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

**Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies**, the largest M.A. program in Jewish Studies in Israel with 600 Israeli students and more than 1400 graduates.

**Schechter Rabbinical Seminary** is the international rabbinical school of Conservative Judaism, serving Israel, Europe and the Americas.

**TALI Education Fund** offers a pluralistic Jewish studies program to 42,000 children in 300 Israeli secular public schools and kindergartens.

**Midreshet Yerushalayim** provides Jewish education to Jewish communities throughout Ukraine.

**Midreshet Schechter** offers adult Jewish education Bet Midrash frameworks throughout Israel.

**Neve Schechter-Legacy Heritage Center for Jewish Culture** in Neve Zedek draws 15,000 Tel Avivians every year to services, classes, events and art exhibits.

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Uniting Israel.
The Schechter Way.

Now more than ever, Israel needs “The Schechter Way” to moderate the forces of religious extremism and to strengthen the voices of moderation. Schechter Jewish education is tolerant, inclusive and open, stressing Darchei Noam (the gentle ways) of Torah. This is our message, day in and day out, as we continue to educate tens of thousands in Israel and Eastern Europe, allowing them to enrich their lives and that of their families with Jewish knowledge.

For over thirty years, Schechter has been at the vanguard of this revolution in Jewish education, touching the lives of thousands, who in turn, touch thousands more in their daily work. Like the students and graduates featured in this year’s Annual Report: Ronen Paritzki, principal of a school for “at-risk” teens; Yaffa Oknin, principal of the TALI Oranim School in Yokneam; Dikla Druckman, rabbinical student who interns in Kehillot in Jerusalem and Toronto; Rachel Shalev, illustrator who is exploring her personal interface with Judaism and Design in an exciting new Neve Schechter project; and Yulia Fresh, emerging young leader of the new Kehillat Aviv in Chernowitz, Ukraine, where she directs NOAM and Marom youth activities.

The Schechter Institutes are a vital educational force, instilling Israelis and Jews around the world with Jewish knowledge anchored in the values of tradition, tolerance, diversity and mutual respect. We are proud of our achievements of the past thirty years and look forward to the multitude of challenges that await us in the thirty years ahead.
Dear Friends,

It has been an eventful year for Schechter and for our mission to promote pluralistic Judaism in Israel. In Rehovot, we witnessed once again issues of non-acceptance of all Jews spill into the headlines when the mayor canceled the Bnai Mitzvah service for children with special needs. This was followed by Israeli President Rivlin inviting and then disinviting the rabbis who had worked so hard to prepare them for their special day and Religious Affairs Minister Azoulay demeaning non-Orthodox Jews.

This makes our work helping to bridge the divides between all Jews no matter how they practice their Judaism more crucial than ever. Education towards mutual respect, tolerance and understanding, and increasing the awareness of all Jews regarding the diversity of practice throughout the Jewish world will unify our people and help prevent many future problems.

In light of these unfortunate events, we remain convinced of the importance of our work to the future of the State of Israel and we continue to promote openness, greater tolerance for others, and pluralistic Jewish education to increase the overall level of Jewish knowledge and inclusiveness. Schechter’s leadership — "touching" and influencing over 50,000 children and adults each year — will undoubtedly continue to spread this message throughout Israeli society and beyond.

We celebrated Schechter’s 30th anniversary this past spring. As part of this historic milestone, we awarded the Liebhaber Prize for Religious Tolerance to two well-known Israelis, Rabbi Benny Lau and singer Etti Ankri. It was a wonderful and special opportunity to gather alumni, supporters, faculty and staff and to reflect on our vast achievements and how we have grown and changed Israel during those years.

Supporters from around the world joined us and experienced all of our Israel programs first hand. We visited a TALI school and held discussions with its principal and teachers; we met rabbis ordained at our Schechter Rabbinical Seminary; we studied and prayed in our Neve Schechter campus and helped break ground for the new Liebhaber Center for Jewish Education there; we watched as almost 90 students graduated with their hard-earned Master’s Degrees; and we partied in Jerusalem at a beautiful celebration hosted by the Israel Friends of Schechter.

Despite the ongoing war in Ukraine, we have been actively working with our communities there, and Camp Ramah Ukraine had a very busy summer with over 135 campers and staff in attendance. Despite the conflict, we had campers from the east and from the west attend this summer.

In the spring, we announced two new major appointments. Rabbi Avi Novis-Deutsch will join the Schechter Rabbinical Seminary as its next Dean, succeeding Rabbi Shlomo Tucker, who has reached retirement age. We thank Shlomo for the great job he has done and for his superb leadership and inspiration.

Dr. Ari Ackerman will be the next Dean of the Schechter Institute for Jewish Studies, a three-year appointment.

Rabbi Professor David Golinkin has reached the term limit as President of the Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies as determined by the Israel Council for Higher Education. Although we have concluded our search for a new President and have a recommended candidate, this position requires approval from that Council. We will be submitting our proposed candidate for approval to them and hope to be able to officially announce our new President this fall. When a candidate is approved by the Council, Rabbi Professor David Golinkin will assume his new position as President of The Schechter Institutes, Inc. which oversees all four of our non-profits (Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies, TALI, Schechter Rabbinical Seminary and Midreshet Schechter) as well as continuing to teach as a Professor at the Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies. We thank him for his 15 years of dedicated service as President of the Schechter Institute.

As we approach Rosh Hashanah, let me wish you a Happy and Healthy New Year and thank you very much for your ongoing support of Schechter. Here’s hoping it will be more peaceful and less divisive than this past year.

Saul I. Sanders
Chairman of the Board
The Schechter Institutes, Inc.
Whenever I am asked “what is the first goal of Schechter?”, I reply: to bridge the gap between Israeli Jews and their heritage. We are told repeatedly in Exodus 19-20 that the Torah was given at Mount Sinai to ‘כל העם’ – the entire people. In modern terms, the Torah was given to the entire Jewish people, men, women and children; not to Haredi or Orthodox or Conservative or Reform or Ashkenazi or Sefardic Jews – but to the entire Jewish people. Therefore, the Jewish bookshelf – Tanakh, Mishnah, Talmud, Halakhah, Midrash, and Jewish Thought – belongs to all of us. It is the heritage of all Jews and it is our duty and privilege to pass it on to our children and grandchildren.

Why is this goal so crucial? Because most of the Jews living in Israel, whether Sabras or new immigrants, did not receive a Jewish education and do not know and appreciate the Jewish bookshelf.

I will give just one example. The Schechter Institute recently published a new Hebrew translation of a classic – *As a Driven Leaf* by Rabbi Milton Steinberg – which I edited and annotated. A few months ago I received a call from a Hebrew language editor of our co-publisher and she asked me something about one passage in the book. I quickly realized that she was referring to the first Mishnah from *Pirkei Avot*, the Ethics of the Fathers: “Moses received the Torah at Sinai and gave it to Joshua” etc. So what was the problem? She had no idea that this was a quote from the Mishnah nor did she know what *Pirkei Avot* was! This is not some esoteric text; it’s the most famous post-Biblical Jewish text. Did we return to the Land of Israel after 2,000 years of Exile in order to cause our children to forget our culture and heritage?!

So what is the solution? The four Schechter non-profits: the Schechter Institute with over 2,000 M.A. students and graduates, most of whom are educators; the Schechter Rabbinical Seminary whose 87 graduates work as rabbis throughout the State of Israel; the TALI Education Fund which provides pluralistic Jewish education to over 42,000 children at over 100 public schools and 200 public pre-schools from Carmiel to Eilat; the Schechter Midrashot which provide adult education throughout the Galilee; Neve Schechter in Tel Aviv which provides services and cultural events for over 15,000 people every year; and Midrashet Yerushalayim which provides Kehilot and schools to Jews throughout Ukraine.

