

This is a portfolio of representative projects I have done as Communications Specialist in the Office of Communications and Public Affairs and the Office of Institutional Development at Yeshiva University.

Michael Bettencourt

\$100,000,000 Proposal for Major Donor

The Leon and Tzili Charney Legacy Project



Yeshiva University



Mrs. Tzili Charney
20 West 64th Street, Apt. 43E
New York, NY 10023

January 11, 2017

Dear Tzili,

As you know, I will soon have the bittersweet pleasure of handing over the keys to this marvelous house we call Yeshiva University to the capable care of our new president-elect, Rabbi Dr. Ari Berman. I have every confidence that he will guide this institution to new heights and keep it as the beacon it has always been for Jews everywhere. Selfishly, given my deep feelings for Leon and you, I have a passionate desire to seal a perpetual relationship.

This changing of the guard is precisely the right time for me to offer you a brave and exhilarating new venture that will give a boost to our new president, bring glory to Yeshiva University, and, most important of all, pay homage to a man whose life epitomized what can be accomplished when one sets out to live one's life by the Jewish values we all venerate.

The Leon and Tzili Charney Legacy Project is composed of four (4) components designed to bring honor to the work that you and Leon have done and to strengthen Yeshiva University's enduring quest to keep our "noble experiment" (to use Dr. Lamm's words) vital and relevant.

I'd like to take a moment here to express my awe at what Leon accomplished in life. After he graduated from Yeshiva College in 1960 and Brooklyn Law School in 1964, he started on a trajectory that would take him far and wide, and it's gratifying to know that Yeshiva University had a part to play in mapping out his path through life.

In fact, the term "Renaissance Man" is not comprehensive enough to fit the final tally of his interests, talents, beliefs and achievements. For most of us, success in one area, or maybe even two areas, would be satisfying enough to say that we had lived a full life. Leon, however, managed to succeed in multiple endeavors: cantorial music and Mid-East politics, being a television impresario and real estate leader, loving both marine sciences and cardiology. He tied together these disparate disciplines through the force of his intellect, charm, savvy, honesty and generosity.

As Hamlet said about his father in Shakespeare's play, "I shall not look upon his like again."

But Leon was not a man who was alone. He had at least a fifty-percent partner in you. Your love, loyalty, vigor, sophistication and fierce Jewish pride informed who he was and defines his legacy.

Each proposal in the Legacy Project has been crafted to touch upon an important aspect of Leon's life, and I hope you find them appealing and evocative enough to support.

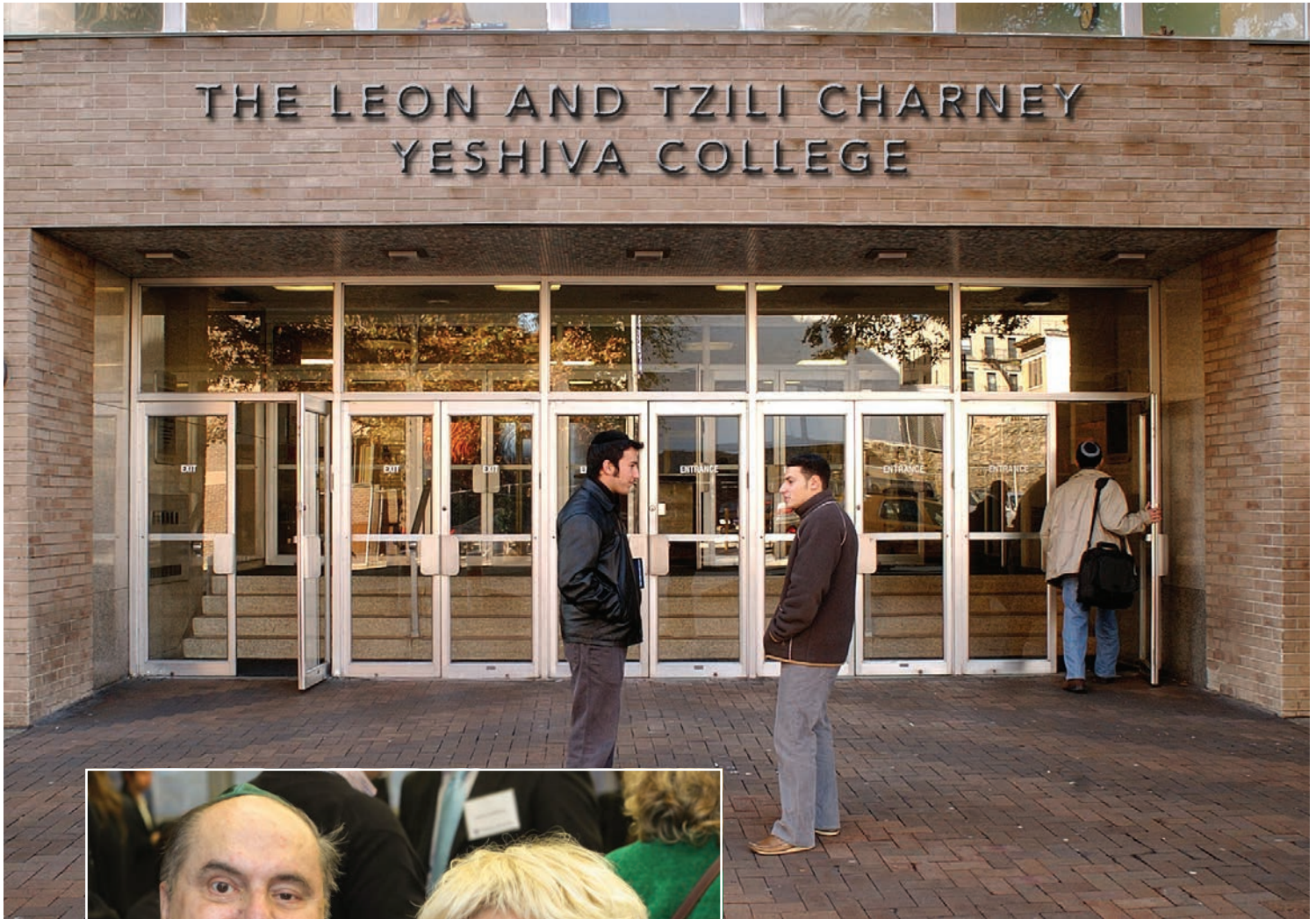
I am especially pleased that you have donated to Yeshiva University Libraries a rich trove of Leon's materials. These will be a vital addition both to YU's collections and to researchers in fields as diverse as entertainment law, Middle East politics, Jewish culture, cantorial singing and media history. The library is drawing up plans to launch an interactive display to make the material accessible, designed to be as rich and beautiful as the material it showcases.

