Schechter is a place
Where Israelis from diverse backgrounds learn a common language.
Where Judaism is explored in dialogue and exchange, not dictated from above.
Where discourse over a page of Talmud can lead to today’s front page headlines.
Where touching a textbook leads to touching lives.
Where Jewish learning is inextricably tied to Jewish life.

Spanning the Spectrum of Jewish Life and Learning provides a window into the world of Schechter education: The Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies Graduate School, Schechter Rabbinical Seminary, TALI Education Fund and Midreshet Yerushalayim programs for Russian-speakers. We invite you to enter this world and learn about 40,000 men, women and children who are enriching the spectrum of Jewish life and learning in Israel and throughout the world.

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Partners in Development: Model of the Future Schechter Jerusalem Campus

Written and edited by Linda Price
Director of Communications
Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies

Photos: Estevan Alterman, Avi Hayoun, Linda Price, Sarit Uziely

Graphic Design: Stephanie and Ruti Design
What do a summer camp near Kiev, a rabbinical school class in the Shulhan Arukh, an M.A. course in the Haggadah, a MILI club for Russian immigrants and a TALI school in Hod Hasharon have in common? They are all part of the spectrum of Jewish life at the Schechter Institutes. We read in the book of Deuteronomy (11,12) “that the eyes of God watch over the Land of Israel from the beginning of the year until its end”. The best way for me to tell you about the spectrum of Jewish life at Schechter is to describe one year in the life of Schechter.

In August 2007, my wife Dory and I traveled to Kiev to attend the 15th anniversary of Camp Ramah Ukraine. There, in a land where Jewish life was decimated by the Holocaust and by three generations of Communism, we saw almost 200 kids daven shaharit every morning, sing birkat hamazon at every meal, study Torah and celebrate Shabbat.

In the first semester, I taught practical halakhah to thirty rabbinical students from the Schechter Rabbinical Seminary, the Jewish Theological Seminary, the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies and the Seminario Rabinico. Together we grappled in Hebrew with the intricate texts of Yoreh Deah – the laws of Kashrut, mourning, niddah, tzedakah, and brit milah - so that they can take their places as rabbis and teachers throughout Israel and the Diaspora.

In December, we held a ceremony at the site of our new Schechter Center in the historic Neve Zedek district of Tel Aviv where we will work together with our graduate Rabbi Roberto Arbib to expand his synagogue and Bet Midrash to reach out to secular Tel Aviv.

In the Spring Semester, I taught “The Haggadah of Pesach – Halakhah, History and Art” to 30 M.A. students - some of the 550 students who make up our Graduate School, now the largest M.A. program in Jewish Studies in Israel. We studied medieval and modern commentaries, illuminated haggadot from the 14th to 20th centuries and seder melodies from all over the world. When I showed a picture from the 14th century Barcelona haggadah depicting a father placing the seder plate on the head of his child, roughly half the class was familiar with the custom that their families brought with them from Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria and Persia.

In honor of Jerusalem Day, the MILI program of Midrashet Yerushalayim held one of its National Competitions in Jerusalem. These high school and college students, whose parents and grandparents grew up in the FSU without any Jewish education or identity, bused in from all over the country from Nahariyah to Eilat to spend hours arguing in Russian over questions about the history and geography of Jerusalem.

In June, I visited TALI Hod Hasharon with a delegation from overseas. Sitting with a group of TALI kids and parents, we heard that the TALI school had brought them to Hod Hasharon, that TALI has become the focus of their Jewish lives and that they had started a synagogue at the TALI school which met every Shabbat. I understood once again just why TALI has succeeded at the grassroots level and why in September 2008, TALI will encompass 83 schools and 35,000 children, which is ten percent of the secular public elementary schools in the State of Israel.

Finally, in July, after having finished the excavation for our new classroom building, we began to erect the building itself with the target date of opening the building in January 2010.

This is the Spectrum of Jewish Life at the Schechter Institutes “from the beginning of the year until its end”. Thanks to supporters all over the world, we now teach Torah to 40,000 Israeli and European Jews every year. May we continue to expand these programs in the years to come so that thousands more will be exposed to the spectrum of Jewish life.

Professor David Golinkin
President
Jerome and Miriam Katzin Professor of Jewish Studies
Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies
Jerusalem
Message from the Chair of the Board

The past year, 2007-08, has been a year of solid growth for the Schechter Institutes. Programming, student enrollment, faculty research and publications have all continued to flourish. The construction of our badly needed new Jerusalem campus and the Schechter Center for Jewish Culture in Tel Aviv moved ahead steadily. You will find detailed information on these developments in the pages of this report. But the larger story is the impact Schechter is having beyond its walls.

- Schechter is now the largest graduate school in Jewish studies in Israel, attracting more students to its interdisciplinary M.A. program than any of Israel’s five leading universities.
- Ten per cent of all secular public elementary schools in Israel today are TALI schools.
- The Knesset recently enacted the Integrated Education Stream Law, which is the first legislative effort to address the lack of Jewish education in Israel’s secular school system. The law calls for the establishment of a state-supported educational stream for schools seeking to integrate a serious program of Jewish studies in a pluralistic educational environment. The TALI Education Fund, the pioneer in bringing pluralistic Jewish studies to Israeli children, supported the enactment of this law and seeks to play a central role in setting up the new stream.

There is reason to believe that the new legislation, like the ever increasing demand for the programs of the Schechter Institutes, reflects a changing climate of opinion in Israel and a growing concern for what is Jewish in the Jewish State. I think it is clear that Schechter has contributed significantly to this new mood.

For nearly a quarter of a century Schechter has been an outstanding example of how Judaism can combine the best of tradition and modernity in a manner relevant and, indeed, essential, to the future of a democratic Jewish state.

During that time, Schechter students have earned close to 1,000 graduate degrees in Jewish education and have gone on to have an impact in classrooms all across Israel. TALI will add eleven new schools this year to its roster, bringing the total number of schools and pre-schools to 185. The Schechter Rabbinical Seminary has been refashioning the role and reach of the rabbi though innovative programs in chaplaincy and public education through Bet Midrash (community learning) centers. Midreshet Yerushalayim continues to bring Russian-speaking immigrants into the fold of vibrant Jewish life.

Not surprisingly, optimism and energy abound at Schechter --- even in this year of fiscal uncertainty and a weak dollar. It is therefore incumbent upon us to redouble our efforts so that Schechter’s dedicated faculty members, staff and program recipients continue to help realize our vision of a Jewish state in our day.

I wish you and your family a new year filled with the satisfaction of participation in this great task, with the joy of accomplishment, with prosperity and good health.

Robert S. Rifkind
Chair of the Board
The Schechter Institutes, Inc.
the graduate school

chair of the board  robert s. rifkind
chair of the executive committee ya’akov tsur
president  professor david golinking, jerome and miriam katzin professor of jewish studies
vice president for finance and administration liat citron
vice president for development eitan cooper
dean dr. guy miron
Schechter Takes First Place in Jewish Studies Enrollment

The Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies is now the largest M.A. program in Jewish Studies in the State of Israel. According to recent statistics published for the year 2006-07, Schechter is now No. 1 in Jewish Studies enrollment, pulling ahead of all other Israeli universities and moving up from its second place ranking of last year.

### Some Demographics…

80% of Schechter’s students, numbering 550 in 2007-08, are working in the Israeli educational system or with Israeli community centers. 70% of the student body is comprised of women. Two-thirds of the student population resides outside of Jerusalem, from Kiryat Shmoneh to Eilat. The average student age is 41.

### New M.A. Concentration in Sephardic Studies

A new M.A. track in Sephardic Jewry and Jews of Islamic Countries, the fourteenth track in Jewish Studies at Schechter, and unique in Israel, was introduced in 2007-08 as part of the implementation of the Board-approved 2005 Strategic Plan. The program of studies acquaints the student with the diverse worlds that developed in the Spanish Jewish community, in the Sephardic Diaspora as well as in the Jewish communities of Islamic lands in medieval and modern times. The track offers courses on Spanish Jewry, Conversos, the history of the Jews of Iran, Iraq, Syria and North Africa, and the status of Jewish women in Islamic culture.

### Academic Appointments

**Prof. Renée Levine Melammed** will assume the position of Dean in October 2008 when Dr. Guy Miron steps down at the end of his term. **Dr. Shula Laderman** will become Assistant Dean of Student Affairs. **Dr. Tamar Kadari** has received a faculty appointment as Lecturer in Midrash in a Tenure Track and will coordinate the M.A. Track in Judaism and the Arts. **Dr. Alex Sinclair** will join the faculty as a Lecturer in Education and will serve as Academic Advisor to the TALI Leadership Program.

### Highlights 2007-08 Academic Year

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schefer Institute</td>
<td>508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haifa University</td>
<td>497</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bar Ilan University</td>
<td>426</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hebrew University</td>
<td>420</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ben Gurion University</td>
<td>165</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tel Aviv University</td>
<td>100</td>
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</tbody>
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**TALI Leadership Development Course Leads Directly to M.A.**

In 2007-08, most of the TALI teachers who completed the Leadership Development Course decided to continue on for an M.A. degree. Since its inception in 2001, 183 TALI principals and lead staff have studied in the two-year accredited course, with the vast majority of them opting to complete their M.A. degrees in the third year.

**Women Chosen to Lead Graduate School**

**Renée Levine Melammed**, newly appointed Dean of the Graduate School, is Associate Professor of Jewish history at the Schechter Institute. Professor Levine Melammed has headed the Women’s and Gender Studies M.A. Track for twelve years. Among her publications are numerous articles dealing with women in Jewish history, and with the Conversos in the time of the Spanish Inquisition. Professor Levine Melammed is the academic editor of *Nashim*, the journal of gender and Jewish women’s studies. Her most recent book is *A Question of Identity: Iberian Conversos in Historical Perspective* (Oxford University Press, 2004). Her first book, *Heretics or Daughters of Israel: The Crypto-Jewish Women of Castile* (Oxford University Press, 1999), received two National Jewish Book Awards. She is currently completing a book on pre-WWII Jewish Salonika as reflected in the Ladino poetry of a Sephardic woman.

**Dr. Shula Laderman** assumes the position of Assistant Dean of Student Affairs. She coordinated the Judaism and the Arts M.A. Track from 2005-08 and was chosen as Kekst Fellow for 2007-09. Dr. Laderman is currently completing God’s *Blueprint of Creation*, to be published by E.J. Brill in Leiden.

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**A grant from the Kochav Trust** continues to enable Schechter faculty members to conduct research, publish and share their findings at academic conferences throughout the world.

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New Schechter Campuses

The Schechter Institutes, Inc. has embarked on two significant capital projects: the New Schechter Campus in Jerusalem and the Schechter Center for Jewish Culture in the Neve Zedek neighborhood of Tel Aviv.

Schechter Jerusalem Campus

Schechter’s staggering growth – from five students when it opened its doors in 1984 – to 550 students today, points to the resounding success of its educational programs… and to the urgent need for additional space. In 2007-08, major excavation work at the building site was completed and work has begun on laying the foundations for the first building of the campus complex, the Legacy Heritage Fund Limited Classroom Building, with a projected completion date in early 2010.

The ground floor of the classroom building will house the spacious Harvey L. Miller Family Bet Midrash (Study Hall), designed to meet the needs of Schechter’s growing student population. There, rabbinical students and M.A. students will come together under one roof for the unifying study of Torah. The ground floor will also house an art gallery for permanent and visiting exhibits, as well as for the works of Schechter students.

Liebhaber Center for Jewish Education Dedicated

The future site of the Rabbi Marc N. and Dr. Henia Liebhaber Center for Jewish Education was dedicated in December 2007 in the presence of Rabbi Liebhaber’s family. Adjacent to the current Schechter building, the Center will be an integral part of the new Schechter Campus, occupying 20,000 square feet on four levels.

Schechter Center for Jewish Culture in Tel Aviv

The Schechter Center for Jewish Culture in Neve Zedek will add spiritual renewal to physical renewal in the heart of Tel Aviv. The Center, which has been made possible through a generous grant by the Legacy Heritage Fund Limited, will be the new home of the Midreshet Iyun Outreach Program and Kehillat Sinai Masorti congregation. In 2007-08, architect Michal Kimmel finalized building plans. Permits were obtained for the renovation of the historic 19th Century building and courtyard, and for the construction of the TALI Early Childhood Center. Construction will commence in November 2008 with the opening scheduled for the end of 2009. The Center will house a Bet Midrash, classrooms and synagogue sanctuary (8,000 sq. ft.), a courtyard with outdoor auditorium and café (3,500 sq. ft.) and the TALI Early Childhood Center (4,500 sq. ft.).

Special Scholarships for Ethiopian Immigrant Students

Special scholarships for students from the Ethiopian immigrant community have been awarded to nine students, all of whom are talented community workers and teachers, committed to working with Ethiopian families as facilitators, teachers and tutors. Most of the students are enrolled in the Family and Community Studies M.A. track. The program will enhance their skills as community educators while helping them to discover a meaningful context for their own particular community history and traditions from Ethiopia.

Development Town Scholarships Help Israel’s Periphery

Full tuition was awarded to 45 teachers from development towns and underprivileged neighborhoods in 2007-08. Schechter has been granting scholarships to educators from Israel’s periphery since 2001. To date, the program has sponsored 106 teachers, with 54 receiving M.A. degrees in Jewish Studies.

Record-breaking Recruitment with New Campaign Slogan

Schechter recruited a record 155 new M.A. students in 2007. The number of registered students has more than doubled since the start of this decade. This growth is attributed to the annual Davidson Scholarships to first-year students; the “word of mouth” campaign by graduates and students that remains one of Schechter’s most powerful recruitment tools; Racheli Brandchaft, an effective recruiter who is a Schechter M.A. graduate; the utilization of new media outlets for increased exposure; and “Open House” days at Schechter at which potential students met with faculty advisors.
On the Spectrum

Angdiusa was born in Gondar, Ethiopia, where her father was a farmer. She arrived in Israel with Operation Solomon in 1991, at the age of 8. She and her seven brothers and sisters are determined to preserve their Ethiopian Jewish traditions in the context of their evolving Israeli identity. No longer living at home, they return to their parents’ home in Afula almost every Shabbat. Angdiusa’s job is challenging, yet emotionally draining. She handles sixty cases, accompanying the unemployed and weakest elements of Israeli society through a complicated process with the objective of finding permanent employment and restoring a sense of self.

On Defining Jewish Life and Learning

“My job is to remove all obstacles preventing my client from working. These are not just physical. I deal with frustration and anger and self-pity so that much of my job is helping heal these emotional wounds. I am not one to type in the data and forget the person at the end of the day.”

“I work four full days a week, nine hours a day. When I reach Schechter on Thursdays, I come not only to study, but to be re-charged. The faculty and administration transmit a warmth and a worldview that encourages consideration of all beliefs. In this spirit, I return to work on Sunday, better able to listen and to empathize.”

“My mother married at age 12. I am 25, studying for an M.A. in Gender and Jewish Women’s Studies in Jerusalem. Some dreams have been realized…others are still out there, waiting to be fulfilled.”
Rachel Hadad-Serusi
Pedagogic Advisor and Grammar Teacher, Atid Special Needs High School, Ofakim, a development town in the Negev

On the Spectrum
Rachel grew up in Beersheva. She attended the ultra-Orthodox Beis Yaakov high school and teachers’ college, and went on to receive a B.A. from the Open University, because “education and an open mind” were values she learned at home. She has single-handedly raised her three children in the same inclusive environment, having tragically lost her husband in a traffic accident some years ago. Her personal loss has not diverted her from a mission to which she is committed. Today she works with marginal youth, mainly from the former Soviet Union, in a special high school which guides them to full matriculation, and a place in the Israeli army.

On Defining Jewish Life and Learning
“I am extremely tied to the Land of Israel, to my people and to Torah. It was not enough to mouth the words ‘Am Yisrael’ in prayer. I needed to take those words and translate them into action.”

“The notion of ‘Israeliness’ is also important to me. It is filled with an emotional nuance that only we Israelis truly understand. We know that although our lives are finite, our deeds stay on and can continue to make a difference to those around us and to future generations.”

“Schechter education measures much more than academic achievement; conferring much more than a degree. It teaches how to live values and how to feel good in a social and community context. My colleagues at Schechter came from such totally different cultural and religious backgrounds, but we were able to forge a common experience through the sources we studied. I felt like I had made a home outside of my home.”
Unique Haggadot Collections Acquired

The Schechter Institute Library now contains one of the largest collections of Haggadot in the State of Israel after acquiring two major collections from Avraham Frank. The Frank/Lovell Collection, acquired with the assistance of Steve and Dedee Lovell, contains approximately 1200 Haggadot printed between 1670-1960; The Morris and Beverly Baker Collection of Haggadot includes approximately 1300 Haggadot printed between 1960-2005. In addition, the library has acquired over 400 liturgical works from Avraham Frank. In other acquisitions, the library received two collections of general Judaica donated by Rabbi Jack Cohen and by the family of Rabbi M. David Weiss z”l.

