" So reasoned Ahaz: "If there are no children [studying Torah], there are no adults; if there are no adults, there are no disciples; if there are no disciples, there are no Sages; if there are no Sages there are no synagogues and Batei Midrash; and if there are no synagogues and Batei Midrash then God, as it were, cannot make His Shekhinah (Spirit) rest upon the world. I will therefore [close] the synagogues and Batei Midrash."

For 70 years, most Israelis have been cut off from synagogues and Batei Midrash. Thanks to the Schechter Institutes, over 70,000 Israeli children and adults now study, experience and appreciate Judaism every year.

With your help, we shall continue to expand this Jewish Education Revolution which we began in 1984.

David Lolinkin

Rabbi Prof. David Golinkin

President

The Schechter Institutes, Inc.

SCHECHTER #1 IN ISRAEL Behind Every Face is a Jewish Story

The Schechter Institutes is *the* address for pluralistic Jewish Studies in Israel. For over 35 years, Israelis have turned to Schechter for Jewish knowledge and culture, identity-building and a positive and inclusive Jewish experience for themselves and their children. That is why today, the Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies offers Israel's largest M.A. program in Jewish studies. That is why the TALI Education Fund leads the way in providing pluralistic Jewish studies to over 50,000 Israeli school children and their families.

It is rewarding to be #1. The Schechter Institutes is grateful for the overwhelming vote of confidence that Israelis throughout the country continue to bestow upon our programs. But numbers never provide the entire picture. Behind every number there is a face, and behind that face, there is a Jewish story. This year's Annual Report allows you to get behind the numbers and into the hearts of people whose lives Schechter has changed.

Schechter Rabbinical Seminary. Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies. TALI Education Fund. Neve Schechter. Midreshet Schechter and Midreshet Yerushalayim. Writing new Jewish stories every day – in Israel and overseas.

Choosing Life

Miriam Peretz, 2018 Israel Prize Recipient, TALI Principal for over 20 years Elyasaf Peretz, Social Activist, M.A. Student in the Maccabee Leadership Program

Elyasaf Peretz radiates a pure positive energy. His words are spoken passionately and at a clip, as if to remind us all that life is short. In 1998, his brother Uriel Peretz, the eldest of six siblings, was killed in action in Lebanon. Twelve years later, a second brother, Eliraz, fell in battle in the Gaza strip. For Elyasaf, and his mother, Miriam, peering through the veil of devastation and despair, only one option presented itself: choosing life.

Miriam not only chose life, she has dedicated every waking moment to the Jewish State and its people, lecturing around the country, especially to the young, as they approach army age. For the many thousands of bereaved families, she has emerged as a symbol of courage and compassion as she expresses so eloquently the hopes and fears of her fellow citizens.

For over twenty years, Miriam served as beloved principal of the TALI Givat Zeev school; she is also a graduate of the TALI Educational Leadership Program at Schechter. She credits the educational spirit of TALI and Schechter for much of her personal growth and development. "I feel blessed to have had the privilege to learn in this special 'Bet Midrash' known as the Schechter Institute. It's been a home that has opened my heart to love the wisdom of Torah and the people of Israel in all their shades of difference."

This year, she received the Israel Prize for Lifetime Achievement and Special Contribution to Society and the State and was given the honor to speak on behalf of the sixteen Israel Prize Laureates.

"My mother has been my beacon of light," explains Elyasaf. Following in Miriam's footsteps, Elyasaf is studying for an M.A. degree in Schechter's Maccabee program for Community Leadership. The program is a perfect fit for this 31-year old father of two who in less than a decade has established a number of non-profits, including two pre-army leadership academies, an organization for bereaved siblings and most recently, "Masa 70" - a seven-week hike honoring Israel's 70th anniversary, where more than 40,000 participants traversed the land from Tel Chai to Eilat.

"Schechter has been a home that has opened my heart to love the wisdom of Torah and the people of Israel in all their shades of difference."



The Road Less Traveled

Yerach B. Meiersdorf, SRS Graduate and Rabbi of NOAM Youth Movement Nava B. Meiersdorf, SRS Rabbinical Student

Nava Berenshtein and Yerach Meiersdorf had gone out only once before, but as fate would have it, out of 40 students at the Schechter Rabbinical Seminary, they were paired as a chavruta (Talmud study in groups of two). The rest is history. The couple were married 18 months later in Jerusalem, surrounded by large families and a huge crowd of Schechter colleagues and friends.

There is a twist to the story: the young newlyweds both come from solidly Orthodox homes.

Nava, 28, grew up in Petach Tikvah in what she describes as an "Ultra-Orthodox Zionist home."

After completing national service, Nava traveled to UCLA where she studied directing, and to Kehillat Ma'arav in Santa Monica where she taught Jewish studies. She was embraced by Rabbi Michael Gotlieb and his community. "I was exposed to a Judaism that accepted everyone and where everyone was treated equally," she explains. She then returned to Israel and enrolled at Schechter.

Yerach, 33, seemed destined to follow a conventional Orthodox path, albeit with some doubts, until one day he happened upon his sister's notes from a "Streams in Judaism" class she was taking in the Schechter M.A. program. This discovery would change his life forever. He began reading up on Conservative Judaism. "I googled Conservative synagogues and started going every Shabbat without telling anyone," he remembers.



Five years ago, Yerach enrolled in the SRS *Mishlei* program which offers M.A. studies in a Bet Midrash environment and serves as a feeder into the ordination program. He interned at Omer's Kehillat Magen Avraham near Beersheva, and two years later, he decided on rabbinical school.

Seeing Nava and Yerach in their cottage in the pastoral Jerusalem neighborhood of Ein Kerem, you sense their strength of purpose, their passion, and yes, their love for each other and the Jewish people. Yerach works full time as Rabbi for the NOAM youth movement. Nava has

begun her rabbinic studies. Their immediate dream? To create a pluralistic community of prayer and learning right in the middle of their living room. Not far-fetched, considering the roads already traveled in reaching this moment in their lives.

"I was exposed to a Judaism that accepted everyone and where everyone was treated equally..."

Nava B. Meiersdorf

Trailblazing Trio for New Junior High Initiative

Aviva Sabag, Principal, New TALI Junior High School, Yokneam; Leah Ben Hamu, TALI Coordinator Osnat Eldar, TALI Pedagogic Supervisor



Leah Ben Hamu

In the fast-growing town of Yokneam, perched on the edge of the verdant Jezreel Valley in Israel's north, the idea of establishing a TALI Junior High School program was a no brainer: all the city's secular elementary schools are TALI schools! "TALI entered the picture just at the moment we were defining our identity as a school and the idea of introducing pluralistic Jewish studies was important to us," explains Aviva Sabag, principal of the New Yokneam TALI Junior High School, and a veteran educator of 25 years with a B.A. and M.A. in Special Education.

Last fall, the school joined TALI, introducing two hours of enriched Jewish studies a week for all 640 students of its 7th and 8th grades. "TALI is much more than just another curriculum, it's a total experience that is effecting the entire school culture," says Aviva. To that end, she



Aviva Sabag

asked TALI to offer the *Haleli* Leadership program to her staff onsite at the school. Today, 17 teachers devote five hours a week, *after* regular school hours, to enriching their Jewish knowledge.

"Judaism by definition is all-encompassing, a way of life," explains Osnat Eldar, TALI pedagogic supervisor in charge of curriculum development and the *Haleli* program at the school. "My job is to show the teachers that Jewish culture is not only there to enrich us, it can be an essential educational tool."

Leah Ben Hamu, the school's TALI coordinator, is a guiding force in the successful implementation of the program. Though soft-spoken and unassuming, she is a serious player, passionately committed to making her school a model for integrated Jewish studies at the



Osnat Fldar

Junior High level. She knows that getting it right at the beginning is crucial. "You have to immerse your entire self into the project. In essense, we are building a totally new discipline. I feel like it's a sacred calling," she says.

"TALI was introduced at the ground level and not imposed from above. Our teachers are actually teaching the sources, creating an organic community of learners at all levels," sums up Aviva.

"TALI is much more than just another curriculum, it's a total experience that is effecting the entire school culture."

Aviva Sabag

Fusing Contemporary Israeli Art with Jewish Sources

Shira Friedman, Founding Curator, Neve Schechter Art Gallery



A warm spring day at the Neve Schechter gallery. A well known artist appears, enquiring about exhibiting in the space. An hour later, a large group arrives to view the gallery's current exhibit as part of the Open University's series, "Walking Art." Although unconnected events, both point to the prominent place the art gallery has achieved within the Tel Aviv art scene.