I look forward to discussing the Legacy Project with you, where I can lay out in more detail our thoughts and visions and hear your response to our plans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Richard M. Joel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Richard" being more prominent and the last name "Joel" written in a slightly more compact, cursive style.

Richard M. Joel



A GIFT TO ENDOW THE LEON AND TZILI CHARNEY LEGACY

1. The Leon and Tzili Charney Yeshiva College

Yeshiva College is a crucial institution for securing the future of Jewish higher education, the Jewish community at large, and the quality of Jewish leadership in the 21st century. Without exaggeration, Yeshiva College is the finest expression of Torah Umadda, Yeshiva University's core philosophy, which reflects a synthesis of traditional Jewish thought and Western culture.

Today, almost nine decades after it began classes in 1928, Yeshiva College is one of American Jewry's great success stories. While the College has flourished as the flagship of Jewish higher education, it can safely be said that with the advent of a new president in 2017, and the drafting of a new strategic plan, it is poised for even greater success in molding our students to become the next generation of respected political, social and intellectual leaders in America, Israel, and Jewish communities around the world. Leon Charney was the personification of all of these attributes beyond compare in the Jewish world. Ever since you became his love and partner in life, you have prolonged his impact and enabled his children to share in the glory of their unique father.

We ask you to help Yeshiva University reach this new horizon by making a gift of \$100,000,000, in recognition of which we will proudly rename Yeshiva College as The Leon and Tzili Charney Yeshiva College of Yeshiva University. An appropriate and mutually agreed upon payout schedule will facilitate your ability to do so.

There are four (4) features of our request for you to create The Leon and Tzili Charney Yeshiva College of Yeshiva University that we would like to enumerate.

First, the magnificence of the gift will cement Yeshiva College's reputation in the world as a premier institution of higher learning, already counted among America's foremost colleges, by giving it the resources to improve every aspect of its operations, from the smartboard in the classroom to the complex technical infrastructure that a modern university requires to function effectively.

Second, we would like to allot \$25 million of this gift as endowed undergraduate scholarships. YU has always made good on its promise that every undergraduate student qualified to study at Yeshiva University will not be denied an education because of financial need. It presents a stiff challenge to fulfill this promise year after year, and a properly endowed and efficiently managed scholarship

program will help YU continue to keep its promise. As a "Distinguished Alumnus" of Yeshiva College, Leon would have appreciated the power and value of this kind of financial assistance, which we describe in more detail below.

Third, we would like to allocate \$10 million of this gift to endow the YU Center for Israel Studies with the express aim of using the resources of YU to promote and protect the State of Israel through a comprehensive program of research, communication and advocacy. (A fuller description is included below.)

Last, but certainly not least, we would like to assign \$1 million to the archiving of Leon's materials. These will be a treasured asset to the holdings of YU Libraries, which is already an important depository of exceptional manuscripts and artifacts. The money will ensure that proper notice is given to the world about what they hold and how they can be used.

As a token of our deep appreciation for this gift, significant major signage will be permanently affixed in prominent locations around the campus, the unveiling of which will occur during a special academic convocation to be publicized throughout the Jewish world and the academic world on the life and accomplishments of Leon Charney.

Every diploma granted by The Leon and Tzili Charney Yeshiva College will bear your names, reminding successive generations of students and their families of your vision and munificence. The University will also include the name of The Leon and Tzili Charney Yeshiva College in all appropriate publications and announcements, further assuring perpetual endorsement throughout the community. Your names will also always be identified with any scholarships, professorships or programs supported by your endowment gift.

Throughout the years, Yeshiva College has been blessed with Benefactors willing to invest in its excellence. We ask you to elevate that tradition with this gift to transform Yeshiva College into The Leon and Tzili Charney Yeshiva College, a unique philanthropic achievement.



2. The Leon and Tzili Charney Scholarships

Scholarships are crucial to student success at Yeshiva University. YU promises that every student qualified to study at Yeshiva College, Stern College for Women or Sy Syms School of Business will not be turned away because of financial need.

To put numbers to this promise, YU awards \$40 million in undergraduate scholarships annually, with 80 percent of the student body receiving scholarship aid.

We would allocate \$25 million to endow The Leon and Tzili Charney Scholarships so that YU can continue to keep its promise that anyone who wishes to study at the University can do so without putting an undue burden on themselves and their families.

A major portion of the gift would be held in an endowment in order to generate the largest possible annual income to be invested in the largest number of students possible. Given our current costs and depending on how the income is allocated, the scholarship fund could support 10 to 20 students per year. Recipients of your scholarship fund would be known as Leon and Tzili Charney Scholars.

We would also like to set aside some of the scholarship funding for students pursuing the arts including, but not limited to, the visual arts and theater, areas in which you have excelled, having done costume design for Israel's major theaters and worked as a curator for LABA, The National Laboratory for New Jewish Culture at the 14th Street Y in New York City.

In the spring of each year, we will host The Leon and Tzili Charney Scholars Luncheon, where you will be able to meet all the students who have benefitted from your generosity, and they will have the opportunity to thank you for this magnificent gift.

Scholarships are a lifeline to our students whose families want to ensure a strong Jewish future for their children as well as for the entire Jewish community. YU shines as a beacon of Torah Umadda throughout the world, and The Leon and Tzili Charney Scholarships will prove to be an effective and vital investment in the most important resource YU has: its students.



3. The Leon and Tzili Charney Center For Israel Studies

The relationship between Yeshiva University and the State of Israel is fundamental to the University's mission of Torah Umadda. To expand and deepen this long-standing relationship, the University established the Center for Israel Studies in 2007 in order to transform the academic study of Israel in "all its beauty and complexity," according to Dr. Steven Fine, current director of the Center for Israel Studies. Yeshiva College is a major beneficiary of the program.

We will designate \$10 million to enable the Center for Israel Studies to expand its current mission to serve as a focal point for the study of Israel, not only at Yeshiva University but also for a broader public.

The Center for Israel Studies is built around the effort to forge scholarship, curriculum, leadership training, and public programming into a single comprehensive conversation about Israel and its place in the world. It explores all facets of life in Israel, from Biblical times to present, with a commitment to study Israel within the context of the culture, religion, history and politics of the Middle East, all areas in which Leon and you have made important contributions.