Monograph Collection Integrated

The library’s entire collection has now been integrated into its new computerized management system, enabling the electronic circulation of all books.

Library Crammed for Space

Shortage of space has forced the Schechter Institute to relocate part of the library collection to the building’s lower level bomb shelter. This acute shortage will be remedied with the completion of the Classroom Building.

Schechter Commencement Exercises

Fifty students received their M.A. degrees at the ceremony held in Jerusalem on December 9, 2007. Also conferred were the annual Rifkind-Meresman Fellowships for Academic Excellence and the Prof. Alice Shalvi Scholarships. Since the program was established in 1990, 840 Israelis, mainly educators and rabbis, have received an M.A. degree from Schechter.

The Midrash Project

The Schechter Institute is preparing seven works related to Midrash, including six critical editions. Each critical edition will include the text utilizing the best manuscript, selected variant readings, mesoret hamidrash which refers to all rabbinic parallels and a commentary. Professors David Golinkin and Shamma Friedman serve as the project’s general editors with the first three works to be published in 2009: Legends of the Jews by Prof. Louis Ginzberg, second Hebrew edition with new indices by Rabbis Monique Suskind Goldberg and Sara Ben-Moshe; Midrash Shmuel, edited by Prof. Berachyahu Lifshitz; and Esther Rabbah, edited by Prof. Yosef Tabori and Dr. Arnon Atzmon.

Prizes

Liebhaber Prize

The 11th annual Rabbi Marc N. and Dr. Henia Liebhaber Prize for Religious Tolerance was awarded at the Graduation on December 9th, 2007, to Member of Knesset, Rabbi Michael Melchior, Chair of the Knesset Education Committee. Rabbi Liebhaber, presenting the award, spoke about the necessity of nurturing a pluralistic Judaism in Israel.

Kekst Faculty Fellowship

Dr. Shula Laderman, ninth Kekst Fellow (2007-09), is nearing completion of her book, God’s Blueprint of Creation: A Shared Pictorial Model in Jewish and Christian Art, which will be published by E.J. Brill in Leiden. A Lecturer in the Graduate School, Laderman has been appointed Assistant Dean of Student Affairs after serving three years as coordinator of the Judaism and the Arts M.A. program.

Academic Conferences

The Schechter Institute sponsored or co-sponsored nine Academic Conferences in 2007-08:

A session of the Hakhel Festival of Jewish Studies at Ramat Efal during Hol Hamoed Sukkot was sponsored by Schechter to launch Dr. Einat Ramon’s new book A New Life: Religion, Motherhood and Supreme Love in the Works of A.D. Gordon (Carmel Publishers).

Holocaust Survivors and Israeli Society, a conference organized by Schechter lecturer, Dr. Galia Glasner-Heled, was held at Schechter in December 2007.

An evening of study to mark the publication of Torah Lishma: A Festschrift in Honor of Prof. Shamma Friedman, was co-sponsored by the Schechter Institute, Bar Ilan University and JTS. Held at the Schocken Institute in December, the event drew 350 people.

The Van Leer Institute in Jerusalem hosted a study evening in January 2008 in honor of the publication of Akedat Yitzhak (The Binding of Isaac), by Schechter Senior Lecturer, Dr. Alexander Even-Chen with Yediot Ahronot Press. 250 people attended.

The Annual Rabbi David Aronson Memorial Symposium, held in March 2008, featured a debate on the subject of Zionism and Post-Zionism with Dr. Alex Yaakovson and Amos Noy.

The Annual Memorial Study Evening for Prof. Saul Lieberman was held at the Schocken Institute in April 2008.
The Fourth Annual Sarah Becker Frank Conference on Jewish Women’s Studies, Women of Valour: The Military Experience, took place at the Schechter Institute in May 2008. The conference was organized by Prof. Renée Levine Melammed.

A conference marking the publication of Jewish Education – For What? and Other Essays, an anthology of articles by Prof. Walter Ackerman z”l, published by the Schechter Institute with Ben Gurion University, Haifa University and Bar Ilan University, took place at the Schechter Institute in June 2008.

An evening of study at Midreshet Iyun in Tel Aviv honoring the publication of Dr. Einat Ramon’s book A New Life: Religion, Motherhood and Supreme Love in the Works of A.D. Gordon, was held in June 2008.

Research Institutes

The Center for Judaism and the Arts

The Center for Judaism and the Arts was established in 2001 for the enrichment of educational and cultural life in Israel, and includes the M.A. track in Judaism and the Arts and the Judaism and the Arts Electronic Archive.

Highlights 2007-08

The M.A. track in Judaism and the Arts continues to be a very popular M.A. program with 74 students majoring in the field (and hundreds of students from all study tracks taking elective courses).

Schechter was transformed into an “art venue” with student exhibits and presentations on Visual Handmade Midrash as part of an art and theology workshop taught by Dr. Jo Milgrom.

“Judaism and the Arts” Electronic Archive

The “Judaism and the Arts” Website, an electronic archive of 4,000 works of art donated by Schechter faculty member Dr. Jo Milgrom, will provide an extraordinary resource tool integrating the arts and Judaism for educators, academics, rabbis and students in Israel and around the world. All art pieces will include basic information on the artist, the work of art and date of completion and a search engine by artist, theme and time period. The website will feature topical essays in Hebrew and English, employing art in the interpretation of Biblical stories. Dr. Jo Milgrom and Dr. Joel Duman have contributed the first twenty essays on The Teaching of Bible with Art as Commentary, which draw upon 500 artworks that have been uploaded to the site. The first stage of the archive will be online by the end of 2008.

“Seeing the Voices” Website Makes Its Debut

“Seeing the Voices,” a project of Schechter’s Center for Judaism and the Arts and the TALI Education Fund, is a web resource developed by a team of artists and educators that employs art and music for teaching the Book of Exodus. The site is used by junior high school pupils and teachers, and is accessed through Israel’s educational website, Snuin. In 2008-09, TEF will conduct training workshops for TALI pedagogic counselors on utilizing the website.

The Center for Women in Jewish Law

The Center for Women in Jewish Law, established in 1999, is devoted to researching, publishing and educating the public on the rights of women from the perspective of Jewish Law. The Center, through its seven Hebrew-English issues of Jewish Law Watch, and its magnum opus Z’a’akat Dalot (The Cry of the Wretched): Halakhic Solutions for the Agunot of our Time, has advanced Jewish legal advocacy research in the area of agunot (women whose husbands refuse them a writ of divorce and whose cases have dragged on in Israeli rabbinic courts).

A popular series of booklets, To Learn and To Teach, presents an array of contemporary issues related to the Role of Women in Jewish Life. Distributed to targeted populations throughout the world in five languages, each booklet is devoted to a specific topic on the status of women in Jewish Law.

Publications 2007-08

Taking the Plunge: A Practical and Spiritual Guide to the Mikveh, Rabbi Miriam Berkowitz, Jerusalem: Schechter Institute, 2007

To Learn and To Teach #5: The Separation of Menstruants from Prayer and the Synagogue, January 2008, published simultaneously in Hebrew, English, French, Spanish and Russian

In preparation

To Learn and To Teach #6: The Halakhic Parameters of the Ketubah, 2009

Ask the Rabbi: Answers to 100 Online Questions on Judaism, 2009

All Center publications are available for purchase online at: www.schechter.edu. Most can be downloaded for viewing at www.ResponsaForToday.com.
Outreach and Advocacy 2007-08

Rabbis Diana Villa and Monique Susskind Goldberg, senior researchers at the Center, represent the Center on public committees and advocacy groups in Israel and overseas. Rabbi Diana Villa continued to serve as chairperson of the Halakhah committee for ICAR (International Coalition for Agunah Rights) in 2007-08. She holds the position of Vice President for Religious Affairs of the Rabbinical Assembly-Israel, thus influencing policy on marriages and conversion. She is also a board member of the Joint Institute for Conversion, a pluralistic body comprised of Conservative, Reform and Orthodox representatives that teaches candidates for conversion.

Sourcebook on the Agunah Problem

ICAR called upon Rabbi Villa to compile a sourcebook and course outline on the agunah problem and its solutions, which are posted on the ICAR website. This important document was distributed throughout Israel for study to coincide with International Agunah Day in March 2008.

“Ask the Rabbi” Answers a Need

In their “Ask the Rabbi” page of the Schechter website, Rabbis Villa and Goldberg reply to on-line questions, which has resulted in the writing of 500 responsa. Popular responsa are published monthly on the site. An Ask the Rabbi book containing 100 selected questions and answers on Judaism will be published in 2009.

German Rabbis Gain Insight on Agunot

Rabbi Monique Susskind-Goldberg lectured on Hafkaat Kiddushin (a legal device for freeing Agunot) to a group of German Reform Rabbis who visited Schechter in January 2008.

Study Day for Prenuptial Agreements

Rabbi Diana Villa, in partnership with Yalta, (the organization of women rabbis and rabbinical students) conducted a Study Day on Prenuptial Agreements for Masorti Rabbis in October 2007.

Lectures to Jewish Agency MASA Participants

Rabbi Diana Villa spoke at two MASA Seminars (Jewish Agency) for young Diaspora adults studying in Israel. She joined a panel on “Religious Streams in Judaism” in Jerusalem in December 2007 and spoke on “Israel-Diaspora Relations” in Tel Aviv in March 2008.

Sharing Jewish Knowledge Overseas

Rabbi Diana Villa taught two courses at the Seminario Rabínico Latinoamericano and Teachers’ College in Buenos Aires during the summer of 2008. She also conducted study sessions with local rabbis. In Uruguay and Chile, she lectured on agunot and on the conversion crisis to the local Jewish communities.

Rabbi Monique Susskind Goldberg taught classes on “Charity and Justice in Jewish Law” in the Brussels Jewish Community Center in September 2008.

The Institute of Applied Halakhah

The Institute of Applied Halakhah, which makes Jewish Law accessible to modern Jewish households around the world, is celebrating a decade of advocacy work. Established in 1997 in order to publish a library of Halakhic literature in Hebrew, English and Russian, the Institute has published 22 volumes of scholarly research through The Meyer and Tirzah Goldstein Holocaust Memorial Library, The Rabbi Israel Levinthal Center for Contemporary Responsa and in partnership with The Center for Women in Jewish Law.

Publications in 2007-08

Torah Lishma: A Festschrift in Honor of Prof. Shamma Friedman, co-published by the Schechter Institute, Bar Ilan University and Jewish Theological Seminary, December 2007

Kuntress Hateshuvot Hehadash, Vol. 2, Prof. Shmuel Glick, the second volume of a new bibliography of the Responsa literature, co-published with the Bar Ilan Law Faculty and the Schocken Institute, September 2007

Taking the Plunge: A Practical and Spiritual Guide to the Mikveh, Miriam Berkowitz, Jerusalem, 2007

Books scheduled for publication in 2008-09

Perspectives on Jewish Law and Contemporary Issues, by Rabbi Wayne Allen

Kuntress Hateshuvot Hehadash, Vol. 3, Prof. Shmuel Glick, the third volume of a new bibliography of the Responsa literature, co-published with the Bar Ilan Law Faculty and the Schocken Institute, Fall 2008 (Hebrew)

Kashrut: A Guide to its Observance and its Meaning for Our Time, Samuel Dresner and David Golinkin (Hebrew)

Responsa of the Va’ad Halakhah of the Rabbinical Assembly of Israel, Volume 7 (Hebrew), David Golinkin, ed.

Halakhot Olam: Responsa on Contemporary Halakhic Problems by Rabbi Hayyim Hirschensohn, Yossi Turner, ed., (Hebrew)

Malki Bakodesh, Volume 2, by Rabbi Hayyim Hirschensohn, David Zohar, ed., second edition (Hebrew)
schechter rabbinical seminary

chair of the board rabbi prof. ismar schorsch
chair of the executive committee rabbi prof. hanan alexander
dean rabbi dr. einat ramon
New Initiatives Shaping Seminary’s Direction

In addition to teaching pulpit skills, Schechter has widened its educational mandate to include pastoral care and grass-roots community-building. Trained Schechter pastoral counselors (chaplains) are providing emotional, religious and spiritual support in times of crisis, working within the health-care system. In the sphere of community life, the Legacy Heritage Rabbinic Fellows program is developing a new model to stimulate Jewish religious and cultural life in Israel – Community Bet Midrash.

Schechter Aims to Establish Community Bet Midrash throughout Israel

The Legacy Heritage Rabbinic Fellowships are enhancing the quality and focus of the rabbinical school curriculum as well as the scope and significance of its outreach and internship programs. A major grant from the Legacy Heritage Fund Limited established a six-year fellowship for study and field work for twelve committed rabbinical students (three are added each year). Their mandate is to establish new communities throughout Israel based on an open and pluralistic religious approach.

In cooperation with the Masorti Movement, Schechter is creating a pool of new communities with which to pair Legacy Fellows as they take on the challenge of community building.

The first three Legacy Rabbinic Fellows commenced community work in 2008. Rabbinical student Hod Shilo partnered with a group of residents of Mesilat Tzion, between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. He led High Holiday services, taught a Bar/Bat Mitzvah class and has facilitated a Passover workshop. Student Michael Ben David traveled to Maale Adumim which has requested bi-weekly lectures and prayer services for the Jewish holidays. Several members from Maale Adumim will participate in lay-leader training sessions at Schechter. Student Dubi Hayun taught in Kehillat Sukkat Shalom located in the Jezreel Valley’s Ramat Yishai community, as well as in Nazareth and Kibbutz Hanaton. Next year he will begin developing a community Bet Midrash with members of Kibbutz Bet Hashita (which has requested the program) and Kehillat Moriah in Haifa.

Asa Keidar, an expert in community education, was hired to coordinate the program. A comprehensive academic curriculum to augment the field work is in place. Rabbinical Seminary courses included “Creating and Teaching in a Community Bet Midrash,” “Developing a Personal Rabbinic Vision” and “Psychology and Crisis Intervention.” In tandem, a curriculum for developing community and lay leadership was developed, focusing on Shabbat from biblical, halakhic, aggadic, kabbalistic and philosophical perspectives. Keidar held a workshop on Pesach in April 2008 for all communities developing Batey Midrash.

Attractive source sheets for the entire family were produced for Shavuot, Tisha B’Av and Tu B’Av. The learning materials were widely distributed to various populations, including Schechter M.A. students and graduates. Initial response was very positive.

Broadening the Concept of Field Work

Schechter rabbinical students took “to the field” this year in a mentoring program expanded to include guidance in the area of community development. Rabbi Roberto Arbib, who successfully established the first Masorti community Bet Midrash in Tel Aviv, together with Rabbi Mauricio Balter of Kehilla HaMasortit Hakrayot, began to supervise Legacy Rabbinic Fellows in community outreach work. Other rabbinical students mentored with Rabbi Gil Nativ in Omer’s Kehillat Magen Avraham, gaining invaluable pulpit experience conducting services, giving sermons and preparing youngsters for Bar-Bat Mitzvah ceremonies.

Tel Aviv’s Midreshet Iyun Trailblazes the Bet Midrash Model

Midreshet Iyun, under the direction of Schechter graduate Rabbi Roberto Arbib, is serving as a prototype for the future establishment of similar learning communities through the Legacy Rabbinic Fellows program. Midreshet Iyun’s cultural offerings in 2007-08 included the Actors’ Bet Midrash; Derekh Avraham, an interfaith group that meets every two weeks to study Jewish and Muslim Philosophy; weekly Talmud and Torah Portion classes; and special event programming around holiday and Rosh Hodesh (new month). Midreshet Iyun, together with Kehillat Sinai look forward to their move to new premises in Tel Aviv’s Neve Zedek neighborhood when the Schechter Center for Jewish Culture opens in 2009. (see p. 44)
First Graduates of Accredited Chaplaincy Program in Israel
In 2007, six students became Israel’s first graduates of an organized course of CPE (Clinical Pastoral Education), and received one unit towards certification as chaplains. A class of six new students began the program in 2008. Established in 2006, the program, the first of its kind in Israel, integrates academic coursework with fieldwork. This year’s coursework focused on Psychological Aspects of Rabbinics, and included topics on Ethics and Fertility Technology, Dementia and Coping with Grief and Loss. Based on the successes recorded in summer 2007, five student chaplains were warmly welcomed back in July 2008 to the Asaf Harofe Hospital Oncology and Dialysis Departments. Other interns returned to the Idan HaZahav Senior Residence where their work with the elderly was greatly appreciated. The Schechter Rabbinical Seminary works in partnership with the National Association of Jewish Chaplains (NAJC), under the direction of Cecil Asekoff. The Robert Wood Johnson Medical Center in New Jersey has accredited the program, with Medical Center staff person, Rabbi Zahara Davidovich-Farkash, building the program and supervising all class work and fieldwork.