The second goal is stressed by our Chair Saul Sanders in his letter which appears here: to unite all Jews regardless of their beliefs and practices by teaching the core Jewish values of pluralism and tolerance. These values were stressed by Prof. Solomon Schechter, for whom we are named and whose 100th yahrzeit will occur this November. At the dedication of the new HUC campus in 1913, Schechter emphasized that he was actually an opponent of the Reform movement. He compares the Jewish people to the British Parliament where the government speaks of His Majesty’s Opposition. “This sounds like a paradox yet it contains a deep truth, implying as it does that both His Majesty’s government as well as His Majesty’s opposition form one large community working for the welfare of the country... The same principle may also be applied to theology... Generally there is hardly any phenomenon in Judaism in the way of sect or movement which has not served a certain purpose in the divine economy of our history” (*Seminary Addresses and Other Papers*, New York, 1959, pp. 240-241).

As we enter our fourth decade, the Schechter Institutes will continue – thanks to your crucial support – to serve as the largest provider of pluralistic Jewish education in the State of Israel, while also standing in the forefront of the struggle for religious pluralism and tolerance in the Jewish State.

With my best wishes for a year of Shalom,

David Golinkin
President and Jerome and Miriam Katzin Professor of Jewish Studies
Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies

Rabbi Prof. David Golinkin
President and Jerome and Miriam Katzin Professor of Jewish Studies
Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies
The Pictures Say it All!

Schechter’s 30th Anniversary
Mission & Celebrations, June 8-14, 2015

1. Dedication of the Liebhaber Center for Jewish Education, Neve Schechter, Tel Aviv. Rabbi Alan Iser and Sharon Liebhaber make it official!

2. Mary and Saul Sanders on their way to the Gala Event in the Pat and Arnold Gittelson Courtyard of the new Jerusalem campus.

3. Liebhaber Prize winner Etti Ankri gives a riveting performance at the Gala.


5. Claudio and Penny Pincus, Summit, NJ, enjoying the party.


7. Mission “group portrait” at the Masorti Kotel, Jerusalem.

8. A tour of the Temple Mount with Schechter Dean Dr. Doron Bar.

9. Rabbi Alan Iser greets old friends at the Gala.

10. An amazing birthday party is thrown for Barbara Zinbarg by TALI Amirim School, Beersheva.


12. Executive Committee Chair, Colette Avital and active member of Israeli Friends of Schechter, Sarah Teperberg, at the Gala.


14. Rabbis David Golinkin and Liebhaber Prize winner Benny Lau enjoy a moment before the ceremony.

15. Mission members listen to a security briefing by top IDF officer at the Gaza border.

16. Mary Sanders and Diane Wohl at the Gala reception.

17. Following a TALI lesson at the Amirim School, Beersheva.

18. Neve Schechter courtyard is a perfect venue for a mission group shot.

19. Mission visit to Sderot and its Cinemateque, run by a Schechter graduate.

20. Rabbi Roberto Arbib gives tour of Atid Sanctuary, Neve Schechter.

21. Schechter Mission visit to the Kotel and the Temple Mount.
Ronen Paritzki has been working at a school for at-risk teens in Israel’s center for 11 years. This is the last stop for many of them who have been thrown out of numerous frameworks in their short lives. Hard work by any account. But for Ronen, an M.A. student in Jewish Thought and Jewish Education at Schechter and vice-principal of the school, professional “burn-out” is not in the cards. “Teaching these kids is my destiny. That’s where I’m at my best. I wouldn’t do anything else.”

Like a proud father, Ronen relates stories of teens who arrived at his school barely knowing to read and write. “With our guidance, they complete full matriculation, perform meaningful military service, and pursue university studies,” he shares.

A passionate educator, Ronen is also a role model. When he was 16, his father died. From the personal crisis he underwent, he understood that adversity can lead people in different directions. He ultimately followed a positive path, choosing a career that helps troubled youth do the same.

Paritzki teaches civics and history and is responsible for disciplinary and social elements of the school’s education. Even though his school is classified as secular, he believes that exposing his students to their heritage and the differences within Judaism – often for the first time – makes them stronger, more complete people. Incorporating Jewish content into the school’s curriculum both formally and informally, he shares much of what he learns at Schechter with his staff and students. For example, this past year his students learned Schechter’s Shoah Scroll, Megillat HaShoah.

Paritzki lives with his wife, a social worker, and four children in a “mixed” religious-secular community outside of Jerusalem. Similarly, it was important for him to send his children to a pluralistic school where they are exposed to different approaches to Judaism. “Difference is power,” he explains.

He sees Schechter as a direct continuation of the values he has embraced his whole life, a type of spiritual and educational home. “I found a holy place, filled with good people, full of knowledge. The experience allows me to recharge.”

I am lucky to work with kids, who for the first time in their lives have somebody who not only believes in them, but also in their dreams.”
Two moments in Dikla Druckman’s life defined the path which led her to Schechter’s Rabbinical Seminary.

The first happened before her Bat Mitzvah, when her mother asked her if she wanted to be called to the Torah, something “unheard of” in her secular community. She answered that first she wanted to investigate the significance of such an undertaking. Not only did she ultimately agree and become Bat Mitzvah, it was a decision that would change her life.

Fast forward 15 years to the Masorti synagogue in Omer. As a rabbinic intern there, Dikla prepared a very introverted girl for Bat Mitzvah. “I always thought that a rabbi was on a pedestal, higher than everyone else. And me? I was just human.” But watching the girl lead prayers with confidence, Dikla realized “that for a year-and-a-half I had been acting as a rabbi. All paths led me there without me noticing.” Becoming emotional, she describes that moment as “Shechinah”—touching the “divine”. Soon thereafter, she enrolled at Schechter’s rabbinical school.

Between her Bat Mitzvah and the fateful Shabbat in Omer, Dikla explored Judaism “in every place I could,” including experimenting in keeping kosher and observing Shabbat. During her army service, she lived on Kibbutz Keturah and subsequently founded Masorti student groups (Marom) in Kfar Saba and Beersheva.

After graduating from Ben-Gurion University with a bachelor’s degree in psychology and Jewish Thought, she applied to Schechter’s Mishlei program. She liked its combination of Bet Midrash study with practical aspects of Judaism as well as music, another passion of hers. At the same time, she enrolled in the chaplaincy program at Schechter because it combines her love of Judaism with helping others.

She is currently the Tanenbaum Fellow at Toronto’s Beth Tzedek congregation and works as a rabbinic intern at Jerusalem’s Ramot Zion congregation. She plans to work as a pulpit rabbi once she is ordained.

People “raise three eyebrows” when they hear she plans to be a rabbi. “I see myself as an agent of change, helping shatter long-held perceptions of gender roles here in Israel.”

What enchants me is Judaism's idea of 'community.' These powerful feelings of togetherness, of caring for each other, are our strongest values.”

Dikla Druckman
Rabbinical Student, Legacy Heritage Fellow at Jerusalem’s Ramot Zion Congregation

Uniting Israel
With caring
理解
Simon Elfassi
Mayor of Yokneam, made his town “totally-TALI”

This year’s Genger Prize for Excellence in TALI Education paid tribute to the Jewish education revolution underway in Yokneam, a town of 22,000 located at the intersection of Israel’s north, its coastal plain, and the Carmel mountains. Its mayor Simon Elfassi was honored for his trailblazing role in pushing for TALI’s Jewish enrichment program for his city. As a result, Yokneam’s entire secular elementary school system is TALI as well as 2/3’s of its early childhood frameworks: 29 pre-schools! Starting this fall, the network will include the middle school level as well.

At a time when social divides widen in Israeli society, the Mayor’s visionary steps should not be taken for granted. “My biggest reward is the growth of a generation that will have an in-depth knowledge of our history and traditions,” said Elfassi at the award ceremony.

Yaffa Oknin
TALI Principal, Oranim School, Yokneam, Genger Prize Recipient

For Yaffa, who has served as principal of the TALI Oranim school for 19 years, implementing these values is all in a day’s work. Several years ago, she participated in TALI’s Educational Leadership Program. “It was this learning that encouraged me to widen the scope of my activity in school, enriching our pedagogical basket,” she explains. She and her staff have introduced groundbreaking programs including TALI’s Spiritual Education program, based on “Jewish meditation,” and guided imagery as well as the “Friends across the Sea” peoplehood project.