In honor of your generosity, the Center would be renamed as The Leon and Tzili Charney Center for Israel Studies at Yeshiva University.

The Center fills a distinctive niche in Israel studies because of the strengths that YU brings to the discipline. YU faculty are experts in these fields, bolstered by research repositories like the YU Museum and YU Libraries and supported by scholarship done through the Jewish-focused graduate schools. YU students are proficient in Semitic languages and possess first-hand knowledge of life in Israel; in fact, they constitute the largest body of pro-Israel students on any other university campus. In addition, thousands of former YU alumni and their families live and work in Israel.

Since its inception, the Center for Israel Studies has achieved major successes both on and off the YU campus. It has developed an extensive Israel-related undergraduate and graduate curriculum with courses ranging from the Dead Sea Scrolls to the Sociology of Israeli Identities. It has sponsored numerous summer internships in Israel in areas from archeology to Israeli film. It has established a distinguished visiting professors program, hosted multidisciplinary conferences such as *The Temple of Jerusalem*

from the Maccabees to the Messiah, created a faculty think-tank on "Zionist Thought and History" and promoted YU Museum exhibitions related to Israel's achievements in multifaceted disciplines.

In honor of your gift, The Leon and Tzili Charney Center for Israel Studies will convene a symposium on the life and work of Leon Charney, with an event featuring a full day of lectures, workshops, and plenary sessions focusing on an aspect of Leon's and your own love for and understanding of Israel. It will include aspects derived from The Leon Charney archives and their relationship to Jewish culture, theater, Jewish history, and Israeli international politics and concerns.

The dedication event will be a major retrospective of Leon's work in law, music, writing, politics, the media and the multiple other areas in which he was active.

Planning for this conference will begin at the start of 2017, with a date targeted to coincide with a major university event including the outgoing President of Yeshiva University and the President-elect in order to maximize exposure and participation.

Dr. Fine, in his books and presentations, has always recognized the power of the arts to dissolve differences and unify sensibilities, and is excited by the prospect of broadening the scope of The Center for Israel Studies to include innovative and exciting narratives and works.

People who work with The Leon and Tzili Charney Center for Israel Studies will become the future leaders, policy makers, opinion shapers and humanitarians who will guide Israel studies around the world and provide an enormous benefit to the well-being of the State of Israel. Leon's own interests in Israel, through his connection with the University of Haifa and his work as the "back channel" in the Camp David process, mesh perfectly with the Center's efforts to promote Israel's accomplishments and advance the country's interests.



4. The Leon Charney Archives

We are especially pleased that you have donated to Yeshiva University Libraries a rich trove of Leon's materials. These will be a vital addition both to YU's collections and to researchers in fields as diverse as entertainment law, Middle East politics, Jewish culture, cantorial singing and media history. These will be a treasured asset to the holdings of YU Libraries, which is already an important depository of exceptional manuscripts and artifacts.

The income from a \$1 million endowment will enable these archives to be a living memory to Leon's accomplishments.

Once the library has gone through the proper process of logging in the materials according to standard practices and posting indexed information on its own website, the library will then launch an interactive display designed to be as rich and beautiful as the material it showcases.

- 1) Printed materials other than books (e.g., letters, press materials, and so on) would be scanned and made both searchable and downloadable.
- 2) Photos and other visual materials would be scanned in with complete metadata and archived in a searchable database and made downloadable.
- 3) Videos would be converted into a stable format so that people could watch and download them.
- 4) Books would be scanned and made both searchable and downloadable.
- 5) Music would be converted into a stable format so that people could listen to it and download it.

The design and function of the website will depend upon the company engaged to do the work, but the overall principles of it would be the following:

- 1) Contemporary user experience principles, which emphasize ease of use and an intuitive interface
- 2) A streamlined look
- 3) Responsive design to fit every device and every manner of input (mouse, stylus, touch)
- 4) Distinctive animations that make the website active and dynamic

Students from Yeshiva College and throughout Yeshiva University will benefit from accessing the multifaceted accomplishments of Leon Charney through the archives, which will serve as a major resource for many of the courses offered.



Features



“There is no space for hate”

Michael Bettencourt (Nov. 13, 2020)

A Tikkun for Generations Past: Strength and Hope for the Future



Mollie Sharfman

Mollie Sharfman '10S has had an unusual path laid out for her in life. It is not one she would have chosen had she known all the details, but it is one which nevertheless has strengthened and deepened her faith both in herself and in the belief that “even in the hard times, G-d is there ... standing by me, no matter what happens.”

Mollie grew up in Baltimore, Maryland, in a family deeply involved in communal life; her parents even helped build the Jewish day school she attended.

For the Sharfman family, “YU was always our central station for Modern Orthodox education,” and given the YU history in the family, “going to Stern College was the natural next step.” Mollie’s father, Dr. William Sharfman, is a 1979 alumnus of Yeshiva College, and her mother, Paula Guttman Sharfman, graduated from Yeshiva University High School for Girls in 1978.

Her grandfather, Chazzan Joseph Guttman z”l, believed so deeply in the ideals of Yeshiva University that he sent Mollie’s mother, Paula, to the high school and her uncle, Rabbi Leonard Guttman '77YUHS, '81YC, '81BR, '84R, '92C, to Yeshiva University.

When she arrived in 2007, after spending a year in Israel studying at Midreshet Harova, Mollie immediately found that Stern College was “a continuation of the Jewish community work I did in Baltimore, but it gave me more opportunities to do it on a greater scale, interfacing with Jewish communities beyond my own,” especially through the Center for the Jewish Future (CJF), where, by her own account, “I did almost every initiative they offered.”

She traveled across the United States and Canada with the Aaron and Blanche Schreiber’s Torah Tours, and she also participated in CJF’s humanitarian missions, “which brought my values alive.” The last of these missions, in 2010, took her to Germany in a joint project between CJF and Germany Close Up, an organization that “brings American Jews to Germany to discuss the country’s reconciliation process so that American Jews don’t think of Germany only through the lens of the Holocaust.”



Mollie Sharfman (bottom left) on Torah Tours

Through that partnership and her work serving as the Director of Programming for New Jersey Junior NCSY while a student at Stern College, she became involved in the work being done in Germany by the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation. “I had no idea that this kind of work was being done in the country,” she noted, “and I decided that I wanted to be a part of it.”