New Course: Teaching Judaism in Special Education Frameworks
An eight-part course on Teaching Judaism in Special Education Classes took place in 2008. Ziva Nativ, director of the Masorti Movement’s Bar-Bat Mitzvah Project for Special Needs Children, taught the class to a number of rabbinical students who are not involved in chaplaincy work. The course will be expanded next year.

New Student Recruitment Campaign Inaugurated
A student recruitment campaign comprised of printed ads, a poster and brochures targeting a number of new populations including educators, members of kibbutzim and the general public, was launched. The campaign stressed the unique interdisciplinary nature of the rabbinical program which integrates religious studies with the diverse practical professional training and experience offered by the Legacy Heritage Rabbinic Fellows program.

Bon Voyage to Executive Committee Chairman
Prof. Hanan Alexander, Chairman of the Schechter Rabbinical Seminary Executive Committee will be on sabbatical during the 2008-09 academic year at the University of California-Berkeley. We wish him a most productive year abroad and commend him for his vital contributions to the strengthening of the Schechter Rabbinical Seminary from 2005-08, both in vision and in practice. We look forward to his speedy return and continued outstanding leadership in the years ahead.

Shimon Lipsky will serve as Acting Chair. He is Vice-Provost of the Rothberg International School of the Hebrew University.

New Rabbis…New Rabbinical Students
Six Israeli rabbinical students entered the Schechter Rabbinical Seminary (SRS) Israeli program in September 2007, including a veteran educator from Midreshet Yerushalayim-Ukraine, a member of the Bene Yisrael Indian community from Dimona and a professor of philosophy from the Sorbonne, France.

Four rabbis were ordained at Schechter’s 20th Ordination Ceremony held in Jerusalem on December 9th, 2007:
Chaya Becker is the rabbi of Jerusalem’s veteran congregation Kehillat Ramot Zion; Gali Snir works as a TALI rabbi and as a Jewish education counselor in a residential youth village; Roni Klein is doing post-doctoral work in Jewish Philosophy, lecturing in the Hebrew University’s Department of Jewish Thought and teaching in a high school in Jerusalem; Yehudit Rubin is completing an intensive program of chaplaincy in the United States, and will return to Israel in the summer of 2009.

The Schechter 2008 Ordination Ceremony will take place in December. Congratulations to the following future rabbis: Jonathan Sadoff who has been working closely with Jerusalem’s Moreshet Israel Synagogue and the Conservative Yeshiva in organizing and leading two very successful alternative minyanim; Dr. Rafi Kassimov, a veteran Midreshet Yerushalayim lecturer whose Tel Aviv classes continue to bring hundreds of Russian-speakers closer to their Jewish heritage and Yoav Ende, who served as TALI rabbi at the Neve Chana Youth Village and will return to TALI as a rabbi and education director of the Masorti educational center in Kibbutz Hanaton.

Jewish Renaissance in Downtown Jerusalem
Jonathan Sadoff has already taken the plunge into pulpit work. Coming with ideas to re-energize the aging Masorti congregation on Agron Street, he established two alternative minyanim. The well-known Yachad minyan, created five years ago, is a monthly Friday Night Service that draws young people from every place and denomination for a lively, celebratory service of soulful singing and dancing and is followed by a “potluck dinner” held at the Conservative Yeshivah Bet Midrash. This year, a special Yachad service held in May at Robinson’s Arch, accompanied by musical instruments before sundown, drew more than 200 participants! The second group, meeting twice a month, is a young Shabbat morning minyan that is reaching an Israeli crowd with a beautiful and soulful prayer service.
Eliav Bock
JTS Overseas Rabbinical Student, former Wall Street trader turned Jewish educator

On the Spectrum
Eliav grew up in Boston in an observant family that encouraged the openness of Boy Scout Camp alongside the orthodoxy of Maimaindes Jewish Day School. After earning a degree in the JTS-Columbia joint program, he worked as an equities trader on Wall Street for five years. Experiencing a “quarter-life crisis,” Eliav took a leave of absence to work at an inter-religious camp called Face to Face - Faith to Faith, and with Camp Ramah.

On Defining Jewish Life and Learning
“I was decent at trading, but I came alive with kids. I realized at some point, that always the happiest people are doing what they really love. It made no difference whether I had an amazing or awful day trading --- the two hours that I spent tutoring kids after work brought me the most joy.”

“Living in Jerusalem was a Jewish educator’s dream. Schechter’s supervised chevruta (Talmud study in pairs) was phenomenal. Text study was a very intimate and engaging experience led by capable and caring teachers. Learning in Hebrew greatly improved my comprehension skills.”

“On a global level, one can’t overstate the importance of Jewish knowledge. In North America, the level of Jewish ignorance is frightening. I want to play a direct role in reversing this trend.”
Liron Levy
Schechter Rabbinical Seminary student, interns at Magen Avraham congregation in Omer, Jewish Studies teacher at Beersheva secular school, counselor at Neve Chana Youth Village

On the Spectrum
Liron was born in Eilat and grew up in a secular environment. A community activist from an early age, she founded and chaired Eilat’s first city youth council. She became an officer in the IDF and annually continues to volunteer for reserve duty. While a student at the Hebrew University, she tutored disadvantaged children in a “big brother” program. With a B.A. in hand, she knew she wanted higher studies, but also sensed something was lacking Jewishly in her life.

On Defining Jewish Life and Learning
“I realized that I wanted to do something that connected to Judaism but I didn’t have the background. I needed a program that was intelligent and practical. I found that at Schechter.”

“I opened my first page of Talmud and learned how to pray here at Schechter. At no other place in Israel could I have done that. Schechter provides a unique Bet Midrash experience but demands a total commitment. The program is not just ‘one more thing you do’ but rather, the essence of what you do. Studies are not just 8 am ‘till 6 pm, but rather, an integral part of my life, friends, family, being. This experience feeds my entire self.”

“Israeli society must get closer to its Judaism. Through a language that speaks ‘Israeliness,’ the discussion of Jewish Law must be based on dialogue, not coercion. Masorti rabbis coming out of Schechter have the tools to effect this change.”

My dream? To be the first woman Chief Rabbi!”
Rabbinical Students and Rabbis in TALI Schools

The Schechter Rabbinical Seminary encourages rabbinical students to participate in TALI school internships. Supervised by the TALI Education Fund, the program operates in 32 schools and 15 pre-schools, including six Tel Aviv schools and three pre-schools. A number of Schechter students and rabbinical graduates fulfill the role of school rabbi in these schools. The program reflects the ideal integration and application of Schechter education in the field. Established in 2001, the TALI school rabbi has, in many cases, evolved into a central figure in the school and an important consultant to the principal.

Listen to the Music...

Liturgical notes filled Schechter’s halls this year in a four-part lunchtime series, “Kehillot Sharot” (Communities Sing) open to all M.A. and rabbinical students. Sephardi melodies were taught by modern liturgist Maimon Cohen to an enthusiastic crowd.

Overseas Students Volunteer

A required “year at Schechter” is an integral curriculum component of all rabbinical schools affiliated with the worldwide Conservative Movement: The Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies (at the American Jewish University) in Los Angeles, and the Seminario Rabinico in Buenos Aires. In addition, rabbinical students from the Boston Hebrew College and the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College also participated in the program.

Volunteer work, which exposes visiting students to Israeli culture and the Hebrew language, is a mandatory part of the program. This year, students were involved with the Masorti Movement’s Conversion Institute; Ramot Zion Congregation learning community; tutoring in TALI schools; the Israel-Palestine Center for Research and Information; the Task Force Against Human Trafficking; Reut: The Center for Modern Jewish Marriage; a soup kitchen in Jerusalem; and the Rape Crisis Center.

Iyunei Shabbat Online in Three Languages

Iyunei Shabbat, located at www.schechter.org.il, and distributed weekly by email, is a weekly Torah Portion commentary published by the Schechter Rabbinical Seminary in conjunction with The Rabbinical Assembly of Israel, the Masorti Movement in Israel and Masorti Olami. Iyunei Shabbat appears in English, Hebrew and Spanish.

Dear Professor Golinkin,

My year of studies at Schechter … was the best academic experience ever, probably as intense as my entire student life combined. Schechter was the perfect atmosphere for a serious text-based learning experience, and I’m sure that much of the wisdom that I will teach my congregants in the years ahead is material I learned at Schechter.

I’m already serving as the congregational rabbi at Libertad Street Synagogue, the oldest congregation in Argentina, together with Rabbi Sergio Bergman. I miss the Bet Midrash but I am also happy to start this new stage of my rabbinic vocation.

I have no words to express my gratitude to Schechter, and to you in particular. Not only because I learned so much Torah from you, but also having the doors of your office always open – for listening and talking – also showed us an example of a true Rabbi.

Todah Rabbah!

B’brachot,

Rabbi Guido Cohen, Buenos Aires, Argentina
TALI education fund

chair of the board of directors and executive committee prof. haim be’er
the susan and scott shay TALI director general rabbi dr. eitan chikli
Highlights 2007-08

TALI Reaches Critical Mass: 10% of Israeli Secular Elementary Schools

With 35,000 pupils attending TALI schools and pre-schools throughout Israel as of September 2008, TALI now comprises almost 10% of all elementary schools in the secular public school system (78 out of 807 elementary secular schools). TEF’s strategic plan calls for expanding TALI to 20% of the secular school system in the next decade.

In 2007-08, a total of ten schools and nine pre-schools joined TALI including two schools in Jerusalem; a school in Jaffa; two schools in the south: Merhavim Regional School near Ofakim, and Neve Chana Residential Village in Kiryat Gat; four schools in the north: Kiryat Motzkin, Givat Ela, Karmiel and Ein ha Mifratz, a Middle School in Ra’anana and five pre-schools (Ra’anana, Kibbutz Hanaton, two in Tel Aviv and five in the Krayot/Haifa Bay area.)

Eleven New Schools, Two Pre-Schools to Join TALI in 2008-09

The TALI school network continues to grow more than 10% a year, with overall number of schools more than doubling in the last decade (going from 29 schools in 1997-98 to 73 schools in 2007-08). A total of 184 schools and pre-schools will be in the TALI network in 2008-09.

Eleven new schools will join TALI: Kiryat Ata (2), Yokneam, Haifa, Nesher, Karmiel, Arad, Jaffa, Shoham, Jerusalem and Tal Shachar. Two new schools are opening in Eilat. Nine additional schools, mainly in the North, have joined a preparatory framework that introduces the TALI philosophy of Jewish education to school staff, parents and children, the result of an extremely successful principals’ course which exposed a large number of principals in the north to TALI. Most of these schools are expected to join TALI in Fall 2009.

TALI Ready to Play Major Role in New Israeli Education Stream

On July 15 2008, the Knesset ratified a historic law with the potential to change the face of Israeli education in Israel: The Integrated Education Stream Law. The new law, proposed by Rabbi MK Michael Melchior and MK Estherina Tartman, calls for the creation of a new public system that will enable schools to enrich their Jewish Studies programs. Dr. Eitan Chikli, Susan and Scott Shay Director General of the TALI Education Fund, stated that the time has come for the State of Israel to be more deeply involved in the Jewish education of its graduates and to collaborate with pluralistic organizations like TEF. He is hopeful “that the TALI Education Fund, Israel’s pioneer in the field of pluralistic Jewish Studies, as well as the Jewish State’s largest provider of enriched Jewish Studies, will be called on to contribute to the program in a significant way.”

New Programs...New Initiatives

Dialogue and Identity Project Brings Arab and Jewish Children Together

The TALI School Network, together with the MENA Network of 44 Christian-Arab schools in Israel, has created Dialogue and Identity, a program that trains Jewish and Arab teachers to teach “Three Religions in the Holy Land.” The curriculum is first introduced separately in the respective classrooms. It is then “shared” in a series of encounters in which pupils meet at each other’s schools and present their religions and cultures to the other, facilitated by their Jewish and Arab teachers, who work together in pairs.

Dialogue and Identity was implemented successfully in eight schools (4 TALI and 4 MENA) in northern Israel during the 2007-8 school year, and will be implemented again in those schools in 2008-9 with additional classes. The program received a positive independent assessment, and was endorsed by the Ministry of Education’s Northern and Haifa Districts. The model is unique in that it fosters direct relationships between school staff and trains the teachers to facilitate the programming, thereby enabling it to become a sustainable part of the school curriculum. As a result, the model is replicable for dozens, perhaps even hundreds of schools. Most importantly the program teaches children about their own religious identity while nurturing tolerance and openness towards the other. (see TALI focus, page 20).
“YahaduTALI” – TALI Kids Produce Their Own Radio Show

TALI fifth graders in the Jerusalem area took to the airwaves this year in a novel educational experiment that combined knowledge of radio programming and production with Judaism. "YahaduTALI" ("TALI-Judaism"), a TALI Education Fund initiative, teaches the kids the art of scriptwriting, interviewing and live broadcasting, while combining Jewish themes with subjects germane to adolescence. The result? An hour-long radio program that aired monthly on a local Jerusalem station.

"Being able to exploit a popular medium turned the transmission of Judaism and Jewish values into a ‘valuable commodity.’ It brought a legitimacy to Judaism that is hard to duplicate in a regular classroom," explains Gila Barashi, project supervisor.

Program Expansion: In 2008-09, a new class of 5th graders will join the class of veteran “mentors” in Jerusalem. In Ma’ale Adumim, where all the secular schools belong to TALI, the mayor is interested in offering “YahaduTALI” to every school in the city.

Parents’ Leadership Development for TALI Advocacy

TEF moved forward this year in establishing a TALI parents’ forum whose goal is to empower parents to become advocates of TALI Jewish education on the local, regional and national level. The more than 50,000 TALI parents around the country are perhaps the largest single target group for pluralistic Jewish outreach, with an enormous potential to change attitudes and impact on Israeli Jewish identity through their involvement in their children’s schools. In 2007-08, TEF organized a course designed to familiarize parents with TALI and with pluralism in Jewish education and to help schools form TALI committees within their parent-teacher associations. Six meetings were held on a regional level in the North and South of Israel. Altogether a total of 35 schools had ongoing representation at the meetings. New TALI committees have been formed in 15 schools and parental school initiatives implemented in twenty schools.

TALI in Tel Aviv to Add New Jaffa School

TALI continued to grow in “secular” Tel Aviv in 2007-08, reaching out to some 2,000 parents and children, creating a school environment in which Jewish culture is embraced. Six schools and three pre-schools worked closely with TALI rabbis and pedagogical counselors in building a year rich in programming that included teacher training, parent-teacher learning communities, family education and classroom workshops. In 2008-09, the Itamar Ben Avi School in Jaffa will join the TALI school network.

Artists’ Bet Midrash Brings “Bibliodrama” to Tel Aviv

A group of eighteen Tel Aviv actors and actresses studied Torah with Rabbi Roberto Arbib, as part of the Midreshet Iyun Adult Learning Program. The talented group then turned their energies toward creating a ½ hour play on the theme of “Genesis: Sibling Relationships,” which was staged in two TALI schools. Afterwards, each class held a “biblidrama” workshop focussing on the story of Joseph and his brothers. These full-day “biblidrama workshops” met with much success.

Dr. Avi Lavsky Appointed Regional Director

Dr. Avi Lavsky, a respected educator in the TALI system who served as principal of the Masorti High School in Jerusalem from 1985-2007, has assumed the position of Director of the Southern Region of the TALI school network. Dr. Lavsky also served as coordinator of the joint Tel Aviv-Los Angeles Federation Jewish Studies Curriculum Writing Project for Tel Aviv high schools, and this past year, coordinated the TALI Parents’ Leadership Development Program.

Neve Chana Youth Village Embraces TALI Rabbis

Schechter rabbinical student Yoav Ende, now in his fifth year of work with the children of the Neve Chana Youth Village, is recognized as an integral member of the school’s teaching and guidance staff. Yoav, who will be ordained in December 2008, works with the children twice a week as well as joining them once a month for Shabbat services and programs. He and TALI rabbi Liron Levy, also a Schechter rabbinical student, teach Bar/Bat Mitzvah classes and other informal education activities, as well as provide spiritual support to village students who come from problematic homes.