In no small measure, the credit goes to Shira Friedman, the Gallery's founding curator. "I define my professional work as 'Jewish curating.' The foundation of the exhibit is based on Jewish thought, texts or philosophy. I then find contemporary art that shares some of those ideas to create the core of the exhibit," explains Shira. "My commentary can juxtapose Rabban Gamliel (1st century rabbinic authority) with Simone de Beauvoir – allowing the viewer a different take on the experience."

"It is difficult for the predominantly secular art world to admit that there can be a strong connection between contemporary Israeli art and Judaism," says Shira. Early on, some artists refused to exhibit in a building shared with the Neve Schechter synagogue. But today, as an integral part of Neve Schechter, the gallery elicits growing interest among Tel Aviv artists, over 100 of whom have exhibited their art here.

With an M.A. in Jewish Art from JTS and a Curator's Diploma from the Technion, Shira brings her passion, knowledge and keen sense of aesthetics to Neve Schechter.

Working around the Jewish calendar, Shira has ambitiously mounted five exhibits this year, and around thirty since the gallery was established.

2018 marked a milestone for the gallery. Two prominent Israeli artists - Ayelet Carmi and Meirav Heiman enquired about exhibiting at Neve Schechter. Commissioning original pieces, Shira worked with the artists for over a year, completing a creative process that also enriched their Jewish knowledge. What emerged was a provocative exhibit which connected the fact that women are frequently excluded from singing at public events in Israel with the counting of the Omer. For the 3rd year in a row, the gallery received funding from Israel's Ministry of Culture, reflecting official recognition from the State.

"If I enable the viewer to look at Israeliness, Judaism and contemporary art in a new and critical way, then I am succeeding," sums up Shira.

"I define my professional work as 'Jewish curating.' The foundation of the exhibit is based on Jewish thought, texts or philosophy. I then find contemporary art that shares some of those ideas to create the core of the exhibit..."

Building a Circle of Jewish Life

Alise Naomi Vork, Volunteer at Kehillat Masoret, Kiev; Veteran Counselor, Camp Ramah-Ukraine; Graduate, Long-distance Torah Reading Class Sponsored by Schechter

Alise Vork takes her Judaism very seriously. From early on, being Jewish and living a full Jewish life was central to her identity. Growing up in Chernowitz, Ukraine, she attended the TALI Jewish Day School from 1st grade through high school, and from age 10, has spent 18 summers first as a camper and then as a counselor at Camp Ramah-Ukraine. "TALI and Camp Ramah created my Circle of Jewish Life. It felt so good to be within that circle. I could not picture my life differently," explains Alise.

Out of the circle grew strong bonds of friendship and a sense of a community working together. Although her grandmother had told Alise that she was Jewish, there were no documents to prove this status. At 16, with the support of Midreshet Yeruhalayim director Gila Katz, Alise began to study for conversion. In the summer of 2009, she joined the first group of Masorti converts in Ukraine, taking Naomi as her Jewish name.

After she married Vladimir Vork three years ago in Chernowitz, the couple decided to move to Kiev. "Kiev is the center of Jewish life in in Ukraine," explains Alise. The Jewish circle has embraced her at *Kehillat Masoret*, led by Schechter graduate Rabbi Reuven Stamov. Alise remembers Rabbi Reuven, her counselor at Camp Ramah-Ukraine, as being "an important role model in my life." Today, she and her husband regularly attend Shabbat services and holiday events, volunteering their services wherever needed.



Most recently, Alise completed a year-long Torah reading course offered to Midreshet Yerushalayim activists via the web from Jerusalem, taught by Schechter teacher, Saralee Shrell-Fox. Alisa read from the Torah for the first time publicly at Camp shabbat services this past summer. "What better way for me to give back something Jewishly meaningful to a place that has given me so much Jewish knowledge!" beams Alise.

"Kiev is the center of Jewish life in Ukraine. Just as Judaism encircled me as a child, so I wanted to enter that same circle as an adult."

The Graduate School

Chair, Board of Trustees: Saul Sanders



Numbers 2017-18

- 402 students, including 80 first-year M.A. students
- 74 faculty members, 17 full-time, 57 part-time
- 10 interdisciplinary M.A. tracks of Jewish Studies
- 65 graduates in 2018; 1683 graduates since 1992
- 4 books published
- 13 conferences/study events, 1200 participants
- 6 special lectures on the Bible, over 600 participants

Academic News

Appointments

Dr. Ari Ackerman is the first incumbent of the Golinkin Chair in TALI Jewish Education. Ackerman, an expert in the philosophy of education, served as Dean of the Graduate School for the last three years. In his new capacity, he will teach TALI educators and organize conferences on pluralistic Jewish education.

Dr. Tamar Kadari is the new Dean of the Graduate School. Kadari, a Kekst Faculty Fellow and senior lecturer, has

been the head of the Midrash and Aggadah program for many years. Her research interests include biblical women, aesthetics and beauty in rabbinic literature and literary readings of midrash.

Dr. Noa Yuval Chacham was appointed Lecturer in Land of Israel Studies. She also coordinates the Judaism and the Arts and Land of Israel M.A. Programs.

Graduation Ceremony | **63 Schechter M.A. degrees** were conferred on May 29, 2018, including the first 10 graduates of the Maccabee Community Leadership program. Keynote speaker was **Miriam Peretz**, 2018 Israel Prize recipient, TALI principal and TALI Leadership and Schechter M.A. graduate. (See profile, page 5.)

New Academic Initiatives

"Bible Revival" at Schechter

An initiative to return the study of Bible to its place of prominence is underway at Schechter. The revised Schechter M.A. program which opened in Fall 2018, hopes to reverse the trend of declining enrolment by offering a dynamic interdisciplinary curriculum. Over the summer, effective marketing of the program to TALI educators, Bible teachers and others interested in deepening their knowledge of the subject took place alongside an impressive 6-part Bible study series of lectures and guided tours which showcased some of Israel's leading literary and academic figures. In addition, a series of 5-minute video interviews on "The Bible Now" were produced featuring media personality Dov Elboim in dialogue with leading Schechter faculty.

New Level | "Informed Creations" (Ma'aseh Hoshev) is Schechter's newest study program offered in conjunction with Jerusalem's HaCubia Art School. Last year, ten students enrolled in this unique Jewish Art program that combines theory and practice. In April, Schechter, HaCubia and Bar Ilan University hosted a well-attended

symposium at Schechter on "The Secret of Creation: the

Teachings of Rebbe Nachman of Breslav and Jewish Art."

"Informed Creations" Takes Judaism and the Arts to

Research Think Tank on Zion and the Diaspora Established at Schechter | A joint interdisciplinary research project: *Zion and the Diaspora in the Past, Present and Future,* headed by Schechter's **Prof. Yossi Turner** and comprised of top-level scholars and intellectuals from Israel and the Diaspora, met 8 times this past year. An initial reading of the discourse tentatively shows that Jewish life in Israel has an advantage over Jewish life in the Diaspora with regard to insuring the continuity of the Jewish people. But that, without the contribution of Diaspora Jewry, the Jewish future will lack many of the ethical and existential emphases that characterized past Jewish life. An international conference to share the group's findings is scheduled for 2019, with a book based on the Conference proceedings to follow.

Maccabee (acronym for Community Leadership in the Jewish Spirit), is today one of Schechter's most popular study tracks. Attracting 27 community center and non-profit professionals from around the country, this unique program combines Jewish studies with practical tools for building strong community-based professional leadership.

Marpeh Spiritual Care Program Offers Supervisory Specialization | Marpeh, with 24 spiritual care students in different stages of their training and a long waiting list, is the only academic chaplaincy (CPE) program in Israel. A new supervisory track curriculum, funded by UJA-Federation of New York and advised by top experts from the Association of Clinical Pastoral Education in the U.S., has attracted four outstanding students - all veteran certified chaplains. Dr. Einat Ramon, founding director of Marpeh, has published *Truth and Loving Kindess: A Sourcebook for Chaplains* in Hebrew (2nd edition) and in English.

University of Amsterdam Holds Winter School at Schechter | A week of Jewish Studies, including field trips, for 12 students from the University of Amsterdam took place at Schechter in mid-January 2018. The course, Schisms and Conficts in Judaism, was co-hosted by Schechter and the Open University and organized by Dr. Paul Mandel. Faculty from both institutions lectured to the students.

Scholarships & Fellowships

- William Davidson Scholarships awarded to all firstyear students.
- Judge Simon Rifkind and Harry Meresman Scholarships for Outstanding Scholarship and Commitment to Jewish Pluralism awarded to 8 exceptional first-year students.
- The Dr. Aubey Rotenberg z" I Memorial Scholarship awarded to an exceptional student who is a teacher.
- The Mimi and Barry Alperin Jewish Educator Scholarship awarded to two exceptional students.
- The Prof. Louis Ginsberg Scholarships in Talmud awarded to two students.
- The Larry and Marcia Arem Scholarships to Advance Jewish Education in Development Towns awarded to two students.

