

In This Issue









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.

CONSTRUCTION COMMENCES ON KOLLEL TORAH CENTER

The arrival of an excavator on the corner of Zenobia and 14^{th} Ave. in mid-October signaled that construction of the Kollel Torah Center was ready to commence. Many months of obtaining the last few permits, finalizing architectural details, and signing with a contractor culminated with the start of construction on November 11, engendering much excitement as the long-awaited work was finally underway.

"The Torah Center that we are watching rise into the rarefied Denver air will be a game-changer for Denver Jewry," says Kollel Dean Rabbi Aron Yehuda Schwab. "This building will be a center of Torah study. It will be a place of Jewish education. It will be a place to engage our youth in creative and constructive ways. It will be a place where Jews of all backgrounds and ages connect with each other and with their timeless heritage."

There are still many dedication opportunities available for the Torah Center. In addition, 5C tax credits are still being offered for many dedications, although availability is limited. For more information, contact Kollel Director Rabbi Moshe Heyman at rmh@denverkollel.org.





Digging on site



At meeting with construction team and contractor

KOLLEL LAUNCHES SEFER TORAH DEDICATION CAMPAIGN Sefer Torah Dedication Campaign

The dedication of a Sefer Torah (Torah scroll) has traditionally been cause for celebration among the Jewish People. When that Sefer Torah is going to be the first one in a burgeoning *bais medrash*, the celebration is even greater. It should thus come as no surprise that there is much excitement over the recent announcement of an upcoming Sefer Torah dedication at the Southeast Kollel Torah Center/ Ohel Yissachar. The Sefer Torah is being donated *li'ilui nishmas* (in memory of) Mr. Shalom (Sol) Sommers, father of Kollel Dean Rabbi Shachne Sommers, by Mr. Sommers' wife, Mrs. Claire Sommers, and the Sommers family.

"My dear husband a"h and our family have always viewed with pride and admiration the wonderful work and growth of the Denver Community Kollel," says Mrs. Sommers. "My father a"h lived a life of 94 years of devotion to Torah learning and living, transmitting that great ideal to the next generations," says Rabbi Sommers. "It is most fitting that a Sefer Torah in his memory should find its home in our Kollel, where the fruits of that transmission continue to blossom."

The Kollel has launched a Sefer Torah Dedication Campaign that will enable the Denver Jewish community to have a part in the latest chapter of the growth of Torah in Denver. A Hachnasas Sefer Torah (Inauguration of the Torah Scroll) Celebration will take place this winter.

Proceeds from the campaign will be used to fund the continued expansion and growth of the Southeast Kollel Torah Center. To claim your part in this exciting opportunity, please visit www.denverkollel.org or email info@denverkollel.org.

Crowdfunding Campaign Provides Inspiration

The Kollel held its annual Quadruple Your Giving crowdfunding campaign on September 3-4, with every dollar matched three times by generous donors. The campaign began with a goal of \$200,000, but ultimately succeeded in raising over \$300,000 - thanks in no small part to a \$10,000, last-minute donation from the Art Harris Foundation, quadrupled to provide a total of \$40,000 - during a campaign that spanned 30 hours. The Kollel once again hosted the campaign on its own crowdfunding platform, saving many thousands of dollars in thirdparty commissions.

This year's campaign also featured teams, as individuals and groups of Kollel supporters committed to raising a certain sum of money during the campaign. One of those groups was Team Josh & Melissa Close, which succeeded in raising over \$11,000. Josh shared the email he sent to friends and family during the campaign, and its message and the story it tells is a truly inspiring and moving one:

Just a quick personal note about the Kollel and the impact that it has had on my life:

This is a great organization that I have had the opportunity to gain much inspiration and knowledge from throughout the past eight years. The

story of how I was introduced to the Kollel is unique. The short story is that my family and I received an invitation from a learning partner I was talking with once a week over the phone to come join them in Monsey, NY for what I call our first "real" Shavuos. There, I met a gentleman who went to the same shul as my learning partner who had connections to the Kollel, and he said I would be receiving a call the following week to learn more about the Kollel. Sure enough, I did; two weeks or



Josh Close (2nd from right in foreground) at Rabbi Avraham Dovid Karnowsky's Sunday Navi shiur



so later, I was learning Torah, and the rest is history.