The school has begun to receive pedagogic counseling from TALI staff and each of the village’s foster families has received a complete set of TALI textbooks. The educational partnership between Neve Chana and TEF was put into place through the good offices of Rabbi Benjamin Kretzman and Janet Tobin.

TALI Students Take Top Honors

Yonatan Brada, a sixth grade student at the TALI Tsafirim School in Hadera took first place in a world competition on “My State of Israel” held on Jerusalem Day in the capital city. Competing against 28 children from all over Israel and the world, Yonatan came out on top. And in the TALI Hod Hasharon School, two fifth graders, Yuval Levy and Galil Meimon, won first place in a young playwright’s competition held in Sarasota Florida. The boys wrote the winning script as part of an English class assignment. Competing against 1,000 other scripts, the winning team was flown to Florida to receive the award, as well as see their play performed by a professional theatre group.
Dialogue and Identity

A select group of 300 Israeli school children, their teachers and principals all live less than an hour’s drive from one another, yet their paths never crossed until Dialogue and Identity.

On the Spectrum

This joint curriculum of the TALI Education Fund and the Center for Jewish-Christian Relations is promoting understanding, respect and a readiness for shared encounters between Jewish and Arab pupils in eight schools in Israel’s north. Dialogue and Identity builds strong professional partnerships on the teacher and principal level; multicultural education which stresses self-reflection while learning to respect the traditions of others and a promise for the future as teachers integrate the program into the school’s culture.

“Dialogue and Identity taught me about myself and my classmates… about the customs in Christianity and Islam. We connected to our guests because they are really nice and they are a lot like us!”

Harel Ben Michael, 5th grade, TALI Alona School, Amikam

“We do not promise peace, but a first positive experience that breaks down stereotypes and the barriers of fear. Each child is allowed to experience the complex identity of the ‘other,’ but only after they learn about their own culture and religion.”

Eva Halachmi, Project Director, TALI Education Fund

“We are citizens, but we are not friends. Arabs and Jews meet in university, but it is already too late. We need mutual encounters from the very beginning… Arabs are not only terrorists, they are citizens. The more we educate our children, the better we can defend the values of the State together. By educating toward these values, we win our future for the State.”

Sister Rene Mousa, Principal, Franciscan School, Kfar Kana

“The program lets me present my culture the way I would like others to see it, and offered an opportunity to ‘live values’.”

Abuna Louis, Principal, Latin Patriarchate School, Yefiyah

“Dancing together, children do not need language… What overcame the language barrier was the excitement, anticipation and lengthy preparations that preceded each encounter.”

Yehuda Wagner, Principal, TALI Neurim School, Kiryat Bialik
Dafna (Daffy) Ziv-Deshe
Educational Counselor and Class Facilitator of Dialogue and Identity program at the TALI Alona School, Moshav Amikam

Dafna (Daffy) has spent her entire life in Israel’s north. She grew up in Haifa and earned an M.A. in Educational Counseling from Haifa University. Daffy’s mother, a fourth generation Israeli, fluent in Arabic, was born and raised in Yesod Hama‘alah, one of Israel’s earliest settlements in the Upper Galilee’s Hula Valley. Daffy’s father, a German immigrant, took up farming in the northern coastal town of Atlit. Adjacent to his plot of land lived an Arab family with whom he had excellent relations. Co-existence with her Arab neighbors is something that comes naturally to Daffy. She remembers as a child, “not needing a program to bring us together. We simply lived together.”

“I look back on the first year of Dialogue and Identity as a time for laying the foundations, consolidating new relationships. We invested our time together in defining our separate identities in a historic and religious context.

“The year, for both of us, far exceeded our wildest expectations. We’ve decided that our two groups will meet next year, turning our attention to a dialogue that speaks to the present... What we’ve created must continue.”

Amir Kessabri
Head of Computer Systems, Social Activities Coordinator and Class Facilitator of Dialogue and Identity program at the Latin Patriarchate School, Yefiya

Amir was born in Yefiya, a village on the outskirts of Nazareth, to a family of Christian Arabs. He studied computer engineering in Haifa and was hired by the Latin Patriarchate School to take charge of their computer systems. But his natural affinity for children and affable personality soon brought him additional responsibilities at the school. “Fusing computers with compassion,” is how Amir describes his job.

“In the beginning, I was skeptical. I saw that both sides lacked a common vocabulary needed to communicate. But from the first meeting, with a few words in each language, some English and sign language, a way was paved for a building of relationships.

“The chemistry between Daffy and me was good. Acting as role models, we transmitted this positive energy to the kids. Our biggest achievement? The children developed a sense of mutual respect for each other.”
TALI “International”
Paris: A TALI school opened in the heart of Paris in September 2007. Established by Schechter graduate Rabbi Rivon Krygier, with members of his congregation Adath Shalom, the school follows TALI guidelines and curriculum. Two TALI textbooks have been translated into French for the early grades, with more planned for the future.

Mexico City: The Magen David Jewish Day School in Mexico City officially joined the TALI world family in September 2007. TEF, in cooperation with the Jewish Agency, is involved in creating specialized materials in Spanish and organizing staff seminars and teacher training workshops to be conducted both in Israel and in Mexico for the school’s principal and lead staff. TEF has recently signed a contract with the school to create a six-year curriculum for grades 6-12.

TALI Syllabus to Extend to High School Level
TALI is preparing a Jewish Studies syllabus for grades 7-12, following the success of the TALI grade 1-6 curriculum introduced in Fall 2004. Schechter faculty members Prof. Shmuel Glick, Prof. Oded Schremer, and Dr. Yossi Turner meet bi-weekly as consultants to professional teams from the Ministry of Education and the TALI Education Fund. The new syllabus, when combined with the Ministry of Education Set of Directives that was published in 2003, will guide the TALI curriculum at the secondary school level.

TALI Education Fund:
Providing A Total TALI Environment
TALI Human Resource Development Program
Leadership Program: 44 TALI principals and lead staff, including eight teachers from new TALI schools, learned at the Schechter Institute as part of the Leadership Development program which is accredited towards an M.A. degree in Jewish studies. Studies included a full day of classes once a week and two professional seminars. A total of 143 principals and lead staff have completed the Leadership Development program since its inception in 2001. More than two-thirds of program graduates continue their M.A. studies at Schechter.

Pedagogic Counseling: Twenty-one counselors worked in a record number of 62 schools and 70 TALI pre-school classrooms, helping more than 1,000 teachers and principals plan lessons, providing resource materials and serving as the central link in the school to TEF. Five professional training seminars were held for TALI pedagogic counselors during the year.

Teacher Training Workshops: Over 500 hours of teacher room workshops and intensive summer seminars were held. These training programs enrich teachers’ Jewish backgrounds and develop a common vocabulary of Jewish education among the staff of the school, contributing to a whole-school TALI environment.

Informal and Family Education: In the past year, TEF has prepared a new repertoire of informal educational activities. These workshops are creatively integrated into the TALI curriculum at each grade level and conducted at schools and other sites. Over 2,000 pupils and parents from nineteen schools participated in these activities.

TALI Online: An average of 21,000 monthly “hits” were recorded for the TALI Torah Portion of the Week that is hosted on Galim, a website for elementary schools run by Hebrew University’s Snunit, the largest educational internet gateway in Israel.

I see Schechter as a home, as family. The educational values promoted at this institution are of the highest. My wife has started studying here as well! Schechter, and all that it stands for, has become part of our family culture. Our children know that Thursdays, “Ema” and “Abba” are in Jerusalem, and we speak about Schechter to our kids in the plural. Beyond the importance of my studies to my educational work, I find that Schechter has bolstered the Jewish content in a way that is totally appropriate to our family lifestyle. We have three children in the local TALI school and we attend a synagogue where the rabbi is a Schechter graduate. Completing the M.A. has given me so much more than professional advancement. It has afforded me a chance to add to the knowledge that I acquired in the [TALI] Leadership program… It was, for me, a jump to a new level of learning.”

Reuven Spiegel, Homeroom teacher, Ra’anana TALI Megged School, 2007 Schechter M.A. graduate

The TALI Rabbi – New Spiritual Role Model
In 2007-08, twelve TALI rabbis and rabbinical students and another three music specialists continued their work as spiritual educators in 32 schools and 15 pre-schools, working with 12,000 children and parents. In a number of communities, where there is a local Conservative synagogue, a connection is established between the synagogue and the school. In two residential youth villages, Ahava near Kikryat Bialik and Neve Chana, near Kikryat Gat, TALI rabbis worked closely with foster families and their wards. The TALI rabbi program organized dozens of school community Tu B’Shvat Seder, Megilla readings and group Bat Mitzvah celebrations. The Shabbat Retreat, a new program organized by TALI rabbis, was held at...
two schools. Of special note: In the Ben Gurion School in Yavne, Rabbi Hannah Klebansky reports that the school has instituted regular prayer. She invested years in laying the ground work for this development which now includes the innovative idea of personal and family prayer. A letter from a school teacher follows:

…Rabbi Hannah comes to every class prepared and teaches the material in a clear and interesting way, enriching the world of the pupils. On Chanukah, Hannah prepared a parent-child activity for my class. We learned a page of Talmud together about lighting candles. Both pupils and parents enjoyed the pleasant atmosphere of learning…Hannah prepared a traditional Rosh Chodesh prayer service and blew the shofar. It was the most moving ceremony I have participated in during my many years at the school. The children learned the Rosh Chodesh songs and prayers by heart and now we conduct our own Rosh Chodesh ceremonies each month in the class.

Esther Schneider, TALI Teacher, Pisgat Ze’ev School

TALI Textbooks
Seven new TALI textbooks and study materials were produced in 2007-08: Shirat Halev (Song of the Heart): A Siddur (Grades 3-6) • Holidays and Festivals, Part 2, Grade 3 • The World of Prayer: A Sourcebook for Teachers, Book One: On Prayer (includes subjects such as the meaning of prayer, the development of prayer, the synagogue, and more); Book Two: Values in Prayers (examination of specific prayers and the values inherent in them) • Bible Stories with Values: Worksheets for the Family • Learning Together – Unit One: Between Parents and Children; Unit Two: “He Said that She Said That They Did”…Gossip, Slander and Tattle-Tales; Geared for students in grades 4-6, kit includes teacher’s handbook as well as educational accessories (cards, games, comics, etc.) • Parshat Shavua: The Weekly Torah Portion on Relations Between People, 4th grade. And in French: Open Up the Gate, Voices of Prayer (A booklet with extra units geared to the French community) + CD and Bible Stories with Values were published for the new TALI school in Paris.

In development:
Learning Together, Kit #2 includes Unit One on “Coping with Jealousy” and Unit Two on “Sorry to criticize, but…” - How to Hear Criticism and Learn from it; How to Criticize so it can be Heard…
• Our Holidays, two booklets on teaching the cycle of holidays, 4th grade • Holidays To Value, by Dr. Phina Feller, for parents and teachers

Textbook Distribution News
• More than 20,000 books were sold to TALI and non-TALI schools in 2007-08, including Jewish Day Schools in the Diaspora
• 40,000 copies of various TALI textbooks were re-printed during summer 2008 in order to supply the many orders from TALI schools across Israel
• Friends Across the Ocean, a TALI textbook that teaches about Diaspora Jews and the Israel-Diaspora relationship, was used in all public school fifth grade classes in the city of Modi’in, in cooperation with the Jewish Agency’s Partnership 2000. The schools received an extra weekly hour of teaching time for the subject. The project was extremely successful and enabled TALI to reach a broad population otherwise not connected to TALI education and learning materials
• A TALI book catalogue was produced in Hebrew to facilitate marketing of the TALI books in Israel.
• To date, a total of 27 textbooks and other educational resources have been published, including a series of five Torah Weekly Portion Textbooks for grades 2-6.
midreshet yerushalayim

chair of the board of directors and executive committee  
rabbi yossie goldman

director of midreshet yerushalayim - israel  
dr. yair paz

director of midreshet yerushalayim - eastern europe  
gila katz
Midreshet Yerushalayim in Israel and Ukraine

Midreshet Yerushalayim was established in 1991 in response to the massive wave of Russian-speaking immigrants reaching Israel’s shores and to the “lifting of the Iron Curtain” in the former Soviet Union. Since then, Midreshet Yerushalayim has played an important role in answering the spiritual needs of these newly emerging Jewish communities searching to re-build a connection with their Jewish roots.

Midreshet Yerushalayim, with its open and intellectual approach to Judaism, provided the right educational and spiritual framework for the Russian-speaking community. In the past seventeen years, thousands of Jews in scores of communities throughout Israel and the former Soviet Union have found a Jewish “home” in the educational life of Midreshet Yerushalayim programs.

Midreshet Yerushalayim – Israel

Highlights 2007-08

The Numbers
Twenty-six Jewish education programs operated throughout Israel from Eilat to the Galilee reaching close to 1,000 Russian-speaking immigrants of all ages. The year-long programs have created communities that provide a focal point for Jewish identity and a sense of belonging in Israel.

MILI (Hebrew acronym for Midreshet Yerushalayim for Creative Study), attracts hundreds of young Russians (aged 20-35) to competitions, based on a game played in their native Russia, which solves intellectual riddles in small groups. The MILI innovation adds Jewish content to the questions. Now in its seventh year, the game has scored great success in attracting young Russian-speaking immigrants to a framework that increases their knowledge and experience of Judaism, while providing them with a social support group to ease their absorption into Israeli society.

Programs included:

• Six MILI national competitions including special Chanukah and Shavuot “treasure hunts” in Jerusalem, in addition to the traditional MILI quiz in Beersheva; a Purim competition in Bet Shemesh; a Pesach quiz in Ashdod; and a Jerusalem Day quiz that drew over 300 participants.
• Two “Heritage Trail” (Shvilei Moreshet) year-long seminars for Jerusalem students and young adults, co-sponsored by Keren Klita. Forty students met twice weekly to study about The History and Ethnology of Jerusalem. Veteran instructor Michael Korol taught a weekly class on the subject and then guided the group on Friday field trips.

New Chair for Midreshet Board

Prof. Shmuel Glick, Director of the Schocken Institute in Jerusalem, was appointed Chair of the Midreshet Yerushalayim Board of Directors in March 2008, replacing Rabbi Yossie Goldman who served from 2006-08. Prof. Glick was the founding director of Midreshet Yerushalayim activities in Hungary and Eastern Europe in the early 1990s. He is a professor of Jewish Law at the Schechter Institute and Visiting Professor at the University of Jewish Studies in Budapest. We wish Prof. Glick success in his renewed efforts for Midreshet Yerushalayim and extend deep appreciation to Rabbi Goldman for his contributions to the institution.

Midreshet Yerushalayim Connects with Conservative Kehillot

Midreshet Yerushalayim offered courses in the following Masorti congregations: Hakehilla Masortit in Ra’anana where twenty immigrants studied Jewish Civilization through Music; in Karmiel’s Kehillat HaKerem where two courses were offered on Practical Judaism and Jewish History of the First Temple Period; and in Rehovot’s Kehillat Adat Shalom Emanuel, where two courses were offered to thirty Russian-speaking students on the Mishnah and the weekly Torah portion. Most Midreshet Yerushalayim instructors are Russian-speaking graduates or students of the Schechter Institute. Raised in the former Soviet Union, they were first drawn to Jewish studies and practice by the Masorti approach to Jewish education at Schechter.
MILI Goes International…with MILI Olami

The MILI quiz game was successfully exported to the city of Kharkov in Ukraine in June 2008. Over 100 university students aged 17-25 played the game which included a large number of Jewish content questions. The event was organized by Leonid Kantor, a graduate of MILI OLAMI, a ten-month academic course run by Midreshet Yerushalayim in 2007 which prepared a select group for Jewish education leadership roles in the FSU and Germany. Another graduate, Natalie Yemiliyanova, is director of a Jewish Center in Novgorod, while other graduates have found Jewish education work in Israel and the FSU.

MILI Heads for the Great Outdoors

Treasure Hunt: Chanukah Menorahs in Jerusalem was the theme for a new game conceived by MILI director Yan Privorotsky which takes the MILI concept out of the classroom and into the streets. Competing teams comprised of over seventy participants from throughout Israel, gathered in the streets of Jerusalem on the third night of Chanukah. Their mission: to scout out the sites where various menorahs were hidden by answering questions on Jewish history. Unlike the indoor MILI game, participants are allowed to use reference books and the internet to obtain the answers.

MILI Methodological Center: Keep those Questions Coming!

The key to MILI's success lies in the formulation of the questions used in the games. To date, about 1,000 questions related to Israel and Judaism have been formulated. Rabbi Reuven Resnick, Schechter Rabbinical Seminary graduate, together with Ilya Talyanski, coordinator for the Bat Yam MILI group, meet weekly to compose new questions.