- Scholarships for Teachers in Development Towns and Disadvantaged Neighborhoods awarded to 10 students.
- Jewish Agency for Israel Jewish Renewal Scholarships for Maccabee Community Engagement Program awarded to 28 students.
- The Gershon Kekst z"I Scholarship for Maccabee
 Community Engagement awarded to one student.
- Prof. Alice Shalvi Scholarships for Outstanding Students in Judaism and the Arts awarded to two students.
- The Edythe Griffinger Special Scholarship to Advance
 Jewish Education in Development Towns awarded to an exceptional student.
- Kekst Faculty Fellow, 2017-19: Dr. Tamar Kadari, Senior Lecturer; Head of the Midrash and Aggadah Program; incoming Dean.











1. First graduates of the Maccabee Community Leadership program receive their M.A. degrees. 2. Handmade Midrash students with teacher and mentor Dr. Jo Milgrom at the course final exhibit. 3. Journalist Sharon Rofe-Ofir with Prof. Alice Shalvi at the annual conference on Women and Gender in Israel. 4. University of Amsterdam students spend a week at Schechter for winter school program. 5. Author Meir Shalev lectures to a large crowd at Schechter as part of the special Bible series.



New Books 2017-8 Published by the Schechter Institute

Akiba: Life, Legend, Legacy, Reuven Hammer, Jerusalem: co-published with Yediot Books, 2017 (Hebrew)

NASHIM, A Journal of Jewish Women's Studies and Gender Issues, academic editor, Renée Levine Melammed, managing editor, Deborah Greniman, Schechter Institute, Hadassah-Brandeis Institute and Indiana University Press, Nos. 32+33: Issues honoring Shulamit Reinharz, Spring 2018 / Fall 2018

Truth and Kindness: A Sourcebook for Chaplains, Einat Ramon, ed. David Golinkin, Jerusalem: Schechter

Institute, 2018; second Hebrew edition; first English edition

Published by Schechter Faculty and Leadership

Sava and Yanuka: God, the Son and the Messiah in Zoharic Narratives, Jonathan Benarroch, Jerusalem:
Magnes Press, 2018, (Hebrew)

Hamudot Mitzraim: Responsa of the Last Egyptian Sages from the Cairo Genizah, Shmuel Glick, Jerusalem: Schocken Institute, 2017 (Hebrew)

Revolutionary – Ada Fishman Maimon – a Biography,

Bat-Sheva Margalit Stern, Jerusalem: Ben Gurion Center and Yad Ben Zvi Institute, 2018 (Hebrew)

In Good Faith: Questioning Religion and Atheism, ScottA. Shay, Brentwood, TN: Post Hill Press, 2018

The Book of Ruth: A New Israeli Commentary, Gila Vachman, ed. Avigdor Shinan, Tel Aviv: Yediot Books and Avi-Hai Foundation, 2017 (Hebrew)

Israel-US Jewry Conference: Resounding Success

A conference honoring Israel's 70th Anniversary, The State of Israel and the Jews of North America: How Can We Bridge the Gaps, was the most successful academic conference ever hosted by Schechter. The conference drew over 200 participants and many more via its livestream feed. Co-sponsored by JTS, the program included scholars, Jewish educators, and public figures, including Prof. Arnold Eisen, Natan Sharansky and MK Rachel Azaria.

European Association of Jewish Studies

Schechter was well-represented at the 11th EAJS Congress which took place in Krakow in July 2018. Ari Ackerman, Doron Bar, Tamar Kadari, Shulamit Laderman, Tamar Salmon-Mack, Hillel Mali, Uri Melammed, Renée Levine Melammed, Paul Shrell-Fox and Gila Vachman all presented papers.

Gallery Showcases Local Jerusalem Artist

Works of artist **Yitzhak Greenfield** - *Exploring Jerusalem* - were on display in the Rabbi Henry and Yetta Segal Art Atrium at Schechter. Curated by **Shira Mushkin**, a gallery talk opened the exhibit in November 2018.

Conferences and Lectures

Fourth Annual Pirkei Avot Lecture in memory of Dr. Aubey Rotenberg z"l, Neve Schechter, October 2018

Annual Jerusalem Conference, sponsored by Schechter's new Bible Studies M.A. program, September 2018

6-part lecture and field trip series, sponsored by Schechter's new Bible Studies M.A. program, *Jewish-Israeli Identity as Seen Through the Bible*, with Meir Shalev, Prof. Yair Zakovitch and more, June-September 2018

19th Annual National Women's Study Day, with over 300 participants, June 2018

Women's Leadership: Whither? co-sponsored by The Schocken Institute (JTS), June 2018

Jerusalem and Other Holy Places as Foci of Multi-Religious and Ideological Confrontation, co-sponsored by Bar Ilan University, University of Tilburg and PThU Amsterdam, May 2018

The Parable in Early Christian and Rabbinic Sources, with PThU Amsterdam, University of Utrecht and University of Tilburg, May 2018

Conference for Israel's 70th, *Israel and North America:*How Can We Bridge the Gaps? in cooperation with JTS,
April 2018

Annual Yom Hashoah Commemoration, *The Jews of Salonica and the Holocaust,* Prof. Renée Levine Melammed, with reading of The Shoah Scroll, April 2018

Judaism and Art Symposium, *The Teachings of Rebbe Nachman of Breslov and Jewish Art*, co-sponsored by Bar Ilan University and HaCubia Art School, April 2018

12th Conference on Women and Gender in Israel, in memory of Moshe Shalvi z"l, *Societal Attitudes Towards a Woman's Body*, co-sponsored by Yad Ben-Zvi, March 2018

Book Launch, *Gender Equality and Prayer in Jewish Law,* by Rabbi Ethan Tucker, SRS, Yedidya Synagogue and Machon Hadar, February 2018

Three Regional Masorti Women's Study Days, Feb. 2018

Book Launch, Mincha L'Yehuda: Julius Theodor and the Redaction of the Aggadic Midrashim of the Land of Israel, (Hebrew), ed. Tamar Kadari, January 2018

The Annual Rabbi David Aronson Memorial Lecture, Akiba: the Man, the Legend, the Legacy by Reuven Hammer, (Hebrew) Book Launch, December 2017

Research Institutes

The Center for Judaism and the Arts includes the M.A. track in Judaism and the Arts and TALI's Visual Midrash Online Archive with 850 explicated Biblical images.

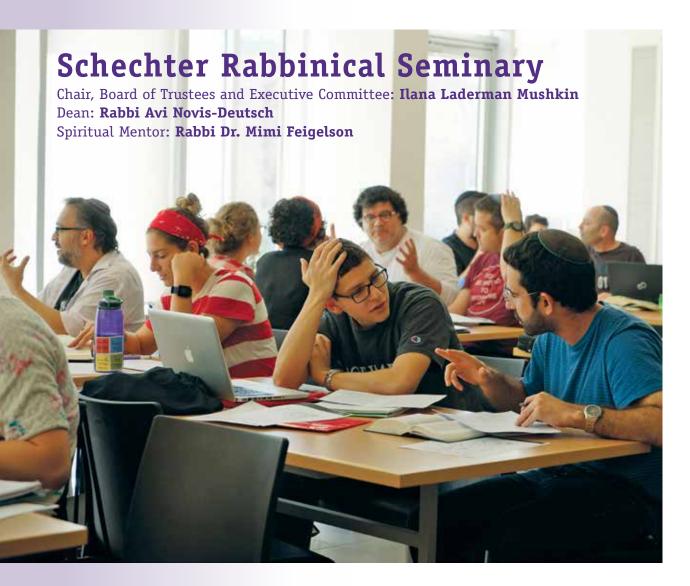
The Center for Women in Jewish Law has published a series of 18 books by and about women in Jewish Law. Go to **www.schechter.edu** to see the publications list.

The Institute of Applied Halakhah has published 26 volumes of Halakhic literature in Hebrew, English, and Russian for Jews throughout the world.

The Midrash Project is publishing a series of critical editions of Midrashim. Published to date: *Legends of the Jews, Midrash Shmuel, Midrash Hadash al HaTorah, Midrash Esther Rabbah and Kohelet Rabbah, Vol. 1,* with synoptic editions of *Midrash Shmuel, Esther Rabbah, Kohelet Rabbah* and *Shir Hashirim Rabbah* on Schechter website: www.schechter.edu.



