

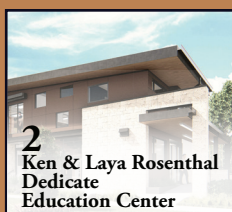


DENVER KOLLEL CONNECTION

SPRING 5779/2019



In This Issue



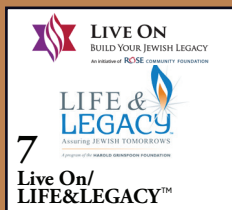
2
Ken & Laya Rosenthal
Dedicate
Education Center



4
Afternoon Kollel



6
Winter Gardens 2019



7
Live On/
LIFE & LEGACY™

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.

A STORIED EVENT AT KOLLEL 21ST ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION ON MARCH 17TH

They are a powerful means of communication. They enchant, inspire, elevate. They help us feel, think, dream. Stories are a vital part of what it means to be human. And stories play an important role in Judaism, as well.

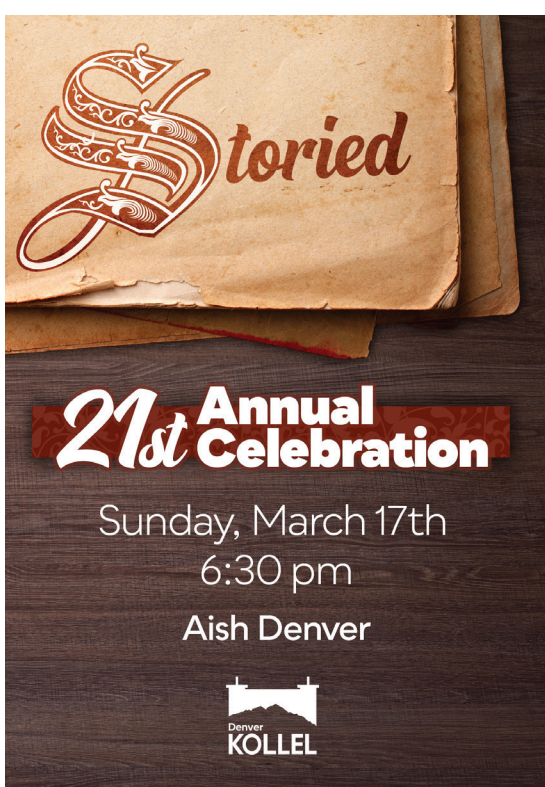
"The Pesach Seder is the foundation of the conveyance of our *mesorah*, as the repository of knowledge and tradition is handed from one generation to the next," explains Senior Educator Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher. "And the Torah commands us to engage in *haggadah*, in telling the story of our slavery, our exodus, the miracles that G-d performed for us. We are being told that storytelling plays an important role in Judaism."

Storied will be the focus of the Kollel's 21st Anniversary Celebration on Sunday, March 17th, 2019 at Aish

Denver, as the Kollel shares the stories of individuals and a community that has grown by leaps and bounds since the Kollel story began in Denver more than two decades ago. The Kollel will honor Neil and Vicki Bluma Olesky for their dedication to the growth of Torah in Denver since the Kollel's inception, a narrative that mirrors the growth of the Denver Jewish community during that time.

The Celebration is the Kollel's broadest appeal to the community to provide funding for the learning, programs and events it brings to the greater Denver area. "When you help the Kollel, your dollars are going to support Torah study and Jewish growth in Denver," says Kollel Director Rabbi Moshe Heyman.

To register for the Celebration and/or place an ad in the Tribute Journal, visit www.denverkollel.org, email journal@denverkollel.org or call 303-820-2855.



NEIL AND VICKI BLUMA OLESKY TO BE HONORED AT 21ST ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Since day one, Neil and Vicki Bluma Olesky have been part of the Denver Community Kollel story. "They were there to greet us at the airport when we landed," recalls Rabbi Yechiel Erlanger, part of the first group of Kollel Scholars.

"When we and the Gertzes became the first Kollel families to settle in Southeast Denver in 2007, Neil and Vicki helped us unpack our boxes," reminisces Yehudis Heyman, wife of Kollel Director Rabbi Moshe Heyman.