In 2011, she worked as an adviser and education coordinator for the JOLT – NCSY summer program, traveling to Poland, Israel, and the Austrian Alps. She maintained close contact with everyone she met, and in 2019, she was given the chance to live and work in

Berlin, Germany, becoming the deputy program and communications officer for Educating for Impact, whose mission is to “promote change in Jewish schools to secure and strengthen Jewish communities in Europe.” She also joined the board of Morasha Germany, the address for Jewish university students and young professionals in Germany.

The position gave her work that was fulfilling and consequential, connected to communities and leadership—everything she could have asked for. So, she began, as she said, “living the life of an ex-pat and a Jew abroad,” proud of her ability to take the risks and make them work to her advantage.

In October 2019, Mollie accompanied a group of young Jews who had been invited to visit the synagogue in Halle, Germany, for the celebration of Yom Kippur on Oct. 9. The synagogue served an older generation of Jews from the former Soviet Union who, as Mollie pointed out, “came to Germany to lead a quiet life” away from the difficulties of their former lives. In fact, her group had been invited “to give the older congregation a little more energy.”

Oct. 9 was also the day when the synagogue in the Paulusviertel neighborhood in the largest city in the German state of Saxony Anhalt underwent an armed attack by Stephan Balliet, a self-proclaimed Holocaust denier who blamed the Jews for promoting feminism, which he believed led to fewer births and increased immigration. For 35 minutes, he livestreamed his attack on the gaming site Twitch. Unable to get into the synagogue itself, he killed two bystanders—a woman, Jana Lange and a young man, Kevin S., in a doner kebab shop—and later injured two people in the nearby city of Landsberg. (At his trial, he was charged with two counts of murder and 68 counts of attempted murder.)

Minutes before the attack began, Mollie left the synagogue after the morning davening to go for a short walk and spend some meditative moments on a park bench. While the synagogue had a voluntary guard, no police had been assigned to protect the building, but Mollie noted that no one felt in danger, which is why she felt perfectly comfortable taking her break.

By her own account, she heard two very loud sounds a few minutes apart (most likely from a hand grenade thrown by Balliet into the synagogue's cemetery) but no screams or any commotion. She continued sitting there for a short while and then decided to go back, only to confront battalions of police around the synagogue while other police pursued Balliet through what had now become an active shooter scene.

With the help of her friend, she managed to convince the police to let her back inside, where everyone continued praying, something they did even as the police escorted them to the hospital, where they did Neilah, the final prayer of Yom Kippur, before they were examined and escorted by the police back home.

Balliet was captured. On Oct. 11, during a court hearing, he confessed to the crime, and on April 11, German prosecutors formally filed charges against him.

And then the trial began on July 21, 2020. Prosecutors asked Mollie to be the lead witness from the victims.

A few months after the attack, Mollie was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, "and I had misgivings about doing what they had asked of me. I had done a lot of work to heal and even experienced post-traumatic growth and made sure the incident would not consume my life."

But describing herself as a person who does what people ask her to if it needs to be done, she agreed to be the lead witness—but not for herself, or only for herself. "My grandfather, Chazzan Joseph Guttman z"l, survived the Holocaust, the only one of his family, and none of them had ever had the chance to stand in front of the person who had killed them. How many times in life do you have the chance to stand in front of that person and see them being brought to justice?"

German media carried accounts of her testimony, in which she spoke lovingly of her grandfather and everything that he meant to her. Here is how *The Berliner Zeitung* reported it:

And then Mollie S. talks about her grandfather, with whom she has a close relationship. He was the first to hold her in his arms after she was born. "He always wanted to protect me from all evil," she says. The grandfather lost his whole family, more than 100 relatives, in the Holocaust. Because of the events in Halle, she now feels a special connection to her family. "I feel like a survivor now, too," she says. And then she takes a piece of paper out of her pocket; on it is a prayer with which her grandfather always blessed her with tears on the eve of Yom Kippur, as she says. She reads it in Hebrew and English: "May God bless and protect you / May God show you favor and be gracious to you / May God show you kindness and grant you peace." When Mollie S. says the prayer, it is completely silent in the courtroom. It is as if all of the dead from her family were suddenly sitting in the room.



Mollie with her grandfather, Chazzan Joseph Guttman z"l

Here is how one newspaper, *Taz DE*, reported what happened when Mollie finished her testimony:

Applause in the courtroom is considered inappropriate. But it does happen once, after acquittals, for example. Applause after questioning a witness is unusual. But that's exactly how the eighth day of the trial in the trial of the right-wing extremist attack in Halle begins, when the co-plaintiff Mollie Sharfman freed herself from the assailant's power on the witness stand. Mollie Sharfman is the first voice in the trial of the Jews who visited the Halle synagogue while the perpetrator tried to gain access to the building. Sharfman speaks calmly and deliberately past the perpetrator into the room and yet tells the 28-year-old right-wing extremist: "You messed with the wrong person, with the wrong family, with the wrong co-plaintiffs. You messed with the wrong people. From that day on, he will no longer cause me personal agony. It ends today."

As she said in an interview with *DW*, "This attacker—this person who is filled with so much hate—he cannot take away what my grandfather taught me, what my grandfather gave me. So, that's what made me feel the strongest was this connection with him. And I felt it was important to share that in the court. That is resilience."

In the months since the trial, many thoughts have crossed her mind, not all of them neatly fitting one into the other. For instance, "this still doesn't fit in with my narrative. I don't fully accept that this happened to me. This is not how the story is supposed to go. My grandfather survived the Holocaust, we're supposed to be safe, anti-Semitism is not supposed to be a problem that

we, as a Jewish people still have (even though it is increasing in Europe and America). I don't know what it means to 'accept,' what it looks like."

Yet, she is acutely aware of the outward ripple effects of an incident like this. "The number of people who are affected by something like this is not just the ones affected immediately—the woman he shot, the nurse walking by the wounded woman who tried to help her, the taxi driver he assaulted, the young man killed in the doner shop and his devastated family. He targeted one group but ended up hitting everything. So many people will forever be affected by this hate crime."

What she hopes to achieve is a state in life where "I am able to do the very opposite of what the attacker tried to do: to do work that achieves a positive ripple effect across the Jewish community and the world."