MILI website used in FSU

The Midreshet Yerushalayim website, www.mili.org.il, continues to gain new readers. With over 12,000 visits recorded in 2008, the site is a rich resource of Jewish information. With much of the material researched and written by Schechter graduate Rabbi Michael Kovson, offerings include a weekly Torah portion sheet in Russian with 1,000 visitors a month, half coming from Israel and half from the FSU; an “Ask the Rabbi” column; a “Jewish Expressions” column which provides a basic introduction to Jewish terms and customs; an “Our Jerusalem” column on the history, architecture and geography of various sites in Jerusalem; the Jewish Calendar and a Midreshet Yerushalayim calendar of events; a MILI dictionary for Jewish religious and cultural expressions; and complete texts of books on Jewish topics published in Russian by the Schechter Institute.

Torah in Tel Aviv in Russian…Celebrating Ten Years

Veteran Jewish educator, Rafi Kassimov, who will be ordained by the Schechter Rabbinical Seminary in December 2008, celebrated a decade of teaching Jewish studies to a highly committed group of Russian-speakers in the heart of Tel Aviv. Over the years, his course became so popular that an additional class was added, and today, over ninety participants engage weekly in intellectual pursuit, both in the classroom and in the field. One class, studying History and Religions of Jerusalem, organized a Shabbat retreat devoted to Shavuot and the Book of Ruth at Kibbutz Yehiam. The second class, Torah and its Interpretation, examined the Joseph Story and Exodus.

Kudos for the Midreshet Yerushalayim Learning Community

Dear Dr. Paz,

We students of Rafi Kassimov’s lecture series, have for years now, come every week to learn about our Jewish traditions and culture. Thanks to this class, many of us were able for the first time, to connect with our wondrous tradition—study we were unable to pursue, for well-known reasons, in the Soviet Union. Today we are able to understand Midrashim as well as fully engage in deep discussions on the commentaries of the Torah. With great appreciation to the pedagogic artistry of Dr. Kassimov, we thank him for bringing us closer to Judaism and Torah, and setting us out on the path of understanding our Jewish religion.

Raya Shapira and classmates

July 2008

Israel Culture Club

Jerusalem’s Russian-speakers are treated weekly to a potpourri of cultural activities held at the Schocken Institute. The brain-child of Schechter-ordained Rabbi Michael Rifkin and today coordinated by Schechter graduate Rabbi Baruch Yonin, cultural encounters include: Aficionados of Ancient Hebrew Manuscripts Club, with lectures utilizing rare manuscripts from the Schocken collection; Music-Lovers’ Club, which focuses on Jewish and Biblical themes in western classical music; and a Modern Hebrew Literature Club, which showcases biblical motifs in modern Hebrew literature.
Midreshet Yerushalayim - Ukraine
Highlights 2007-08

The Numbers
1,000 children and their families participated in Midreshet Yerushalayim, the only Conservative Jewish educational network in the former Soviet Union, through the following education frameworks:

- Eight TALI Family Education Centers in Kiev, Chernivtsi, Munkatsh, Khust, Berdichev, Priuki, Kirovograd and Donetsk
- The TALI Day School with 320 pupils in Chernivtsi
- Two schools receiving pedagogical support (Chirksas and Nikolaiyev)
- Ramah-Ukraine Summer Camp
- Ramah-Ukraine Family Camp
- For the first time! Ramah-NOAM Winter Camp

Leadership training is essential to high quality Jewish education and community building. Midreshet Yerushalayim held the following seminars:

- The first Ramah-Ukraine International Leadership Seminar took place in January 2008 in Kiev where six North American Ramah counselors met with forty Ukrainian Marom students in a rich experiential program
- A week-long teachers’ training seminar (outside Kiev) was attended by 45 teachers from Midreshet Yerushalayim schools who were joined by ten Ramah-Ukraine camp counselors for Shabbat in March 2008
- A Midreshet Yerushalayim-Marom Leadership Seminar in May 2008 brought together thirty Ramah-Ukraine camp counselors who are also active in their city’s Marom chapters throughout Ukraine
- Holiday celebrations included four pre-Passover model Seders held for teachers, students and parents and three High Holiday services held in Kiev, Chernovitz and Donetsk

New Initiatives … New Programs

Ramah-Ukraine Camps: First Time for Winter Camp

Camp Ramah in Ukraine was a bold idea that took hold 16 years ago, and with each passing year has evolved into an educational reality that has a profound impact on the young Jewish population of Ukraine. Thousands of children have graduated the program as campers and then as counselors, with close to 1,000 of the graduates making their home in Israel in the last decade.

The 1st Ramah-Noam Winter Camp in Ukraine, a longtime dream of the children and staff of Midreshet Yerushalayim, took place this past winter outside of Kiev. Starting on the first night of Chanukah, the five-day camp constituted an additional holiday “miracle” for the eighty campers aged 13-16. The youngsters were treated to an exciting program of educational and cultural activities - Miracles in Jewish History and in My Own Life - that focused on the story of Chanukah and on personal Jewish identity. The spirit of Chanukah came to life through workshops in arts and crafts, animation and music. The themes of the Chanukah story were used as a springboard to numerous discussions of Jewish and personal identity which carried over into the Shabbat programming. Feedback was very positive, with campers and counselors already planning for next year’s winter reunion.

Camp Ramah-Ukraine, celebrating its 16th anniversary this year, has acquired an outstanding reputation for providing a positive two-week educational and social experience in the countryside for Jewish children and families in Ukraine. Informal Jewish study, religious services, as well as cultural and recreational activities conducted in a scenic setting provide a wonderful model of Jewish living and a welcome break from the harsh economic conditions that characterize life for most Ukrainian Jews. In 2008, 175 children and 34 staff members (seven coming from Israel) explored the theme of Our Israel: the 60th Anniversary of the State of Israel.

Ramah-Ukraine Family Camp held its fifth annual camp for children aged 6-10 and their parents. Almost 100 “campers of all ages” formed a Kehilla (community) committed to learning and growing together as one family unit. This year, for the first time, the majority of children were accompanied by both their parents. The experience of the entire family living in a Jewish community twenty-four hours a day plays a vital role in forming Jewish identity, bringing parents and children closer together, and prompting them to observe Jewish ceremonies once they have returned to their homes. A high percentage of parent graduates of the camp take on leadership roles in their local Midreshet Yerushalayim educational centers.

1. Participants of the Tel Aviv Lecture Series take a field trip to Jerusalem
2. Shvilei Masoret fieldtrip in Jerusalem environs
3. Midreshet Yerushalayim lecturer Shlomo Voskoboynik, speaking to a single-parents group in Eilat
4. Campers at the Camp Ramah-Ukraine Summer Session
5. Gila Katz, Midreshet Yerushalayim Director, sharing a book from the Rabbi David Clayman z”l Library with children at the Kiev Cultural Center
Shlomo Voskoboynik
Teacher of Jewish Thought, Bible and History and Pedagogic Coordinator, Yotvata Regional School, near Eilat; Midreshet Yerushalayim Jewish Studies teacher for single-parent Russian-speakers, Eilat

On the Spectrum
Shlomo made aliya in 1994 with a wife and child from his hometown of Vinnitsa, Ukraine where he was a teacher of Russian Literature. In Israel, he earned a teaching certificate which enabled him to begin a new life in education. He is now in his second year of M.A. study at Schechter, majoring in Jewish Thought with a minor in Land of Israel studies.

On Defining Jewish Life and Learning
“I remember my grandmother lighting Friday night candles; once in a while, tasting matza, joining in a minyan. But the first time I actually touched a Torah and opened a Bible, I was 21 years old!”

“My work with the single parents has been most rewarding. It is amazing how they take hold of the Bible stories and make them their own. Each one arrived in Israel for his or her own reasons, but none of them had the leisure time to acclimate. I am giving them their ‘educational absorption.’”

“My aim is to bridge the gap that prevents them from reaching ‘Israeliness.’ All of us need to find our Jewish narrative as much as we need a salary to feed our families.”

“At Schechter, it became clear to me that what unites Israeli society is much greater than what divides us. Sometimes, sitting in class, I am moved just by looking around the room and seeing fellow students of all levels of religious observance, deep in a dialogue that needs to resonate throughout Israel.”
Igor (Boaz) Babkin
Senior Camp Ramah-Ukraine Counselor; Graduate of the Midreshet Yerushalayim Educational Leadership Program; Schechter Rabbinical Seminary Candidate

On the Spectrum
Igor grew up in Odessa, Ukraine, where “Jewish” was a dirty word, and a secret to keep under wraps. He taught English in the FSU before making aliyah five years ago. In summer 2004, he traveled to Kiev and Camp Ramah-Ukraine where he worked as a translator for North American counselors, experiencing a personal “Ten Days That Shook His World!” He has returned to camp every summer since as the “Singing Rabbi.”

On Defining Jewish Life and Learning
“Judaism? I know this is something that was lacking in my life. I now realize that a person cannot be a Jew without learning the basics of Judaism.”

“In Israel, there is a Russian community that numbers more than a million souls. The vast majority of them are good people, educated and moral. But they don’t have a clue about Judaism. In their minds, Judaism equals Meah Shearim and black hats. They are losing out on an entire world, rich in color and meaning.

“Ramah has been the miracle in my life. 1000 miles from Israel, so far from Jerusalem, yet connected by that Jewish thread we are all tied to. I lead 200 children in Hebrew song; children who are learning to pray; children who bring the traditions back to the family.”
A letter from Rabbi Mitch Cohen, National Ramah Director:

Following my visit last summer to Ramah Yachad in Ukraine to celebrate the 15th anniversary of their Ramah programming, Amy Skopp Cooper and I, together with the Ramah directors and the leadership of the Schechter Institute in Israel, planned a Steinberg Fellowship staff training program in Ukraine for a small number of our senior-most youth leadership at North American Ramah camps. We planned this carefully with Rabbi David Golinkin and Gila Katz of Schechter’s Midreshet Yerushalayim program, in partnership with Masorti Olami.

Below, please read Philip Sherman’s wonderful account of this trip. Philip is a rabbinical student at Hebrew College in Boston, and senior educational leader at Camp Ramah in Wisconsin:

‘Traveling to Ukraine to meet with the staff of Ramah-Ukraine was truly one of the most significant learning experiences I have ever had in my life. These campers … went to Ramah because they learned of their Jewish heritage from their families and wanted to understand more of their true identity…traveling upwards of 16 hours to be with us for a weekend of learning and fun…

‘Understanding the mindset of a Ukrainian was not easy, but finding clarity in their commitment and passion for Judaism was quite meaningful…

‘Creating successful and meaningful relationships with the young Ukrainian Jewish community, in my eyes, is one of the more important things young Jews of today can do. Jews around the world are beginning to establish significant communities that many in North America have yet to discover. Using Ramah as a catalyst for these relationships will not only help our youth, but also will connect their youth to a brighter future…’ “

Midreshet – Marom Sponsor Four Young Leadership Training Seminars
The Marom (Masorti Olami) Student Movement and Midreshet Yerushalayim, in a new initiative to build a strong young leadership base within the Ukrainian Jewish community, have organized four Young Leadership Training Seminars in 2007-08.

- The Ramah-Ukraine International Seminar, organized by Midreshet Yerushalayim Director Gila Katz and Ramah National Director Rabbi Mitch Cohen, brought six Ramah staff from North America to Kiev to connect with forty of their Midreshet Yerushalayim counselor counterparts in January 2008. The seminar took participants to Kiev for a tour of the Jewish sites of the city, followed by five days of professional growth and exchange at the site of Camp Ramah-Ukraine outside of Kiev. Response to Ramah-Ukraine International was overwhelmingly positive. Counselors from both sides of the ocean committed themselves to maintaining and strengthening the professional ties and personal relationships that evolved out of this gathering. • Thirty young Jewish leaders from all Marom chapters attended the Midreshet –Marom May Seminar whose theme was Israel’s 60th anniversary. The program focused on preparing for the Camp Ramah-Ukraine summer session as well as strengthening participants’ knowledge of Shabbat practice and prayer. • A third Young Leadership Seminar took place at the end of the summer after Camp Ramah-Ukraine. • A fourth seminar is planned for November 2008.

Marom provides an avenue where young Jewish students can meet and socialize, which strengthens Jewish identity. To date, Marom has opened chapters in Midreshet Yerushalayim – Masorti Olami Cultural Centers in Kiev, Lvov, Chernivtsi, Kirovograd and Donetsk. All chapters hold Kabbalat Shabbat Shabbat activities that include prayers and a Shabbat dinner. Many Marom students are also Midreshet Yerushalayim teachers and counselors at the Ramah-Ukraine summer camps. Midreshet Yerushalayim guest lecturers enrich Marom programs with lectures and workshops on timely Jewish topics.

Kiev Cultural Center: Outreach Seven Days a Week
Kiev’s new Midreshet Yerushalayim-Masorti Olami Educational Cultural Center, funded by a grant from the Rothschild Foundation-Europe, celebrated its second anniversary in January 2008. In a short time, with the ongoing partnership of Mercaz-Masorti Olami, a multi-generational Jewish community with a strong Jewish identity has developed in Kiev. The Center is open seven days a week, with a host of innovative programs that is drawing some 250 people weekly, including:

- Armon (Chestnut) Community Education Center which meets twice a week and is comprised of 100 parents and children
- Kiev Beit Midrash, weekly pre-Kabbalat Shabbat Havruta study with 30-40 participants
- An animation workshop that produced two short films on Chanukah and the Hebrew alphabet
- The Jewish Cinemateque Club
- The Jewish Literature and Poetry Club
- The Jewish Drama Club
- Judaism in the Home “how-to” morning workshop for mothers, grandmothers and toddlers
- Israeli and Jewish Song and Dance
- Hebrew Ulpan
- Marom Student Movement
- Holiday Arts and Crafts Workshops
NOAM Branch to Open at Kiev Center
In response to local demand, the Center is now recruiting and training counselors in order to open a NOAM Youth Group for children aged 12-15, patterned after the NOAM youth group that is run in Israel.

Rabbi David Clayman Memorial Resource Library: A Community Gem
A Jewish Resource Library named in honor of Rabbi David Clayman z”l, one of the founders of Midreshet Yerushalayim, opened last year at the Kiev Cultural Center. Presenting a unique resource for the Kiev Jewish community, the Clayman Library contains bilingual Bibles, Mishnah, Talmud, Midrash, Pirke Avot, Siddurim, books by Jewish philosophers and teachers on spiritual and practical aspects of Judaism that have been translated into Russian, books on Israel, as well as CDs with prayers and Shabbat songs. The intellectual hub of the Center, the library is used extensively by students and instructors. Of particular interest is a Library Appreciation Class established to introduce children aged 9-13 to the beauty of classical Jewish texts. The versatile library transforms itself into a bookmobile which is stationed each summer at Camp Ramah-Ukraine for use by campers and counselors.

Schechter Rabbinical Student Interns in Kiev
Rabbinical student Reuven Stamov serves as student rabbi and educator in the Kiev Cultural Center, Midreshet Yerushalayim-Marom seminars, Camp Ramah-Ukraine winter and summer sessions and the Teacher Training Seminar. At the seminars, he taught classes on contemporary Halakhah, Conservative Judaism and Streams in Judaism. In informal settings, he led prayer services and Torah readings, accompanied by his guitar.

New “Family Club” Opens Door in Chernivtsi TALI
Chernivtsi TALI school families attending the annual Ramah-Ukraine Family Camp have developed strong bonds. As a result, they have established their own “Family Club” that meets twice monthly at the Chernivtsi school. The club initiates popular lectures on Jewish traditions, Israel and other current issues common to Jewish family life around the world. The Chernivtsi TALI Day School, established in 1991, is Midreshet Yerushalayim’s flagship school. With 320 pupils from elementary through high school, the school hosts family programs, Kabbalat Shabbat and holiday celebrations for the school community.

Seminar for Jewish Educators in the Ukraine
Midreshet Yerushalayim’s week-long seminar for teachers, held in March 2008, provided an intense educational experience that enhanced the participants’ Jewish knowledge and equipped them with new didactic tools. This year, in addition to the forty-five teachers representing all Midreshet Yerushalayim schools and educational frameworks, ten camp counselors from Ramah-Ukraine joined the seminar for the two-day Shabbat program.

Conversion Classes at Teachers’ Seminar
Rabbi Chaim Weiner, from the Masorti Bet Din in London, together with Schechter rabbinical student Reuven Stamov, met with nine prospective converts during the Teachers’ Seminar in March. The students, all veteran Midreshet Yerushalayim counselors, received a study plan and introduction to the conversion process. Reuven will continue to learn with the group toward their conversion.