Since this first "real" Shavuos eight years ago in Monsey, I have had the great privilege to learn and interact with these wonderful rabbis daily (in fact, I live only three doors down from the Kollel building). I am always impressed that they learn and work during the day and take time away from their families and own learning nearly every evening of the week to teach Torah to Jews like myself. I am always amazed by the amount of knowledge the rabbis have and the ability to convey this knowledge to a vast audience, as well as to be able to answer any question at any hour of the day.

As a child, I did not have a formal Jewish education. When I first started at the Kollel eight years ago, I could barely open and read a page of the Gemara or any other Jewish text. Today, I have the confidence to be able to open the same millennia-old texts that my ancestors opened, as well as live a life of Torah as they did.

From the Kollel, I have gained a priceless gift of following in the same footsteps of my ancestors. Closing with a short story – when I was in Las Vegas a couple of years ago visiting my grandfather, we were chatting about Judaism, and he mentioned a Gemara he learned in yeshiva some 70 years ago in Chicago, but he couldn't remember what it was. Based on what he mentioned, I was

> able to find the Gemara, and we were able to learn it together. This precious memory of connecting generation to generation through Torah will be one I will always cherish, one enabled by this wonderful organization. I ask that you consider supporting the Kollel through this campaign in any amount that you can, to enable them to continue their mission and create stories and journeys like mine.

Halachic Expertise Benefitting Jews in Denver and Around the World



There are many different areas of Torah that the serious student can focus on, resulting in many advanced Torah scholars who can be expert in different aspects of the Torah.

"The Kollel has always made in-depth Talmud study its primary focus," says Senior Educator Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher. "During the last seven years or so, there has much greater focus on taking those Talmudic studies through to the practical halachic conclusions."

The increased focus on halacha has proven a boon for the Denver community, as the Kollel scholars' level of proficiency in practical halacha makes them highly qualified to answer halachic questions. While Kollel Dean Rabbi Shachne Sommers took on the official responsibility as the halachic authority in the Southeast Denver community at the request of Aish of the Rockies' Rabbi Yaakov Meyer several years ago, other Kollel members are also available to answer halachic questions.

Two current scholars, Rabbi Shmuel Halpern and Rabbi Chaim Yeshia Freeman, have received semicha (Rabbinic ordination) from Beth Medrash Govoha in recent years.

"Not unlike a degree from a university, the process of testing and expected proficiency to obtain *semicha* varies from one place to the next," explains Rabbi Fleisher. "Semicha from Beth Medrash Govoha is known as one of the most difficult to obtain. Passing the rigorous examination process is no small feat. It attests to the high level of expertise these Kollel Scholars have attained in their studies."

The Kollel Scholars' expertise in halacha has led to another development

in recent months. "There is a need for people to understand how the halachic process works, to have a greater awareness of common halachic issues and challenges, to gain an appreciation of why we do what we do," explains Kollel Dean Rabbi Shachne Sommers. To provide for that need, the Kollel created Iyun Halacha. A bi-weekly publication that provides an in-depth exploration of a particular halachic subject, each issue of Iyun Halacha is written by a Kollel member following extensive research into the nuances and details of the subject matter at hand. Iyun Halacha is sponsored by the Dr. Philip & Mrs. Leah Mehler Family Foundation in memory of their parents, Dr. Irving & Mrs. Bernice Mehler & Mr. Gedalja & Mrs. Miriam Zupnik.

KOLLEL

Iyun Halacha has garnered a great deal of positive feedback, and it has also encouraged people to think more deeply into understanding the nuances of practical halacha.

The publication is is emailed weekly to over 1,100 people, many of them living across the United States and the world, including Russel Raskin of Providence, Rhode Island. Mr. Raskin is the father-in-law of Kollel Associate Scholar Rabbi Ari Aragon.

"I am grateful that Rabbi Aragon told me about the Iyun Halacha articles," he says. "Each of the in-depth articles is an excellent resource for anyone wishing to understand the halachic landscape for issues which often arise. Thank you again for this excellent product from the Denver Kollel."

To receive Iyun Halacha via email, email info@denverkollel.org.

