



# DENVER KOLLEL CONNECTION



## IN THIS ISSUE

Two Years of  
Growth & Impact

2



3  
Summer Learning  
with the Kollel



6  
Stern Family Relocating  
to East Side



7  
New Programs at  
the M.B. Glassman  
Foundation GOLD  
Division



The Denver Community Kollel is an institute for advanced Torah study whose scholars are dedicated to serving the educational and spiritual needs of all Jews throughout the greater Denver area.

## CAPITAL CAMPAIGN TO BE ANNOUNCED AT UPCOMING DONOR APPRECIATION EVENT

The Kollel will formally launch a capital campaign at its upcoming annual Donor Appreciation Event, which will take place on October 9<sup>th</sup>.

"After 18 years, the Kollel is embarking on the next step of building Torah infrastructure in Denver," says Kollel Dean Rabbi Aron Yehuda Schwab. "This capital campaign will provide the Kollel a place on the West Side that it can call home – a location of its own, a building of its own, a place where Denver Jewry can come together and connect through Torah."

The capital campaign is part of a larger effort of creating Torah infrastructure both on Denver's West Side and in Southeast Denver. "The Kollel, along with its friends and supporters, has spent the past several years laying the groundwork for infrastructure

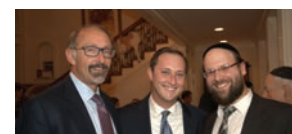
that will provide stability for the Kollel," says Rabbi Schwab. "That stability means we are establishing a permanence of Torah learning, Torah teaching and Torah living here in Denver."

*For further details on the capital campaign and the infrastructure project, see centerfold.*



## KOLLEL'S ANNUAL DONOR APPRECIATION EVENT ON OCT. 9<sup>TH</sup>

The Kollel will hold its annual Donor Appreciation Event at the offices of Altura Periodontics, 3690 S. Yosemite St., Denver, CO 80237, on Sunday, October 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:45 pm.



Kollel.

"I can think of no better venue than our Donor Appreciation Event to begin our capital campaign," says Kollel Dean Rabbi Shachne Sommers. "These are the people who have been with us, have had our back, have supported us through thick and thin. As we start a new era of Torah growth in Denver, we begin with the dearest friends of the Kollel."

through thick and thin. As we start a new era of Torah growth in Denver, we begin with the dearest friends of the Kollel."

The Donor Appreciation Event is the opportunity for those dedicated to the Kollel to gather and show their support, as well as an opportunity for the Kollel to express its appreciation to its supporters.

This year's Donor Appreciation Event will feature the official launch of a capital campaign to create Torah infrastructure for the

The event will feature *TAPAStic*, a unique culinary experience designed by the Kollel women.

*Reservations and donations for the Donor Appreciation Event can be made on the Kollel's website, [www.denverkollel.org](http://www.denverkollel.org).*

# RABBI SHMUEL AND SARA HALPERN - TWO YEARS OF GROWTH AND IMPACT



It's been nearly two years since Rabbi Shmuel and Sara Halpern joined the Denver Community Kollel, but their accomplishments belie that relatively short period of time.

Rabbi Halpern was instrumental in reestablishing a Kollel learning program for men and women at Ohr Avner, a synagogue in the Jewish Bukharian community in Aurora. The program, *Sunday Night Wisdom*, is held weekly, features several Kollel members, including Rabbi and Mrs. Halpern, and attracts more than twenty men and women who come to take part in meaningful and inspiring Torah study.

"I would like to express our gratitude to the Halperns and the Kollel for coming every week to light our community with Torah wisdom," says Abo Simanov, president of Ohr Avner. "People love and practice what they learn. [The program] gets



General Studies Principal at Hillel Academy. "She is warm and caring and has so much to offer the girls. Her creativity allows her to accomplish a great deal with her students."

"She is a real role model for the girls," says Yocheved Lebovits, 6<sup>th</sup>-grade Kodesh teacher at Hillel Academy, "and I have learned a tremendous amount from her."