Kirovograd and Donetsk Community Schools
Community schools in Kirovograd and Kiev are successfully reaching out to their respective Jewish communities with an inclusive Jewish studies program which began in 2006. These schools were established in response to demand from families who had attended Ramah-Ukraine’s family camp. The schools offer a rich program in Jewish experiential learning. In Kirovograd, seventy parents and children learn on Sundays and Wednesdays. In Donetsk, 150 children and parents attend weekly and Shabbat activities.

Turetsky Scholarship Fund Broadens Reach
The Rabbi Arnold (z”l) and Noemie Turetsky Scholarship Fund, after many years of spearheading the revival of Jewish education in Budapest, has from 2008, thanks to the vision of Noemie Turetsky, expanded its mandate to include developing rabbinical leadership that will serve the young, growing Midreshet Yerushalayim-Masorti community in Kiev. Reuven Stamov is the first Turetsky Rabbinical Scholar, who besides studying full time, traveled to Ukraine six times in 2007-8 to conduct programs and religious services as a rabbinical intern.

Midreshet Yerushalayim – Hungary
Marking the fourth anniversary of the passing of beloved Midreshet Yerushalayim educator and supporter, Rabbi Arnold Turetsky z”l, the Turetsky Fund will maintain its ties with Budapest by continuing to send a visiting scholar from the Schechter Institute twice a year to teach advanced seminars. This year, Prof. Shmuel Glick, Professor of Talmud and Rabbinics at the Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies, traveled to Budapest where he taught Jewish Education and Rabbinic Literature.

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2. First Ramah-Ukraine International Seminar January 2008
3. First Ramah-Noam Winter Camp Havdalah Service
4. Children of Midreshet Yerushalayim’s TALI flagship school in Chernivtsi
5. Directors of Ramah-Ukraine and Ramah-North America, Gila Katz and Rabbi Mitch Cohen lead a summer camp session
6. Turetsky Fellow Reuven Stamov leads song at the Kiev Cultural Center
scholarship for the community
Scholarship for the Community

Conservative Congregations Study with the Best of Schechter

The Rebecca Goldstein z”l and Rabbi Noah Golinkin z”l Educational Outreach Program enables Schechter lecturers to teach at Masorti synagogues throughout Israel.

September 2008  Kehillat Magen Avraham, Omer: Rabbi Dr. David Frankel, Jonah - From Atonement to Repentance
• Kehillat Eshel Avraham, Beersheva: Rabbi Hagit Yisrael-Sabag, Shavuot Study on To See and Be Seen Before God and Man
• May 2008  Kehilla HaMasortit HaKrayot: Dr. Yossi Turner, Zionism and Diasporism
• April 2008  Kehillat Kiryat Bialik: Dr. Shula Laderman, Pesach: A Presentation of the Jewish Past, Present and Future through Hebrew Illustrated Haggadot from the Middle Ages
• Kehillat V’Ahavta, Zichron Ya’akov: Rabbi Dr. David Frankel, Hebron, The Eternal City – Indeed?
• March 2008  Kehillat Hod V’Hadar, Hod Hasharon: Dr. Guy Miron, From Mendelssohn to Leo Baeck: German Jewry as a Symbol for Jewish Modernity
• Kehillat Sukkat Shalom, Ramat Yishai: Dr. David Frankel, Hebron, The Eternal City – Indeed?
• Kehillat Magen Avraham, Omer: Rabbi Dr. Einat Ramon, International Women’s Day Special Lecture and Kehillat Shearim, Netanya: On Mourning and Teshuva: a Memorial Service for Merkaz Harav Yeshiva Students
• February 2008  Kehillat V’Ahavta, Zichron Ya’akov: Dr. Aharon Amit, The Shmita Year
• January 2008  Kehillat Sinai: Rabbi Dr. Einat Ramon, Feminist Readings of the Creation Stories in Genesis
• Kehillat Sukkat Shalom, Ramat Yishai: Dr. Aharon Amit, The Shmita Year
• October 2007  Kehilla HaMasortit HaKrayot, Rabbi Dr. Paul Shrell-Fox: Psychological Aspects of Life Cycle Ceremonies in Judaism
• September 2007  Kehilla HaMasortit HaKrayot, Rabbi Dr. Shula Laderman, Yom Kippur and the Seder Avodah: The Image of Atonement and Sanctity in Jewish and Christian Art

Schechter: Popular Venue for Public Lectures and Conferences

The Schechter Institute hosted a number of lectures and conferences throughout the year that were open to the public:

• Jewish Education – For What? and Other Essays, a colloquium honoring the publication of an anthology of articles by Prof. Walter Ackerman z”l, published by the Schechter Institute with Ben Gurion University, Haifa University and Bar Ilan University, June 2008

• Tribute to Prof. David Halivni, 2008 Israel Prize recipient in Talmud; opening remarks by Profs. David Golinkin and Shamma Friedman, with keynote speaker, Dr. Yossi Turner, on Halivni’s, Breaking of the Tablets: Jewish Theology After the Shoa.


• “Schechter Artists’ House” Opening with works by Judaism and the Arts M.A. students, coordinated by Dr. Jo Milgrom, May 2008

• Holocaust Memorial Day Service and Megillat Hashoah reading, lecture by Irena Steinfeld from Yad Vashem, May 2008

• The Annual Rabbi David Aronson Memorial Symposium, devoted to the subject of Zionism and Post-Zionism at Israel’s Sixtieth Anniversary, with Dr. Alex Yaakovson, lecturer in History at the Hebrew University and Amos Noy, journalist, March 2008

• The Matt Eisenfeld z”l and Sarah Duker z”l Memorial Service, February 2008


• Lunch “N Learn on The Importance of Organ Donations with Yeshayahu Ben Shmuel, from ADI organization for the advancement of organ transplants in Israel, and Tirza Rotkovitz, editor of TEF booklet To Give With All Your Heart, December 2007

• Holocaust Survivors and Israeli Society, a conference organized by Schechter lecturer, Dr. Galia Glasner-Heled, December 2007

• Shlomo Carlebach Concert commemorating the rabbi’s 14th yahrzeit, with Dr. David Frankel and Prof. David Golinkin, October 2007

• 11th Rabin Memorial Day Ceremony, presented by Schechter Rabbinical Seminary students, October 2007

• Faculty evening for the opening of academic year with Prof. Gideon Shimoni, Professor Emeritus, Hebrew University’s Center for Contemporary Jewry, and Dr. Einar Ramon on Israel at Sixty: How Would A.D. Gordon and Ahad Ha’am View the State Today, October 2007

Lieberman Symposium Showcases New Research on the Scholar

The annual 25th Prof. Saul Lieberman Memorial Lecture, held in April at the Schocken Institute, brought to light recent scholarship dedicated to Saul Lieberman the teacher and scholar. Guest speakers included Prof. David Golinkin, Schechter Institute; Prof. Shamma Friedman, JTS and Schechter Institute; Prof. Dov Zlotnik, JTS, and Dr. Efraim Bezalel Halivni, The Academy of Hebrew Language.

Footnotes:
1. Holocaust Scroll (Megillat Hashoah) Reading at the Schechter Institute
Women’s Study Days: Empowerment in Four Languages
400 women made their way to Jerusalem and the Schechter Institute to participate in the 9th annual National Women’s Study Day held in June 2008. This year’s theme, “We Were Dreamers: Yesterday’s Dreams and Dreams of Tomorrow” was organized in honor of Israel’s 60th Anniversary and was taught in Hebrew, English, Russian and Spanish. Many of the lecturers were Schechter rabbinical graduates and Graduate School faculty members. Sponsored by the Schechter Institute, Women’s League for Conservative Judaism and the Masorti Movement, and organized by Diane Friedgut, regional study days also took place in three locations in February (see profile, page 37).

Faculty Publications Honored with Symposia
The Van Leer Institute in Jerusalem held a panel discussion in honor of the publication of Akedat Yitzhak (The Binding of Isaac), by Schechter Senior Lecturer, Dr. Alexander Even-Chen, with Yediot Ahronot Press, which was attended by 250 people, January 2008. An evening of study to mark the publication of Torah Lishma: A Festschrift in Honor of Prof. Shamma Friedman, co-sponsored by the Schechter Institute, Bar Ilan University and JTS, held at the Schocken Institute, was attended by 350 participants, December 2007. Dr. Einat Ramon’s book, A New Life: Religion, Motherhood and Supreme Love in the Works of A. D. Gordon was the topic of a panel discussion held at Midreshet Iyun in Tel Aviv in July 2008. The annual Sukkot Learning Festival, Hakhel, which took place this year at Ramat Efal, also showcased Ramon’s new book in a panel discussion with Muki Tsur, Einat Ramon and Sharon Leshem Zinger in September 2007.

Ramon is Scholar-in-Residence at Masorti Congregations
The Dean of the Schechter Rabbinical Seminary, Rabbi Dr. Einat Ramon, traveled extensively in 2007-08 in order to share scholarship on Shabbat or holidays with Masorti congregations throughout Israel. For Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, she led services at the Moriah Congregation in Haifa and returned there in December to lead a Bar Mitzvah service. The Amitay Ra’anana congregation hosted Ramon in April for Shabbat Hagadol and Pesach. Ramon taught in Jerusalem’s Moreshet Yisrael and Ya’ar Ramot congregations, Kehillat Sinai in Tel Aviv, Shira Hadasha in Arad, Succat Shalom in Ramat Yishai, Netzach Yisrael in Ashkelon, Eshel Avraham in Beersheva, and the Kehilla Masortit Mishpachtit in Kfar Vradim.

The Holocaust Scroll Reaching New Audiences Worldwide
Increasing numbers of Conservative congregations throughout Israel and the world are adopting the Holocaust Scroll for ceremonies marking Holocaust Remembrance Day. The Holocaust Scroll is co-published by the International Rabbinical Assembly and the Schechter Institute.

A second edition of the Holocaust Scroll in Spanish, sponsored by Saul and Toby Feldberg in memory of their mother Eva, father Abraham and brother Philip, was read in synagogues throughout Central and South America.

“... The new Megillat Hashoah has greatly benefited our community. This year we held two ceremonies. In our congregation reading of the Megilla, all of the people were truly moved. A second reading took place with our Youth Movement at a touching ceremony at the small Jewish cemetery in Entre Rios. Eighteen teenagers from our community and fifty people from Entre Rios participated. We have no words to thank you. You can rest assured that the booklets have fulfilled the mission for which they were designed: reaching a diversity of people.”

Sem. Sebastian J. Grimberg
Community Director
Ciudad de Buenos Aires, Argentina

Rabbi Lawrence Pinsker of Shaarey Zedek congregation in Winnipeg, Saskatchewan, introduced the scroll to his community in 2008:

“The Winnipeg premiere of the Holocaust Scroll was moving and elicited universal acclaim, as well as an institutional pledge to make it an annual event! Our readers included the local Catholic Archbishop, Anglican Bishop and the Dean of the School of Theology of the University of Winnipeg and local Jewish religious and communal leaders as well as political figures. Six survivor families lit candles and we incorporated three stunning pieces of music, including a Yiddish poem set to music that left everyone gasping and tearful.”
Eighty Israeli community centers held public readings of Megillat Hashoah—the Holocaust Scroll on Yom Hashoah in May 2008. The special JCC booklet, produced by Ya’akov Maoz, Director of the Jewish Heritage Department of Israel’s National Association of Community Centers and the Schechter Institute, was first read in 2007 in fifty centers. In 2008, a second printing of 5,000 copies, sponsored by David and Aviva Rubin, in memory of Rabbi Jerome Weistrop z”l, introduced the Megillah reading to many more thousands of Israelis.

Moshe Luzon, Schechter M.A. graduate and regional director of community centers in the Krayot, reports on the reading that took place at the Eshkol Hapayis Center in Kiryat Yam:

“200 participants read the Holocaust Scroll for the first time, receiving it with great enthusiasm. Kiryat Yam Mayor Shmuel Siso, rabbis, school principals and other public figures, including many Holocaust survivors, carefully reviewed the content and were impressed by the Scroll’s creative integration of a wide range of source material. The text itself, as well as its presentation was of a very high standard. I saw people silently weeping - the effect was so strong!”

Israeli Diplomats in more than one hundred Israeli embassies and consulates worldwide received copies of Megillat Hashoah, the International Rabbinical Assembly-Schechter Institute publication, in order to conduct public readings in their respective countries on Holocaust Remembrance Day.

Masorti 30th Anniversary Celebrations Feature Schechter Scholars

A significant number of Schechter rabbinical graduates, students, faculty and lay leaders participated in New Masorti Midrash - two days of study and celebration honoring thirty years of the Masorti Movement in Israel which was held in December 2007. Speakers included Rabbi Prof. David Golinkin, Prof. Alice Shalvi, Prof. Hanan Alexander, Rabbi Dr. Eitan Chikli, Rabbi Dr. Einat Ramon, Rabbi Diana Villa and many additional Schechter graduates.

Conferences, Lectures and Symposia by Schechter Faculty

September 2008
Dr. Galia Glasner-Heled, “Alternative Memory in Israel,” Annual Conference of the Forum for Research of Israeli Society, under the direction of Prof. Anita Shapira, Tel Aviv University

August 2008
Rabbi Dr. Einat Ramon, “Tisha B’av panel discussion with Rabbi Benny Lau and Micha Goodman, Merkaz Tarbut Amim Lanoar, Jerusalem

July 2008
Prof. David Golinkin, “The Israeli Conversion Crisis from a Halachic Perspective,” Kehillat Moreshet Avraham, Jerusalem
Dr. Jo Milgrom: “Handmade Midrash Workshop,” Ki Va Moed, Jerusalem-New York, Torah study group, July and April 2008
Dr. Yair Paz, “The Mysterious Disappearance of the Cornerstone of the Hebrew University and Its Rediscovery,” Conference Marking Ninety Years Since the Establishment of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem Cinematique, Jerusalem

Rabbi Dr. Einat Ramon, “The Challenges of Conversion,” with Rabbi Donnibel Hartman and Prof. David Ellenson, Hartman Institute, Jerusalem

June 2008
Jewish Education – For What? and Other Essays, a conference honoring the publication of an anthology of articles by Prof. Walter Ackerman z”l, published by the Schechter Institute with Ben Gurion University, Haifa University and Bar Ilan University, chaired by Prof. David Golinkin, a personal note by Shira Ackerman Simcovitch and lectures by Prof. Hanan Alexander, Dr. Brenda Bacon, Prof. Haim Marantz and Prof. Michael Rosenak.

Prof. David Golinkin, “Judaism and Ecology,” Women’s Study Day, Schechter Institute

Prof. Shamma Friedman, “What does Sinai have to do with the Sabbatical Year?” Hoshaya, Shavuot

Rabbi Dr. Roni Klein, “A Turn towards the Verse” in the French-Jewish Thought in the 1980s,” Ben-Gurion University

Dr. Shula Laderman, “The Unique Significance of the Hebrew Alphabet in Jewish Art,” The Jewish Presence in Art, A Research Workshop of the Israel Science Foundation – Jewish Art and Worship, Bar Ilan University- Ars Judaica

1-4. Women’s Study Day at Schechter. 1. Morning prayers 2. Our youngest Jewish feminist 3. “A Full House” for a Spanish lecture 4. Rabbi Tamar Elad-Appelbaum leading prayers 5. Shira Ackerman Simcovitch speaks at a colloquium at Schechter honoring the publication of an anthology of her father’s works, with Prof. Michael Rosenak, Dr. Brenda Bacon and Prof. Hanan Alexander (seated), also presenting papers
Galit Gaon
Founding director and chief curator of the Israeli Cartoon and Caricature Museum, Holon

On the Spectrum
Galit was born in Jerusalem and raised in an enlightened secular home. She “grew up” in the Israel Museum where she spent countless hours immersed in art and culture, alongside her father, Izzika Gaon, then chief curator of architecture and design. Today, in addition to her full-time job at the museum, she is a doctoral student of Hebrew Culture at Tel Aviv University and an M.A. student in Schechter’s Judaism and the Arts program.

On Defining Jewish Life and Learning
“The caricature is a tool for communication; a catalyst for thought and action. Our museum exhibits cry out: ‘Take responsibility for your place in Israeli society. Voice an opinion. Be a part of the democratic process…’”

“Israel’s culture icons were created in the ‘Great Zionist Tsunami’ of the 1930s and 1940s… Today Israelis take so much for granted. We need to be involved in renewing and preserving our culture. This museum forces us to confront our own personal and collective identities: The new ‘Hebrew Hero’ vs. the ‘Jewish Victim’ of the Past? How do Judaism and Hebrew culture find their modus vivendi? In essence, what does it mean to be Israeli today?