Summer & Fall in Pictures



Kollel Scholar Rabbi Yosef Melamed teaches at July 4th Legal Holiday Learning at West Denver Kollel Torah Center



Kollel Scholar Rabbi Aharon Wilen teaches at July 4th Legal Holiday Learning at Aish Denver



Listening attentively as Kollel Dean Rabbi Shachne Sommers delivers shiur on Hoshana Rabba night at Southeast Kollel Torah Center/Ohel Yissachar





Motzoei Shabbos Nachamu Kumzit



Rabbi Avraham Dovid Karnowsky delivers pre-Tisha B'Av class for men at Southeast Kollel Torah Center/Ohel Yissachar



Rabbi Yosef Melamed learns with Jared Danziger

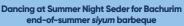


Night Seder at West Denver Kollel Torah Center during the summer



Senior Educator Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher delivers pre-Tisha B'Av class for women at Southeast Kollel Torah Center/Ohel Yissachar









Smorgasbord Learning Event in Southeast Kollel Torah Center/Ohel Yissachar focused on mitzva of chinuch



Kollel Dean Rabbi Shachne Sommers delivers pre-Yom Kippur talk at West Denver Kollel Torah Center



Rabbi Avraham Dovid Karnowsky delivers his weekly Sunday morning Navi *shiur* at West Denver Kollel Torah Center



Senior Educator Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher delivers shiur on Chol Hamoed Sukkos at Southeast Kollel Torah Center/Ohel Yissachar



Shacharis on Chol Hamo'ed Sukkos at the Southeast Kollel Torah Center/Ohel Yissachar

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Kollel Comings & Goings

Coming Full Circle as Kollel Welcomes New Family



new family, Rabbi Dov and Sarah Bluma Holczer, ${
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m joined}$ the Kollel following Sukkos. While it's always exciting when new members become part of the Kollel, this particular family is of special significance. Sarah Bluma Holczer is the daughter of Kollel Dean Rabbi Shachne and Tzippy Sommers.

"This is certainly a milestone in the history of the Kollel," observes Rabbi Sommers. "Having our own children return to Denver as Kollel members was the farthest thing from our minds when we opened the Kollel 22 years ago. It's a coming of age of sorts as we come full circle.'

Reb Dov, 30, is a Passaic native. He studied in Yeshiva of Long Beach, Yeshivas Ner Moshe (Rabbi Sholom

Schechter) in Jerusalem, and Beth Medrash Govoha in Lakewood, NJ, where he spent the last eight years as a full-time Kollel member.

Sarah Bluma, 29, a graduate of Bais Yaakov High School of Denver, has been teaching special education for the past ten years, and specializes in Hebrew reading and math.

The Holczers have three children: Nechama Gittel, 7, Yanky, 6, and Miri, 2.

"I would never have believed that I'd move back to my home town with a family, have my children attend the same school that I did and live a couple of blocks away from where I grew up," says Sarah Bluma.

"Having visited Denver many times over the years, I'm well aware of the high caliber of the Kollel members," says Reb Dov. "We look forward to being part of the

intense Torah study and harbatzas Torah (spreading of Torah) that the Kollel brings to Denver."

Kollel Scholars Assume Leadership Positions in the Community

C In some ways, it's like a parent seeing a child moving on in life," says Kollel Dean Rabbi Aron Yehuda Schwab. "One of the goals of a community kollel such as ours is to prepare our members for roles in the community. Whether a Kollel Scholar ultimately goes into communityrelated work such as education or rabbinics, opens a business, or learns a

profession, it is our duty, while they are Kollel Scholars, to guide them and help them develop their skills so that they will become leaders and difference-makers in the Jewish community."

During the past several months, the Kollel has seen two of its members take on positions of leadership in the Denver community.

Rabbi Avraham Dovid Karnowsky, who joined the

Kollel in 2016, has been appointed Director of Development in Beth Jacob High School of Denver. Rabbi Karnowsky's duties at Bais Yaakov include cultivating future donors, developing alumnae connection, general public relations and managing special projects. This past June, even before formally assuming the position, Rabbi Karnowsky led Bais Yaakov's very first crowdfunding campaign, an effort that was met with great success.