"On the one hand, I feel empowered—I stood up to someone who is filled with so much hate—and on the other, it's just one of those things that I bring up or not, depending on the situation." She doesn't want to be defined as "Mollie who was in a terrorist attack," but she also knows that it will be something that will always shade her responses and the routine facts of daily living. "G-d willing, I will live a very happy and fulfilling life, living in my values, and this will only come up every so often. That is what I hope."

For more of Mollie's thoughts, read an account she wrote in [*The Jewish Week*](#) and an article for in the [BBC](#), listen to [a speech she gave outside the courtroom](#) after her testimony and listen to excellent interviews with [DW](#) and [BBC Radio](#).

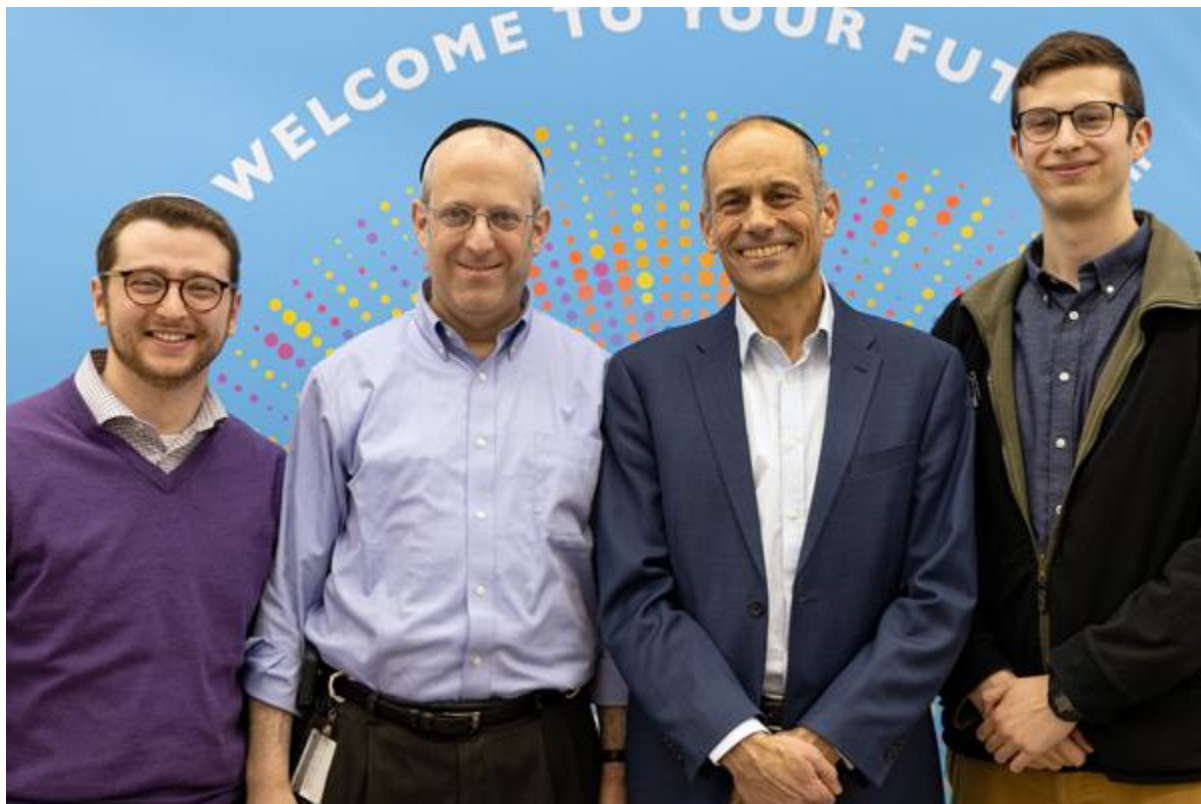


Mois Navon, Self-Driving Cars and the Trolley Problem

Michael Bettencourt

On Tuesday, Feb. 18, 2020, Mois Navon, the founding engineer of Mobileye, spoke at the kickoff event of the YU Tech Ethics Society, a club founded by Zechariah Rosenthal '22YC and Elimelekh Perl '22YC, to explore, in Rosenthal's words, how "the yeshiva part of our day can solve the world's problems."

Navon's topic, "The Trolley Problem Just Got Digital," was an excellent choice because it encapsulates, said Navon, a very knotty ethical problem connected to autonomous vehicles (AVs): how will the vehicle decide who lives and who dies when confronted by a life-and-death decision on the road? (For a quick tutorial on the trolley problem, click [here](#), and read about Navon's earlier lecture at YU on "[Innovation, Autonomy and Faith](#).")



(l-r): Elimelekh Perl, Judah Diamant (chair, computer science department, Yeshiva College), Mois Navon, Zechariah Rosenthal

Navon was quick to point out two key elements. First, AVs are being built to save lives. According to a study cited by Navon from the World Health Organization, 1.25 million people die each year in car accidents (3,400 people per day). Actuarial studies done by insurance companies estimate that widespread adoption of AVs will reduce injuries and deaths by 90%.

Having said that “we’re making AVs to save lives,” he also said that he was not going to tell anyone how to drive or code and that Mobileye, as a company, won’t make these moral decisions: “We’ll program for the customers; we’re not moral ethicists but computer scientists.” In fact, he said, of the five groups he feels might have the authority to make these decisions (coders, tech suppliers, car suppliers, car owners and the government), only the government can take a third-party impartial stand when deciding these questions, the other four being riddled with conflicts of interest.

Instead, what he wanted to do in his talk was explore how the application of Jewish wisdom might help those decide who need to decide since, in one way or another, according to Navon, Jewish thought has been dealing with variations of the trolley problem for 3,000 years.



However, after an entertaining excursion through a variety of Jewish texts and commentators, he concluded that the body of wisdom did not offer clear-cut guidance in part because the commentators and philosophers are focused on human beings making decisions: “When a person gets into a trolley problem, he’s looking at real people in real time, and now he’s got to make a decision about ‘Am I going to kill these people now?’ and he has to make a decision about life and life. That’s very different from the computer, where there’s a person busy writing code that will be put into a system that’s going to get on the road in another two years and who knows when it will ever get into a trolley problem, and then it’s going to have to make a decision.”

For the digital driver, the programmer is “programming the car to save lives because the autonomous vehicle is being made for one reason: to save lives. It has a *modus operandi* that it does everything it can do to save lives. When the AV is faced with the multiple choice of who is going to live and die, the MO of the whole system is to save as many lives as possible—you are trying to raise the statistical odds of everybody surviving. A human driver is very different than a digital driver, and in the computer’s case, you would save the many at the expense of the individual.”

