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FOR THE
LATEST ALUMNI
MAZEL TOV'S
AND UPCOMING
EVENTS!

The YRY/Genesis community will be forever indebted to Mrs. Zises for the love and devotion she extended to all of us as she considered us all part of her "mishpocha." The bounty of her life will serve as a source of inspiration and motivation.

Mr. Howard P. Ronson OBM, Chairman of the Board of the Genesis Center, a giant proponent of the Genesis ideals, literally took the principles supported by Ruth Zises and the Zises Family and transformed them into brick and mortar. Mr. Ronson, passed away on March 21, 2007, tragically, at the age of 63, after a brief illness. Although he was well known for his impressive building projects internationally, his heart truly belonged to Jewish education, the Jewish people and the State of Israel. Mr. Ronson held the highest standards for all of his work and had the same expectations for the Genesis Center. The grandness of the Ronson Campus is the hallmark of yeshiva campuses in Israel. Mr. Ronson lovingly dedicated the Ronson Campus to his parents because they instilled in him their love for his God, people and land. He was always concerned with the physical as well as the spiritual aspects of YRY, whether it was the majestic Beit Medrash, the well equipped workout room, or the elegant dining hall. Mr. Ronson cared for every stone and flower on the Ronson Campus, tending to its maintenance even from abroad.

In 2001 the YRY/Genesis campus was the venue for Mr. Ronson's wedding to his wife Angelika, and last spring, at what would be his last visit to YRY, Mr. Ronson and Angelika brought their twin daughters, Gisele and Livia, to visit what they called "Poppa's school."

Mr. Ronson's favorite time to visit the YRY/Genesis Center was during Pesach. For many years he enjoyed the Pesach holidays with the students at Reishit along with Rav Jay, Rav Ari, Rav Elie and Rav Doni. In his eulogy for Mr. Ronson, Rav Jay explained to all what the poignant meaning of "Ma Nishtana Halayla HaZeh" would mean this year in Israel at the Reishit Pesach Seder. This year, Pesach would be different because YRY/Genesis would be without its visionary master builder, Mr. Howard P. Ronson. His unyielding support and steadfast encouragement will be sorely missed.

Please join us as we celebrate the lives and accomplishments of Mr. Howard Ronson Mrs. Ruth Zises with a special presentation at the Annual YRY/Genesis Center Dinner on Tuesday, June 19, 2007/ 3 Tammuz 5767. A siyum of the entire Mishnah will be presented by Reishit students at the dinner in memory of Mr. Ronson, Mrs. Zises and the parents of Mr. Sidney Gable, longtime member of the Genesis Center executive board Rabbi Achiezer Gable z"l and Mrs. Rena Gable a"h, who both passed away this year.



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REISHIT ALUMNI UPDATE

SPRING 2007/ 5767

VOLUME 4 NO. 1

12TH ANNIVERSARY SCHOLARSHIP DINNER - SAVE THE DATE

On Tuesday, June 19, 2007/3 Tammuz 5767, join us for a special evening celebrating another year of remarkable accomplishments at Yeshivat Reishit Yerushalayim/Genesis Center. The gala dinner, to be held at the Grand Hyatt, in New York City, will recognize the outstanding achievements of our honorees, **Dr. Michael and Fern Malka**, serve as a wonderful opportunity to speak with Rebbeim, and reconnect with Yeshiva friends. As in years past, we the dinner will be an important opportunity for us to raise important scholarship funds to ensure that we will continue to provide financial support for talmidim who may be in need.

In addition, at this year's dinner the Reishit-Genesis community will have the opportunity to pay tribute to the lives of **Mr. Howard P. Ronson, OBM**, Chairman of the Board and **Mrs. Ruth Zises, OBM**, a founder of the Genesis Foundation, during a special memorial honoring their unsurpassed dedication to Genesis/Reishit and their contributions to our foundation and growth.

This year's Guests of Honor/Keter Torah Awardees, **Dr Michael and Fern Malka**, are well known for their involvement, support and leadership in almost every area of Jewish education and communal life. Not only are they leaders in their home community of Englewood, NJ, and in the greater New York Sephardic community but they are also renown for their dedication to numerous Jewish causes nationally and internationally.