"The school recognizes Rabbi Karnowsky

as an asset to the future of Beth Jacob's development in many areas," says Rabbi Myer J. Schwab, founder and dean of Beth Jacob. "We look forward to working together with Rabbi Karnowsky to take our school to even greater heights."

Rabbi Karnowsky will remain a part-time member of the Kollel. He will be a part of the afternoon seder (study session), and will also continue as part of the Kollel's community-wide night seder program, studying with



Rabbi Dov and Sarah Bluma Holczer

Rabbi Shmuel Halpern teaching at Kollel Learn-A-Thon



Beth Jacob Dean Rabbi Myer J. Schwab with Rabbi Karnowsky at a recent Bais Yaakov event in New York

individual chavrusas (study partners) and delivering his popular classes across Denver.

"I'm truly honored to be a part of such an incredible institution, founded and led by the indefatigable Rabbi and Mrs. Schwab," says

Rabbi Karnowsky. "They have created from scratch all the necessary foundations and structure. It is a great privilege for me to take what they have created during the past fifty-plus years and help develop it further for the coming generations."

At the same time, Rabbi Shmuel Halpern, who joined the Kollel in 2014, has taken on a new position in the Kollel as Director of Programming. Rabbi Halpern's new role is to expand and maximize the Kollel's ability

> to bring Torah learning and Torah teaching to Denver Jewry. Rabbi Halpern is already actively creating new chavrusa study partnerships and Torah classes.

"The Kollel has seen success in recent years in building two strong night seder programs, one in West Denver and one in Southeast Denver, in addition to many other Torah study opportunities throughout Denver," explains Rabbi Halpern. "My focus is to continue building the night seder and to expand the Torah study opportunities beyond the walls of the bais medrash.

Rabbi Halpern remains a full-time Kollel Scholar even as he takes on his new responsibilities. This includes being a part of the Kollel's two daily internal sedarim, his many classes and chavrusa partnerships with numerous community members, as well as his considerable communal involvement in areas such as managing the Southeast *eruv* and answering halachic questions from community members.

Rabbi Karnowsky

Yaakov event in New York

eaking at a recent Bais

Personnel Changes at the Kollel

Bonayich: Building a Broad Torah Community in Denver



 $B^{\rm esides}$ creating a culture of Torah in Denver, a major part of the Kollel's success in Denver has been it ability to build a Torah community through the Kollel families that live in the Denver Jewish community. During its more than two decades of existence in Denver, the Kollel has, on several occasions, added a scholar who studies and teaches with the Kollel on a part-time basis while simultaneously taking steps to learn a profession. This has enabled these part-time scholars and their families to settle in Denver and transition into the workplace.

In recent months, the Kollel has looked to expand and diversify this

program. The recent effort began with an opportunity presented by Aish of the Rockies, whom the Kollel has worked with during the Kollel's 22 years in Denver to build a Torah community in Southeast Denver.

Aish of the Rockies has launched an initiative to settle families in the Southeast Jewish community. The program is not geared to families in a specific field of work - it is open to professionals, business owners, or people interested in studying in Kollel. The latter category is where the Kollel plays a vital role, explains Rabbi Yechiel Erlanger, Aish of the Rockies' Director of Community Relations & Development. "When we meet someone who has an interest in studying Torah full-time, or part-time while pursuing a career in the workplace, we turn to the Kollel. [Aish of the Rockies

founder] Rabbi [Yaakov] Meyer looks to the Kollel to provide the environment in which a person can study Torah, interact with advanced Torah scholars, and be a part of a true bais medrash."

"Aish and the Kollel have worked together successfully on numerous endeavors," says Rabbi Meyer. "This project is just the latest example of these two institutions joining to bring the Southeast Jewish community to new heights."

The Kollel has embraced the opportunity, and is working on creating a broader Torah-study structure for others interested in moving to Denver or who are already living in the community. Kollel Director Rabbi Moshe Heyman is at the forefront of this endeavor. "The Kollel has recently created a new chabura (group) within the Kollel for those who would like to place a greater focus on studying halacha, with perhaps even a goal of



Reb Tuvia and Aliza Harbater

obtaining semicha (Rabbinic ordination)."