Ken Weil, former Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy and Initiatives under past Colorado Governor Bill Ritter, says he has gained a great deal through his learning with Rabbi Halpern – and that learning has not limited itself to the study hall.

"It has been a great privilege to study with Rabbi Halpern," says Ken. "Through the use of texts to wrestle with tough questions, he has provided invaluable insights, leading to new questions and more profound explorations."



bigger every time as more and more Jews come to learn."

Rabbi Halpern delivers a number of classes during the week at the Kollel's Southeast Torah Center, including the Kollel's long-running and highly successful *Learn2Learn* program. He also initiated a weekly in-depth halacha class.

Both Rabbi and Mrs. Halpern study with community members, bringing the joy and inspiration of Torah into their lives. Amy Topelson is one individual who studies with Mrs. Halpern as part of the international Partners in Torah program.

"On many occasions I had the opportunity to connect with a Partner in Torah, and I always made up an excuse," says Amy. "Just this year, however, I pushed myself outside of my comfort zone and began studying with Sara Halpern. I am so glad I did! I never knew the Torah and its ancient teachings could be so relevant to my life! I look forward to learning with Sara every week."

Sara Halpern is the 7<sup>th</sup>-grade Kodesh (Jewish studies) teacher in Hillel Academy, and her reservoirs of knowledge and inspiration make an impact there, too.

"Sara brings a lot to the classroom," says Mrs. Marcie Calm,



But it's not just the learning that sets the Halperns apart, says Matt Walles.

"Rabbi Halpern is my twice-a-week learning partner at Aish," says Matt. "These sessions are one of the highlights of my week. While I enjoy and benefit from the in-depth learning, I learn as much from Rabbi Halpern's *middos* (character) and kindness as I do from the texts. We are so grateful to have them in our community."

The Halperns, for their part, are delighted and grateful to be part of the

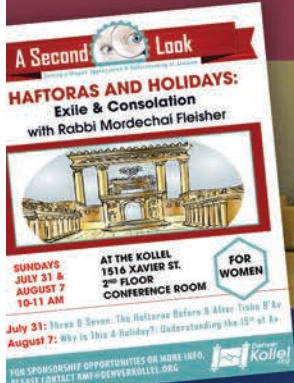
Kollel and the Denver Jewish community.

"Baruch Hashem we were *zocheh* (merited) to a most amazing opportunity by joining the Kollel," says Rabbi Halpern. "Not only is it a great environment to continue my own personal growth in Torah study, it also provides the ability to interact with the amazing members of the Aish (Southeast) community."

"We feel privileged to be here in the Southeast Denver community," says Sara. "We are very grateful to the supporters of the Kollel for all that they do for us and the whole Kollel family; we genuinely feel like it is a family! Thank you to the Kollel for bringing us here!"



# Summer Learning with the Kollel



## Haftaros and Holidays: Exile & Consolation

As part of the *A Second Look* series, Kollel Senior Educator Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher delivered a two-part series, on the West Side for women and in the Southeast for men and women, focusing on the mourning of Tisha B'Av and subsequent consolation.



Rabbi Halpern delivers a pre-Tisha B'Av talk at the Kollel West Side Bais Medrash



Rabbi Halpern at Ohr Avner in Aurora



Chavrusas learning with Rabbi Halpern at Kollel Southeast Torah Center



## Summer Scholar-in-Residence Program with Rabbi Binyomin Halpern

Rabbi Binyomin Halpern, rav of Cong. Bais Halevy in Lakewood, NJ, was the Kollel's Scholar-in-Residence as he led a special learning session at the Kollel's Southeast Torah Center and delivered lectures, classes and talks in a number of locations.

## Summer Night Seder for Bachurim

As part of its year-round community night seder, the Kollel once again organized an evening learning session for boys on vacation from school, with refreshments, as well as a stipend for those who attended regularly.