Yaffa is very proud of Oranim’s long-time participation in TALI’s Dialogue and Identity program, a framework for Jewish and Arab children and their teachers to meet and learn about each other’s religions and cultures. “Amid all of the problems we have here, it’s important… to understand that when you refer to an Arab you are first and foremost talking about another human being.” In the context of the program, Oranim’s fifth-grade students visit a church and a mosque and learn about each other’s holidays with their Arab counterparts.

“Israeli society, now more than ever, needs to build a common Jewish narrative allowing for discourse and a difference of opinion. A basic knowledge of Judaism is a pre-requisite. Schechter and TALI have provided me with the Jewish narrative and the knowledge,” sums up Yaffa.

“TALI education is a direct investment in the future, for today’s students are Israel’s exemplary citizens of tomorrow.” Simon Elfassi

“Strengthening the values of Zionism, democracy, and Judaism - that is TALI's main message.” Yaffa Oknin

Uniting Israel
With dialogue
מ-ישראל
The Paper Lab at Neve Schechter

Where Judaism Intersects with Design

Time to check out Neve Schechter’s Morris and Beverly Baker Foundation Art Room. Yes, something new and exciting is underway. From mid-year, Neve Schechter’s art studio is abuzz with color, innovation and a medley of shapes and patterns fashioned mostly from paper. The space now houses a “lab” - a workshop for three designers - Tamar Dovrat, Merav Peleg, and Rachel Shalev, who came together through a joint project of Neve Schechter and the NGO “OutBox”. The year-long program aims to fuse the cutting-edge design trends of Tel Aviv with the Jewish cultural world of Neve Schechter.

Their training at Neve Schechter includes study with the center’s Rabbi Roberto Arbib and Curator Shira Friedman as well as entrepreneurial and business training. In recent months, Shira and the three designers have been touring the country’s top museums and cultural hubs to learn about the longstanding connection between Judaism and art.

In addition to specializing in different areas of design, the designers come from different religious backgrounds. Tamar’s home is secular, “So... for me, what we’re learning is opening my mind immensely.” Merav, though she grew up in a traditional home, left the world of religion behind and has never actively incorporated Judaism into her art – until now. The program has evoked in her “nostalgia and empowering feelings from her past and Jewish heritage.” She hopes to include meaningful psukim (verses) from Jewish sources and relevant blessings into the papercut artworks she is designing.

For illustrator Rachel, the program brought together two central aspects of her life: art and Judaism. “I’m observant, so I’ve always had a connection to Judaism.” Until now, she viewed representations of Judaism in modern art as cynical or critical. But the program has given her a completely new viewpoint. “Shira has shown us that many modern artists approach Jewish texts with love. They use them to connect with the sources.”

In the coming months, the three artists will be busy preparing for a High Holiday fair at Neve Schechter and an exhibition entitled “Black and White,” which will showcase themes of light and darkness in time for Hanukkah.

The more the artists are exposed to Jewish arts ... the more their visual language will be enriched, allowing them to express Jewish themes in their own language.”

Shira Friedman, Neve Schechter Curator

Uniting Israel

With creativity

ייחרזיות
Yulia (Liat) Fresh & Liudmyla Bakanovska
Camp Ramah-Ukraine counselors and community activists in Kiev, Chernowitz and Berdichev

Yulia (left) and Liudmyla (right) are Midreshet Yerushalayim’s ultimate poster children. Growing up within the warm folds of Midreshet programming, they are today, in their 20’s, connected, committed and knowledgeable about Judaism and their place in the Jewish community.

For Yulia, July 1, 2015, will be forever remembered as her second “Birth” day. On that date, she and an additional 11 members of Midreshet communities officially joined the Jewish People, passing the Masorti Bet Din which took place at this year’s Ramah Family Camp-Ukraine. “This is a new beginning, filled with faith, tradition and love. Now my life is exactly where it should be,” says Yulia, who has chosen “Liat” as her Jewish name.

Yulia, 26, has not known a world without Midreshet Yerushalayim. Born and raised in Chernowitz, she attended the TALI day school there for 11 years and shared Ramah memories as an enthusiastic camper from 4th grade. She is now actively involved in her hometown’s new Kehillat Aviv, formed a few years ago by a group of young families. Her life focusses on the community where she coordinates Marom and Noam activities for up to 20 youngsters, is instrumental in organizing much of the Shabbat and holiday programming as well as young leadership training. Camp Ramah continues to play a crucial role in Yulia’s life, returning for the last ten summers as a counselor. “When you hug children and make their life and yours brighter for at least a few weeks...when you’ve got something to learn and something to teach...when you are just yourself...that for me is pure happiness!”

Liudmyla Bakanovska, 21, grew up in Berdichev, where she attended the local Midreshet Family school every Sunday. Through the school, she heard about Camp Ramah-Ukraine, which she has “religiously” attended for nine years, first as a camper and today, as a counselor. “Jewish life is simply in my heart and in my blood,” she effuses. “The people who have most positively affected my life are those I’ve met and learned from at camp and in school.” Liudmyla is today a law student in Kiev, which has allowed her to connect with Kehillat Masoret and Rabbi Reuven Stamov. Between her studies, she finds time to volunteer at the community cultural center, where she teaches dance and helps wherever needed. Twice a month she returns to Berdichev, running youth programs at the Sunday school.

Uniting Communities in Ukraine
With LOVE

“"For me, Camp Ramah-Ukraine is our 'Life-Machine'!!!”
Yulia (Liat) Fresh
## Budget
(in $US) January 1-December 31, 2015

### Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies Graduate School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Expenses</th>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>Sub-Total</strong></td>
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*Includes fundraising and PR to all 4 Schechter Amutot and the budget of The Schechter Institutes, Inc. in U.S.

### Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies Graduate School

<table>
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<th>Income</th>
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<td>Special Projects</td>
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**Midreshet Schechter - Israel**

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*Includes Neve Schechter

### Midreshet Yerushalayim - Ukraine

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<td>Contributions</td>
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<td><strong>Sub-Total</strong></td>
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Total 8,317,732
The Graduate School

Chair, Board of Trustee: Saul Sanders • Chair, Executive Committee: Colette Avital
President: Professor David Golinkin • Dean: Dr. Doron Bar
Vice President for Finance and Administration: Liat Citron
Vice President for Development: Eitan Cooper

Numbers 2014-15
- 600 students, including 141 first-year students: Making Schechter the largest M.A. program in Jewish Studies in Israel!
- 53 faculty members, 18 full time, 35 external
- 13 interdisciplinary M.A. tracks of Jewish Studies
- 83 graduates in 2015; 1444 graduates since 1992
- 7 books published; 10 conferences and study events

New Appointments
Dr. Ari Ackerman has been appointed Dean of the Graduate School for a three-year term.
Dr. Alexander Even-Chen has been promoted to Associate Professor.

Liebhaber Prize and Graduation
83 Schechter M.A. degrees were conferred on June 10, 2015 in Jerusalem as part of Schechter’s 30th anniversary celebrations. Keynote speaker MK Roy Folkman pledged to advance the educational work of Schechter in the Knesset. On June 9, the 18th Liebhaber Prize for Religious Tolerance was awarded to Rabbi Benny Lau and to musical artist Etti Ankri, whose inspirational words and artistic performance were the highlight of the Israeli Friends’ Gala Event of the year.