The natural next step was for the Kollel to formalize these efforts of broadening its scope, and thus Bonayich, Hebrew for "Your Builders," was born. "The name is based upon a passage of Talmud that states that Torah scholars are the builders of the Jewish People," explains Rabbi Heyman. "The Kollel's initiative makes this idea quite literal. Those who join Bonayich will build the Denver Torah community and help it grow and move forward. Their Torah study and Torah knowledge will make an impact, their families' presence will make an impact, their passion

and commitment to Torah and Judaism will make an impact."

Aish of the Rockies' initiative has already produced Bonayich's first member, as Reb Tuvia and Aliza Harbater joined Bonayich following Sukkos. Reb Tuvia, a Bayswater, NY native, studied at Yeshiva Darchei Torah in Far Rockaway, Mir Yeshiva in Jerusalem, and Rabbi Leff's yeshiva in Adelphia, NJ. His father, Rabbi Yehuda Harbater a"h, was a devoted alumnus of Yeshiva Toras Chaim of Denver. Reb Tuvia will join the Kollel for its morning and evening sedarim (study sessions) and simultaneously pursue a degree in computer security.

Aliza is a Denver native, the daughter of Southeast residents and Aish members Kerry and Mindy Berman, and is a graduate of Hillel Academy and Bais Yaakov

High School. She is nearing completion of graduate school for speech therapy and hopes to begin her CFY (Clinical Fellowship Year) in January. The Harbaters have an 18-month-old son, Yehuda Eliezer.

"I am excited to join and contribute to the Southeast community, and to be a part of an initiative that will encourage the growth of the community," says Aliza. "I only hope that what we add as a young family can reciprocate some of the tremendous gratitude I feel toward the Southeast community."

"I am thankful for the opportunity, as a Kollel member, to be a role model and to create a positive effect within the community," says Reb Tuvia. "We look forward to creating an identity within the community as a couple that really cares about each person, and we would like to help in any way we are able!"



Holiday Kit Project Launched by GOLD



The Kollel's M.B. Glassman Foundation GOLD Senior Division began a new initiative during the past year with the launch of its Holiday Kit program. The brainchild of Josh Raderman, who studies with the Kollel regularly (see article on page 7), the Holiday Kit project offers a package filled with items related to an upcoming major Jewish holiday.

To date, GOLD has offered Holiday Kits before Pesach and Rosh Hashana. The Pesach kit offered items such as a box of matzah, a Haggada, charoses, and a basic Seder meal that included brisket and sides. The Rosh Hashana kit featured honey, challa, apples and gefilte fish. Each kit also contained information about the upcoming holiday.

Neil and Vicki Olesky played a big role in creating the Pesach kits, as the food was prepared in their kosher-for-Pesach kitchen.

"Neil and I were fortunate to participate in helping fulfill a mitzvah with Josh Raderman," says Vicki. "Josh is a very generous person who brought a lot of joy for the holidays to people who may not have had a traditional meal at the holidays. Leave it to the Kollel to jump in on this and bring it to fruition!"

"We received a tearful phone message from a woman who had moved to a retirement community from California some time ago, and she was so grateful to have a real connection to the upcoming Pesach holiday. We also received a thank you letter from another recipient. It is deeply meaningful to make a difference in their lives through these kits and other programming that the Kollel offers."



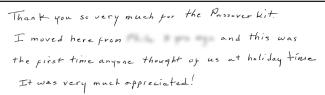
Delivering Meals on Wheels



Josh Raderman preparing honey cakes for Rosh Hashana kits

The kits were distributed to Jewish seniors living at home and in retirement communities, as well as through Jewish Family Service of Colorado's Meals on Wheels program.

"Recipients were very touched and grateful for these kits," says GOLD Director Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher.



Letter received following Pesach holiday kit distribution





LIVE ON Build Your Jewish Legacy An initiative of ROSE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

As a member organization of Rose Community Foundation's Live On/Life & Legacy program, the Kollel continues to meet the goals set by Rose Community Foundation for garnering new commitments as well as for formalizing past commitments, earning a financial bonus in the process.