1. (opposite page) Israel-Diaspora Conference draws standing room only crowds to Schechter. 2. Annual Women's Study Day in June drew 300 participants. 3. Students of the Hannaton Pre-Army and NOAM Leadership Programs at a lecture given by David Golinkin. 4. Lecturers from Schechter, Bar Ilan, University of Tilburg and Protestant Theological University at an International Conference on Jerusalem and Religious/Ideological Confrontation. 5. Dr. Tamar Kadari (center right) at the launch of her new book on Julius Theodor. 6. From left: Profs. Doron Bar, David Golinkin and Arnold Eisen, Schechter Board Chair Saul Sanders and JTS Board Chair Alan Levine at the Israel-Diaspora Conference. 7. Opening of Jerusalem artist Yitzhak Greenfield's "Exploring Jerusalem" exhibit at Schechter.



Significant Growth in 2017-18

The Schechter Rabbinical Seminary continued to record substantial growth this year. Its dynamic team of educators mounted an extremely successful recruitment campaign for the rabbinical school, creating new and innovative programs that resonate with Israelis of all ages and backgrounds.

Altogether, 91 SRS students were enrolled in 2017-18:

- 17 rabbinical students (50% increase over 2016-17)
- 26 Mishlei students
- 20 students in the Torah Lishma program
- 16 JTS students
- 12 students in the new Ashira Jewish music program

28th and 29th Ordinations - 6 New Rabbis!

In December 2017, Yerachmiel (Yerach) Meiersdorf (see profile page 6) and Sara Cohen were ordained. Yerach holds the national position of NOAM Rabbi and Sara is the community rabbi of Kibbutz Ketura. On November 29, 2018, four new rabbis will be ordained in the Schechter Bet Midrash. Yarden Raber is serving Ramat Aviv's Tiferet Shalom Congregation in north Tel Aviv; Irina Gritsevskaya is assistant rabbi at the New Ramat Aviv Kehillah and works with Russian-speaking Israelis as well; Raanan Mallek is the new rabbi of Kehillat Darchei Noam in Pardes Hannah and Idit Mevorach serves as the liaison for all JTS students in Israel.

New Spiritual Mentor

Rabbi Dr. Mimi Feigelson joined SRS in September 2017 as Spiritual Mentor and Lecturer in Rabbinics and Hassidic Thought. Mimi served as Spiritual Mentor of the Ziegler Rabbinical School in Los Angeles for 16 years. We welcome the enthusiasm she brings to Schechter.

New Initiatives 2017-18

Ashira: Music as a Jewish Experience In Fall 2018, SRS launched the first cohort of Ashira students. Ashira was developed by an outstanding group of music educators, performers and leaders of Jewish renewal in Israel. Its goal is to bring composers, musicians, song leaders and shlichei tzibbur into a learning process that will enhance Jewish musical creativity throughout Israel. The program offers an intensive weekly program in liturgical music, the study of the structure and meaning of prayer, and guidance in musical performance and creation. A planning team of 12 world class prayer and music leaders developed the Ashira curriculum.

Torah Lishma For the Public Established two years ago to provide the community with a Bet Midrash non-academic framework of learning, **Torah Lishma** has blossomed into an inspirational and meaningful

program of Jewish study. The program draws an eclectic group of lay activists and Jewish educators, young adults and retirees, religious and secular. **Program to expand:** Due to the program's success in Jerusalem, a new track opened in Tel Aviv's Neve Schechter in Fall 2018.

Mishlei Community Outreach and Renewal Mishlei combines Jewish studies with leadership training. The two-year M.A. program stresses the strong connection between Jewish academic studies, Jewish renewal and communal service. Its diverse student body reflects a microcosm of Israeli society, with many Mishlei graduates engaged in educational leadership roles. Since Mishlei started seven years ago, ten graduates have continued for rabbinic studies, with several receiving ordination.

Derakhim (Ways) New Media Project The Derachim New Media Project for Pluralism and Tolerance, in memory of Rabbi Marc and Dr. Henia z"I Liebhaber, established a solid online presence in 2018, producing more than 25 short videos of Israeli leaders, which reached over 90,000 people on Facebook. Disseminating the Jewish value of pluralism, the project aims to show that there is more than one way to be Jewish.

New NOAM-Schechter Partnership "7 Days of the Week (to Shabbat)" was launched this year for NOAM graduates participating in a "gap-year" of national service before entering the army. The group of 35 young leaders spent one day a month engaged in high level studies at the Bet Midrash. Conceived and supervised by Dean **Rabbi Avi Novis-Deutsch**, NOAM director **Yair Zafrany** and NOAM

Rabbi, Schechter graduate Rabbi Yerach Meiersdorf (see profile, p. 6), the year-long project strengthened the students' connection to Torah and their dialogue with Jewish sources.

"Betzavta - Altogether" for Special Needs "Betzavta" is a first-of-its-kind Bet Midrash study program for adults with cognitive disabilities. More than doubling 2018 projections, eight study groups with over 100 participants met in centers from Nahariya to Eilat. A joint project of SRS and the Adraba Masorti Center, the 10-session curriculum is supervised by an SRS student, and 4 groups are taught by SRS students and graduates. The program provides expertise in working with this important underserved community, while giving participants a rich values-based learning experience.

ZOOMing in for the Holidays SRS offered a new series of Holiday Webinars for rabbis worldwide. Taught by Rabbis **Avi-Novis-Deutsch**, **David Golinkin and Mimi Feigelson**, the learning in Hebrew (8 sessions to date) have reached dozens of rabbis in the U.S., Israel, the U.K., Argentina and Brazil.

Rabbinic Intern Program: Strengthening Students and Kehillot SRS has increased the level of partnership with the Masorti Movement, reflecting the belief that the training of outstanding spiritual leaders must include practical experience in Masorti communities. Today, SRS students are interning in 13 Kehillot around Israel, learning invaluable skills while giving back to the community.

The Importance of Inter-Faith Programming SRS continues to value and develop its interfaith programs with the Netherlands Israel Study Institute. In January, a group of Dutch Protestant pastors spent a morning in study with SRS students. SRS is a member of the Inter-Religious Coordinating Council in Israel (ICCI).











1. Rabbis Sara Cohen and Yerachmiel (Yerach) Meiersdorf with Rabbi Avi Novis-Deutsch at the ordination ceremony. 2. Israeli rabbinical students (left) study with JTS students (right). 3. Inter-faith sharing at a Schechter study day with a group of Dutch Protestant pastors. 4. Rabbinical student Matan Stein with spiritual mentor Rabbi Mimi Feigelson in the Bet Midrash 5. Torah Lishma students Tsafy Simons and Yulia Fresh (right) study in a full Bet Midrash.



TALI is Israel's largest pluralistic in-school Jewish Studies program. Reaching more than 50,000 children and 3,000 educators in 318 public schools and preschools throughout the country, TALI's myriad of programs and curricula make the beauty of Judaism accessible to growing numbers of diverse Israeli communities.

Growing Ties with Ministry of Education and Municipalities

Israel's Ministry of Education significantly increased its funding of TALI programs in 2017-18. The TALI Education Fund (TEF) was charged with professional development programs, preparing curricula and developing textbooks for secular schools throughout Israel. TEF also works closely with municipalities and the Ministry of Education.

As a result, all elementary schools in towns like Yokne'am and Ma'ale Adumim study according to TALI curriculum.

Numbers 2017-18

- 318 TALI frameworks serving 50,000 pupils: 103 schools, including 5 new elementary schools, two middle schools, five high schools and 215 pre-schools
- 15 pedagogic counselors provided guidance to over 3,000 teachers in 103 TALI schools and additional schools Israel-wide
- 58 participants took part in three Haleli tracks in Modi'in, Yokne'am and in additional locations in northern Israel
- 16 TALI school rabbis/spiritual educators worked in TALI

- schools, providing 350 programming hours
- 2 TALI Leadership Program graduates received Schechter M.A. degrees; total program graduates: 283
- 20 professional development days focused on interdisciplinary studies, with 50 schools participating
- 2 TALI Leadership Program graduates received Schechter M.A. degrees; total program graduates: 283
- 200% increase in experiential education workshops: from 34 last year to 94 in 2017-18
- 5 "Shirat Halev" music festivals for choirs, dance and orchestra reached 1,250 students from 35 schools
- 25,000 Jewish-Israeli identity textbooks sold

Middle and High School Initiatives 10th Grade Jewish Identity Seminar Leads to Full Year National Program

Two successful two-day experiential seminars designed to engage Israeli 10th graders with their Israeli/Jewish identity were offered to 80 high school students from the northern Negev town of Ofakim. Based on the success of these pilots, a full-year curriculum has been launched nationwide with 1,100 students taking part. The program, comprised of weekly two-hour sessions and an end-of-year three-day experiential seminar will allow students to explore, many for the first time, the major existential questions that will accompany them into adulthood, framed in the Jewish/Israeli experience.