Scholarships & Fellowships
- William Davidson Scholarships awarded to all 141 first-year students
- Judge Simon Rifkind and Harry Meresman Scholarships for Outstanding Scholarship and Commitment to Jewish Pluralism were awarded to 13 exceptional first-year students
- The Dr. Aubey Rotenberg z”l Memorial Scholarship awarded first time this year
- The Edythe Griffinger Scholarship to Advance Jewish Education in Development Towns to an exceptional student
• Prof. Alice Shalvi Scholarships for Outstanding Students in Gender and Judaism and the Arts to two students.
• Binah Yitzrit Research Scholarships in Judaism from a Bio-social Perspective to two students
• Keren Kayemet L’Yisrael Academic Excellence Prize to two students in the Land of Israel Studies M.A. Program
• Scholarships for M.A. Students in the TALI Leadership Program awarded to 23 TALI teachers
• Scholarships for Teachers in Development Towns and Disadvantaged Neighborhoods awarded to 24 students
• Jewish Agency for Israel Jewish Renewal Scholarships for Community Engagement to six students
• Kekst Faculty Fellow, 2013-15: Dr. Doron Bar, Dean, Senior Lecturer in Land of Israel Studies

Anonymous $1 Million Research Endowment
The first fruits of a $1 million research endowment fund supported faculty publishing and academic research for all full-time Schechter faculty.

“Literary Firsts” for Israeli Public
Now in Hebrew! As a Driven Leaf, by Rabbi Milton Steinberg, one of the most successful Jewish historical novels ever published in English is now available in Hebrew. Co-published with Yediot Aharonot Books, the new version has a 40-page appendix, written by Prof. David Golinkin, which provides the sources quoted or hinted at in the book, and explains the historical background. An English version of the notes has also been published at www.schechter.edu

The book has been published in Hebrew by Schechter and edited by Dr. Einat Ramon, founding director of Schechter’s “Marpeh” (“Healing”) program which confers CPE (Clinical Pastoral Education) certification with an M.A. degree in Family and Community Studies or Spiritual Education. There are 31 students currently enrolled in the certification program which entails rigorous classwork together with extensive fieldwork in hospitals, old-age homes and more.

New initiatives
A six-part series on Judaism and Evolution – Can the Two Co-Exist?, co-sponsored by Schechter’s Center for the Study of Bio-social Perspectives on Judaism and the Hebrew University, drew a large and enthusiastic audience in May-June 2015. The six lectures were organized and presented by Center director Dr. Paul Shrell-Fox and Center Research Fellow, Dr. Naomi Dar, who brought questions of evolution and Jewish religious practice to the forefront of Israeli public discourse.

Jewish Education for Social Empowerment
Schechter continues to innovate academic programs to foster community-based professional leadership through its M.A. in Family and Community Studies, including: a unique initiative to empower women from Jerusalem’s Kiryat Yovel neighborhood, as well as a program designed for police and prison guard officers where the focus on Jewish values will assist them in meeting the challenges of their jobs. Toward Fall 2015: A partnership between Schechter and the Community Center Association is creating a special M.A. program for Community Center professionals.
Schechter Scholarship for the Community

New Books 2014-5
Published by the Schechter Institute


*NASHIM, A Journal of Jewish Women’s Studies and Gender Issues,* academic editor, Prof. Renée Levine Melammed, managing editor, Deborah Greniman, a joint publication of the Schechter Institute, Hadassah-Brandeis Institute and Indiana University Press: No. 27: *Gender and the Holocaust—New Research* (Consulting Editor: Dalia Ofer), Fall 2014 and No. 28: *Feminist Interpretations of the Talmud,* honoring Judith Hauptman on her 70th birthday (Consulting Editors: Charlotte E. Fonrobert, Jane L. Kanarek and Marjorie Lehman) Spring 2015


*As a Driven Leaf,* Milton Steinberg (Hebrew Edition), edited with introduction and endnotes by David Golinkin, co-published by Yediot Ahronot, 2015

*Esther Rabbah,* eds., Yosef Tabori, Arnon Atzmon and David Golinkin, Jerusalem: Schechter Institute, 2014

*Published by Schechter Faculty and Graduates


*Studies in Language and Terminology in Talmudic Literature,* Shamma Friedman, Jerusalem: Hebrew Language Academy, 2014 (Hebrew)

*Women in Jewish Society in Pre-State Israel 1882-1948,* Bat-Sheva Margalit Stern, Ra’anana: The Open University, 2014 (Hebrew)


Conferences and Lectures Sponsored by Schechter

- “Ethics of the Mothers”, 16th National Masorti Women’s Study Day, June 2015
- Schechter 30th Anniversary Gala with Liebhaber Prize winners Rabbi Benny Lau and Etti Ankri, June 2015
- Bi-Annual Academic Conference on Jewish and Christian Perspectives, “Migration of Stories”, co-sponsored by Bar Ilan University and Christian Theological Schools in Amsterdam, June 2015

◆ Letters of Remedy, the Graphic Work of Fishel Rabinowicz, lecture by Yossi Rabinowicz and reading of Megillat Hashoah, Holocaust Memorial Day, April 2015

◆ Book Launchings for Schechter’s critical edition of Midrash Esther Rabbah, Bar Ilan University and Schechter, March 2015

◆ Three Annual Masorti Regional Women’s Study Days, February 2015

◆ Abraham Joshua Heschel: Philosophy and Way of Life in Historical Perspective, a conference at the Van Leer Institute and at Schechter, with participation of Schechter faculty: Dr. Ari Ackerman, Prof. Hanan Alexander, Dr. Alexander Even-Chen, Prof. David Golinkin, Dr. Einat Ramon, December 2014


The Goldstein-Golinkin Adult Education Program provided Masorti Kehillot with the best of Schechter faculty in 2014-15, including: Kehillat Netzach Israel, Ashkelon, Dr. Shula Laderman, “Purim through the Art Lens”; Kehillat Ohel Menashe, Yokneam ilit, Dr. Moti Arad, “A Different Look at Pharaoh and the Egyptians” and Prof. Moshe Benovitz, Men and Women in the Talmud”; Kehillah Masortit Kiryat Bialik, Rabbi Dubi Haiyon, “Judaism Through the Ages: East and West”; Kehillat Eshel Avraham, Beersheva, Prof. David Golinkin, “A Different Approach to the Shmitah Year”; Chavurat Tel Aviv, Dr. Michal Oren, Land of Israel studies; Kehillat Magen Avraham, Omer, Prof. Moshe Benovitz, “Lowering the Mehitzah in Synagogue”; Kehillat Moriah, Haifa, Dr. Bat-Sheva Margalit Stern, “The Women’s Struggle for Equality and Social Justice in Israel”

Research Institutes

The Center for Judaism and the Arts includes the M.A. track in Judaism and the Arts and TALI’s Visual Midrash Electronic Archive - www.tali-virtualmidrash.org.il – which includes 850 explicated images of art relating to Biblical subjects.

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

The Institute of Applied Halakhah publishes a library of Halakhic literature in Hebrew, English, and Russian for Jews throughout the world. It has to date published 21 popular and scholarly volumes.

The Center for the Study of Bio-social Perspectives on Judaism promotes research in the field of evolution and Jewish religious practice, convenes an international conference bi-annually and sponsors two research fellowships.

The Midrash Project is publishing a series of critical editions of Midrashim. Published to date: Legends of the Jews, Midrash Shmuel, Midrash Hadash al HaForah, Midrash Esther Rabbah with synaptic editions of Midrash Shmuel, Esther Rabbah, Kohelet Rabbah and Shir Hashirim Rabbah on Schechter websites.

65 students studied at the Schechter Rabbinical Seminary: 12 rabbinical students; 26 Mishlei students; 15 JTS students in selected M.A. courses and 12 Lehava rabbis

New Dean Appointed
Rabbi Avi Novis-Deutsch has been appointed as the new Dean of the Schechter Rabbinical Seminary, succeeding Rabbi Shlomo Tucker who is retiring after inspiring SRS students for the past 23 years, the last four years as Dean. Rabbi Novis-Deutsch, a 2003 graduate of the seminary, is returning to his alma mater. Rabbi Avi and his wife Dr. Nurit Novis-Deutsch (also a Schechter graduate) and their three children live on Kibbutz Hanaton. Using Hanaton as his base, he has worked in several northern communities, teaching in Schechter’s Midreshet Schechter outreach program and serving as a congregational rabbi in Kfar Veradim in the Western Galilee. We thank Rabbi Shlomo for his inspired leadership and wish him good luck and welcome Rabbi Avi and look forward to continued success for the SRS under his guidance.

