

NEW YEAR, NEW BEGINNINGS



As we review the past academic year, we are proud of our students and alumni who have taken part in a number of courageous and meaningful projects, whether it be traveling to Kazakhstan or India to help fellow Jews experience a seder, or finding ways to contribute to local communities, as in the case of our Mayanot alumni group, WOMAN. Our students are passionate individuals, and we are very proud of their achievements.

It is our prayer that the students who study at Mayanot, or even experience a Taglit

- Birthright trip with Mayanot, will be inspired Jews, infused with the desire to reach out to our fellow Jews and make a difference to our people and to our world.

Thank you for your support and partnership as we endeavor to play a role in building the future of Am Yisrael.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Shlomo
Gestetner

Rabbi Kasriel
Shemtov



MAYANOTES



BREAKING RECORDS

With 2,000 college students (more than 50 buses) registered to participate in Taglit-Birthright's Mayanot program this summer – after a recruitment of a record-breaking 6,000 applicants – Mayanot's Birthright office has been working around the clock to get the planning process underway for what they hope will be Mayanot's most successful Birthright session to date.

Rabbi Shlomo Gestetner met with Minister for Public Diplomacy and Diaspora Affairs Mr. Yuli Edelstein recently to discuss the upcoming season. The meeting agenda focused primarily on post-Birthright issues, and in particular, the potential for Mayanot Birthright participants to be ambassadors for Israel on campus across North America.

“Mayanot Birthright is not only a wonderful experience for our participants, but can also impact Jewish life in the Diaspora. We

communities,” said Rabbi Gestetner.

Mayanot Birthright is one of the leading providers of Taglit-Birthright programs. “Hundreds of Mayanot alumni choose to study at the Mayanot Institute of Jewish Studies following the program,” explained Rabbi Kasriel Shemtov, Executive Director of Mayanot. “They return to North America inspired to make a difference within their local Jewish communities.”



Minister Yuli Edelstein with Rabbi Shlomo Gestetner

hope that we are able to leverage the success of Birthright and create a situation whereby participants return home, become defenders of Israel on campus and contribute to Jewish life in their local

A special thank you to Danny Sack, Director of Mayanot Birthright and to the Mayanot Birthright office staff: Ella Ben-Pelech, Natalie Dallal, Deb David, Ariel Diamond, Sarah Prinsky, Ilana Wachs, Karen Weddel and Tali Weisberg.

NEW HORIZONS

SCHOTTENSTEINS DEDICATE HOLTZBERG ADMINISTRATION CENTER



David and Eda Schottenstein outside Mayanot's new Holtzberg Administration Center

On the Yartzheit of Rabbi Gavriel and Mrs. Rivka Holtzberg z"l this year, more than 100 students and supporters of the Mayanot Institute of Jewish Studies gathered on the streets of Jerusalem to dedicate a new facility for Mayanot in their honor.

Mayanot's Holtzberg Administration Center, built in response to Mayanot's expanding activities, was

made possible due to the generous and steadfast support of David and Eda Schottenstein of Columbus, Ohio. Located in the heart of Jerusalem, the center serves as Mayanot's administrative and financial offices, and is abuzz with activity each and every day.

In a joyous yet moving dedication ceremony, David Schottenstein explained to the crowd that dedicating

the center in the memory of the Holtzbergs was a most meaningful way to continue their legacy, and build on their holy work.

Rabbi Shmuel Rosenberg, Mrs. Rivka Holtzberg's brother, spoke on behalf of the family, and expressed his deep appreciation to David and Eda Schottenstein and to Mayanot for dedicating the new center in the name of his sister and brother-in-law.



PICTURE PERFECT

In February, Mayanot held a photo competition for Mayanot Birthright alumni, who were asked to submit photos on Facebook from their Israel trip. Photos were judged based on creativity, aesthetics and number of Facebook votes received. Below is the winning photo together with some of the others that reached the final 12.



Winning Photo:

By Sophie Cannon, University of Connecticut

Other Finalists' Photos



Rachel Doyle, Wellesley College



Molly Fischman,
University of Pittsburgh



Haley Klarfeld,
San Francisco State University



Rachel Doyle, Wellesley College

REACHING OUT

Two days before Purim, Mayanot students packed more than 600 mishloach manot, which were later distributed to

soldiers at Havat Hashomer, an army base located in the Lower Galilee that recruits disadvantaged soldiers.