But, says Kollel Dean Rabbi Aron Yehuda Schwab, Neil and Vicki Olesky's dedication extends far beyond the Kollel. "They are a paradigm of *chesed* here in Denver," explains Rabbi Schwab. "They will do whatever they can to help others. It can mean something seemingly

(continued on page 3)



Honorees Neil and Vicki Bluma Olesky

Ken and Laya Rosenthal Dedicate Torah Center Education Center



The Kollel's Building Campaign took a big step forward this past September when Ken and Laya Rosenthal dedicated the Kollel Education Center in memory of their parents. As the plans for the Kollel's Torah Center slowly wend their way through the City of Denver's permitting process, this very significant dedication has made a big difference in the fundraising efforts for the Kollel Torah Center.

Since their arrival in Southeast Denver 12 years ago, Rabbi Moshe and Yehudis Heyman have hosted Ken and Laya for Shabbos meals on a regular basis, and Rabbi Heyman studies with Ken in preparation of Rosh Hashana/Yom Kippur and Pesach. Ken and Laya's son and daughter-in-law, Eric and Katy Rosenthal, are also friends with the Heymans, joining them for Shabbos meals and with Eric studying Torah with Rabbi Heyman.

"The Kollel's mission of educating and connecting Denver Jewry with Torah and Judaism is something that resonates powerfully with me," says Ken. "The Education Center that will be created in the Kollel's



r. to l., Laya Rosenthal, Hannah Sperber, Ken Rosenthal, Pennie Aragon, Jesse Aragon, Chaya Sara (Aragon) Singer

Torah Center is a wonderful opportunity to express my passion for Torah education."

"It's up to us to ensure the future of Denver Jewry," says Laya. "What we build today is what will inspire and inform our children, our grandchildren, the coming generations. This Education Center will connect future generations with their rich heritage and allow them to pass that legacy on to their progeny."

"Ken and Laya's commitment to Jewish continuity through Torah education has helped the Denver Jewish community in so many ways," says Rabbi Heyman. "The Kollel Education Center that they have dedicated will take that impact to a whole new level. I am very grateful and appreciative, both on a personal level as well as on behalf of the Kollel, that they have chosen to partner with us in this Torah Center."

Colorado Attorney General Phil Weiser Presents at Torah for Tycoons



In today's politically polarized environment, trying to converse with someone who has different views can quickly deteriorate into a shouting match. Yet an important part of being a *mentsch* is to be able to listen to other opinions, even those that one vehemently disagrees with. The Torah provides a great deal of guidance into how to have a dispute; after all, much of Torah study consists of understanding an array of different viewpoints.

This past February 6, Torah for Tycoons, now in its 14th year, featured a class on this important subject, titled *Can We Talk?: Getting Past Political Polarization*. The class featured Colorado's new Attorney General, Phil Weiser, and Kollel Senior Educator Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher.

"It is nice to know that organizations such as the Denver Kollel are taking proactive measures to forge Jewish unity," says attendee Josh Raderman. "I am particularly impressed by the Kollel's ability to unify and conclude the many complex issues in a non-alienating manner."

At the start of the presentation, Mr. Weiser reminisced about his role in launching Torah for Tycoons fourteen year earlier, as he had suggested that, rather than bring in a Torah scholar from out-of-town to present classes, the Kollel ought to utilize its own Torah scholars in discussing the ethical challenges of the professional world.

Mr. Weiser drew on his experiences in the political arena and his vision for good governance, while connecting these ideas to the Torah sources discussed by Rabbi Fleisher that provide the proper approach toward disagreement, such as the disputes of Shammai and Hillel and the subsequent disputes between their students.

"Rabbi Fleisher wonderfully expressed the concept of 'both are right' as it is commonly used in Torah commentary," says Josh.

The presenters and attendees discussed the realities faced today and how the Torah's guidance can help people understand each other despite disagreeing on issues. "This class was a *kiddush Hashem*" (sanctification of G-d's Name), says Kollel Dean Rabbi Aron Yehuda Schwab. "Those in attendance saw how the Torah's guidance is just as relevant now as it has been for millennia. That is the goal of Torah for Tycoons, and people have a great appreciation for the Torah view of a hot-button issue such as the complex political climate we see today."

"There are too few occasions to reflect on how we can elevate political discourse," says Mr. Weiser. "At this Torah for Tycoons, we had a great discussion about what it means to have a discussion for the sake of heaven and how this model can inform today's policy debates. The guidance and inspiration from this study opportunity will stay with me for a long time to come and make me a better Attorney General."