New TALI Junior High Opens in Yokne'am

A new junior high school in Yokne'am opened its doors last year to receive children from all the town's elementary schools - all of which are TALI schools! Providing pluralistic Jewish eduction at the highest level is the school's goal. To that end, most of its teachers are enrolled in the *Haleli* program for Jewish leadership. (see profile, page 7).













1. (opposite page) 7th grade students in dialogue at the new TALI Jr. High School, Yokne'am. 2. Pre-schoolers learn about Chanukah at Jerusalem's Moreshet Avraham kindergarten. 3. Dialogue and Identity creates meaningful friendships: students from the TALI Yesodot school Petach Tikva and the Terra Santa School Ramla. 4. Tenth grade students from Ofakim participate in a pilot seminar on Jewish identity. 5. The "Mine and Yours" textbook series is introduced in the North Pisgat Zeev TALI Mathematics School. 6. 17 teachers study in the Haleli Professional Development course at the TALI Jr. High in Yokne'am with Dr. Eitan Chikli, CEO of TALI. 7. Shirat Halev Music Festival in Jerusalem.

Professional Development Initiatives

Dr. Peri Sinclair was hired as Director of Professional Development in 2017. With a doctorate in Midrash and an M.A. in Jewish Education from JTS, Dr. Sinclair has already had a significant impact on the quality of the programs. Initiatives include a new and rigorous 30-hour professional development course which took place in 11 teachers' rooms with the focus on creating a shared language around Israeli-Jewish identity. Additional development seminars offered teachers innovative programs which combined Judaism with science and the arts; courses on spiritual education and creating school initiatives. 50 schools participated.

Haleli Program for TALI Educators Grows Significantly

Haleli, the TALI Professional Development course launched two years ago as a pilot for 11 principals has grown to 116 educators in six locations in 2018-19. This impressive expansion includes a high school teachers' group at the Israeli Naval Academy; four high school groups from the Branco Weiss School Network serving at-risk youth in the north; school heads in Ramat Yishai; a new high school in Yokne'am and Modi'in TALI coordinators/lead teachers.

In 2017-18, 58 participants met in Modi'in, the new Yokne'am TALI Junior High School and a northern Israel group. Their syllabus included the Jewish Bookshelf, Dilemmas in the Integration of Jewish Studies in the Public School System, Tradition and Innovation, and more.

The veteran northern Israel group traveled to New York for an exchange program with North American colleagues.

Textbook/Curriculum Initiatives

TALI Completes Textbook Series for Ministry of Education At the request of Israel's Ministry of Education, TALI wrote four new textbooks to teach the "Jewish Israeli Culture" discipline in Israel's secular public schools. Completed this year, the comprehensive series for grades 3-6, called *Sheli Ve'Shelachem* (Mine and Yours), embraces pluralistic Judaism. Each textbook has an accompanying website and has been marketed widely to schools throughout Israel.

From Identity Card to Identity Consciousness, the 10th grade curriculum on Jewish/Israeli identity forms the backbone of the year-long course currently being introduced nationwide in Israel.

Judaism and the Environment Learning Center, for grades 1-6, is nearing completion and will soon be available to all schools. The kit, which offers 7-8 learning stations for each of three age groups, utilizes methods that encourage independent and experiential learning.

TALI Curricula for South America on Jewish holidays are nearing completion. Translated into Spanish and Portuguese, these important materials are distributed in 30 Jewish Day Schools in Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Chile and Ecuador. A new partnership with Israel's Ministry of Diaspora Affairs is expanding the program to include teacher training online and summer study visits to Israel.

DigiTALI Media

- The new TALI website launched in April 2018 with improved SEO and easier accessibility of online materials.
- The Levana and Visual Midrash sites were updated.
- TALI's Facebook community grew by 25%, with increased activity, ads and posts. A redesigned digital newsletter is produced bi-monthly. Two instructional videos to accompany TALI textbooks were produced, as well as marketing videos for other TALI projects.



Numbers 2017-18

17,000 people attended lectures, holiday events and exhibits during the year, with an average of 1,500 participants a month, including thousands of worshippers and guests who attended 83 Bar and Bat Mitzvah ceremonies in the Atid Sanctuary.

Neve Schechter: A Magnet for Jewish Renewal

Neve Schechter, located in Tel Aviv's trendy Neve Zedek neighborhood, presents Israeli culture as an ongoing dialogue and point of engagement between contemporary life and Jewish sources. The center is recognized as a leading venue for Jewish culture and renewal in Tel Aviv and beyond.

The Masorti Kehillah of Neve Zedek

Neve Schechter houses the Masorti Congregation of Neve Zedek, led by **Rabbi Roberto Arbib**, which embraces families and individuals who seek an inclusive and spiritual community. In the heart of secular Tel Aviv, the Kehilla continues to expand its base of young families.

 83 children and their parents held their Bar/Bat Mitzvah in the Atid Sanctuary of the Masorti Kehillah of Neve Zedek

Celebrating the Holidays

 High Holiday Programming: Slichot: on personal and collective reconciliation with a writer, educator and journalist. Liturgy for the High Holidays and Succot; September 2018

- Tisha B'av: Reading of Lamentations; screening of prize-winning documentary "The Wall," and discussion with its director, Yair Agmon, August 2018
- Shavuot: All night study with poets and musicians on "Women in Religion, Music and Art," May 2018
- Holocaust Memorial Day: Virtual Planet: Shaping Holocaust Memory in Virtual Spaces, with Shalev Moran, game designer and Prof. Amit Pinchevski, Communications Dept., Hebrew University, April 2018
- Purim: A Purim Ball dedicated to Jewish Persian music, dance and culture, March 2017
- Tu B'shvat: Photography workshop for special education students, with exhibit opening, January 2017
- Hanukkah/Kislev Happenings: Concert, candle lighting and art exhibit, December 2017
- The Atelier Children's Program: Parents and children met in the Simha and Sara Lainer Family Bet Midrash throughout 2017.

70 Voices

A musical project bridging contemporary language and ancient Jewish texts. Ten sold-out performances took place:

- A-WA. Traditional Jewish Yemenite music mixed with hip-hop and electronic music, July 2017
- Assaf Amdursky and Roy Hasan. Duet with Ashkenazi rock musician and Mizrahi poet, June 2018
- Kamila and Inbal Ben Shitrit A Capella. Atid Sanctuary hosts Jewish Azeri and Andalusian music, May 2018
- The Prayer of the Mothers. Christian and Jewish women join award-winning singer Yael Deckelbaum, May 2018
- Persian Music for Purim. Israeli actress and singer Liraz
 Charchi sings classical Iranian music, March 2018
- Wheat Flower. Singer Maureen Nehedar sings Persian folk classics, February 2018

- A Tribute to Rachel the Poetess. Performance by Uriel Herman, Sivan Talmor and Alma Zohar, January 2018
- Yona Wallach. Musical tribute to Yona Wallach's poems by Israeli singer Rona Kenan, December 2017
- Tusovka. Musical tribute to Israeli poet Hayim Nahman Bialik by the "Cultural Brigade," November 2017
- White Days. Celebration of Israel's national poetess, Leah Goldberg, with pop artist, Karolina, October 2017

Tel Aviv's Literati at Neve Schechter

Memory Lane. 7-part lecture series celebrating 70 years of Hebrew literature and featuring some of Israel's finest authors, October 2017-April 2018

A Salute to Hebrew Literature! Four festive literary events marking the 60th Anniversary of Keter Publishing House and Israel's 70th, May-June 2018

Book Launch: How do you say Yiddish in "Mizrachit"? Hebrew-Yiddish anthology of poetry, November 2017

The Neve Zedek Story

Cinema Tel Aviv is a 12-minute film produced by Neve Schechter in Hebrew and English, highlighting 130 years of Tel Aviv's history through the cultural heroes of Neve Zedek.