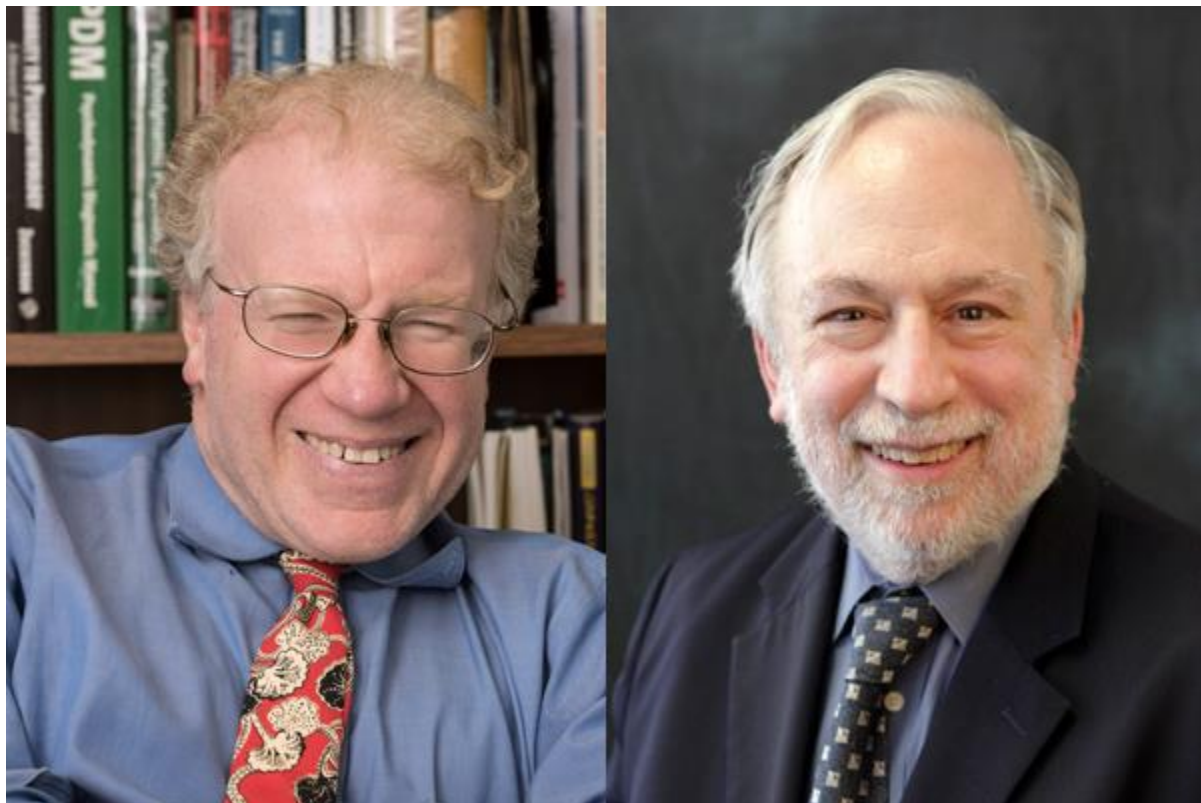
He ended his talk by reiterating the point he made at his opening: AVs are going to save lives, and the way they are programmed ensures that they will encounter far fewer trolley problems than humans encounter in their driving careers. “What we’ve discussed tonight is more of an academic exercise than applied technology. At the end of the day, autonomous vehicles are going to save lives.”



Dr. William Salton and Dr. Carl Auerbach on Training Graduate Students to Work with Political Asylum Seekers

Michael Bettencourt (December 31, 2019)

The growing population of asylum seekers has created a political and social justice crisis in the United States. Since 2014, Dr. William Salton and Dr. Carl Auerbach, both of the [Ferkau Graduate School of Psychology](#), have been doing their part to solve this crisis by developing a program to teach clinical psychology graduate students about the psychological concomitants of immigration and to train them to interview and write psychological affidavits for political asylum seekers. (Dr. Salton is a clinical professor of psychology and clinical director of the [Max and Celia Parnes Family Psychological and Psychoeducational Services Clinic](#); Dr. Carl Auerbach is an emiritus professor of psychology at the Ferkau.)



Dr. William Salton (left) and Dr. Carl Auerbach

In a recent article in the [*Journal of Infant, Child, and Adolescent Psychotherapy*](#), they describe “how we began the program, its current structure, and the challenges and benefits of the program for both the instructors and the students. Our hope is that other mental health professionals will find our work helpful in setting up programs of their own.”

Their program, comprised of class and practical work, has three major sections. They first teach the students “about the cultural and psychological worlds of the political asylum seeker as well as the nature of the traumas the asylum seekers have endured.” This often includes discussions about resilience, exclusionism, diagnostic criteria and world politics.

After teaching this theoretical material, “we bring in ‘real’ asylum seekers to our training clinic to be evaluated. Then we supervise students writing detailed, cogent and evocative psychological affidavits.” The students also learn to work collaboratively with the lawyers involved in these asylum cases, and sometimes they are present in court for the actual asylum proceedings.

The final component of our program is teaching students how to identify and manage the asylum seekers’ various feelings during the evaluations as well as their own counter-transference toward the asylum seekers and the legal system. “These complex reactions often include such dynamics as the power differentials between the asylum seekers and those who are trying to help them and the feeling of being ‘White and privileged’ while working with minorities.” They encourage the students to understand their own personal experiences during the evaluations, and their own family’s immigration histories are very important in enabling them to help the asylum seekers.”

Despite the challenges the program has faced, “we find this work to be some of the most invigorating and valuable experiences of our teaching and clinical careers. Our students repeatedly told us that we provide them with experiences that they will never forget....Being in the asylum program also changes the way the students look at the world and their places within it. They tend to re-evaluate their cultural heritages and even sometimes their sense of privilege through new and different eyes. They also appreciate the relative sense of freedom that living in the United States gives them. Finally, they perceive ‘foreigners’ as people with unique stories and traumas.”

To this point, the asylum program has achieved real and distinct triumphs. “At the time of this writing, all of the asylum seekers whom we have evaluated and who have had hearings or trials have been granted asylum and they are now living in the United States without fears of deportation. We hope that this trend will continue, despite the many potential obstacles that lie ahead.”