# West Denver Kollel Torah Center

Since its inception, the Kollel's West Side Bais Medrash and its offices have been located in rented space at 1516 Xavier St. While this provided a space for Kollel study sessions, programs and some events, it was far from ideal. "It has been our dream, almost from day one, that the Kollel have its own building," says Kollel Dean Rabbi Aron Yehuda Schwab.

Dreams often need a strong push to begin their journey toward reality. Since the Kollel opened its doors in 1998, it has been at the forefront of the development of a culture of Torah learning and Torah living that has emerged and grown in Denver's Jewish communities, including the West Side. The need to provide a proper environment for Torah study for its members and the broader community, coupled with rising real estate rental prices, spurred the need for a capital campaign.

"We have heard the need for our own place expressed by many Kollel participants," Rabbi Schwab relates. "This huge step forward was jump-started by a \$250,000 gift of an anonymous donor."

That \$250,000 has grown to \$500,000 as other supporters have stepped forward, even before the official launching of a multi-million dollar campaign. A location has been designated for the Kollel's West Side Torah Center, at 5195 W. 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue on Denver's West Side. The building will feature two above-ground floors and a basement. It will contain a *bais medrash* (study hall), library, offices and classrooms, as well as an outreach center. It will provide a beautiful and spacious place to hold the Kollel's study sessions, programs, classes, and events. In addition, there will be offices available for rent in the new, state-of-the-art structure. These rentals will encourage further economic development on the rapidly growing West Side, and will provide a source of income for the Kollel moving forward.

"This structure is part of the Kollel's long-term goal of creating Torah infrastructure in Denver," explains Rabbi Schwab. "This infrastructure will give the Kollel ownership and a reasonably-priced space, providing stability both in terms of permanence and finances."

Dedication opportunities for the campaign are available; for more info, contact Rabbi Moshe Heyman at [rmh@denverkollel.org](mailto:rmh@denverkollel.org).

Den  
Comm  
Kol



CAPITAL C





# Torah Infrastructure in Southeast Denver

As the Denver real estate market continues to heat up, the challenge of providing affordable housing for Kollel families looms ever-larger. In Southeast Denver, this challenge was met head-on by a group of Kollel supporters. Led by Bob and Mike Weiss, these dedicated individuals embarked on a project several years ago to obtain houses, which are then rented to Kollel families at reasonable rates. During the past five years, two homes have been purchased, providing homes for two Kollel families.

But the venture hasn't stopped there. As the Kollel presence in Southeast Denver has continued to develop and grow from one year to the next, the need for the Kollel to have its own, independent location has grown, as well. Recently, this devoted group of friends of the Kollel acquired a property to serve as the Kollel's Southeast Torah Center, as well as for a home for Kollel Dean Rabbi Shachne Sommers and his family. This new space will provide a study hall for Jews to gather and study Torah, attend classes and connect with fellow community members. Rabbi and Mrs. Sommers, who will be living in the house adjacent to the study hall, are widely respected and much sought-after by the community members, and their proximity to the Kollel Torah Center will make them more available and accessible to community members.

The support of Rabbi Yaakov Meyer of Aish Denver has been integral in the success of the project. "It was Rabbi Meyer who made it possible for Kollel families such as mine to settle here in the first place," says Kollel Director Moshe Heyman, who settled in Southeast Denver as a Kollel Scholar in 2007. "His unwavering support in seeing the growth of Torah and Judaism here in Denver, and his willingness to partner with the Kollel in maximizing the potential of the community, is a vital part of the phenomenal success we have seen in the community."

"We are deeply grateful to the Weiss brothers and other devoted supporters who have undertaken to help ensure the future of the Kollel here in Southeast Denver," says Rabbi Sommers. "Their vision of, and commitment to the growth of Torah in Denver has already borne fruits, and we look forward to continued success as we work together to bring Torah to Denver's Jews."

Dedication opportunities for the campaign are available; for more info, contact Rabbi Moshe Heyman at [rmh@denverkollel.org](mailto:rmh@denverkollel.org).