Colorado Attorney General Phil Weiser, a T4T founder, speaking as Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher listens

Breakfast & Learn during Chanukah Break

This past Chanukah, the Kollel held a daily breakfast & learn program for boys on Chanukah break. The program took place at the Kollel's West Denver Bais Medrash and Southeast Torah Center. *Shacharis* was followed by breakfast and learning. At the West Denver Bais Medrash, several learning groups for elementary school boys were led by Kollel members. The learning program was sponsored by Mr. Dan and Mrs. Jeannie Kravitz.



The M.B. Glassman Foundation GOLD Senior Division Making a Difference

The M.B. Glassman Foundation GOLD Senior Division continues to impact the lives of seniors across Denver. GOLD's weekly free Lunch & Learn, held at EDOS, attracts dozens of attendees, while other holiday-centric events, such as Chanukah programs, were held at four senior communities in Denver and Aurora.

GOLD programming is made possible by grants from the Melvin and Elaine Wolf Foundation, the M.B. Glassman Foundation, JEWISHcolorado and the Pluss Family Foundation, and the Kollel expresses its profound appreciation to these organizations for their generosity in helping improve the lives of seniors in the greater Denver area. The Kollel also extends a very big thank you to EDOS and its board for allowing the GOLD Lunch and Learn to be held in its social hall free of cost.



Getting Ready for Holidays with A Second Look

The Kollel's *A Second Look* series for women offers classes focused on gaining a deeper understanding and appreciation of Torah Judaism.

Classes generally focus on upcoming holidays, with subjects such as *Letter Burning: The Destruction of the Aleph-Bais* before Tisha B'Av and *Turning Over a New Leaf: What Does a New Year for Trees Mean?* before Tu B'shvat.



Neil and Vicki Bluma Olesky To Be Honored at 21st Anniversary Celebration

(continued from cover)

small like changing a flat tire or serving as security guards, or something much larger like hosting a parlor meeting in their home and making a major donation to a local institution. They serve on boards of schools and shuls, on action committees for *mikvaos* and *eruvim*. And everything is done with a trademark smile. They are role models for their children and for all of us, every member of the Denver Jewish community."

"It's well known that if you need a ride to the airport, something fixed in your home, or a place for guests to stay - call Neil or Vicki," says Kollel Director Rabbi Moshe Heyman. "They are a one-stop *chesed* operation."

In recent months, Neil and Vicki made a major donation for the Kollel Building Campaign, dedicating the Refreshment Café.

"Neil and I chose to dedicate the Refreshment Café because we want to nurture and nourish the future generations, those who will walk into the Kollel building," explains Vicki. "We want to take care of people, and it just seemed like a natural progression."

"The Refreshment Café is actually an extension of what we do from our home," agrees Neil.

"The story of the Oleskys here in Denver is one that needs to be shared," says Kollel Dean Rabbi Shachne Sommers. "It's a story that ought to uplift and motivate us all with its message of dedication to their heritage, to their fellow Jews and to the growth of Torah in Denver."

Torah Grows



Afternoon Kollel Latest Step in Building Torah in Denver



During its 21 years in Denver, the Kollel has continuously striven to raise the level of Torah study in the city. As the importance of Torah study has become more integral in the lives of Denver's Jews, the Kollel's efforts have increased. "There is a constant focus on 'What else can we do to enable people to study Torah?'" says Kollel Senior Educator Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher. "New *chavrusa* (study partnership) opportunities, potential for a new *shiur* (class) – we are always on the lookout."

The Kollel night seder in both West and Southeast Denver has seen considerable growth, especially in recent years, but Kollel Director Rabbi Moshe Heyman envisioned creating something even bigger: a part-time kollel. The kollel would offer people in the workplace the opportunity to spend a portion of their day studying a single *sugya* (subject matter) as a group, similar to the internal study sessions of the full-time Kollel Scholars.

Rabbi Heyman spoke with potential participants, finding times that would work for interested individuals, as well as a *sugya* that would be amenable to all those joining.

This past October, the afternoon kollel launched with six members, comprising three *chavrusa* pairs. Since then, two more pairs have joined, making a *minyan* (group of ten men)

for the afternoon kollel. The group studies Tractate Mikvaos during the late afternoon and early evening hours, as well as on Sunday mornings.