Contemporary Israeli Art Meets Jewish Sources

Neve Schechter mounted eleven art exhibits this year, five curated by **Shira Friedman** (see profile, page 8) and all enriched by monthly gallery events. Highlights include:

- Sphere, commissioned works by Ayelet Carmi and Meirav Heiman on the counting of the Omer and the feminine experience, April-August 2018
- Sanctity: Diminished, photo exhibit by Donna Musan-Levy on Tel Aviv's abandoned synagogues, May 2018
- Isfahan Isfahan/Adar, exhibit by Ardyn Halter on his memories of this Persian city. February-March 2018













(opposite page) The Persian Purim Ball at Neve Schechter.
 Rabbi Roberto Arbib with a visitor at the Creative Midrash Art Exhibit.
 Visitors at the exhibit "From Here and There: Yosef Haim Brenner in Art."
 Singer Sivan Talmor in a tribute to Rachel the Poetess.
 Shira Friedman, curator of the Schechter Gallery, leads a gallery talk of the "Sphere" exhibit.
 Maureen Nehedar in a piyyut concert at the Atid Synagogue.
 A sold-out performance in the Neve Schechter courtyard.

- Rachel the Poetess, first exhibition of Rachel's original manuscripts, courtesy of the Genazim Archive of the Hebrew Writers Association in Israel, January 2018
- Milk of the Stars, original manuscripts by poetess Yona Wallach, from the Genazim Archive, December 2017
- What Goes Around Comes Around/Kislev, works of contemporary art, December 2017-February 2018
- She Sits at the Window H. N. Bialik's Love Poems, Dani Kerman's book illustrations, November 2017
- Goldberg, Leah 1-4050, exhibit of the writer's original works, from the Genazim Archive, October 2017
- Yosef Haim Brenner in Art/Tishrei, group exhibition curated by Hagai Segev, September-November 2017
- The "Artists' Lab" in The Morris and Beverly Baker Foundation Art Room, is home to three Israeli artists whose works of art contribute to Israeli cultural life.

At the Bet Midrash

The Creative Midrash Course, where 8 artists, led by Rabbi Roberto Arbib and theatre director Adili Liberman, studied the story of Sodom and Gomorrah, culminating in a 3-day exhibit of their interdisciplinary works with performance and art gallery talks.

Body Midrash (November 2017-February 2018) completed a fourth successful season, in cooperation with the Suzanne Dellal Center for Dance and Theater, and Ohad Naharin's Gaga Workshop.

Adult Education Courses included: Revolutionaries, a lecture series analyzing Israel's contemporary social issues; The Kabbalah and Rabbi Luzatto; Rambam's Ethics, Psychology and Spirituality; Talmud Bet Midrash; Women's Monthly Rosh Chodesh meetings, and more.

Midreshet Schechter & Midreshet Yerushalayim

Gila Katz, Pedagogic Supervisor, Midreshet Yerushalayim – Ukraine **Rabbi Reuven Stamov**, Rabbinic Shaliah, Kiev



Midreshet Yerushalayim - Ukraine

Midreshet Yerushalayim, the only Conservative Jewish educational network in the former Soviet Union, sponsors Zionist-Jewish education in Ukraine. Over the last 27 years, the program has enabled thousands of Jews to reconnect to their heritage through experiential programs in schools, family centers and summer camps. All programs stress Jewish tradition, history, peoplehood and the centrality of Israel for the Jewish people.

Special Moments: Camps & Seminars 2018

Camp Ramah-Ukraine celebrated its 26th season of Jewish camping in August when 115 children coming from all over Ukraine immersed themselves in the joys of Jewish learning, spirituality and community.

■ This year, of special note, local Midreshet Yerushalayim leaders – counselors at the camp – read for the first time from the Torah on Shabbat, serving as an important role model for all the campers. They had just graduated from a special year-long Torah cantillation course conducted by Schechter teacher Saralee Shrell-Fox via Skype. ■ Five of the counselors were once campers

themselves, reflecting the love and loyalty that Camp Ramah-Ukraine engenders in its children and staff

Mazal Tov! Two additional counselor couples became engaged to be married at the camp.

Ramah Family Camp was exceptionally successful this summer, drawing 80 participants (25 families) from Kiev, Kharkov, Odessa, Chernowitz. Berdichev and Belaya Tzerkov. Many families had to be turned away due to limited funds. Run by Kiev's *Kehillat Masoret* rabbi, Reuven Stamov, and his wife, Lena, the camp acquaints families with the beauty of Judaism and Masorti Kehillot in Ukraine. After the camp, four new families joined the Kiev Kehillah.

The Annual Teachers' Seminar, which took place near Uzhgorod, marked its 28th anniversary this year. 35 educators from across Ukraine learned in a unique atmosphere that fosters professional development and strengthens feelings of Jewish identity and peoplehood. Lectures relating to the "Jewish Mosaic" were taught by experienced Jewish educators, including Irena Gritsevskaya, a Schechter rabbinical student to be ordained in November 2018.

MY Community Outreach 2017-18

- Kiev's Midreshet Yerushalayim/Masorti Olami Center for Jewish Education and Culture offers a multi-generational educational program for all family members in Hebrew, Jewish tradition, history, literature and Israeli culture. Today, under the able leadership of Schechter graduate Rabbi Reuven Stamov, the Center, together with the Masorti congregation, draws over 250 weekly participants to a plethora of courses and holiday workshops. Rabbi Stamov has become a leading religious figure in the city, invited to officiate at Jewish and non-Jewish events.
- Chernowitz Kehillat Aviv Cultural Center, led by Lev Kleiman, has built up an active community of more than 100 members in just a few years. In addition to

high quality holiday workshops and weekly Shabbat programming, the center is nurturing young leaders with a vibrant NOAM youth group and a young leadership training program.

- Odessa Kehillat Tiferet, led by Zeev Waksman, was established two years ago. Today it boasts over 60 active members with creative Shabbat and holiday programming and a NOAM youth group of 20 teens.
- Other Family Centers are located in Berdichev,
 Kharkov and Uzhgorod.
- The Kharkov Lyceum Day School, with 120 students (grades 1-10), continues to receive invaluable pedagogical services from Midreshet Yerushalayim.

Midreshet Schechter - Israel

Midreshet Schechter offers continuing adult education programs in Hebrew, Russian, English and French to Israelis in Bet Midrash frameworks. Programs include study and cultural events at Masorti congregations and community centers, as well as at the Schechter Institute in Jerusalem. Over 700 people attended the weekly learning with hundreds more coming to one-time events.

Learning Centers Flourish

Rabbi Dubi Haiyun directs the study programs that take place primarily in Israel's north, including: Haifa's veteran Kehillat Moriah where its Midreshet HaKarmel offered 12 different courses at the synagogue and the

Pisgat Ahuza Senior Center Facility; **Karmiel's Kehillat Hakarmel** offered three courses; two courses took place in the Lower Galilee town of **Shlomi**; interfaith study of Judaism and Islam at the **Jezreel Valley College**; a course in **Nazareth Ilit** for Russian speakers; Jewish Philosophy at **Ramat Yishai's Kehillat Sukkat Shalom** and Torah Portion study at **Kibbutz Degania Bet.** Most recently a new center opened in **Yokne'am's Kehillat Ohel Moshe.**

In Israel's center, Rabbi Haiyun taught an intergenerational Bet Midrash in Or Akiva. A class on Jewish family life took place in Mazkeret Batya, with additional courses in Jerusalem in French and Russian at the Conservative Yeshiva and the Schocken Institute and in Ma'ale Adumim.

Rabbi Haiyun Police Interrogation Causes Media Splash

Midreshet Schechter Director, Rabbi Dubi Haiyun, Schechter graduate and Rabbi of Haifa's Kehillat Moriah, was forcibly taken from his home in late summer and brought to police headquarters for questioning over his officiating at a marriage that the Haifa Chief Rabbinate had refused to perform. This outrageous act garnered international media interest and put Rabbi Haiyun at the center of the struggle for religious pluralism in Israel.

Continuing Adult Education in Hebrew and English

Midreshet Schechter's **English Jewish Studies Program**, now entering its fourth year, continues to grow in popularity. Registration reached 150 participants for nine courses in 2017-18. In Spring 2018, an additional special six-week study series with walking tours in honor of Israel's 70th anniversary, showcased high level lecturers, including leading historian, **Prof. Gil Troy**. Also in the spring, **a lecture series on Jewish Thought for Hebrew speakers was launched.** The Hebrew program was expanded in Fall 2018 due to its success.













1. (opposite page) Children of Kiev's Kehillat Masoret prepare for the High Holidays. 2. Graduates of a year-long Torah cantillation course and a Bat Mitzvah girl, read from the Torah at Camp Ramah-Ukraine with their teacher Saralee Shrell-Fox (third from right), Rabbi Reuven Stamov (left) and Gila Katz (second from right). 3. Prof. Gil Troy was a guest lecturer for the special English lecture series honoring Israel's 70th anniversary that took place at Schechter. 4. Schechter graduate Rabbi Dubi Haiyun, director of Midreshet Schechter, rabbi of Kehillat Moriah and a leader in the struggle for religious pluralism in Israel.