“Tel Aviv University is too much like me. I needed the “other world” of Schechter. There, I am transported to a realm of thought where I am made whole. I hear texts that I can’t hear any place else. The learning lets me super-impose ‘Israeli’ on ‘Jewish,’ creating new definitions and ways to perceive myself and my culture.”

“I came up with my idea for the “Hero in Israeli Comics” from a Schechter course that dealt with Samson and Noah. Our first real heroes are from the Bible! I presented a Shavuot lecture in Tel Aviv on ‘The Book of Ruth: Comics from the Middle Ages.’

“The Schechter experience for me has been a real ‘give and take.’ I often share visual images in class - while I gain the historic and religious context.”
Diane Friedgut
Founding Coordinator for National Women’s Study Days

On the Spectrum
Diane Friedgut works three “full-time jobs.” One as a wife, mother, grandmother and daughter; two, in sales in a well-known retail shop in downtown Jerusalem; three, as founding coordinator and guiding force behind the highly successful Masorti Women’s Study Days, that together with the Schechter Institute and Women’s League for Conservative Judaism, she initiated in 2000. Over the years, these gatherings of hundreds of women, taught by Schechter faculty and graduates, have earned a stellar reputation for blending the highest level of Jewish study with a deep spirituality that empowers its ever-growing ranks of students.

On Defining Jewish Life and Learning
“The success of the Women’s Study Days stems from their ability to make women, be they 14 or 84 years old, from Morocco, Tel Aviv or New York City, feel connected to each other and to their Jewishness. It has exceeded its initial goals, spurring the establishment of monthly study groups (some co-ed) in many individual Conservative/Masorti congregations.”

“Many of the participants are new immigrants, so that classes are held in four languages - Hebrew, English, Spanish and Russian.

“The Study Day is not just about study. When each bus pulls up, women surge forward and run to participants from last year with shrieks of joy. A cacophony of languages…a symphony of sound. But the words don’t matter - the hugs say it all.”

“The words of Prof. Alice Shalvi, (former President of the Schechter Institute and the creative force behind the Study Days) guide me: ‘Start in your own four walls, with your own family. Try to bring some of the spirit of the Shabbat to your table. Open the minds of those around you to the potential power lying in our own Jewish texts which can enrich our lives and maybe change the world.’”
Dr. Ya’akov Maoz, “Go to Me - On the Dialogue between the Liturgical Verse and the Israeli Singer,” Who Are You- the Israeli Song?, Bar Ilan University and Army Radio

Dr. Jo Milgrom: “Art and Judaism,” two lectures at the School for Humanistic Rabbis, Jerusalem

Rabbi Dr. Einat Ramon, “The Author Responds,” special panel discussion on “A.D. Gordon: The Significance of his Thought for Today” held at Midreshet Iyun in Tel Aviv to mark the publication of Ramon’s A New Life: Religion, Motherhood and Supreme Love in the Works of A. D. Gordon, with Schechter lecturer Dr. Batsheva Stern on “Zionist Women: Between Exclusion and Partnership.”

May 2008


Dr. Paul Shrell-Fox, “Neuro-Psychology of Emotion,” Seminar, Efrata College, Jerusalem


Prof. Andre Haidu, “A Musical Talmudic Happening,” with the Artists’ Ensemble, Gerard Behar Center, Jerusalem

Dr. Galia Glasner-Heled, “The Myth of Ka-Tzetnik,” Ben Gurion University Library, Beersheva

Rabbi Dr. Roni Klein, “The Political Dimension in French-Jewish Thought in the 1980s,” Hebrew University, Jerusalem

Prof. Renée Levine Melammed and Dr. Bat-Sheva Margalit-Stern, Chairs, Sarah Becker Frank Conference on the Status of Women in Israel in honor of Israel’s 60th Anniversary, Women of Valour: The Military Experience

Rabbi Dr. Einat Ramon: “On the Schechter Institute and the Masorti Movement,” to Bronfman High School Fellows and to Bar Ilan University Avshalom Center students, Schechter Institute

April 2008


March 2008


February 2008

Dr. Galia Glasner-Heled, “Potential Meanings: What Can Be Learned from a (Very) Small Sample,” The Israeli Center for Qualitative Methodologies, Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Beersheva; “Who does Ka-Tzetnik Represent?” Pornography and the Holocaust, Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Beersheva

Rabbi Dr. Einat Ramon, “Denominations in Judaism,” Israeli Young Leadership Forum: Alei Tzameret, JAFI, Jerusalem

January 2008

Rabbi Dr. Alexander Even-Chen, “The Author Responds,” special event held at The Van Leer Institute in Jerusalem to mark the publication of Even-Chen’s Akedat Yitzhak (The Binding of Isaac)

Rabbi Monique Susskind Goldberg, “Hafkaat Kiddushin: A Solution to Free Agunot,” to a group of German Rabbis, Schechter Institute

Dr. Guy Miron, “Facing Evil: The Legacy of Rabbi Shimshon Rafael Hirsch in the Eyes of German Orthodoxy During the Nazi Reign,” A Conference Marking the 200th Anniversary of the Birth of Rabbi Shimshon Rafael Hirsch, Bar Ilan University; Young Scholar’s Workshop regarding “Questions on Historiography,” Leo Baeck Institute, Jerusalem

Rabbi Dr. Einat Ramon, The Land of Israel in the Thought of A.D. Gordon and HaRav Kook,” Beit Avi Chai, Jerusalem; Meeting with Jewish educators from the Golan Heights, Schechter Institute

1. An evening of study to mark the publication of Torah Lishma: A Festschrift in Honor of Prof. Shamma Friedman. From left: Sarah Friedman, David Golinkin, Moshe Benovitz, Shamma Friedman, Ismar Schorsch, Daniel Sperber and Mordechai Akiva Friedman. 2. Rabbi Einat Ramon addressing Bronfman High School Fellows at Schechter
December 2007

An evening of study to mark the publication of Torah Lishmah: A Festschrift in Honor of Prof. Shamma Friedman, with Prof. David Golinkin, Sarah Friedman, Prof. Daniel Sperber, Prof. Mordechai Akiva Friedman, Prof. Ismar Schorsch, Prof. Moshe Benovitz, response by Prof. Shamma Friedman, Schocken Institute, Jerusalem

International Conference on Contemporary Reform Judaism: Sociology, Education and Theology, with Schechter contributions by Prof. Hanan Alexander, "Philosophical Issues in Reform Jewish Education for the 21st Century" and Dr. Ari Ackerman, "Eugene Borowitz and the Shifting Conception of Jewish Education in the American Reform Movement," Van Leer Institute, Jerusalem

Heavenly Torah: the Book and its Themes through the Prism of a Generation, Conference in Honor of Abraham Joshua Heschel’s Centennial, Beit Morasha, Jerusalem, featured Schechter faculty members: Dr. Alexander Even-Chen, Prof. Shamma Friedman and Dr. Einat Ramon


Dr. Pnina Feller, "Cain and Abel: From the Bible to 2007," International Conference on Comics, Israeli Cartoon and Caricature Museum, Holon, (see profile, page 36)

Etka Liebowitz, "Queen Alexandra: Widowhood as Empowerment for Royal Women," Conference on Widows and Gender, Van Leer Institute, Jerusalem

Rabbi Dr. Einat Ramon, "On Liberal Conversions in the State of Israel," Conference on Aliyah and Absorption, Ashdod; "Zionism and the Danger of Globalization: A Look at Classical Zionist Texts by Mendele Mocher Sfarim, Y.C. Brenner and A. D. Gordon," Limmud Galil (English) and

Philosophical Influences

"Heschel’s View of Radical Evil in Torah Min Hashamayim: Pragmatistic and the Danger of Globalization: A Look at Classical Zionist Texts by Mendele Mocher Sfarim, Y.C. Brenner and A. D. Gordon," Limmud Galil (English) and

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Philosophical Influences

"Heschel’s View of Radical Evil in Torah Min Hashamayim: Pragmatistic

Published Works

(Published by the Schechter Institute or authored by Schechter Faculty)

Book News

Lovell Haggadah an Instant Bestseller The Lovell Haggadah, with illustrations and commentaries by Rabbi Matt Berkowitz, is a Schechter bestseller. With an initial run of 3500 copies, the Haggadah was sold out within the first two months of printing. A second printing will ensure additional sales for Pesach 2009.

Praise for Lovell Haggadah

“The Most Impressive New Haggadah of the Year by far is the Lovell Haggadah. The Lovell Haggadah is profound and aimed at the minds, the eyes and the hearts of adults. The book is, first of all, a visual delight. Creator Rabbi Matthew Berkowitz provides discussion questions, allowing opportunities for the seder leader to encourage guests to truly think about the meanings of the oft-recited words. And he provides a number of projects for the children to do as well, so that they can feel part of the seder.”

Rabbi Jack Reimer
San Diego Jewish Journal, April 2008

Book Signing for Taking the Plunge Rabbi Miriam Berkowitz, author of Taking the Plunge: A Practical and Spiritual Guide to the Mikveh, immersed herself in the Jerusalem literary world, when she agreed to participate in a book signing event in early September, sponsored by veteran Jerusalem bookstore, Michael Pomerantz Books. The book is selling well both in Israel and North America.

Books published in 2007-08

"Jewish Education for What? and Other Essays," by Prof. Walter Ackerman z”l, eds., Hanan Alexander, Ari Ackerman, Brenda Bacon and David Golinkin, Jerusalem: co-published by the Schechter Institute, Haifa, Tel Aviv and Ben Gurion Universities, 2008

The Lovell Haggadah, Rabbi Matthew Berkowitz, Jerusalem: Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies, 2008

Taking the Plunge: A Practical and Spiritual Guide to the Mikveh, Rabbi Miriam Berkowitz, Jerusalem: Schechter Institute, 2007

Torah Lishmah: Essays in Jewish Studies in Honor of Professor Shamma Friedman, eds., D. Golinkin, M. Benovitz, M.A. Friedman, M. Schmelzer and D. Sperber, Jerusalem: Schechter Institute, Bar Ilan University and JTS, 2007 (Hebrew and English)
Dear Professor Levine Melammed,

Let me express my deepest admiration for the excellence of your scholarship. “Heretics or Daughters of Israel: The Crypto-Jewish Women of Castile” is one of the best and most inspiring books I have read on Jewish forms of survival. Your more recent book, “Question of Identity: Iberian Conversos in Historical Perspective” has proven extremely useful to my research…"

Dr. Doyle Ray Quiggie, Jr.
Neuss, Germany

Articles


Dr. Pnina Feller: “The Widow in the Bible and Ancient Egypt,” ZAW, Vol. 120, August 2008


Dr. Jo Milgrom: Leading article, Catalog for Retrospective Exhibition of Yitzhak Greenfield, the Artists House, Jerusalem, Spring 2008.


Dr. Yossi Turner: “The Notion of Ethnicity in Yehezkel Kaufmann’s Golah Venekhar,” Modern Judaism, September 2008 • “The Debate between Herman Cohen and Martin Buber on Zionism,” Yyunim Bitkumat Israel: Studies in Zionism, the Yishuv and the State of Israel, 17, 2008 • “Zionism and Diasporism according to the Writings of Ahad Ha’am,” Uleom Mi’Tom (Hebrew), Van Leer Institute, 2008

1. Annual Memorial Service for Matt Eisenfeld z’t and Sarah Duker z’t 2. Rabbi Monique Susskind Goldberg (left) teaching a class of rabbis visiting Schechter from Germany
partners in development

vice president for development eitan cooper
director of communications linda price
north american representative avrum lapin, ehl consulting
**Development and Communications**

The 2007/8 fundraising year was, again, one of significant growth for The Schechter Institutes, Inc. EHL Consulting continues to provide full service in North America, and has enabled us to build our fundraising capacity while assuring a minimum of overhead – ensuring that a maximum of every dollar we raise is used directly to further our mission.

Between August 2007 and July 2008, The Schechter Institutes, Inc. raised $5.3 million over and above capital gifts for its numerous programs and activities in Jerusalem and across Israel and Eastern Europe. This is an 11% increase from the previous year. While the dollar has declined significantly in value, we are, with the generous support of individuals, foundations and federations, sustaining our educational programs despite the current volatile economic climate.

**Capital Campaigns**

**Jerusalem Campus**
Through August 2008, The Schechter Institutes, Inc. has raised $8.5 million for the first two buildings, the Legacy Heritage Fund Limited Classroom Building, currently under construction and the Rabbi Marc and Dr. Henia Liebhaber Center for Jewish Education.

Harvey L. Miller and Jan Miller have made a generous capital commitment of $1 million towards construction of the Classroom Building, to be acknowledged by the naming of the Harvey L. Miller Family Bet Midrash.

**Schechter Center in Tel Aviv**
The Campaign for the Schechter Center for Jewish Culture in Tel Aviv’s Neve Zedek neighborhood has raised $2.7 million out of our goal of $4.1 million.

**New Capital Campaign Commitments ($50,000 and over)**
- Morris and Beverly Baker Foundation
- Dr. David Braun
- Jake and Janet Farber
- The Lainer Family Foundation
- Harvey L. and Jan Miller
- Barry Sonshine
- Rick and Ann Tavan

**New Major Gifts/Commitments ($10,000 and over)**
- Beverly Baker, Haggadah Collection
- Leonard and Joy Baxt, General Support
- David Berg Foundation, Center for Women in Jewish Law
- Louis Colen, General Support
- Abraham and Dena Greenstein, General Support
- Rabbi Marc N. and Dr. Henia Liebhaber, Haggadah Collection
- Steve and Dedee Lovell, Publications and Haggadah Collection
- Claudio and Penny Pincus, General Support
- David and Aviva Rubin, Megillat Hashoah

**Schechter Rabbinical Seminary**
- Harold and Penny Blumenstein, Scholarship
- JUF of Greater Chicago, Community Batay Midrash project
- Diane Troderman, Scholarship

**TALI Education Fund**
- Yaakov Davidson (z’l) Fund – TALI Programs and Textbooks
- Jack Kay – Adoption of New TALI School
- JUF of Greater Chicago – TALI Parents’ Empowerment Program and TALI Music Program
- UJF of Pittsburgh – New TALI School (Dekel Elementary School) in Karmiel

**Midreshet Yerushalayim**
- Betsy Gidwitz – Midreshet Yerushalayim – Masorti Olami Kiev Center
- Ned and Jane Gladstein – Midreshet Yerushalayim – Masorti Olami Kiev Center and School
- Dutch Jewish Humanitarian Fund – Leadership Development Seminars
- The Rabbi Arnold (z’l) and Noemie Turetsky Scholarship Fund – Rabbinical Scholarship for Kiev

**The Schechter Institutes, Inc.**

**Highlights of Activities**

**Building on Two Fronts: Jerusalem and Tel Aviv Campuses**

**New Schechter Campus in Jerusalem**
Heavy excavation work was completed in June 2008. The Classroom Building is expected to be completed by early 2010. Because of the steep rise in steel and other related building materials, combined with the serious decline of the dollar, the projected cost of Phase I of the campus has risen considerably. This difference must be made up in additional capital gifts.

In 2009-10, the 25th anniversary of the Schechter Institute’s founding in Jerusalem, a Campus Dedication is planned to celebrate this milestone.
**Rabbi Marc and Dr. Henia Liebhaber Center for Jewish Education**
The future site of the **Rabbi Marc N. and Dr. Henia Liebhaber Center for Jewish Education** was dedicated in December 2007 in the presence of Rabbi Liebhaber's family: Sharon Liebhaber, Rabbi Alan Iser, and their two children, Sam and Naomi, from Berwyn, PA. The building will be an integral part of the new Schechter Campus and will be home to the Graduate School, Rabbinical Seminary, TALI Education Fund, and Midreshet Yerushalayim wings.

**Ribbon Cutting Ceremonies for Schechter Center for Jewish Culture in Neve Zedek**
Members of the Schechter Boards of Governors as well as members of Los Angeles' Temple Beth Am, led by Rabbi Joel Rembaum, were guests of honor at ribbon cutting ceremonies marking the future site of the Schechter Center for Jewish Culture in Neve Zedek in December 2007. Schechter leaders, led by Board Chair **Robert S. Rifkind**, celebrated the event with the Mayor of Tel Aviv, **Ron Huldai** and Deputy Mayor **Yael Dayan**. Dramatic sketches re-enacted by members of the Midreshet Iyun Creative Bet Midrash Project brought the rich history of the former Lorenz House to life. The $4.1 million Schechter Institute project, with the generous support of the **Legacy Heritage Fund Limited**, will open its doors in December 2009, in partnership with The Masorti Movement and Rabbi Roberto Arbib's Kehillat Sinai and Midreshet Iyun Learning Center.