What are Stories For? Visiting Professor Dr. Dara Horn Provides Some Answers

Michael Bettencourt (December 27, 2019)

When people read novels, what is it that they expect to get from the experience?

This intriguing question was the subject matter of a talk given by Dr. Dara Horn to the honors students of the [S. Daniel Abraham Honors Program](#) at [Stern College for Women](#) on Monday, Dec. 16, 2019. Dr. Horn, a much-admired and much-awarded novelist, is a visiting professor at Stern College courtesy of the [Zahava and Moshael Straus Center for Torah and Western Thought](#).

She began by quoting a piece of fan mail from a reader, who was upset by the brutality of a scene in one of her novels. “With all of the cruelty in the world,” said the writer, “I find it more of a service to mankind to write a book for people to laugh, enjoy and be uplifted.” The writer’s suggestion prompted Dr. Horn to examine what it might be that readers are looking for when they spend the time and effort to read stories.

Dr. Horn suspected that many people, like her letter-writer, read novels “secretly expecting a redemptive ending.” This expectation comes from a Christian view of the Bible and Christian beliefs about salvation, where the “in the beginning” of Genesis ends with the establishment of the kingdom of God in Revelation. In this view, history is the story of the redemption of a life started in sin and ending in grace and judgment.



If “normal literatures, like English or Russian or French” are drawing their inspiration from this Christian context both of being saved and of a narrative with a satisfying and coherent ending, then the Jewish literature she studied in Hebrew and Yiddish can be considered a kind of “anti-literature, one which should make us question what we want out of a work of art,” in part because Jewish people read a different bible than do Christians, one that does not “end in a bang.”

In what way does this “anti-literature” question this desire for orderly endings, a desire, Dr. Horn believes, that “is not universal at all but is Christian”? In the literature she was studying, “there are almost no people getting saved, there is never anyone who had an epiphany, there are no moments of grace, and what I quickly noticed in the stories and novels in Yiddish and Hebrew, often did not have endings at all.”

As one example among many to illustrate her point, she chose the stories about Tevye the Dairyman of Sholem Aleichem, the source for the musical *Fiddler on the Roof*. She described the stories as “sort of like a TV series where every daughter’s marriage is another episode, and each is more devastating than the last.”

But what amazed her most as a Western reader as she made her way through them is that “Tevye never changes, he never realizes anything, he never has an epiphany or a moment of grace. And he certainly is never rescued, and he’s certainly never saved.” Instead, as she pointed out, “he just keeps enduring, which feels painfully realistic.”

For Dr. Horn, the difference between literature and anti-literature, Western literature and Jewish literature, is that “there is a commitment in Western literature to the idea of human creativity being ultimately redemptive: art can become a substitute for religion.” On the other hand, Jewish literature presents, in her view, “an authentic realism that comes from an authentic humility about human limitation: the knowledge that you cannot be true to human experience while pretending to make sense of the world.”

Stories like Tevye’s are not about endings that makes sense of all that comes before the ending “but the beginning of a search for meaning, stories without conclusion animated by endurance and resilience.”

Through the rest of her talk, she expanded upon these core ideas of humility in the face of living in an unredeemed world, the passage and disappearance of time (at one point, she characterized Judaism as a “technology to capture time”), the obligations imposed upon us by the way the dead live through us into the future and the “archeology of the soul” that each of must plumb to find some satisfying degree of understanding and acceptance.



What are stories for? To help us ask, and perhaps answer, “our questions about the purpose of being alive.” Not through uplift, not through redemption, not by an artist shoehorning a string of events into a narrative arc, but by finding a resilience and endurance of our own where we can “give to the people younger than us a past to build a future with” and by trying to figure out “what will we take from the world that came before us, and what will we give to the world that comes after us.”

After a brief conversation about her talk with Rabbi Dov Lerner, a resident scholar at the Straus Center, she answered questions from the students.

One student asked her how reverent she remains to the texts which she draws upon for her stories, and Dr. Horn emphasized that she maintains all the reverence that is required and would never do anything to sully them, such as having God appear as a character.

Another asked about writer's block, which Dr. Horn admitted she does not experience it. She is committed to generating material every day, even if it's not any good. She does this, she explained, because, even as mother with four children, she manages to use the bits and pieces of time available to her in each day, whether that is standing in line at checkout counter or writing in the shower on a waterproof pad that her husband bought for her. "Just generate as much material as you can," she advised. "Cut later."

Her final offering to a student's request for some "life advice" were these notions: "Always leave the party while you're still having fun" and "you don't have to decide what you're going to be when you grow up."



(l-r): Dr. Cynthia Wachtell (director, S. Daniel Abraham Honors Program), Dara Horn, Rabbi Dov Lerner, Rabbi Dr. Stu Halpern (senior adviser to the Provost and senior program officer at the Straus Center)



Kwame Anthony Appiah Examines Our Multiple Identities

Michael Bettencourt (September 12, 2019)

Noted Scholar and Ethicist Believes We Should All Be Citizens of the World

On Wednesday, Sept. 4, 2019, Kwame Anthony Appiah, the noted scholar, teacher and ethicist for the *New York Times Magazine*, spoke to an audience of close to 200 students, faculty and staff about “Managing Our Multiple Identities,” a subject he explores in his most recent book, *The Lies that Bind: Rethinking Identity*, and which, in one manner or another, he has studied throughout his entire professional career.

The presentation was sponsored by the Rabbi Arthur Schneier Program for International Affairs (Dr. Ronnie Perelis, director) and the S. Daniel Abraham Honors Program (Dr. Cynthia Wachtell, director).

Appiah began laying out his theory of human identity by speaking about himself, the child of a British mother and a Ghanaian father, a brown-skinned man with what he described as a “vaguely British accent” who is happily married to his husband. Just as his identity is shaped by this mix of gender, creed, country, color, class and culture, so is the identity of everyone in the audience.

And these elements of identity do not stay still. At one point in a person’s life, one element may be in ascendance, but as time passes, others may become more prominent. In addition, the meaning assigned to these elements changes as well: “All these dimensions of identity are contestable,” he noted, “always up for dispute.”

Thus, a person’s identity, the sense of who he or she is in the world, is not a settled matter but one always available to change and reform.



But why, Appiah mused, does any of this matter? Because our survival as a species depends upon a deeper and better understanding of ourselves.