Denver  
Community  
Kollel



**CAMPAIGN**





# STERN FAMILY RELOCATING TO EAST SIDE IN A NEW FIRST FOR THE KOLLEL



It's a new step in the Kollel's mission of bringing Torah to Denver Jewry. This past July, it was announced that Rabbi Akiva and Chani Stern, who joined the Kollel nearly four years ago, will be moving from the West Side to Denver's East Side.

Rabbi Stern has been hired as the executive director for EDOS, and he will bring his talents and warmth to that venerable institution. Yossi Fried, Vice President of EDOS, is excited to have the Sterns join EDOS. "EDOS has a long and fruitful relationship with the Kollel," says Yossi. "Those ties are now strengthened as Rabbi Stern moves into his position at EDOS. We look forward to their contributions to the EDOS community."

Rabbi Stern will remain a part of the Kollel's daily internal study sessions for part of the day, and his classes and one-on-one chavrusah study sessions on the East Side will continue, as well.

Rabbi Amsel was quite pleased to hear the news of the Sterns' imminent move to the East Side. "It is very gratifying to hear that Rabbi Akiva Stern will be relocating to the East Side of Denver," he says. "The Kollel has had the privilege of leading many *shiurim* (classes) and programs on the East Side for almost two decades. But having a Kollel family live there is a commitment to the East Side on an entirely different level, and a real manifestation of the Kollel's name, Denver 'Community' Kollel."

Andy Kark, a long-time friend of the Kollel, regularly attends Rabbi Stern's Wednesday night parsha class. "We are extremely excited to have our friend Rabbi Stern and his family join us on the East Side," says Andy. "We are looking forward to him being a real part of our community."

"Rabbi Stern and his family will be a wonderful addition to the East Side," says Adam Moskowitz, another student of Rabbi Stern's. "They will add to the joy of Judaism in this community."



At Rabbi Stern's Monday night class at the home of Donny Basch



Rabbi Stern telling a story at a Kollel children's learning program

The Kollel's efforts on the East Side go back to its inception. Founding Kollel member and former Kollel Outreach Director Rabbi Yehuda Amsel delivered classes at EDOS and other locations for nearly fifteen years. Rabbi Amsel and fellow founding Kollel member Rabbi Yechiel Erlanger ran the Torah Learning Center (TLC) on the East Side from 2002-2004, a place where East Side community members came to study Torah and attend classes.

Rabbi Stern arrived shortly after Rabbi Amsel's departure for Detroit in 2012, and he assumed leadership of several of Rabbi Amsel's East Side classes. Rabbi Stern's heartfelt and profound classes and discussions found a receptive audience, and he launched other classes and one-on-one chavrusah learning sessions. During the past year, Rabbi Stern began delivering a weekly class in Boulder, as well.

"I don't think there's anyone Rabbi Stern doesn't connect with," says Kollel Dean Rabbi Aron Yehuda Schwab. "It's that ability – and he's really Rabbi Amsel's heir in that respect – that has been so important in connecting with everyone in the East Side community."

Plus, we'll have easier access to his dips!"

Kollel Director Rabbi Moshe Heyman, who was involved in making this move a reality, expressed his delight that yet another Kollel family is remaining in Denver. "The Kollel is always thrilled when our Kollel members make concrete efforts to strengthen their permanence in Denver," says Rabbi Heyman.

Rabbi Stern and his wife, Chani, are looking forward to making an even bigger impact in the East Side community as they embark on this new stage.

"I look forward to expanding the Kollel family to the East Side," says Chani.

"The Kollel has afforded me the tremendous *zechus* (merit) to connect to Jews from all areas of Denver through the medium of our heritage, the Torah," says Rabbi Stern. "I believe that my upcoming move, as well as my new position in EDOS, will enable me to build an even closer relationship with the entire East Side community."