**New Push for Fundraising in Israel**
In March 2008 an Israeli fundraising coordinator, Chanah Zeideman, was added to our development staff. Thanks to his efforts, a major gift has been committed by a family fund in Tel Aviv, and a fundraising dinner, “An Evening in the Sukkah with Rabbi Roberto Arbib,” is planned for October to benefit the Schechter Center for Jewish Culture in Neve Zedek. We wish Chanah great success in meeting the challenges of fundraising for Schechter in Israel.

**Los Angeles Friends of Schechter Committee Formed**
The Los Angeles Friends of Schechter Committee, under the leadership of Lou Miller and Bruce Whizin, has taken an active role on behalf of the Schechter Institutes. Established at the beginning of 2008, under the direction of Mike Siroti, new Schechter representative in LA, the committee meets monthly. It has achieved notable success in fundraising for the Schechter Center for Jewish Culture in Neve Zedek, the TALI Education Fund and other Schechter programs and activities. The committee is also involved in planning a unique **Study Trip to Israel in February 2009**. The “Eyes on Israel” tour promises to provide an enriching cultural experience, utilizing Schechter Institute faculty members and other noted personalities, with a focus on Judaism and the Arts in Israel.

**The WEBINAR: Online Learning from Schechter**
Schechter leadership and friends throughout North America were able to log on to the best of Schechter scholarship through “The Webinar.” The first Schechter Webinar was conducted in March 2008 by **Prof. David Golinkin**, who taught a mini-course of three lectures on the **Passover Haggadah**. Dr. Einat Ramon presented a Shavuot lecture on the **Relevance of Jewish Law in Modern Life** as perceived by pre-state Zionist figures, Joseph Chaim Brenner and Berl Katzenelson.

“I wanted to express my thanks to Rabbi Golinkin and the Schechter Institutes for a wonderful Webinar. I look forward to the next one...”
Robert Braun, Los Angeles, CA

**Schechter Board Meetings**
The Schechter Institutes, Inc., under the chairmanship of **Robert S. Rifkind**, held its Board of Directors meetings in New York in September 2007 and May 2008. The Schechter Institute Graduate School, led by Mr. Rifkind and by Executive Committee Chair **Yaakov Tsur**, and the Rabbinical Seminary, led by Chair **Ismar Schorsch** and by Executive Committee Chair **Prof. Hanan Alexander**, conducted their respective Board meetings in Jerusalem in December 2007, and by video conference in Jerusalem and New York in June 2008.

**The Schechter Institutes, Inc. welcomes the following new leadership to the Boards of our Israeli organizations:**

**Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies Graduate School**
Mr. **Yehiel Leket**, former Chair of the Jewish National Fund; Mr. **Uri Ben David**, Executive at Bank Yerushalayim; Mr. **Claudio Pincus**, Founder and President of the Quantic Group, an international consultant to the pharmaceutical industry based in Livingston NJ; and **Aaron Malinsky**, Principal Partner of PA Associates, a real estate development company in the New York area.

**Schechter Rabbinical Seminary Executive Committee**
Mr. **Josh Weisen**, Educator and retired high school principal, longtime President of Masorti Moriah Congregation, Haifa; Ms. **Ilana Laderman Mushkin**, independent marketing consultant and community activist, Hod HaSharon; Ms. **Sarah Ilan**, Principal of TALI Neve Dekelim School, Ashkelon and Mr. **Eduardo Bitelman**, Architect and Principal of Bitelman Architects Inc., Raanana. All are active members of Masorti congregations.
We thank Prof. Hanan Alexander, Chair of the Executive Committee, for his tireless efforts on behalf of SRS and wish him well during his sabbatical in Berkeley California. Mr. Shimon Lipsky will serve as acting Executive Committee Chair for 2008-9.

The TALI Education Fund
Ram Shmueli, Brigadier General and pilot in the Israeli Air Force

Midreshet Yerushalayim
Prof. Shmuel Glick has replaced Rabbi Yossie Goldman as Chair of Midreshet Yerushalayim. Mr. Yossi Lentz has joined the board as a member of the Audit Committee.

Schechter President Warmly Received in North America
Prof. David Golinkin addressed major Conservative convocations and served as a scholar-in-residence at a number of North American Jewish communities in 2007-08, including the Rabbinical Assembly Convention, Washington DC; Tifereth Israel Congregation, Columbus, OH, led by Rabbi Harold Berman; Beth Hillel Congregation Bnai Emunah, Wilmette, IL, led by Rabbi Allan Kensky; Habonim Congregation, New York City, led by Rabbi Joanna Samuels; Beth Israel Congregation, Milwaukee, WI, led by Rabbi Jacob Herber; Beth El-Mekor Chayim Congregation, Cranford, NJ, led by Rabbi Akiba Lubow and Chizuk Amuno Congregation, Baltimore, MD, led by Rabbi Ronald Shulman.

Schechter Faculty Lectures Around the World
Dr. Ari Ackerman, “The Educational Philosophies of David Hartman and Eliezer Schweid,” The National Research on Jewish Education Conference, Cleveland, OH, June 2008

Dr. Brenda Bacon: "Between Spiritual Education and Cultural Literacy: Teaching the Siddur in Israeli Schools,” University of Maryland, Baltimore, MD, September 2008; “Teaching Bat Mitzvah in Israeli Schools,” Kemp Mill Synagogue, Silver Spring, MD, December 2007; “How Shall We Tell the Story of the End of Beruriah?” Westville, New Haven Study Group, New Haven, CT, December 2007


Dr. Shula Laderman: “Jerusalem as Narrative Space for Jews and Christians of the Fourth Century,” Jerusalem as Narrative Space (4th-15th Century), An Interdisciplinary Colloquium, Kunsthistorisches Institut, Max-Planck-Institute, Florence, Italy, December 2007

Prof. Renée Levine Melammed: Bunny and Leo Horvitz Scholar-in-Residence for the Jewish Community Center of Houston, where she gave public lectures and taught mini-courses that dealt with “Insights into Jewish History: Studying Women, Sephardim and Oriental Jewry,” Houston, TX, January-February 2008; “Identities in Flux: Iberian Conversos at Home and Abroad,” Late Medieval Jewish Identities Workshop, University of Granada, Spain, November 2007

Dr. Bat-Sheva Stern: “Mothers Of The Nation, Daughters Of The Revolution: Women and Zionism in the Pre-Statehood Era,” University of Calgary and WIZO-Hadassah, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, September 2008

Schechter Faculty Fellowships
Schechter Scholar Shmuel Glick Travels to Cambridge for Geniza Project
Prof. Shmuel Glick, Director of the JTS-Schocken Institute and professor of Jewish Law at the Schechter Institute, spent six months as a sponsored researcher at the Taylor-Schechter Geniza Unit. The goal of the project is to prepare a detailed descriptive catalogue devoted to the numerous responsa in the Hebrew manuscript collections housed at Cambridge. While there, Prof. Glick documented 580 responsa from the 10th-11th Centuries through the 19th Century.

University of Pennsylvania Awards Fellowship to Doron Bar
Dr. Doron Bar, a lecturer and advisor to Schechter’s Land of Israel Studies M.A. track, was awarded a fellowship at the University of Pennsylvania’s Center of Advanced Judaic Studies, September-December 2007. During that period, he worked on an English version of his 2007 book, Sanctifying a Land: The Jewish Holy Places in the State of Israel 1948-1968. He taught a course on “One Map, Different Titles: Changes in the Population of Palestine During Late Antiquity,” as well as a graduate course to students of the Jewish Studies program. Bar also lectured to a group of Orthodox, Reform and Conservative rabbis of the greater Philadelphia area.
Communications
The Communications and Development Department supports the fundraising efforts of The Schechter Institutes, Inc., through the production of promotional materials, the on-going cultivation of media contacts both in North America and Israel, the encouragement of mission visits to Schechter, and the strengthening of communication avenues between Schechter and its growing donor base.

Publicity and Media
Over 150 articles, interviews and news briefs from the media in Israel and overseas focused on Schechter programs and personalities in 2007-08, including excellent coverage of the ceremonies for the Schechter Center for Jewish Culture in Neve Zedek in December. Extensive coverage of the TALI Education Fund focused on TALI and the new Knesset Education Law, YahaduTALI radio program and the Dialogue and Identity project.

The President's Corner: Prof. David Golinkin in the Media

Dear Rabbi Golinkin,

…My gratitude for the efforts you put forth in sharing with us “Why I Made Aliyah,” in the Summer 2008 issue of Voices of Conservative Judaism… it was evident that you truly have entered into a profound relationship with the soil, the atmosphere and the whole heritage comprising Israel – a ‘touching’ and ‘being touched.’ As a statement of your residence there, it was a delight to read; as a testament of faith, it was embracing and nurturing. Serving as an ‘animus’ for deepening our relationship with the foundations of faith, your article was a grand impetus…”
Father George F. Gilliland
Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island
Canada

Dr. Penina Feller Tapped by the Media
Dr. Penina Feller, Schechter lecturer and world expert in Ancient Jewish History, was interviewed extensively in advance of Pesach 2008, including: “Egypt and the Exodus,” broadcast by the Canadian Broadcasting Company; “Teaching of the Bible in Israel and the World,” Dov Elbaum Show, Channel One TV; and “Exodus from Egypt,” Israel Radio. In addition, she participated in an eight-part TV series on “Bible and Science: What the Bible Says About Creation,” for National Geographic Television, to be screened in Israel in September 2008.

….more on Schechter Faculty in the Media
Dr. Brenda Bacon: “The House of Jacob: at Sinai and Now,” Jerusalem Post, June 2008

WWW.SCHECHTER.EDU Gets New Look
The website of The Schechter Institutes, www.schechter.edu, has a new graphic design which will facilitate navigation on the site as well as improve search results for Jewish studies topics. The new and improved Schechter website will be accessible by Fall 2008 with its popular features including Responsa in a Moment, a monthly column written by Prof. David Golinkin; Faculty Forum, a monthly column presenting original research by Schechter faculty; Ask the Rabbi, a service staffed by Rabbis Diana Villa and Monique Susskind Goldberg, who have written over 500 responsa to date; and the Schechter Bookstore for purchasing SUJS publications.

Other websites include: the Schechter Rabbinical Seminary website, www.schechter.org.il; the Schechter Institute Graduate School Hebrew website, www.schechter.ac.il; Midreshet Yerushalayim’s Russian-language website, www.mili.org.il; the TALI Education Fund website www.tali.org.il; ResponsaForToday.com, a multi-lingual repository of Conservative responsa where many Schechter Halakhic studies can be accessed; and PluralismIsrael.com, a resource for pluralism projects in Israel.
Iyunei Shabbat online with YNET
One of Israel’s leading website news services, YNET of Yediot Ahronot, published Schechter’s Torah Portion, Iyunei Shabbat, on their English website. Iyunei Shabbat is co-published by the Masorti Movement, Rabbinical Assembly and Masorti Olami and appears in Hebrew, English and Spanish.

Responsa in a Moment in Hungarian and Spanish
The Jewish University in Budapest, academically affiliated with the Schechter Institute, has translated electronic articles by Prof. David Golinkin from his Responsa in a Moment monthly column, placing them in Hungarian on their official university website. Ria Okret, from the Uruguay Jewish Community, translates articles from Responsa in a Moment into Spanish, sharing them with the Spanish-speaking world through her congregation website.

Missions and Individual Visits to Schechter
Budget 2008 (in US$)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Expenses</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies Graduate School</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish Agency</td>
<td>Faculty Salaries</td>
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<td>63,542</td>
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<td>Federations and Foundations</td>
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<td>Scholarships</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,738,237</td>
<td>3,738,237</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Includes Schechter Institutes Inc. in US

| **Schechter Rabbinical Seminary**          |                                               |
| Jewish Agency                              | Faculty                                       |
| 219,408                                     | 453,485                                       |
| Federations and Foundations                | Scholarships                                  |
| 299,157                                     | 277,828                                       |
| Israeli Government                         | Special Programs and Student Activities       |
| 28,571                                      | 121,709                                       |
| Contributions                              | M.A. Program                                  |
| 200,484                                     | 80,272                                        |
| Tuition and Fees                           | Administration                                |
| 334,685                                     | 174,669                                       |
|                                             | Reserve                                       |
|                                             | (25,658)                                      |
| **Total**                                  |                                               |
| 1,082,305                                   | 1,082,305                                     |

| **TALI Education Fund**                    |                                               |
| Jewish Agency                              | Textbook/Curriculum Development               |
| 443,757                                     | 331,143                                       |
| Federations                                | Pedagogical Counseling                        |
| 362,886                                     | 515,857                                       |
| Foundations                                | School Rabbis and Experiential Programming    |
| 861,772                                     | 190,542                                       |
| Contributions                              | Teacher and Leadership Training               |
| 477,557                                     | 234,977                                       |
| Israeli Government                         | Early Childhood Department                    |
| 11,428                                      | 125,714                                       |
| Fees for Sales, Services                   | Special Programs                              |
| 122,057                                     | 381,142                                       |
| Miscellaneous                              | Network Expansion                             |
| 43,714                                      | 166,368                                       |
|                                             | Administration                                |
|                                             | 314,571                                       |
|                                             | Reserve                                       |
|                                             | 62,857                                        |
| **Total**                                  |                                               |
| 2,323,171                                   | 2,323,171                                     |

| **Midreshet Yerushalayim - Israel**         |                                               |
| Jewish Agency                              | Weekly Courses and Programs                   |
| 140,000                                     | 99,421                                        |
| Foundations and Federations                | MILI Program                                  |
| 108,748                                     | 74,883                                        |
| Israeli Government/Municipalities          | Land of Israel and Shvilei Moreshet Courses   |
| 17,998                                      | 50,714                                        |
| Participation and Fees                     | MILI Olami Program                            |
| 33,529                                      | 12,857                                        |
| Miscellaneous                              | Administration                                |
| 3,285                                       | 65,685                                        |
|                                             | Reserve                                       |
|                                             | 0                                             |
| **Total**                                  |                                               |
| 303,560                                     | 303,560                                       |

| **Midreshet Yerushalayim - Ukraine**        |                                               |
| Federations                                | Ukraine – Schools                             |
| 29,000                                      | 108,600                                       |
| Foundations                                | Camp Ramah Sessions                           |
| 245,500                                     | 142,400                                       |
| Contributions                              | Teacher and Young Leadership Training         |
| 174,400                                     | 56,000                                        |
| Masorti Olami                              | Hungary - Scholar-in-Residence                |
| 27,700                                      | 6,000                                         |
|                                             | Kiev Center                                   |
|                                             | 81,300                                        |
|                                             | Administration                                |
|                                             | 68,800                                        |
|                                             | Reserve                                       |
|                                             | 13,500                                        |
| **Total**                                  |                                               |
| 476,600                                     | 476,600                                       |

| **Grand Total**                            |                                               |
| 7,923,873                                   | 7,923,873                                     |
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54/55
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Where Israelis from diverse backgrounds learn a common language.
Where Judaism is explored in dialogue and exchange, not dictated from above.
Where discourse over a page of Talmud can lead to today’s front page headlines.
Where touching a textbook leads to touching lives.
Where Jewish learning is inextricably tied to Jewish life.

Spanning the Spectrum of Jewish Life and Learning provides a window into the world of Schechter education: The Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies Graduate School, Schechter Rabbinical Seminary, TALI Education Fund and Midreshet Yerushalayim programs for Russian-speakers. We invite you to enter this world and learn about 40,000 men, women and children who are enriching the spectrum of Jewish life and learning in Israel and throughout the world.

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TALI Education Fund: Shoham Shenhav, from Hadar TALI School, Mevasseret Zion, broadcasting on YahaduTALI, a radio show on current events and Judaism, produced by TALI students
Midreshet Yerushalayim: Camp Ramah-Ukraine 2008 Opening Day
Scholarship for the Community: Prof. Renée Levine Melammed (left), Dean of the Graduate School, with Dr. Bat-sheva Stern, Lecturer in History and Women’s Studies
Partners in Development: Model of the Future Schechter Jerusalem Campus

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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:

Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies
A Graduate School offering innovative, interdisciplinary M.A. programs to Israeli educators of all backgrounds and beliefs.

Schechter Rabbinical Seminary
A Rabbinical School for the training of educational and community leaders for Israel and abroad.

TALI Education Fund
A nationwide Jewish education program providing enriched pluralistic Jewish Studies in 184 public schools and kindergartens throughout Israel.

Midreshet Yerushalayim
An educational program offering study opportunities in Jewish culture to immigrants from the former Soviet Union in Israel and in communities throughout Eastern Europe.