Packing mishloach manot



Soldiers receive mishloach manot at Havat Hashomer

“My Mayanot experience has been inspirationally warming and has brought me closer to understanding what it means to be a Jew. In addition, Mayanot has given me the skills to explain the significance of what it means to be a Jew and to bring other Jews to understand and feel the same way as I do.”

MAX GOLDSTEIN

JEFFERSON COMMUNITY AND
TECHNICAL COLLEGE, FALL, 2010

MEET OUR STUDENTS

FEATURING: MATTHEW TUNE-COHEN (LEEDS, ENGLAND)



Matthew Tune-Cohen grew up in Leeds, England and until recently, has had very little connection to Jewish practices. His recent association with Chabad of Leeds inspired him to come to Mayanot for the summer,

and he had such an eye-wakening experience that he will be attending Mayanot for the entire year. "I am making up for 27 years of no Jewish education," he says. Matthew, who only recently began to learn the Hebrew alphabet, left school at the age of 16 and became a chef in the British army. For the last ten years he has been working in hospitality, and says that despite growing up with little connection to Judaism, Jewish cooking has always been part of his life. "At the

age of six I started to cook and made a chicken soup. No one even showed me how to do it. I think it's in the Jewish blood," he jokes. Matthew hopes to be able to help others, either in Israel or the UK, who want to strengthen their connection to Judaism. In Leeds he was involved in Jewish Meantime (JMT), an organization that organizes events for young Jewish professionals in England. He has been approached by a Kosher caterer to come and work with her when he returns home.

CHANGING THE FACE OF WOMEN'S LEARNING CELEBRATING TWO YEARS

In January, Mayanot celebrated the second anniversary of its Women's Program at a dinner for more than 100 guests at the Mayanot Synagogue in Rehavia.

At the dinner, Mayanot recognized its major supporters, among them: Lead Investor Mr. George Rohr, Founding Chairman Rabbi Josef Gutnick, Chairman of the Board Mr. Yaakov

Cohen, Guest of Honor Mrs. Susan Shapell, Board Member Mr. Mordechai Haller and Mr. Abe Erdynast.



Guest Speaker Mrs. Susan Shapell

In her address to the students, Mrs. Susan Shapell encouraged students to take what they have gained from the Mayanot experience and help shape the futures of Jewish communities worldwide. "I am sure that you will one day look back at this experience as being one of the most memorable and exciting times in your lives," Mrs. Shapell told the students. "But, it doesn't have to end here," Mrs. Shapell insisted. "The excitement can continue. Giving back to your communities is, without a doubt, a priority that surpasses most."



Mayanot students and faculty at the celebration

“You will all be leaders and you will be a pillar of strength for the Jewish people. It is an honor to be part of this incredible place of Torah”

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
MR. YAAKOV COHEN IN HIS ADDRESS
TO THE MAYANOT WOMEN'S PROGRAM

“What you have taught and given us does not – and cannot – have a price tag put on it. For me, Mayanot is the most inspiring, wholesome and beautiful environment I have ever been in.”

HAYLEY DIAMOND
FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
IN HER DVAR TORAH TO MARK THE
OCCASION

To see a video of the first and second anniversary celebrations, go to <http://youtube.com/watch?v=rUVyAvr1mb4>



MAYANOT PATRONS VISIT WOMEN'S PROGRAM

In a much anticipated event, **Rabbi Joseph Gutnick**, founding chairman of the Mayanot Institute of Jewish Studies in Jerusalem, and **Mr. George Rohr**, founder of the Mayanot Women's Program, visited the Mayanot Women's Program in April.



From left to right: Rabbi Shlomo Gestetner; Rabbi Joseph Gutnick, Mr. George Rohr and Rabbi Kasriel Shemtov

In a talk with the students, Rabbi Gutnick drew on examples from the *Haggada*, and in particular, a homily on the Four Sons, to illustrate the profound impact that women can have, both within their families and on an educational level, on the course of Jewish history and on the Jewish people.

Mr. Rohr expressed the overwhelming happiness and satisfaction he gets from being part of, and supporting, this Mayanot initiative. "I feel privileged to help young women study Torah and gain access to their heritage," he said.