Mishlei Program Leads to the Rabbinate
The Mishlei study program has become an entirely new paradigm for Jewish learning in Israel. Combining traditional Bet Midrash study (Hevruta) with an M.A. degree in Jewish Studies, Mishlei is today one of Schechter’s most popular programs. Four Mishlei graduates are studying in the 3-year Rabbinical program and one more student will enter the ordination program in Fall 2015.

Newest Rabbinic Track Students
- Yerah Meirsdorf, born in Israel, grew up in an Orthodox family, served in the Hesder Army-Yeshiva program, found his spiritual home in Masorti Judaism. Yerah worked as a rabbinic intern in Kehillat Eshel Avraham in Beersheva and as a student rabbi at Camp Ramah
Berkshires (2015) and will study for a semester at JTS in the Fall of 2015.

- **Lucas (Pato) Leiderman**, born in Brazil, Jewish Day School graduate, aliyah 2007, directs Marom student organization/South America; In 2015-16, Pato will be on leave, serving in a senior position at the Jewish community day school in Santiago, Chile.

- **Sara Cohen** today serves as regional rabbi in the Eilot region of southernmost Israel, including her Masorti Kehillah at Kibbutz Ketura. A Schechter M.A. graduate, Sara interns at the New Masorti Kehillah, Ramat Aviv.

- **Idit Mevorach**, Israeli-born from an Orthodox background, grew up in Israel's south. She begins the rabbinic track in Fall 2015 and at the same time will assume the position of “Rabbi” of the Masorti youth movement NOAM.

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**Legacy Heritage Rabbinic Fellows**

A ‘Win-Win’ Program for Students and Kehillot

SRS believes that the training of outstanding spiritual leaders must empower them through practical experience and hands-on contribution to Masorti communities. Driven by this spirit, the Legacy Heritage internship program has continued its crucial role in the school's curriculum. Rabbinic Fellows work one day per week and one Shabbat per month in Kehillot, bringing new vitality and fresh program ideas to attract new families to the kehillot. **There is great demand for these interns. 2014-15 Legacy Heritage rabbinic fellows and highlights of their work:**

- **Dikla Druckman**, Kehillat Ramot Zion, Jerusalem, establishment of a childrens’ choir;
- **Sara Cohen**, New Masorti Kehilla, Ramat Aviv, e-column on the weekly Torah reading;
- **Yerach Meyersdorf**, Kehillat Eshel Avraham, Beersheva, taught a conversion class for five women;
- **Raanan Malik**, Kehillat Magen Avraham, Omer, created a new website for Bnei Mitzvah program. **Rabbi Liron Levy**, a former LH Fellow, as program coordinator, organized five professional seminars for rabbinical students.

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**“Lehava” Continuing Education for Masorti Rabbis**

The Lehava continuing education program completed its second year with 12 Masorti rabbis, joined by 6 rabbinical students. The program, run jointly with the Rabbinical Assembly in Israel, provides rabbis with practical knowledge on contemporary halakhic issues. Offering a high-level Masorti Bet Midrash at Schechter, the bi-weekly study days are also a forum in which congregational rabbis can connect, meet and discuss shared issues central to their communities, and interact with rabbinical students. First semester topics included Mourning, Funerals and Spiritual Care. Second semester focused on Kashrut and Wine, of timely interest since many wineries in Israel are searching for alternative Kashrut certification to the rabbinate. **2015-16:** In response to requests by European Masorti rabbis, some of the classes will be offered via video conferencing to allow for overseas participation.

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**“Piyut-Tehilim”: Where Liturgy Meets the Psalms**

Schechter hosted a second very successful conference - The Annual Rabbi David Aronson Memorial Study Day - on *piyyut* (Jewish liturgical poetry) that drew over a hundred people in May to a stimulating afternoon. This year’s theme dealt with the “piyyut” and its connection to Psalms. Organizer of the conference and a Mishlei student, Yossi Ochana, firmly believes that piyuttim can connect people to Judaism. “What better way to transmit history and bring the uninitiated into the embrace of Jewish learning than through poetry and song?” he says.
TALI Education Fund

Chair, Board of Trustees:
Col (ret.) Roni Yannay
Susan and Scott Shay Director General:
Rabbi Dr. Eitan Chikli

TALI Expansion Continues
Over 12% of all elementary schools in the secular public school system are in the TALI Network. TALI is by far the largest provider of pluralistic Jewish studies and values education in Israel. In Fall 2015, 8 elementary schools and 35 pre-schools are joining the TALI Network.

Numbers 2014-15
- 94 schools and 166 pre-schools, totaling 260 TALI frameworks serving 40,000 pupils; including 6 new schools and 31 new pre-schools
- 11 pedagogic counselors worked in all 94 schools with about 2,000 teachers
- 11 pedagogic counselors worked with teachers in 98 pre-schools and kindergartens
- 30 teachers and principals studied in the TALI Leadership Program
- TALI Principals’ Forum held 5 regional seminars attended by 110 principals and Jewish studies coordinators
- 23 graduates of the TALI Leadership Program received Schechter M.A. degrees
- 24,000 TALI textbooks sold with 14 textbooks available in digital format
- Over 100,000 TALI textbooks and resource kits are currently used in Israeli schools
- 12 TALI rabbis conducted 450 hours of workshops in 46 TALI schools and pre-schools
- Dialogue and Identity Co-existence Program with 540 pupils, 40 teachers and 17 principals from 8 TALI schools and 9 Arab schools
- TALI 2-day Bar/Bat Mitzvah Seminars at Kibbutz Hanaton with 1,850 pupils from 31 schools
- Bat Mitzvah program for over 300 girls from 25 TALI schools in the north with mother-daughter activities and a Bat Mitzvah ceremony
- 116 Niggunim music workshops for 12,000 pupils and parents from 40 schools and pre-schools
- TALI “Shirat Halev” Music Festivals for choirs, dance and orchestras engaged 1,600 pupils and 400 teachers from 57 schools
- TALI-Leket’ Tzedakah activities enlisted over 1,000 pupils from 17 schools

Initiatives 2014-15
Parental Leadership Development Program
A new program to nurture parental advocacy and involvement in TALI schools was piloted in Spring 2015. Participants in five pilot workshops were recruited through school parents’ committees and based on excellent response, parental empowerment groups, meeting throughout the year, will be launched on a regional/municipal basis in 2015-16.

New Family Experiential Resources Developed
“Opening the Year” on the High Holidays and Sukkot was launched as the first in a series of experiential kits designed for home use. “Chanukah Game” is the second in the series with “Yom Ha’atzmaut Tractate” for parent-child enrichment on Independence Day in the design stage. A Rosh Chodesh Website is in development with a variety of activities and study materials for each month.

“Friends Across the Sea” Grows into “Friends Online”
The first TALI textbook in English - “Friends Across the Sea”, is being used successfully in North American day schools. The curriculum on Jewish Peoplehood taught in schools all over Israel is now being used for twinning Israeli schools with 12 day schools in the U.S. and Canada. The new “Friends Online” program is bringing new meaning to “Peoplehood” as 5th graders on both sides of the sea are making “real-time” Jewish connections with their peers.
Increased Resources for Early Childhood Education

Current demand for TALI early childhood education by municipalities all over Israel is unprecedented. The TALI Education Fund (TEF) has responded by dramatically increasing the number of TALI ganim (pre-schools and kindergartens) from 67 to 196 in just four years. TEF has developed new curricular materials and teacher training programs to serve more than 6,000 children in 25 cities and towns. About 50% of TALI ganim feed into TALI elementary schools. Where there is no TALI school, the ganim act as a catalyst for establishing a TALI presence.

New programs and resources include: Workshops to nurture teacher-led initiatives, with 12 projects being implemented and documented for future online sharing; An Ethics of the Fathers curriculum pilot; 2nd year for the TALI interactive calendar with teachers’ guide.