5. Members of Kehillat Aviv in Chernowitz declare their premises "free of Chametz" before Passover. 6. Ramah Family Camp-Ukraine – even the youngest participants enjoy a warm experience! 7. Havdalah service for members of Odessa's Kehillat Tiferet – Midreshet Yerushalayim's newest family center.

Development and Communications

Chair, The Schechter Institutes, Inc.: Saul Sanders

President, The Schechter Institutes, Inc.: Rabbi Prof. David Golinkin

Executive Vice President: **Eitan Cooper** Director of Development: **Anya Segal**

North American Representative: Avrum Lapin, The Lapin Group, LLC



The Schechter Institutes enjoyed another year of fundraising success, raising \$6,623,928 during the period of September 1, 2017- August 30, 2018. The continued growth enabled Schechter's four non-profits to advance academic, educational and outreach activities and initiatives for 70,000 children and adults at its main campus in Jerusalem, at Neve Schechter in Tel Aviv, in TALI schools throughout the State of Israel, and at

Schechter Centers in Northern Israel and in Ukraine.

Our generous community of donors enables The Schechter Institutes to advance its mission of Jewish education and promoting religious pluralism and tolerance in Israel. We are grateful to each and every donor for their generosity and look forward to their continued support, partnership, and involvement in Schechter's mission.

In addition to the generous support of our donor community, foundations, the Jewish Agency and local federations, the Israeli government has committed a record amount of \$698,000 in support of our work in 2018, twice what Schechter received in 2016, including new and/or increased support for TALI, the Schechter Rabbinical Seminary and Midreshet Schechter. Donations from private Israeli sources in 2017-18, individuals and foundations/trusts, was \$445,000. We will redouble efforts to raise money from both private and public sources in Israel. On December 13, an auction of contemporary Israeli art is planned to benefit Neve Schechter. All are invited to participate!

New Major Operating Gifts, Grants and Allocations (\$20,000 and up)

- Anonymous Israeli Gift, SIJS Graduate School to Renew the Bible Studies M.A. Program
- Isabelle Adler, TALI Choir and Dance Festivals
- The Morris and Beverly Baker Foundation, Neve Schechter "70 Voices" concert series
- Israel Ministry of Culture, Neve Schechter Art Gallery and Literary Events
- Israel Ministry of Diaspora Affairs, TALI Educator Training in South America
- L.A. Pincus Fund of the Jewish Agency, Educator Enrichment in Ukraine
- Saul and Mary Sanders, Robert Rifkind and JTS, First Schechter-JTS Conference
- Alex Sapir, SRS to develop a music app for Prayer and Jewish Music Leaders
- Carl Sunshine and Members of Beth Am Los Angeles,
 SRS Torah Lishma Program at Neve Schechter
- Joan Trempala, Scholarships for SIJS and SRS students
- Women's League Torah Fund, SRS Rabbinical Scholarships

The following Donors Sponsored the Publication of New TALI Textbooks:

- Lynne Galler and Hezzy Dattner, on behalf of the Marc Galler Research Foundation
- The Katzin Family in memory of Jerome and Miriam Katzin z"l
- Louis and Judy Miller

Schechter Leadership News Board News

We welcome Adir Waldman and Dr. Dana Peer to the Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies Board of Trustees and Executive Committee. Adir, an active friend of Neve Schechter, directs the Tel Aviv office of Freshfields, an international legal firm; Dana, chair and co-founder of the Ohel Menashe Kehilla in Yokne'am Ilit, is a gerontological counselor. We also welcome back Amb. Colette Avital who has rejoined the SIJS Board of Trustees. Joining the Audit Committee is Ira Brier, attorney, who currently resides in Herzlia. Stepping down: We wish to thank Diane Wohl and Lynne Galler for their wisdom, leadership and valuable contributions they made to the SIJS Board and The Schechter Institutes, Inc. Board, respectively. Diane continues to serve on The Schechter Institutes, Inc. Board.

Senior Staff News

In 2017-18 Schechter involved the senior professional leadership of its non-profits in fundraising efforts. In addition to trips by The Schechter Institutes, Inc. President **Prof. David Golinkin** and Exec. Vice President **Eitan Cooper**, TALI CEO **Dr. Eitan Chikli** and SRS Dean **Rabbi Avi Novis-Deutsch** both travelled twice to meet with donors and friends and to speak to groups in the US and Canada.

Eitan Cooper and **Dr. Peri Sinclair**, TALI's Director of Professional Development, attended the CEJP "Power of Judaism" Summit, September 5-6, 2018, and presented TALI's new high school project to a gathering of Jewish philanthropists and foundations. TALI was one of four Israeli organizations selected for the Summit.

The newest member of our development team is **Rabbi Paul Kerbel**, Rabbinic Campaign Chair.

Board Meetings

- The Schechter Institutes, Inc., under the leadership of Chair Saul Sanders, met in New York in November 2017 and June 2018.
- The Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies Board of Trustees, led by Chair Saul Sanders and by Executive Committee Chair Jonathan Steinberg convened in December 2017, April 2018 and August 2018.
- The Schechter Rabbinical Seminary, led by Board Chair Ilana Laderman Mushkin, conducted board meetings in Jerusalem in December 2017 and in April 2018.

- The TALI Education Fund Board, chaired by Roni Yannay met in January and October 2018.
- The Midreshet Yerushalayim Board, chaired by Prof.
 David Golinkin, met in January and in July 2018.

The JTS Connection

The Schechter Institutes is proud of its partnership with JTS on the following joint programs: JTS Scholarships for Israeli students in the Schechter Rabbinical Seminary, Graduate School, TALI Leadership Program and for teenagers to attend Camp Ramah-Ukraine; general support for TALI teacher training and JTS support for adult education courses at Neve Schechter.



1. (opposite page) NCSY Chicago youth trip to Israel visit Schechter and the Harvey L. Miller Bet Midrash. 2. Mark and Odile Ellison (right) meet with Schechter leadership including Midreshet Yerushalayim's Pedagogic Supervisor Gila Katz (far left), Eitan Cooper, David Golinkin and Anya Segal. 3. Sheri and Paul Robbins (bottom right) meet with Rabbi David Golinkin (bottom left) and Rabbi Avi Novis-Deutsch (top left) and rabbinical students. 4. David Katzin meets with David Golinkin. 5. Norman Lipoff (back left) leads members of the Jack Chester Board, Robert Russell Board and June Baumgardner Gelbart Board, with Jacob Solomon (middle), President and CEO of the Miami Federation on a Schechter visit to meet David Golinkin. 6. Women's League Intnl. Executive Vice President Debbie Bruce (center left) meets with (from left) Diane Friedgut, David Golinkin and Eitan Cooper.











1. Rabbis David Golinkin and Avi Novis-Deutsch meet with Rabbi Elie Spitz (center), Congregation Bnai Israel, Tustin, CA. 2. Rabbi Michael Schwab, North Suburban Synagogue Beth El, Highland Park, IL, meets with David Golinkin. 3. Prof. David Golinkin was a guest lecturer at the Vancouver Law and Learn seminar, hosted by Howard Mickelson at his law firm, with Rabbi Jonathan Infeld, Congregation Beth Israel. 4. Heads of Schechter's four non-profits, from left: Yonit Kolb, Eitan Chikli, Moshe Cohen, Avi Novis-Deutsch, Doron Bar, Eitan Cooper, seated front: Saul Sanders, David Golinkin, Ilana Laderman Mushkin. 5. Rabbi Michael Gotlieb (left) leads Kehillat Ma'arav, Santa Monica mission to Israel, with Development Director, Anya Segal (right).