"Schedules tend to vary, and everyone tries to learn for one to two hours," says Rabbi Fleisher, who joined the afternoon kollel and studies with Rabbi Elchonon Joseph, Kashrus Administrator for Scroll K Kashrus of Denver. "It's great to have a group studying the same subject, because it allows for discussion both during the study sessions as well as at other times."

Brett Pepper often spends 30 minutes travelling to study with Kollel Dean Rabbi Aron Yehuda Schwab. "It's been an honor and pleasure to have the opportunity to learn with Rabbi Schwab every day," says Brett. "I learn a tremendous amount from him, both inside the *sefer* and out."

"The years I spent learning in Eretz Yisrael were the best years of my life," says Efraim Cunningham, who also travels across town to study with Rabbi Heyman. "Every time I learn at the Kollel, I experience a little bit of that again."

"Anyone interested in learning with a *chavrusa* is welcome to join and be a part of something special," says Rabbi Fleisher. "We want this to be the new normal for those looking to devote more of their day to Torah study."



l. to r., Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher studying with Rabbi Elchonon Joseph



l. to r., Brett Pepper studying with Kollel Dean Rabbi Aron Yehuda Schwab



l. to r., Rabbi Moshe Heyman studying with Efraim Cunningham

in Denver



Kollel Expands to Eight Full-Time Scholars



The undertaking began two years ago, at the Kollel's 19th Anniversary Celebration. It was there that Kollel Dean Rabbi Aron Yehuda Schwab announced that the Kollel had its sights set on expanding its core group of full-time scholars, with a goal of ultimately having a minyan of scholars in the *bais medrash*.

Since then, the Kollel has seen two of its scholars move on to other positions in the Denver Jewish community and the addition of four new members. Currently, there are eight Torah scholars who spend their days and nights in the study hall, absorbing and sharing vast wellsprings of Torah knowledge.

Rabbi Aharon and Shani Wilen are the latest Kollel family to join the Kollel, arriving in Denver this past November.



Rabbi Aharon and Shani Wilen arrive at DIA

in Denver. "It's very special when a native Denverite joins the Kollel," says Kollel Dean Rabbi Aron Yehuda Schwab. "Besides the excitement

of the homecoming, it is a wonderful way to build the Denver Jewish community."

"We are very excited to be returning to Denver, and we are grateful to the Kollel for this opportunity to contribute to the community," says Rabbi Wilen.

Reb Aharon's impact on the Kollel's *bais medrash* has been quickly felt. "He is a constant presence in the *bais medrash*, from early morning till late at night," says Kollel Dean Rabbi Shachne Sommers. "His sharp mind and breadth of knowledge make him an invaluable contributor to the Kollel's study sessions."

The addition of this new family was made possible thanks to a generous matching grant from Mr. Shimon Glick, a renowned philanthropist who lives in New York who believes strongly in the impact Torah study has on a community. Some nine months ago, Mr. Glick challenged the Kollel to expand from six to eight full-time scholars, committing to underwrite a significant portion of the costs of an eighth family.

Kollel Associate Scholar Rabbi Yissochor Steinharter, owner of Highland Properties of Denver, committed a significant sum toward the expansion.

"With much *siyata dishmaya* (Heavenly assistance) and the help of our supporters, the Kollel met Mr. Glick's challenge," says Rabbi Schwab. "But we are not done yet. We look forward to bringing two more families to the Kollel, completing a *minyan* of full-time Torah scholars who will take Denver's status as a city of Torah Judaism to the next level."



Kollel Scholars studying during afternoon internal study session

Jewish Community Extravaganza 2018



Winter Gardens Women's Night Out 2019



Chavrusah Connection

Dan and Isaac Kravitz



Isaac Kravitz (l.) studying with Rabbi Karnowsky

Multi-generational learning is a beautiful thing to behold, as one has the opportunity to see Torah being passed from one generation to the next. There is a unique twist to that dynamic for father-son duo Dan and Isaac Kravitz. Dan and Isaac are the owners of Home Again Furniture, a local business Dan built from scratch that specializes in gently used furniture. And Dan and Isaac both have separate weekly *chavrusah* study sessions with Kollel Scholar Rabbi Avraham Dovid Karnowsky.