TALI Resources Reaching Jewish Educators in the Americas

In 2014-15, the Seminario Rabino in Buenos Aires requested curricular materials and pedagogical assistance to establish a TALI Network of Latin American day schools. In July 2015 TALI senior staff travelled to Argentina and Brazil to conduct workshops for senior educators and assess needs. In North America, educators long frustrated by a lack of suitable educational materials, have turned to the TEF’s Curriculum Development Dept. which is adapting and publishing the TALI Weekly Torah Portion curriculum in easy Hebrew for Toronto’s largest day school.

The Devorah and Shraga Genger Prize for Excellence in TALI Education was awarded in June 2015 to Yaffa Oknin for Outstanding Principal, TALI Oranim School, Yokneam, with a special award going to the Mayor of Yokneam, Mr. Simon Alfasi, who has made all of the secular elementary schools and 2/3 of the pre-schools part of the TALI Network. Jerusalem’s Gilo School won the Outstanding School Award.

2014-15 Project Updates

The TALI Educational Leadership Program is a two- year program for developing professional educational leadership, conversant with Jewish texts and capable of achieving the goals of TALI schools. Since its establishment in 2001, 250 educators from 80 TALI schools have studied in the leadership program, with most of them completing the M.A. Degree Program at the Schechter Institute. In 2014-15, 30 teachers were enrolled, and 23 TALI teachers completed their academic coursework, receiving Schechter M.A. degrees.

The Dialogue and Identity Program brought Jewish and Arab children together over the school year around a curriculum of Three Religions in the Holy Land. The program encompassed 540 children from TALI schools and Arab schools in the MENA Catholic Network (with Muslim and Christian pupils), who shared their traditions with each other in an atmosphere of equality and mutual respect that offers hope for the future.

The two-day TALI Bar-Bat Mitzvah Seminar hosted a record 31 schools and 1,850 6th grade pupils. In partnership with the Educational Center at Kibbutz Hanaton, the program introduces children to the meaning of adult Jewish responsibility through creative informal educational activities.

TALI "Shirat HaLev" Choir Festivals expanded to include several school dance troupes and orchestras. This program, led by TALI’s outstanding music specialist, Bat Ella Birnbaum, began with 8 schools five years ago. This year 57 TALI schools participated in 7 regional festivals. More schools are expected to join this inspiring program in the coming year.
2014-15 Highlights:
- **Tisha B’av study**: 250 participants, July 26
- **Shavuot**: 600 participants. All night study dedicated to the tensions between the “Broken” and the “Restored” (*Shever and Tikkun*) in Jewish culture, May 23
- **Holocaust Memorial Day**: 300 participants. Exhibition opening, followed by film on Italian Jewish partisan, April 15
- **Passover Events**: 400 participants. Exhibition Opening; *lecture by Prof. Yair Zakovich*; Musical performance by Mark Eliyahu, March 19
- **Purim Celebration**: 350 participants. Megillah Reading and Concert; March 5
- **Tu B’shvat Seder**: 220 participants, February 22
- **Chanukah Happening**: 550 participants. Exhibition Opening, *A Bit of Matter*; inter-faith candle lighting; musical performance by Liebhaber Prize winner Etti Ankri, December 18
- **Liturgy of Selihot Prayers**: 200 participants. September 30

**Numbers 2014-15**
10,000 people attended lectures, holiday events and exhibits during the year, with an average of 1,000 participants a month, in addition to thousands of worshippers and guests attending 55 Bar-Bat Mitzvahs in the Atid Sanctuary.

**Neve Schechter: A Magnet for Jewish Renewal**
Opened in 2012 in the trendy Neve Zedek neighborhood of Tel Aviv, Neve Schechter envisions Israeli culture as an ongoing dialogue and point of engagement between contemporary life and Jewish sources. Offering art exhibitions, lectures, weekly classes and holiday programming, Neve Schechter is recognized as a leading venue for Jewish culture and renewal in Tel Aviv and beyond.

**Liebhaber Center for Jewish Education**
The popularity of Neve Schechter programming has surpassed all projections. To meet the growing needs of the facility and to complete the Center’s educational vision, *The Rabbi Marc and Dr. Henia Liebhaber Center for Jewish Education* will be built to engage young local families. The three-storey building will house two TALI early childhood classrooms, two activity rooms and the main offices of Neve Schechter. The ground-breaking ceremony for the Center took place June 12, 2015. (See pictures from Schechter’s 30th celebrations, page 4.)

**Holidays Take on New Meaning**
Jewish holiday “happenings” are a focal point at Neve Schechter where Israelis of all ages celebrate with members of the Masorti Kehillah of Neve Zedek.

**Showcasing a Rich History – The Neve Schechter Story**
*In-House Theatre*: 2,000 annual participants, Friday mornings. Tel Aviv’s past comes to life with the highly successful play, *Café Lorenz - Templers, Bohemia and S.Y. Agnon*, an inspiring one-hour historical “tour” of Neve Schechter from 1906 to the present.

*Houses from Within*: Over 200 people visited Neve Schechter during this event, showcasing Israel’s most interesting architectural gems, May 14-16

*Wikipedia Loves Monuments*, 2nd annual photographic competition at Neve Schechter, raising awareness of national heritage sites and their preservation, November 12
The Big Wedding: 450 participants. An evening of nostalgia dedicated to the weddings held at Neve Schechter (Bet Lorenz) in the mid-20th century, including a renewal of marriage vows by couples married at the site up to 50 years ago; received extensive media coverage, October 29

Masorti Kehillah of Neve Zedek
Neve Schechter houses the Masorti Congregation of Neve Zedek, led by Rabbi Roberto Arbib, which embraces families and individuals who seek an inclusive and inspiring spiritual community. It is progressive yet traditional, in the heart of the secular urban landscape.

Drawing young families has been a major objective of the Kehillah:

55 children and their parents held their Bar/Bat Mitzvah in the Atid Sanctuary of the Masorti Kehillah of Neve Zedek in 2014-15.

A children’s play on the Torah Portion, with actress Irit Sopran, takes place two Shabbat mornings a month, attracting 40-50 children and their parents. Sopran also leads a monthly Wednesday afternoon Bible and Midrash storytelling with dozens of children and parents.

Jewish and Israeli Art in Focus
Fulfilling its promise to be Tel Aviv’s preeminent cultural crossroads for Judaism and the arts, Neve Schechter hired Shira Friedman to curate contemporary Jewish art exhibits, including:

Redeem and Salvage, by Rabbi David Greenstein, New Jersey artist, mixed media art with study sessions on “Ego and Creation Through the Lens of the Zohar”, July 2015

Memorial Buttons - On Holocaust and Resurrection, by Racheli Rogel, April 2015

Vashti: The Newly-Discovered Chapter, feminist interpretation of a feminist queen in a patriarchal society brought together artists from Israel and abroad with paintings, sculptures and a sound installation; received extensive media coverage, March-April 2015

The “Paper Lab”: A Jewish Look at the Artist’s Basic Tool In Neve Schechter’s newly converted basement studio, three young artists have come together in a unique design program that combines Jewish studies with Rabbi Roberto Arbib, study and museum tours on Jewish art with curator Shira Friedman and entrepreneurial training from the OutBox organization. The program was launched on May 15 with the artists exhibiting their first works. A major exhibition is planned for Chanukah 2015. (More on this story, page 9).

The Bet Midrash... a Study in Innovation

Body Midrash, a unique 7-part workshop series with nearly 100 participants explored the role of the body in Jewish Thought including ancient and contemporary attitudes to the body and to masculinity and femininity. The series combined text study and lectures with performances by the Batsheva Dance Company in the neighboring Suzanne Dellal Center for Dance and Theater, February-June 2015.

Neve Schechter offered an array of popular lecture series and courses in Jewish studies, including the Vilna Gaon and the Baal Shem Tov, Jewish Creative Writing, Piyut/Poetic Liturgy, Guided Imagery, Arabic, Rosh Hodesh study for Women and a six-part series on Fighting Racism from the Perspective of Jewish Sources, co-sponsored by Shatil.
Kiev’s Kehillat Masoret and Midreshet Yerushalayim/Masorti Olami Center for Jewish Education and Culture conducted programming for more than 200 people a week. New this year was the well-attended “From Generation to Generation” program that included Jewish historical guided tours and lectures in Kiev and the environs.