Following the President

Prof. David Golinkin served as a scholar-in-residence at numerous Conservative congregations and spoke at various conferences in Israel and abroad in 2017-18. In North America: Temple Beth Am, Los Angeles, CA, Rabbi Adam Kligfeld, June 2018 • Sinai Temple, Los Angeles, CA, Rabbis David Wolpe and Erez Sherman, June 2018 • The Schechter Institutes, Inc. Board Meeting, June 2018 • Tifereth Israel Congregation, Washington, DC, Rabbi Ethan Seidel, June 2018 • RA Convention, Chicago, IL, April 2018 • Mosaic Law Congregation, Sacramento, CA, Rabbi Reuven Taff, March 2018 • Law and Learn, Beth Israel, Vancouver, BC, Rabbi Jonathan Infeld, February 2018 • Temple Etz Chaim, Thousand Oaks, CA, Rabbi Richard Spiegel, February 2018 • Congregation B'nai Israel, Danbury, CT, Rabbi Nelly Altenburger,

February 2018 • Ohr Kodesh, Silver Spring, MD, Rabbi Lyle Fishman, November 2017 • Kehillat Maarav, Santa Monica, CA, Rabbi Michael Gotlieb, September 2017

In Israel: NOAM Olami Leaders, "The Conservative Approach to Jewish Law," Schechter, June 2018 • Tikkun Shavuot, Yedidya Synagogue, "Is Aliyah a Mitzvah?" May 2018 • Tikkun Shavuot, Kehillat Moreshet Avraham, "Midrashim on Ruth," May 2018 • AACI Seniors, "The Customs of Shavuot," May 2018 • Schechter-JTS Conference, "Israel and North American Jews: How to Bridge the Gap?" April 2018 • SRS and JTS students, "Why Pray?" April 2018 • Nachshon students and Rabbi Todd Zeff, Schechter, "The Conservative Approach to Jewish Law," March 2018 • Conservative Yeshiva, "The Student Struggle Against the Holocaust," March 2018 • Hanaton and NOAM leaders, "The Conservative Approach to Jewish

Law," Schechter, February 2018 • Kehillat Amitai, Ra'anana, "Is it Permissible to Drive to Synagogue on Shabbat?" January 2018 • Masorti Convention, "Jewish Law for Today," January 2018 • NOAM leaders, Schechter, "The Conservative Approach to Jewish Law," December 2017

Schechter Faculty at International Forums:

Schechter faculty served as scholars-in-residence and spoke at international conferences:

Dr. Ari Ackerman: "The Philosophic Underpinning of Hasdai Crescas' Ruling on the 'Killer Wife' (*Katlanit*)," 49th conference of the Association for Jewish Studies, Washington, DC, December 2017

Dr. Jonathan Benarroch: "Medieval Kabbalistic Responses to Patristic Commentary," Department of Religion Seminar, Princeton University, January 2018

Dr. Tamar Kadari: "The Post-Classical Midrashim: Continuity and Innovation," Princeton University, Princeton, NJ, November 2017

Dr. Paul Mandel: Delivered three papers at the 2nd International Tosefta Workshop, Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster, October 2017 • "The Semantic and Cultural Evolution of Aramaic *Safar* from Recorder to Legal Interpreter," 47th International Conference, ARAM Society for Syro-Mesopotamian Studies, Oxford University, July 2018

Dr. Hillel Mali, "The Influence of the Destruction of the Temple on the Ritual Writing of the 1st Century C.E.," Minerva Center Annual Conference, Leipzig University, Germany, May 2018

"Conceptual and Ideological Aspects in the Mishnaic Description of Bringing the First Fruits (Bikkurim) to Jerusalem," University of Erfurt, Germany, October 2017

Prof. Renée Levine Melammed: "The World of Women in the Cairo Genizah, 1978-2018." Annual Genizah Lecture, Cambridge University, England, October 2018 **Dr. Bat-Sheva Margalit Stern:** "Not Strictly By the Book: Ada Fishman's Historiography as an Autobiography," Association for Israel Studies, UC-Berkeley, CA, June 2018

Prof. Yossi Turner: Padnos Visiting Professor, Frankel Center for Jewish Studies, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, Fall semester, 2018

Prizes

Dr. Hillel Mali, a lecturer in Talmud, received the prestigious Riklis Foundation Prize for Research on Jewish Studies for 2018

In the Media

The Schechter Institutes leadership received significant media coverage this past year, with over 100 articles, opeds and interviews by senior faculty and staff, including the following:

- Major coverage of the Schechter-JTS conference on Israel-U.S. Jewry: i24 NEWS TV interview with David Golinkin and Arnold Eisen; Times of Israel feature story; Kol Yisrael radio interviews with David Golinkin and Yossi Turner; op-ed pieces by Eitan Chikli published in Ynet and by Eitan Cooper in Times of Israel.
- i24NEWS featured interviews with faculty members
 Paul Shrell-Fox, Einat Ramon, Yossi Turner, Eitan

 Cooper and rabbinical student Irena Gritsevskaya on contemporary issues in Judaism.
- Israel Hayom, leading Israeli daily, featured a biweekly column on the Weekly Torah Portion written by Schechter faculty, including David Golinkin, Einat Ramon, Tamar Kadari, Paul Shrell-Fox, Daniel Topaz and David Frankel.
- Op-ed pieces on current events published by Doron Bar, David Golinkin, Avi Novis-Deutsch, Eitan Chikli and Eitan Cooper.
- Article on TALI's Dialogue and Identity program for Jewish and Arab children published in YNET.

- Article on Marpeh Chaplaincy Program in Yediot Ahronot.
- Book by Tamar Kadari reviewed in Makor Rishon.
- Book by Bat-Sheva Margalit Stern reviewed in Sgula and L'Isha.





















1. Bnai Israel Congregational Mission, Rockville, MD, led by Rabbi Michael Safra, learns with David Golinkin. 2. Rabbi Todd Zeff, Program Officer of Legacy Heritage and co-director of The *Nachshon* Project with his students at Schechter. 3. Temple Etz Chaim leaders, Thousand Oaks, CA, led by Rabbi Rick Spiegel (second from right), welcome Rabbi David Golinkin (center). 4. Delegation of heads of U.S. Theological Schools, organized by the American Jewish Committee, meets with David Golinkin. 5. Neal Meiselman and Terry Shuch host David Golinkin and friends in their Chevy Chase, MD home. 6. NOAM young leaders meet with David Golinkin in the Bet Midrash. 7. NOAM Olami delegation visits Schechter and studies with David Golinkin. 8. Rabbi Joel Chernikoff meets with David Golinkin. 9. Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl (middle right) meets with six of the Tannenbaum Fellows, including (from left) Rabbis Tamar Elad-Appelbaum, Dikla Druckman, Yerach Meiersdorf, Avi Novis-Deutsch, Chaya Baker, Liron Levy and Nathalie Lastreger. 10. David Golinkin (left) officiates at the Jake Feinstein Bar Mitzvah in Jerusalem with his grandfather Howard Turner of Chicago.

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(in \$US) January 1, 2018-December 31, 2018

NCOME	EXPENSES

1. Schechter Institute of	Jewish Stu	dies Graduate School	
Federations and Foundations	1,325,628	Academic Faculty Salaries	1,737,133
Contributions	1,086,772	M.A. Scholarships	156,231
Tuition and Fees	895,942	Student Recruitment and Outreach	186,087
Endowment Income	248,695	Academic Centers, Publishing and Library	322,985
Book sales, rental income, misc.	173,834	Administration and Campus Maintenance*	704,165
		Development and PR*	624,270
Sub-Total	3,730,871		3,730,871

*Includes PR, fundraising, US and campus expenses for 4 Schechter Amutot

2. TALI Education Fund			
Jewish Agency	384,791	Textbook/Curriculum Development	480,246
Foundations and Federations	1,107,532	Pedagogic Counseling	382,928
Contributions	988,376	Spiritual Educ. and Experiential Programming	441,178
Israeli Government	560,224	Halleli and In-Service Prof. Development	459,271
Fees for Sales, Services	549,414	Early Childhood Department	422,007
Carryovers and Misc.	42,726	High School Projects	362,788
		Special Projects and New Media	377,650
		Network Expansion and Evaluation	118,403
		Administration	588,592
Sub-Total	3,633,063		3,633,063

INCOME EXPENSES

3. Schechter Rabbinical	Seminary		
Jewish Agency and KKL	103,037	Faculty Salaries	311,595
Contributions	215,898	Student Scholarships and Stipends	255,032
Earmarked gifts and grants	367,190	Student Activities and Internships	111,144
Tuition and Fees	154,565	Torah Lishma	73,912
Interest and carryover	27,404	Administration	116,411
Sub-Total	868,094		868,094
4. Midreshet Schechter	- Israel		
Jewish Agency	39,520	Schechter Centers in North - Courses	133,543
Foundations and Federations	301,622	Neve Schechter Programming	420,405
Israeli Government/ Municipalities	115,665	Neve Schechter Maintence and Operating	201,803
Contributions	149,067	Administration	67,171
Participation and Rental Fees	217,048		
Sub-Total	822,922		822,922
5. Midreshet Yerushalay	/im - Ukrai	ne	
Federations and JAFI	51,300	Teacher Training - Seminars and Workshops	55,152
Foundations	151,800	Ramah NOAM - Summer/ Winter and Family Camps	162,855
Contributions	212,506	Rabbi/Shaliach Salary and Housing	87,500
Masorti Olami	108,200	Kyiv Center	80,437
		Communities (Odessa, Chernowitz, Berdichev	53,501
		Administration	84,361
Sub-Total	523,806		523,806
Total	9,578,756		9,578,756

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