In addition, Mayanot faculty contributed to the visit. Associate Director of the program **Mrs. Rivka Marga Gestetner** gave a tour of the Katamon campus, and Educational Director **Rabbi Meir Levinger** gave a short presentation on the educational philosophy behind the program.

Mayanot Dean **Rabbi Shlomo Gestetner** and Mayanot Executive Director **Rabbi Kasriel Shemtov** gave an overview of Mayanot's plans for development and of future initiatives for the programs.

THE MAYANOT WOMAN

WOMAN (Women of Mayanot Alumnae Network) meets regularly for shiurim and social gatherings. Pictured above are a group of alumnae at the first planning meeting for **WOMAN**, held at the offices of **Mr. George Rohr**, Founder of the Women's Program, in midtown Manhattan. For more information or to find out about events, contact mayanotalumnae@gmail.com



Left to right: Musya Shemtov, Rochel Pruss, Yehudis Diskin, Meli Garber, Rachel Fertel, Estee Berhman-Popack, and Joelle Cohn (Not pictured: Aviva Rozmaryn)

Announcements and Mazal Tov's

One of Mayanot's youngest fan sports the latest Mayanot fashion



Births:

Tzvi Yehuda and Leah Balbin, Boy
Jeremy and Jennifer Berg, twin boys
Michael and Allison Bromberg, Boy
Raphael and Naama Brown, Boy
Yossi and Chana Raizel Friedman, Girl
Eli and Keren Gescheit, Girl
Ari and Simy Herszberg, Boy
Eli and Elana Kahn, Boy
Shmaya and Rivka Krinsky, Boy
Pinchas and Rachel Levy, Boy
Jay and Bat-Ami Moses, Boy
Ari and Chana Paller, Girl
Menachem and Tehila Posner, Girl
Ari and Vanessa Propis, Boy
Yosef and Devorah Leah Romano, Boy
Adam and Yonina Segal, Boy
Mendel and Rachael Simons, Girl
Nuta Yisroel and Ettie Shurack, Girl
Moshe and Devorie Silver, Girl
Maly and Ilan Smolarski, Boy
Tzipah and Shaul Wertheimer, Boy
Henry and Chaya Valier, Girl
Menachem Mendel and Sharon Gist, Girl
Daniel and Avigail Gimpel, Girl

Weddings/Engagements:

Zechariah Barkai and Hayley Diamond
Hershel Batkin and Leah Shira Casper
Shalom Ber Charitan and Rochie Geisinsky
Faigy Cole and Alon Hammerschmidt
Gal Dahan and Nessia Bernstein
Levi Shloush and Tzippy Shusterman
Shmulik Shuchat and Miri Hus
Simcha Sidorsky and Mieka Weindeker
Yitzchak Smith and Yehudis Rumbak
Shaya Weinstock and Sarah Felberbaum
Alex van der Linden and Rivka Mendelson
Mazel tov to Rabbi Kaplan and family on the marriage their son Yisroel Kaplan to Mushky Borevitz.
Sender Seigel and Chana Sora Katz
Binyomin Trager and Ester Michlin

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

PESACH IN KAZAKHSTAN

BY DANIEL GOULD

During this Pesach break, students from Mayanot set out to run sederim in different countries throughout Europe. I was one of four students who journeyed to the only recently famous, thanks to our very own Sasha Baron Cohen, country of Kazakhstan.

After a rough and long bus journey through snow from Almaty, where we had spent Shabbat, we arrived early morning in Taraz, a city located in the south of the country. We immediately set out to the local market there, to buy the food and utensils needed to run our seder. After the excitement of the hustle and bustle of the marketplace in Taraz, and the funny looks the two of us got from the locals – we were dressed in our black hats and jackets - we came back to the Chesed Centre in Taraz,

and began koshering the kitchen. Exhausted, and still with the taste of sticky tape engraved on my tongue from covering up half the kitchen, we did the ritual search for chametz in our hotel room and retired for the night.

Early Monday morning we continued our Pesach preparation. In between the sticky tape and the blowtorching, we found time to burn and sell our chametz, complete a section of Talmud (as we are both first-borns) and finish off what little food we had brought with us from the city of Almaty. As we were doing well for time, my partner (the only one who could speak Russian) went with the driver to drop off matzah to members of the community, most being quite old and having lived there since they were exiled from the Former Soviet Union.