Chernowitz Aviv Cultural Center and Masorti Kehilla’s more than 90 families enthusiastically attend Shabbat and holiday programming. The “From Generation to Generation” program conveys local Jewish history and heritage to the emerging generation.

Berdichev Community Sunday School expanded this year to include “second generation” pre-schoolers; children of graduates of the school. Altogether, 35 children aged 3-16, often with their parents, meet every Sunday for learning and a hot meal.

Odessa, Midreshet Yerushalayim’s newest community, moved to permanent premises in November. 50 young adults come together for Shabbat and holiday services, an annual Pesach Seder, and weekly Jewish study programs.

Conversion Ceremony at Ramah Family Camp
Over 100 Midreshet Yerushalayim parents, children and grandparents from all over Ukraine spent 5 days at camp immersed in strengthening Jewish family ties through experiential learning: Several Bar/Bat Mitzvah children were called to their first aliyah and two community leaders began a course for “shohatim,” ritual slaughterers, offered by SRS graduate, Rabbi Shlomo Zacharov. The camp’s highlight came in an emotional ceremony for 12 adults and children, who after completing a rigorous study program with Rabbi Stamov, were converted under the auspices of the European Masorti Beit Din, led by SRS graduate Rabbi Chaim Weiner.

Kharkov School Shelters Refugees
27 refugee children and their families, fleeing the fighting in their hometowns of Donetsk and Lugansk, arrived in Kharkov and the Shalavim Day School in Fall 2014 with only the clothing on their backs. Principal Dr. Yevegeny Persky and the over 140 pupils and pre-school children “adopted” the children, paying for their tuition in 2014-15, and in many cases, providing the families with basics such as food, blankets and clothes. Many of these children attended Camp Ramah Ukraine in the summer of 2015.

Larger Attendance Recorded
As political unrest and violence continued in Ukraine, communities sought strength in numbers as well as inspiration from their Jewish sources.

Midreshet Yerushalayim
Midreshet Yerushalayim – Ukraine, Pedagogic Supervisor: Gila Katz
Midreshet Schechter - Israel, Director: Rabbi Dubi Haiyoun

MIDRESHET YERUSHALAYIM – UKRAINE
Crisis Brings Community Together
Deeply affected by the Russian incursion into Ukraine in late 2014, Midreshet Yerushalayim communities went into high gear, taking in Jewish refugees from Donetsk and other war-torn eastern areas. They were provided with food, shelter and employment in Kiev, Chernowitz and Kharkov. Security was enhanced at all Centers and at the Ramah-Ukraine summer camps and additional holiday and Shabbat meals were given to needy newcomers. Gila Katz was in constant contact with Rabbi Reuven Stamov and his wife, Lena, spiritual leaders of Kehillat Masoret in Kiev, as well as with school principals and community leaders of all Midreshet schools and family centers.
Numbers and Programs 2014-15

- 1,000 children and their families participated in Midreshet Yerushalayim programs, the only Conservative Jewish educational network in the former Soviet Union, in the following frameworks:
- **Family Education Centers** in Kiev, Chernowitz and Berdichev
- **Odessa Masorti Center** formed with 50 young activists (mainly in their 20s) and the **Odessa Hebrew Club and Café**, with 30-40 weekly participants
- **Kharkov Lyceum Day School**, with 140 students
- **Kiev Family Education Center** programming seven days a week, 200 weekly participants
- **Teachers’ Seminar for 43 teachers and camp counselors** in western Ukraine, June 2015
- **Ramah-Ukraine Family Camp for 26 families** (over 100 participants comprised of three generations) June 2015

- 23th Annual Ramah-Ukraine Summer Camp: 135 teenagers (aged 11-17) and staff from 11 Ukrainian towns, 10-days of Jewish adventure
- **Chanukah Shabbaton in Kiev**, December 2014, with 100 people (thirty families) from Kiev, Berdichev, Chernowitz and Odessa with Shabbat learning and prayers culminating in a festive Chanukah party

**In Appreciation: Founding Director of Midreshet Yerushalayim-Israel**

Dr. Yair Paz, founding director of Midreshet Yerushalayim programs for Russian-speakers in Israel, retired from his position in 2014. Paz and his team of educators helped thousands define their Jewish identities through innovative Jewish studies programming from 1991-2014.

**MIDRESHET SCHECHTER – ISRAEL**

Midreshet Schechter offers continuing and adult education programs in Hebrew, Russian, English and French to Israelis and immigrants in Bet Midrash frameworks in Masorti congregations and community centers, as well as at the Schechter Institute in Jerusalem.

**Bringing High-Level Jewish Learning to Northern Israel**

In 2014-15, Midreshet Schechter in Northern Israel conducted 16 weekly classes in Haifa (Kehillat Moriah), Karmiel (Kehillat Hakerem), Ramat Yishai (Kehilat Sukkat Shalom), Kfar Tavor and Shlomi. Courses were taught mainly by Masorti rabbis, with **Rabbi Dubi Haiyoun**, rabbi of Kehillat Moriah, serving as the director and lead teacher. Over 300 people attended the classes and hundreds more attended one-time events. **Expansion 2015-16: The Jezreel Valley Schechter Learning Center** co-sponsored by the regional council will offer a weekly study program, to be taught by SRS graduate **Rabbi Yisrael Saruk**.

**English Study Series Launched by Midreshet Schechter-Jerusalem**

A Goldstein-Golinkin lecture series in English was inaugurated at Schechter in Spring 2015. Offering three courses of 8 lectures each and showcasing the best of Schechter faculty, the program attracted 40 students to courses in Jewish philosophy, Midrash and Hebrew literature taught by **Dr. Ari Ackerman**, **Dr. Pinhas Mandel** and **Dr. Shana Mauer**. Building on its initial success, an Autumn Series is planned, with four courses to be offered in English and one in French.
Schechter raised a record $6,434,659 for operating expenses from the period of August 1, 2014- July 31, 2015, an increase of 16% over the previous year. We owed much of this success to a generous two-for-one matching campaign from The William Davidson Foundation which led to new or increased gifts from over 100 donors from all over the world. The continued fundraising success enabled Schechter’s four Amutot (nonprofits) to sustain and grow numerous academic, educational and outreach activities and initiatives at its main campus in Jerusalem, at Neve Schechter in Tel Aviv, in TALI schools throughout the State of Israel, at Schechter Centers in Northern Israel, and in Ukraine.

Schechter’s two beautiful new facilities, the Legacy Heritage Classroom Building in Jerusalem and the Legacy Heritage Center for Jewish Culture in Tel Aviv opened in 2012. Final payments on multi-year pledges made to the capital campaigns for these buildings have continued to arrive through 2014-15. Over 97% of funds pledged for building these facilities have been received.

The groundbreaking for a second building to complete the Neve Schechter Campus in Tel Aviv was held in June 2015. The naming gift for the Rabbi Marc and Dr. Henia Liebhaber Center for Jewish Education was part of the generous bequest of Rabbi Liebhaber z’l, who passed away in 2014. As of August 1, 2015, $1,450,000 in commitments toward a total goal of $2 million have been made by eleven generous donors, with $1,080,000 of that amount received.

