

The Military Yeshiva Academy of Israel

BNEI DAVID ELI

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BNEI DAVID INSTITUTIONS WISH ALL OUR FRIENDS, ALUMNI AND STUDENTS
A VERY HAPPY CHANUKAH, A HOLIDAY FULL OF LIGHT, HEROISM AND JOY

**“Creator
of the world,
complete
this building...”**

Thirty years ago Bnei David's first class of students began their Beit Midrash studies in a repurposed industrial building on the edge of the settlement of Eli.

Over the years that building was expanded and stretched on all sides, and by the spring of 2016 the overcrowding prompted the relocation of the Beit Midrash to the campus's dining hall. Six months later, during Sukkot, the cornerstone was laid for the mechina's new Beit Midrash and during Sukkot just one year later, in 2017, the new building was dedicated

at a joyous event attended by hundreds, including Bnei David rabbis, students, graduates and members of the Gindi family from Los Angeles, who helped make the new Beit Midrash a reality. Eli Gruner, an alumnus from that first class who is now the director general of the Prime Minister's Office, addressed the class of 2018, wishing them success in their

studies and all the tasks ahead. Mr. Alan Gindi said that he felt privileged to be a partner in the spacious and fitting

Beit Midrash, whose goals support the State of Israel in the spirit of Torah. Rabbi Eli Sadan spoke about the great responsibility he felt to fill the stone structure with great spirit - the spirit of Torah faithfully dedicated to building

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The Military Yeshiva Academy of Israel
Yeshiva for Discharged Soldiers
Advanced Yeshiva • Ma'ale Ephraim Branch
Midreshet Danielle for Young Women

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The first new sefer Torah for Bnei David's Ma'ale Ephraim branch

The Beit Midrash in Ma'ale Ephraim continues to grow and currently has 70 students. Our friend Mr. Gabriel Bousbib and his wife decided to donate a Sefer Torah in memory of their parents and chose to give it to our Ma'ale Ephraim Beit Midrash. The final letters of the Sefer Torah were written by Gabriel, his sister and his friend in the Ma'ale Ephraim main synagogue, to the accompaniment of piyutim and songs. Attending were

Rabbi Eliezer Baron, who heads the Ma'ale Ephraim branch, the rabbi of Ma'ale Ephraim, Mayor Shlomo Allouche, Bnei David rabbis, students and local residents. After the last letters were completed, the Sefer Torah was wrapped in its special mantle and brought in a procession of singing and dancing to its new home in the Beit Midrash. Once again we extend our thanks to the Bousbib family for their generous donation. ■



"Arise and walk through the land"

During November the mechina students traveled to distant parts of Israel for special Shabbat programs with the communities there. The second-year students were hosted by Moshav Keshet, in the Golan Heights, and met with Bnei David alumni who live and work there. The first-year students split into groups and were hosted by Ramot Hashavim, Hispin, Ma'ale Gilboa, Sde Eliahu and Masuot Yitzhak. The connection with the land and the various communities is an integral part of Bnei David's educational program. ■



Field navigation exercises

Before their return to the Beit Midrash for the winter semester, the mechina students participated in field navigation exercises that involved learning how to read a map and correlating it with their surroundings.

The exercises are led by Bnei David alumni who mentor the new students. Students from the Ma'ale Ephraim branch also participated

in field exercises, with a three-day hike in the Sde Boker region in the Negev, where they learned how to manage with only what nature provides. ■



"Complete this building"

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a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exodus 19:6). The singing and dancing were accompanied by musician Yonatan Razel. Members of the Meir family, from Canada and Hashmonaim, affixed the specially designed beautiful mezuzah that they had donated for the main entrance to the Beit Midrash. Work

continues apace to complete the classroom building, the landscaping, pathways and infrastructure over the next two months. The voice of Torah study emanates from the Beit Midrash day and night, and we are very grateful to everyone who has helped and is continuing to help the growth of Bnei David's campus. ■



Chai Roi & the settlement challenge

Shortly before the beginning of the academic year, the Chai Roi program students toured several settlements in Israel's south and learned about the challenges they face.