The Kollel recognizes and thanks its Legacy Society members:

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

Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher Rabbi Shmuel Halpern Rabbi Moshe and Yehudis Heyman Rabbi Elchonon and Miriam Joseph Harvey Milzer obm 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 Patti Jo Streltzer Dr. Effie and Cindy Sonstein **Bob and Allison Weiss** 13 Anonymous Members

For more info or to discuss becoming a Legacy Society member and leaving a lasting impact for future generations, or if you have already included a gift for the Kollel in your will, trust, retirement account or life insurance policy, contact rmh@denverkollel.org or call 303-820-2855.

Chavrusah Connection Rabbi Moshe Heyman & Josh Raderman

"I felt quite honored, and a bit nervous as well," says Josh Raderman, Principal Owner of Raderman Holdings and CEO of Leotele Brands, when discussing the initial offer Kollel Director Rabbi Moshe Heyman made to study Torah with him.

"Josh visited the Kollel, and we decided to meet for lunch," says Rabbi Heyman. "We hit it off and began learning."

"Rabbi Heyman made me feel comfortable from the beginning," relates Josh. "We started with the weekly Torah reading. Each week, a new awareness of the how and why of Judaism helped lead me toward an understanding-based observance, which has now blossomed into an ever-flowering shrubbery of awareness. What began as a 10-30-minute practice per week of Judaism now averages 10-20 hours a week of a mix of study and prayer."

"Our learning is high-energy, fast-paced, and extremely-insightful," says Rabbi Heyman. "The whole Kollel brightens up when Josh arrives to study."

But Rabbi Heyman is no slouch either, according to Josh. "Learning with Rabbi Heyman is very exciting, to say the least," says Josh. "If he is unaware of the correct answer on a subject, he literally leaps from his chair



Josh Raderman and Rabbi Heyman studying at the Kollel West Denver Bais Medrash

and almost dives in the direction of the book that will provide the answer. He is patient like few people I have met, and he is a fantastic listener for someone with so much to say."

Both Josh and Rabbi Heyman have discovered new vistas through their shared learning.

"Josh has brought the beauty of the world and his knowledge of it into my life," says Rabbi Heyman. "Tying it into our learning has been an amazing experience."

"Studying with Rabbi Heyman has opened up a new world of pride of Judaism and moral conduct," says Josh. "These practices have helped improve my quality of life immensely. I see Torah all around me where I had not seen it before."

Apart from learning with Rabbi Heyman, Josh has also capitalized on the presence of the other Kollel members and discusses Torah with them

as well. In addition, he has begun attending Rabbi Akiva Stern's Monday night class in East Denver. Josh is effusive in his appreciation of the Kollel.

"We are truly blessed to have such a place in Denver! The fact that here, in the middle of the country, true connections are being revealed is a miracle in itself. The ongoing dedication to study and community has given me a somewhat unattainable, yet welcome, benchmark for my own being."

Kollel Publishes Denver Jewish Tourist Guide

"A much-needed resource."

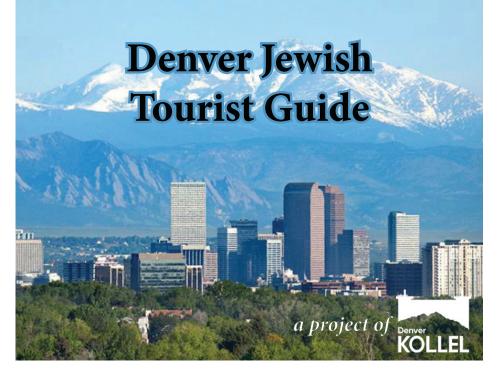
"Thank you for doing this."

These are some of the comments received about the Kollel's recently-published Denver Jewish Tourist Guide.

"People are frequently emailing and calling for information about kosher food, *davening* (prayer) times and locations, and the like," explains Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher, who created the guide together with Kollel Associate Scholar Rabbi Yaakov Zions. "The guide is a simple way for people to easily access all of this information."

The guide contains a chart of *minyanim* times and locations in Denver, a kosher food directory, and listings of other Jewish amenities in Denver. Plans are underway to expand the guide for the coming summer to include information about Denver in general, such as suggestions for basic day trips and popular attractions around Denver.

The guide can be accessed on the Kollel's homepage, www.denverkollel.org



[&]quot;This is a wonderful guide."

Build the Future of Torah in Denver!



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