Our generous community of donors enables the Schechter Institute to advance its mission of Jewish education and promoting religious pluralism and tolerance in Israel. We are grateful to each and every donor and funder for their generosity and look forward to their continued support, partnership, and involvement in Schechter’s mission.
New Major Operating Gifts and Grants ($20,000 and up)

- Ken and Nira Abramowitz, Neve Schechter programming
- Anonymous, Publication of a critical edition of Kohelet Rabbah
- JAFI/Israel Ministry of Education, Jewish Renewal Project Grants for all four Schechter amutot
- Jewish Federation of Greater Atlanta, TALI Dialogue and Identity Co-Existence Program, Yokneam Schools
- David Katzin, TALI general support
- Bequest of Rabbi Marc Liebhaber z”l, Campus maintenance & activities promoting religious tolerance
- Seth Merin, TALI Dialogue and Identity Co-Existence Program
- Louis and Judith Miller, TALI general support
- Claudio and Penny Pincus, Establishment of a network of TALI schools in South America
- Nathan and Lily Silver Education Foundation, TALI Weekly Portion Curriculum for Toronto Day Schools
- Ben and Susan Stein, General support for the Graduate School
- Harold and Carol Wolfe/Toddy and Irving Granovsky, Rabbinical Scholarship for Schechter Rabbinical Seminary student from the Eilot Region

New Capital Commitments

Bequest of Rabbi Marc Liebhaber z”l to name the Family Education Center at Neve Schechter

Schechter Leadership News

Prof. David Golinkin, who will be stepping down as President of the Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies in Fall 2015, was appointed President of The Schechter Institutes, Inc. and received the title of President Emeritus of the Schechter Institute.

30th Gala Celebrations and Mission

Schechter leaders, donors and friends from around the world joined Israeli leaders June 8-14, 2015 in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv to celebrate the vast contribution Schechter has made to Israeli society in the field of pluralistic Jewish education. For thirty years, Schechter has been at the forefront of this revolution in Jewish education through its graduate school, rabbinic program and the TALI school network. It was a great week of learning, touring and celebrating. (See pictures on page 4).

Schechter Board News

The Schechter Institutes, Inc., under the leadership of Chair Saul Sanders, met in New York in November 2014 and February 2015. The Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies Board of Trustees, led by Saul Sanders and by Executive Committee Chair Colette Avital convened in Neve Schechter in Tel Aviv, December 2014, and in Jerusalem, June 2015. The Schechter Rabbinical Seminary, led by Board Chair Ilana Laderman Mushkin and Executive Committee Chair Rabbi Barry Leff, conducted board meetings at Neve Schechter, December 2014 and in Jerusalem, June 2015, where the SRS paid tribute to Rabbi Shlomo Tucker for 23 years of dedicated professional leadership, including four years as Dean.

Veteran Board Members Honored

Aaron Priest, long-standing member of the Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies Board of Trustees and of the Board of Directors of The Schechter Institutes, Inc., has stepped down from the Board of the Schechter Institute after more than twenty years of dedicated service. He will continue to serve on the Board of The Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies.

1. 30th Anniversary Mission visits TALI Amirim School, Beersheva. 2. Jonathan Aaron and his wife Mary, Bloomfield Hills, MI (center right), with Schechter students, David Golinkin and Shira Simchovitch, Dir., early childhood education. 3. Maria Lucia Uribe, Director, Arigatou Foundation, Geneva, meets children of the Dialogue and Identity program from Wasifiah School in Nazareth and TALI Alona School. 4. Arye Genger (right) with David Golinkin at the Genger Prize Ceremony. 5. Aaron Priest (center) with wife Arleen, were honored at June board meeting, with David Golinkin, Saul Sanders and far right, Benjamin Segal. 6. Rabbi Pablo Berman congregational mission from Curitiba, Brazil.
Institutes, Inc., and we look forward to many more years of his wise counsel.

We Remember

During the past year we mourned the loss of board member Rabbi Marc Liebhaber z"l, who passed away on Sukkot, 2014/5775, at the venerable age of 97. Rabbi Liebhaber and his wife, Dr. Henia Liebhaber z"l had a firm belief in the transformative power of Jewish education. Their commitment to fostering religious pluralism and tolerance in the State of Israel was manifested in their generous support of Schechter, including sponsorship of the Annual Liebhaber Prize for Religious Tolerance for 18 years and the Schechter Spring of Tolerance Campaign in 2014, and most recently, by providing a major bequest to name the Rabbi Marc and Dr. Henia Liebhaber Center for Jewish Education in Neve Schechter. The scholarly wisdom, sharp wit, love of life and boundless energy of Rabbi Marc Liebhaber will be missed by the entire Schechter community.

Schechter Scholarship Overseas

Following the President

Prof. David Golinkin served as a scholar-in-residence at numerous Conservative congregations and spoke at various conferences in Israel and abroad in 2014-15.


Schechter Faculty Enrich International Conferences

An international conference in Amsterdam on Jewish and Christian Perspectives showcased Schechter faculty including: Dr. Tamar Kadari, Aggadic Motifs in the Story of Jonah the Prophet: Interaction between Religions; Dr. Shula Laderman, Pictures Featuring Stories and Traditions in Transformation; Dr. Paul Mandel, Bethlehem and the Birth of the Messiah in the Eyes of a Byzantine Jewish Storyteller

Dr. Alexander Even-Chen: taught four courses at the School of Jewish Theology, Potsdam, Germany, Fall Semester 2014


Dr. Amitai Baruchi Unna: “The Role of the City Samaria in the Days of Ahab and his Sons: Bible, History, and Archaeology”, European Association for Biblical Studies, Córdoba, Spain, July 2015 and “Reporting the Content of Divine Positive Response in Assyrian Royal Inscriptions”, Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale [RAI], Genéva, Switzerland, June 2015

Rabbi Diana Villa: “Conditional Marriage as a Systemic Solution to the Agunah Dilemma”, “Conversion in Jewish Law”, “Kevod Habriyot (Human Dignity)”, “Rabbi Dr. Leo Jung” (in honor of the 27th yahrzeit of Rabbi Villa’s grandfather), Limmud Conference, Coventry, UK, December 2014

Under the able leadership of Moshe Sharashove, Chair of Israeli Friends of Schechter and Iris Shvil, Director, both Schechter graduates, Israeli Friends of Schechter held activities throughout the year, bringing businesspeople, alumnae and board members together to form a Schechter support community. The highlight of the year was the Annual Gala Event, which this year coincided with Schechter’s 30th anniversary festivities, June 9, (see page 4). The Gala evening provided the perfect venue for Schechter leadership from around the world to celebrate together, highlighted by the awarding of the annual Liebhaber Prize for Religious Tolerance with an inspiring speech by prize winner Rabbi Benny Lau and musical performance by prize winner Etti Ankri.

Israeli Friends of Schechter enjoyed a number of high-level field trips in 2014-15, including:

An Evening Dedicated to the Jews of Aleppo: program commenced at the Israel Museum with a tour of the Second Temple Model led by Dr. Doron Bar; followed by a lecture by Prof. David Golinkin on the Aleppo Codex at the Shrine of the Book. The group then wound its way to the charming Jerusalem neighborhood of Nahla’ot and the exotic Adas synagogue, built by Aleppo Jews, with a lecture by Liebhaber Prize winner Dr. Micah Goodman on “Moses’ Parting Speech,” October 2014

The Secrets of Hanavi’im Street – 19th century Jerusalem, with a visit to an impressive 3-D model of Jerusalem in the Municipality, a visit to the Ma’aleh Film School with lecture by Yuval Rivlin, who teaches in the Schechter Judaism and the Arts M.A. Track, followed by dinner in the quaint “Tmol Shilshom” Jerusalem eatery, led by tour guide and VP for Development, Eitan Cooper.

1. Dr. Sheldon and Judith Spector, Santa Monica, CA on a visit to Schechter. 2. From left: Josiah Rotenberg, with Prof. Avigdor Shinan and David and Riva Rotenberg at the Dr. Aubey Rotenberg Memorial Lecture, Jerusalem. 3. David Golinkin with Moshe Sharashove, Israeli Friends Chair, at the 30th Gala Event. 4. David Golinkin with Jeff Kopin, Highland Park, IL. 5. Saul Sanders, Board Chair, NYC (center), receives first copy of The Illuminated Torah, from artist Avner Moriah and author Dr. Shula Laderman. 6. Dr. Ron and Nina Spiro, Jerusalem, with David Golinkin at Schechter. 7. Israeli Friends of Schechter tour Jerusalem’s 19th century streets with Eitan Cooper.

Israeli Friends of Schechter

This year, for the first time, fundraising for operations from private donors and foundations in Israel reached one million shekels, and government sources provided over one million additional shekels.
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