While the two of us held a seder on both nights for 25-30 adults and kids, our classmates up north also accommodated for such numbers on one night, with a considerably larger table for 70 on the other night. After all was said and done we took a deep breath and thanked G-d for taking us out of exile, and for helping us to accomplish such a feat!



Seder in Kazakhstan

PESACH IN INDIA

BY CHANA TIBOR

In April, my husband Yehoshua and I went to a remote village in India called Kasar Devi; the closest city to it is Almora. Our mission was to open a Chabad house for the season, to bring up the shipment of kosher food that would be needed for the coming year, to run the seder and all of the Pesach-related activities, and also to coordinate activities at the Chabad house for that month.

We shechted (ritually slaughtered) kosher meat for most of the Chabad houses in India while we were there because Yehoshua was the only active shochet in the region at the time. We shechted for Varanasi, Delhi, all of Uderkhnad, and, we were told that some of the chickens

were sent to the Philippines as well! During the entire month, travelers of all types and from across the globe, stopped by the Chabad house to relax, get kosher food, and enjoy the warm, homely atmosphere.

More than fifty people came to our seder, which we held outside on our porch on pillows and low tables and straw mats. It looked like what a Pesach table must have looked at during the time of the Temple. As the sun started to set, and its orange-red-crimson embers glowed across the sky, people started to come, dressed in the calm of Yom Tov, each taking a place around the set table. We sang Maariv and Hallel together under the full starry sky and then the seder continued into



Jamming on the porch



Preparing for the seder

the night, with an overwhelming feeling of belonging and family.



MAYANOT FACILITATES LEARNING FOR 200 VISITING AMERICANS

In March, more than 200 North Americans visited Israel on the Rohr Jewish Learning Institute (JLI) mission, led by JLI Executive Director Rabbi Efraim Mintz and patron of JLI Rabbi Moshe Kotlarsky.

During their visit, participants took part in a Mayanot Executive Learning program at the David Citadel Hotel. Five Mayanot teachers visited the group for an hour of learning on topics ranging from Jewish mysticism to the relationship between Science and Torah.

“The high caliber of study provided by the Mayanot Executive Learning program was outstanding,” said Rabbi

Efraim Mintz. “It gave a whole new meaning and a deeper perspective to our Mission to Israel and was one of its most memorable highlights.”

A special thank you to Yael Brygel, Director of Public Relations for Mayanot for coordinating the program, and to the Mayanot teachers who graciously taught the classes: Rabbi Shmuel Braun, Rabbi Mordechai



Rabbi Kasriel Shemtov addresses a packed hall

Guth, Rabbi Baruch Kaplan, Mrs. Gila Lowell, Mrs. Adi Silverman and Rabbi Joshua Weisberg.

Executive Learning at Mayanot

The Executive Learning Program at Mayanot offers the unique Mayanot learning experience to business executives and professionals who don't have the luxury to study for an entire semester.

The program is tailor-made to suit the specific needs, timeframe and interests of each individual and includes:

- Courses in Hebrew Language (Ulpan), Jewish Mysticism, Philosophy, Talmud, Chassidut and Chumash (Bible)
- One-on-one tutorials with Mayanot Rabbis and teachers, giving participants the opportunity to discuss topics of interest in a more personal setting
- A personalized schedule
- Exciting tours throughout Israel

Contact yael@mayanot.edu



“Dr David Katzin, former participant of the Mayanot Executive Learning Program, addresses the Mayanot Summer 2010, end of semester Banquet. Dr. Katzin spoke poetically about his love for learning and the relevance of Torah study in today's contemporary world.”



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*Mayanot mourns the
passing of former Israeli
chief Rabbi, Mordechai
Eliyahu. In the photo,
Rabbi Eliyahu is seen
speaking at Mayanot
on the occasion of
a Hachnasat Sefer Torah. The Torah was
donated to Mayanot by the Harkham family of
Los Angeles, California and Sydney, Australia.*



*Mayanot students walk towards a Yom Hazikaron
commemoration at Har Herzl, where Israel's main
military cemetery is located, to honor soldiers
killed in the line of duty.*

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