Fern and Michael are the proud parents of three Reishit alumni, Josh (married to _____, Judah engaged to _____, and Daniel, along with daughter Vicky who will be attending school in Israel next year. Their love and respect to Torah was instilled by Michael's and parents grandfather who served as the Chief Rabbi of Tunisia, and by Fern's parents, the Coopers who served the Far Rockaway, NY Jewish community for many years.

As our honorees, DR. MICHAEL AND FERN appreciate and value the dedicated Reishit faculty who have made an indelible mark on their family by establishing enduring relationships with their sons. They firmly believe that the years their sons spent learning at YRY were critical to their developing into fine Bnei Torah. Fern and Michael have been involved with Reishit for many years and their long-term support has been constant and consistent

We look forward to what will certainly be a meaningful and inspiring evening of Hakarat Hatov that will help to strengthen the bonds of our Yeshiva community.

Yeshivat Reishit Yerushalayim/Genesis Center Mourns the loss of two of its most longstanding and ardent supporters - **Mr. Howard P. Ronson**, Chairman of the Board, and **Mrs. Ruth Zises**, mother of our **President Jay Zises**. It was a very difficult winter for the YRY/Genesis Family as we had to endure the loss of two of our most longstanding and ardent supporters, Mr. Howard P. Ronson, Chairman of the Board, and Mrs. Ruth Zises.

Mrs. Ruth Zises,obm passed away the night of Purim surrounded by her family as she succumbed to a long illness. Her devotion to her husband Bernie, her sons **Selig, Seymour**, and our President, **Jay**, her 9 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren was exemplary. She was the paradigm of the Jewish matriarch. Mrs. Zises's support for Judaism and Israel was unparalleled. It was her commitment to these ideals that spurred the Zises family to found the Genesis Foundation in America so that all Jews, in business, government and politics could be exposed to a high level of Jewish scholarship through regularly scheduled classes and study sessions that they endowed. Later by helping establish the Genesis Center in Jerusalem, the Zises family provided a world-class venue for American businessmen and politicians to visit Israel and experience Israeli culture. Because of Mrs. Zises's principles, the Zises family enriched the Reishit program

with special guests speakers from the business and political world.

In 2005, Mr. Jay Zises, instituted a scholars program in conjunction with the Shalem Center in Israel, where Reishit students, during their free time, work on research projects related to Israel. Mr. Zises was determined to include these experiences into the Reishit program because he wanted the students attending Reishit to learn Torah at the highest levels of scholarship and return to their secular studies after Yeshiva as fine, well-rounded Jewish men. He named the program in tribute to Mr. Howard Ronson, for all of his dedication to YRY/Genesis.



•NATAN SHARANSKY AND SHALEM CENTER- YRY RESEARCH INTERNSHIP



We are proud to announce the YRY- Genesis Foundation Internship Program with The Hon. Natan Sharansky at The Shalem Center in Jerusalem. Throughout the Zman, Talmidim have had the unique opportunity to work alongside the Jewish hero and champion of human rights, and assist Mr. Sharansky in researching the much anticipated follow-up to his best-selling book, *The Case for Democracy*. The internship program has enabled the Reishit student interns to gain professional research experience, and work on a meaningful project that has the potential to impact and influence the current global geo-political reality as we know it.

To launch the new initiative, the interns, accompanied by Rav Jay, Rav Judah & project coordinator Rav Dov Lipman met with Natan Sharansky in Jerusalem to discuss the goals of his new project. It was a memorable and exciting experience for all of us, and we look forward to welcoming Mr. Sharansky to Reishit later in the year.

•REISHIT YERUSHALYIM-RONSON FELLOWS MEET WITH UNITED STATES CONGRESSMAN GARY ACKERMAN



On Thursday April 12 Reishit Yerushalayim students including a number serving as Ronson Fellows at the Shalem Center had the privilege to meet with Congressman Gary Ackerman. Following some opening remarks by the Congressman, the fellows had the opportunity to ask the Congressman questions. The ensuing discussions which lasted close to two hours involved peace negotiations with the Palestinians, the kidnapped IDF soldiers, Jonathan Pollard, the 2008 U.S. Presidential elections, and more. At times, the discussions turned into more of a respectful debate as the Reishit students demonstrated their passion and knowledge regarding certain contentious issues. The Congressman remarked how invigorating it

was to have such an intense discussion with young men and how hopeful he was for the future with such bright and impressive students as our future leaders. The Reishit Yerushalayim-Ronson Fellows Program at the Shalem Center, endowed by the Zises Family, looks forward to many more meaningful and memorable programs of this kind in the future.