Dan and Rabbi Karnowsky began studying nearly three years ago, shortly after the latter joined the Kollel. They study *Strive for Truth*, an English translation of Rabbi Eliyahu Dessler's classic work *Michtav Me'Eliyahu*, and they are nearing completion of the first volume.

"Dan inspires me by personifying the name of the *sefer* we learn," says Rabbi Karnowsky. "He is constantly striving for the truth. While some people settle into a comfortable routine, Dan is always questioning himself and looking to perfect himself in all areas of his daily living."

"Rabbi Karnowsky is very thought-provoking," says Dan. "Our learning is always positive and inspirational. He also shares wonderful *divrei Torah* (Torah thoughts) with me on Shabbos."

"I consider Rabbi Karnowsky a friend in whom I can confide," continues Dan. "He is always insightful, and, for a young man, he is mature and level-headed. Rabbi Karnowsky is a real asset to the Denver Jewish community. He is a living *kiddush Hashem*."

Isaac Kravitz began learning with Rabbi Karnowsky in the past year. Initially, their learning focused on preparing for upcoming holidays, but

they are currently in the midst of an in-depth study of Tractate Bava Metziah.

"I've gained from, and enjoyed, studying with Rabbi Karnowsky, whose enthusiasm gives our learning a refreshing outlook," says Isaac.

Rabbi Karnowsky shares that he has gained a great deal from studying with Dan and Isaac.

"Isaac brings an incredible vibrancy into the Kollel *bais medrash*," says Rabbi Karnowsky. "I'm inspired by his dedication to learning. After a long day at work, he fights off his tiredness (with lots of coffee!) and gets seriously involved in the learning."

"Dan has taught me that I can always push myself harder, and has taught me a lot of valuable skills in life. Our weekly *chavrusa* has turned into a real relationship, and I value our friendship tremendously."



Dan Kravitz (r.) studying with Rabbi Karnowsky

Kollel Successfully Completes First Year of Live On/LIFE & LEGACY™



LIVE ON
BUILD YOUR JEWISH LEGACY
An initiative of ROSE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

In recent months, the Kollel completed year one of the two-year Live On/LIFE & LEGACY™ planned giving program with great success, meeting goals set by Rose Community Foundation for garnering new commitments as well as for formalizing past commitments.

The Kollel recognizes and thanks its Legacy Society members:

Dr. Daniel and Sharon Pincus Abrams
Dr. Marc and Melanie Avner
Graeme and Irit Bean
Rabbi Zev and Adina Beren
Marc Brooks and Dr. Terry Samuels
Joshua and Melissa Close
Marc and Amity Cooper
Bill Goldsmith

Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher
Rabbi Shmuel Halpern
Rabbi Moshe and Yehudis Heyman
Rabbi Elchonon and Miriam Joseph
Dr. Ken and Karin Sherman Katz
Dr. Dimitri and Kathy Kaufman
Rabbi Aron Yehuda Schwab
Rabbi Myer J. and Mrs. Bruria Schwab

Dr. Marc and Dale Sievers
Rabbi Shachne Sommers
Izzy and Peri Sonenreich
Bob and Allison Weiss
11 Anonymous Members

For more info or to discuss becoming a Legacy Society member and leaving a lasting impact for future generations, contact rmh@denverkollel.org or call 303-820-2855.

LIFE & LEGACY
Assuring JEWISH TOMORROWS
A program of the HAROLD GRINSPOON FOUNDATION

Houston Delegation Visits Kollel



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On October 17, 2018, 20 members of the Houston Jewish community spent a day with the Denver Community Kollel, joining the Kollel for Torah study and touring the Denver Jewish community. Their day-long trip included *shacharis* prayers, breakfast and a learning session at the Kollel, including a lecture from Kollel Scholar Rabbi Chaim Yeshia Freeman and a talk from Kollel Dean Rabbi Shachne Sommers.

The group met with Denver lay leaders such as Kollel President Rabbi Zev Beren, visited Denver Jewish educational institutions, and heard from Denver Torah leaders such as Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan, Dean of Yeshiva Toras Chaim, Rabbi Myer J. Schwab, Dean of Beth Jacob High School, and Rabbi Yaakov Meyer of Aish Denver.



Denver Community Kollel
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