# NEW PROGRAMS AT THE M.B. GLASSMAN FOUNDATION GOLD SENIOR DIVISION



*l. to r., top row, GOLD Chavurah participants Hannah Sperber, teacher Yehudis Shifra Aragon, Jacqui Marks, Elizabeth Naidu, Dysia Sonnenreich, Sunshine Cohen*

The M.B. Glassman Foundation GOLD Senior Division continues to expand, offering several new programs for seniors in the greater Denver area.



*Leah Schiermeyer discusses her journey and conversion to Judaism at the Migel Museum shortly before Shavuot*

## CHAVURAH (SMALL-GROUP) STUDY SESSIONS

Three groups meet on a regular basis with a Kollel teacher to discuss the subject of their choice.

## THOUGHT ON THE PARSHA RECORDING

Kollel Senior Educator Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher records a short, five-minute thought on the weekly parsha, which is then emailed to nearly 100 seniors on Fridays for a quick shot-in-the-arm dose of inspiration as they prepare for Shabbos.

*Listening and enjoying. Shabbat Shalom! –Tova Kawa*

*I listened to the [Thought on the Parsha] and found food for thought. – Linda Serio*

*Absolutely enjoyed Rabbi Fleisher's parsha [thought]. May G-d always bless him for the pleasure that he brings to so many of us by speaking of our Jewish heritage that he explains so well. And thank you so much so much, Joyce, for organizing so many activities for us. – Marlene Leddick*

## GUEST SPEAKER SERIES

GOLD periodically features a guest speaker who delivers a presentation on a unique and informative subject. Presenters to date include Leah Schiermeyer, author of *A Simple Twist of Faith*, and Rabbi Moshe Heisler, Kashrus Administrator for Scroll-K Kashrus of Denver.

## PRE-SHABBOS MEAL

Ten seniors came to Rabbi Fleisher's home to take part in a pre-Shabbos Shabbos meal. A complete Friday night meal, including Kiddush, challah, gefilte fish, chicken soup, salad, chicken and potato kugel, along with *zemiros* (songs), Torah thoughts and stories made the experience unforgettable!

*I want to thank you (GOLD Director Joyce Litzman) and Rabbi Fleisher for the lovely Shabbat Experience on Friday. All the food was delicious. It was wonderful that you made all of it yourself. The whole Shabbat experience brought back lots of memories for me. Thanks to Rabbi Fleisher and the other gentlemen who either spoke or sang beautiful zmirot tunes, it was a wonderful way to celebrate Shabbat (even though it was early). Once again, thank you. I know that Bud Glassman would be pleased that some of the funds he left are being used to benefit so many seniors. – Marcia Snyder*

# TORAH FOR TYCOONS

The Kollel completed its 12<sup>th</sup> season of Torah for Tycoons. The 2015-2016 series of classes featured many relevant and timely topics, such as cloning, vaccinations, capital punishment, estate planning and organ donations.

Senior Educator Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher, who presents at many of the classes, is looking forward to the Bar Mitzvah year for Torah for Tycoons. "There are so many intriguing subjects that have come up in the news during the last few months," he



says. "We are hoping to have the opportunity to explore the ethical dilemmas some of these stories raise."



*Dr. Noah Makovsky speaks about vaccinations at September T4T*



*Danny Sherwinter discusses the ethical challenges of artificial intelligence at the December T4T session*



*Brad Kornfeld presents on the ethics of organ donations with Kollel Dean Rabbi Aron Yehuda Schwab and moderator Dr. David Polaner*



*Marc Cooper poses with his "clone" before presenting on the ethics of cloning at the January T4T session*



# KOLLEL'S 1<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL LEARN-A-THON



Denver Community Kollel  
1516 Xavier St.,  
Denver, CO 80204

Non-Profit Org  
US Postage  
PAID  
Denver CO  
Permit #904

The Denver Community Kollel held its first annual Learn-A-Thon on June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016, one week before Shavuos. More than 125 men, women and children joined together for one hour of Torah study that culminated in the collective completion of Tractate Sotah.



· Denver Community Kollel ·  
www.denverkollel.org · 303-820-2855