•YOM IYUN FOR SOLDIERS

This winter we dedicated a very meaningful, informative and emotional special day focusing on our Soldiers Missing In Action. We were honored and moved by the presence of Mr. Yona Baumel, father of IDF soldier, Zacharya, who has been MIA since the infamous battle of Sultan Yakoub in June 1982. The keynote address was presented by Dr. Stuart Ditchek, Prof. of Pediatric Medicine at NYU Medical School, and Founder of The Committee for the Return of Zachary Baumel (www.ZacharyBaumel.org). A lifelong friend of the Baumel family, Prof. Ditchek outlined the background facts of the case and the political efforts to obtain information regarding where Zach is being held.



The program included shiurim on the topic of Pidyon Shevuyim (Redeeming Captives) in Jewish Law and Machshava from Rav Jay Marcus, Rav Chaim Soloveichik and Rav Danny Myers. Rav Simcha Hochbaum shared stories, songs and teachings of hope and salvation, and Rav Judah gave a sicha and discussed practical ways we can help and what we can do to stay focused on this critical issue. To that end, Rav Jay distributed pocket sized cards with the names and prayer for the MIA's for everyone to keep (Please contact our office to receive an MIA Tefilla card).

•YRY ALUMNI: MAKING A DIFFERENCE ON COLLEGE CAMPUS

In the wake of last summer's War in Lebanon, there has been a significant increase in anti-Israel bias and activity on college campuses. We are proud of our alumni who have risen to the challenge of defending Israel and taken on leadership positions at their respective Universities: Nati Philosophe & Yoni Roth (YRY '05-'06), both first year economics students at York University in Toronto were featured in a lead article in *The Canadian Jewish News* this winter, which recognized and praised their groundbreaking Pro-Israel Hasbara and activism. Yoni and Nati founded the Campus Coalition of Zionists (CCZ) to counter false and misleading claims by Arab student groups, and to ensure that pro-Israel students have a forum for expression and protest as well. To counter the virulent anti-Israel sentiment on campus (such as "Israeli- Apartheid Week"), Roth and Philosophe organize programs to educate, inform and inspire.

Their first event, "We've JiHAD Enough", successfully focused attention on Muslim Terror as a global phenomenon and long time Israeli problem. Yoni and Nati have formally addressed Israel's right to self defense and the security barrier, and have created quite a stir at York. After making a public presentation about Hizbollah using civilians as human shields, an editorial in York's official campus newspaper claimed that they "provided racist justifications for the killing of Palestinian and Lebanese children." Yoni, Nati and the CCZ are defiant, and insist that they won't shy away from controversy. During this year's winter break, Nati spent time at Yeshiva, learning and strengthening his ideals. "Nobody wants to stand up alone," says Nati; now, thanks to their efforts, Jewish students at York won't have to.

CHANUKAH HIGHLIGHTS:

- Each shiur enjoyed a family chanuka seuda and mesiba celebration at their Rebbi's house
 - Chanuka Seuda and Chagiga Concert with **Aharon Razel**
- Inter-Shiur competitions: "the most intense GaGa and dodgeball tournament in the Middle East"



PURIM

Following Taanit Esther we held our annual "Megillah-thon" - all night learning. Chagiga featuring all-star band of **Chaim David, Shlomo Katz & Meir Solomon**- the music was amazing, and the dancing lasted for hours! Talmidim raised over \$3,000 for **L'maan Achai**, a local community charity and social services organization. The highlight of the fundraising project came on Purim morning, when 40 guys canvassed the neighborhood singing, dancing and collecting Matanot Levyonim. Yasher Koach to **Mikey Mitnick** (Shana Alef) who coordinated to fundraising effort.