The day began with a meeting with farmer Shai Dromi, who told them his personal story and explained the hardships of managing an isolated farm. The students then went to the temporary site of Hiran and met with Hebron Mountains Regional Council Head Yochai Dimri and Mr. Ron Shechner, who told the students about the promotion of settlements in that region. The founding core group for Hiran was established during a similar tour by Chai Roi students eight years ago. Now Hiran

is home to some 30 families, who are hoping to move to a permanent site in the near future. For lunch the students went to Be'er Sheva, where Yair Maayan, who heads the Bedouin administration, spoke about his many years of experience in the public service and the importance of constant initiatives. Finally, the students met with Roni Palmer, director general of the Or settlement movement, which promotes settlements in the Negev and Galilee. He told the students about his 2048 plan and explained the importance of long-term planning. ■



Dining hall renovations

The dining hall that served as a Beit Midrash for the mechina students over the past year and a half has been thoroughly cleaned, repainted and renovated, and has now been returned to the Advanced Yeshiva students for their meals. The full use of all the dining halls required logistical reorganization by our veteran kitchen staff, headed by Aliza and Tzuri Daniel, and we hope that now the dining complex will continue to provide tasty, nutritious meals to all our students. ■



Midreshet Danielle, past, present and future

The alumni of the first two classes of Midreshet Danielle spent the Shabbat before Rosh Hashanah at the campus in Tapuach, along with Rabbi Kashtiel and his family and one of the teachers, Mrs. Idit Sela and her family. The girls enjoyed a special Shabbat full of meaningful divrei Torah and are already looking forward to the next alumni Shabbat.

During the winter semester alumni are invited to join the current students for classes on Thursdays. After a concerted effort by the girls from the second class, a 220-page book, "Conversations in Preparation for National Service," based on the wonderful shiurim of Rav Amir Sandler, has been published in memory of Danielle Sonnenfeld. ■

Alumni activities



Many gatherings were held for Bnei David alumni over the past year, and Rabbi Yoel Rechel, who is in charge of alumni programs, encourages and assists with class reunion initiatives. The class of 1998 held a Shabbat program with their families at the JNF facility

in Nes Harim; the class of 1995 organized a reunion in Shaharit, a beautiful site near the community of Bruchin, where one of the alumni is a founding member. After a sumptuous dinner Rabbi Yigal Loewenstein addressed the students and praised their accomplishments. ■

Facing the challenges of our times

In recognition of the need for in-depth knowledge of the public discourse in Israel, the mechina students visited the Jewish Statesmanship Center for a one-day seminar of fascinating lectures on Israeli society.

The center is headed by Yitzhak Fuchs, a Bnei David alumnus from the class of 1998. Lecture topics included nationalism in Israel – the relationship between the individual and society, the policy of the culture budget, and David Ben-Gurion as a molder of a shared society. ■



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Coming "home"

Among the students welcomed this year were returning alumni who have completed their IDF service and have come back to study in the post-army yeshiva.

There are also plans for special Shabbat programs for soldiers who will be discharged in the spring and for soldiers who come to Bnei David for weeklong study vacations during their service. The guest rooms have been renovated and we hope to see our alumni as often as possible. With the opening of the new Beit Midrash, a special space has been allocated for soldiers to learn with study partners or participate in shiurim. ■



Visitors from Ivory Coast

During Sukkot a group of tourists and senior diplomatic corps delegates from Ivory Coast visited the mechina's new Beit Midrash.

One of the residents of Eli promotes Israel's ties with Ivory Coast and Eli Mayor

Ido Me'ushar showed the visitors around Bnei David and explained the educational concepts fostered in its programs. At the end of the visit some of the guests asked if they could enroll their sons here... ■



Bnei David blood drive

Every three months mobile blood donor teams visit Bnei David. Beds are set up and the students roll up their sleeves to help maintain Israel's emergency blood banks. In the past two years the students at the Ma'ale Ephraim branch and Midreshet Danielle have joined the donors in Eli. ■