CHESED & COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS



- We are proud to be the first Yeshiva to host a Shabbaton with **Darkaynu**, a groundbreaking "Year-In-Israel" program for young men with Developmental Disabilities. The members of "**Yeshivat Darkaynu**" and their staff joined us for a special Chanuka Shabbaton at Reishit, filled with learning and lots of Ruach



- A group of talmidim have been volunteering weekly- packing fruits and vegetables with **Yad Yosef HaMashbir** a local chesed organization that provides Tomchei Shabbat services to needy families.
- We travelled to **Afula**, a predominantly secular Israeli city to strengthen the efforts of the local Yeshiva and Outreach

Center. The Reishit Band(s) performed, and the energized talmidim showed Afula how to party. It was a fun and inspiring evening of Reishit Ruach and talent.



Yasher Koach to Shana Bet Talmidim Josh Weinberg, Josh Zlotnick & Sruli Rapps; and Shana Alef talmidim Yoni Stokar, Phil Reich & Jeremy Ancelson for the music.

- 5th year of our unique partnership with Yad Eliezer!
- Talmidim participated in a special program in Jerusalem with participants of the **OU- Yachad Birthright Mission**, for young adults with Developmental Disabilities. We ran a wonderful Melaveh Malka incorporating songs, stories and discussion that involved the Yachad members and ended with dancing and singing together in a beautiful display of ruach and friendship.
- Talmidim in **Rav Doni** and **Rav Benovitz's** shiurim spent the morning working at **Karmeil Halr Soup Kitchen and Restaurant**, preparing and serving meals. We look forward to

developing and expanding our relationship with Karmeil Halr in the near future.



- Kol HaKavod to Shana Alef talmidim **Phil Reich** and **Danny Wein** who created and distributed dozens of Chanukiot and gift packages to local families.
- Our **Big-Brother** programs continues to grow and flourish, as more students have joined the team of talmidim working with local children as tutors and mentors- Yasher Kochachem!
- Guest Speakers who joined us for Shabbat this Zman included: **Rav Shalom Rosner** (YU Rosh Yeshiva); **Rav Ari Jacobson** (Young Israel of Monsey & Wesley Hills); **Rav Lazer Brody** (Special- Ops officer, Lebanon War veteran and popular author); **Lt. Meyer Birnbaum** (one of the first Orthodox Jewish liberators of the Concentration Camps); Rav **Hanoch Teller** (Maggid and author).

GENESIS CENTER HAPPENINGS



- **Rav Jay Marcus** continues his popular daily shiur and discussion on Zionism & Politics from a Torah perspective, dealing with difficult and controversial issues effecting Klal Yisrael.



- Congratulations to our **Basketball Team** on winning the Yeshiva League Championship, and for making a Kidush Hashem every step of the way!

- Congratulations to our ATFL **Football Team**, who made it into the second round of the Division 1, top tier playoffs.

- **Yud Tet Kislev:** Rav Jay, Rav Ari & Rav Doni, Rav Willig, Rav Soloveichik, Rav Myers, Rav Bronfeld & Rav Rocky Stewart all joined the special Shana Bet Melaveh Malka featuring Reb Shlomo Katz at the Mischels in Ramat Beit Shemesh.

- **Rabbi Dr. Ari Zivotofsky** (Brain Science Prof. at Bar Ilan University) gave a thorough overview of the Halachot of Shechita, dealing with a wide range of Halachik and ethical issues. The program included a multi-media presentation and culminated in an on campus shechita (followed by BBO lamb chops)

- In preparation for Shabbat Shira, we had a special **Concert/ Kumzits** with **Reb Yehuda Katz** of **Reva L'Sheva**, a singer/ songwriter and talmid of Reb Shlomo Carlebach who helped get us in

the mood for a spirit filled Shabbos with his stories and niggunim. Yasher Koach to Shana Bet Talmid, Sruli Rapps who accompanied him on guitar.



- Over 80 talmidim joined **Rav Ari** and **Rav Judah** for an Alumni Reunion, Get-Together and Shiur at YU in February.
- A group of talmidim had the unique opportunity to meet with a number of our generation's leading Rabbinical figures, including Rav Chaim Kanievsky, Rav Nosson Zvi Finkel, Rebbe Yakov Meir Shechter, and Former Chief Rabbi of Israel and Rosh Yeshiva of Merkaz HaRav, HaRav Avraham Shapira.