As he says in *The Lies that Bind*, “Much of our contemporary thinking about identity is shaped by pictures that are in various ways unhelpful or just plain wrong.” These legacies of thinking took their modern shape in the nineteenth century, and “it is

high time to subject them to the best thinking of the twenty-first.” Appiah believes that “much of what is dangerous about [these legacies] has to do with the way religion, nation, race, class, and culture can be the enemies of human solidarity,” the “horsemen of a score of apocalypses from apartheid to genocide. We need to reform them because, at their best, they make it possible for groups, large and small, to do things together.”



Kwame Anthony Appiah speaks with Stern College students

In the end, he stated, the challenge to the human species at this particular moment in its history of division, partisanship, distrust and violence is to find a middle way that encourages us to secure for everyone “the rights enunciated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights while caring for our own tribes and their common projects.”

For Appiah, this middle way is called “cosmopolitanism,” which he defines as “a spirit of global citizenship” predicated on a common humanity. “We live with over 7 billion humans on a small, warming planet. The cosmopolitan impulse that draws on our common humanity is no longer a luxury; it has become a necessity. If you want to protect the world, it helps to see yourself as a citizen of the world.”

He ended by quoting the words of Publius Terentius Afer, stated over two millennia ago: “I am human, I think nothing human alien to me.” “Now there’s an identity,” Appiah said with a smile, “that can bind us all.”



(l-r): Cynthia Wachtell, Kwame Anthony Appiah, Selma Botman, Ronnie Perelis



The Commencement Ties That Bind

June 6, 2016

YU Administration, Faculty and Staff Celebrate Family Graduations

You might have heard of the game "Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon" where one tries to find the fewest number of connections to the Hollywood star. Well, at Yeshiva University, it takes far fewer to get to Dr. Karen Bacon, The Mordecai D. and Dr. Monique C. Katz Dean of the Undergraduate Faculty of Arts and Sciences.



President Richard Joel with Rivka Pahmer, Dean Karen Bacon and Ayden Pahmer

When we learned that Dean Bacon had two granddaughters graduating at YU's 85th Commencement, we wondered if there were other people connected to YU having similar experiences. Thus began a fascinating exploration into the commencement ties that bind so many YU families together.

Dean Bacon's granddaughters are Ayden Pahmer and Rivka Pahmer, both now proud bearers of '16S after their names. A third granddaughter, Devorah Pahmer, is on deck for graduating, currently attending Sy Syms School for Business.

Ayden and Rivka have two cousins, Max and Isaac Shulman, who also graduated, and Devorah's father, David, is an instructor in Jewish studies, with his own graduation history from Yeshiva

College, Azrieli Graduate School of Jewish Education and Administration and Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (RIETS).



President Joel and his wife Esther, with their children Avery, Penny and Noam

One of the highlights of the 85th Commencement was President Richard M. Joel's conferring degrees upon three of his children: Penny and Avery receiving doctorates from Azrieli, and Noam, a PsyD from Ferkauf Graduate School of Psychology. As President Joel said in his remarks, conferring these degrees means that during his tenure, he has signed diplomas for all six of his children. In what may be some sort of record, it was also a point of pride for the Joel family and testimony to their belief in and dedication to the University.

Moshael Straus, chairman of the YU Board of Trustees, could claim a similar happiness as he watched his daughter Sarah receive her degree from Ferkauf.



YU Board of Trustees Chairman Moshael Straus celebrates Sarah's graduation from Ferkauf

Rabbi Jonathan Muskat, rabbi at Young Israel of Oceanside (New York) and a three-time YU alumnus, delivered the benediction at Commencement. He is the husband of Dr. Yael Muskat, director of the YU Counseling Center, herself a 1993 Stern alumna. Their daughter, Ahava, just graduated from Stern along with her husband, Adir Pinchot from Yeshiva College, and Adir's sister, Arianne, also graduated from Stern. To add a little more to the mix, Adir and Arianne's father, Dov, received his diploma from Yeshiva College in 1990.



Joshua Wildes continues a long lineage of YU graduates

Joshua Wildes, who attended Sy Syms and was valedictorian for the James Striar School of General

Jewish Studies, continues a long YU lineage with his graduation. His mother and father, Michael and Amy, are alumni of Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, and Michael and his father, Leon (an alumnus of Yeshiva College), are both Cardozo faculty members. Joshua's uncle, Rabbi Mark Wildes, is a graduate of Yeshiva College, Cardozo and RIETS, and his aunt, Jill, carries a degree from Wurzweiler School of Social Work. Joshua and his sister, Rachel, will both attend Cardozo in the fall.

Their cousin, Ezra Wildes, goes to the Marsha Stern Talmudical Academy / Yeshiva High School for Boys (YUHSB), and another cousin, Yosef Wildes, is a YUHSB alumnus planning on attending Yeshiva College next year.

But Shai Berman, now a graduate of Yeshiva College, may just edge out Joshua. His paternal grandparents are Julius Berman (Yeshiva College and RIETS alumnus in addition to an honorary YU degree in 1995 and being chairman emeritus of the RIETS Board of Trustees) and Dorothy Berman (Stern and Ferkauf). His maternal grandparents are Rabbi Dr. David Berger (Yeshiva College, RIETS, and dean of Bernard Revel Graduate School of Jewish Studies) and Pearl Berger (Teachers Institute and dean of the Yeshiva University Libraries for 30 years).



Pearl Berger, Julius, Shai and Dorothy Berman, President Joel and Dean David Berger

Shai's parents picked up the torch – Rabbi Elliott Berman (YUHSB, Yeshiva College and RIETS) and Dr. Miriam Berman (Samuel H. Wang Yeshiva University High School for Girls and Stern) – and Shai's wife, Adi, graduated from Stern this past January.

From Canada come brother and sister graduates Aitan (Yeshiva College) and Yona (Sy Syms) Magence. Their mother and father, Shawna and Jeremy Magence, are both graduates of YU. Jeremy is currently the president of Canadian Friends of Yeshiva University. In addition, their grandfather, Maier Sadwin, is also a YU graduate. A younger sister, Ahava, will enter Stern next year.



The Magence family celebrated Aitan and Yona's graduation

Shayna Schwarzberg, daughter of Rabbi Ronald Schwarzberg, director of Jewish career guidance and placement at the Center for the Jewish Future, now bears a diploma from Sy Syms. Shayna is engaged to Noam Itzhak, who graduated as well this month from YU. She is the last of Rabbi Schwarzberg's four children to attend YU.

And then there is Sy Syms graduate Sammy Schwartz, son of Suzy Schwartz, assistant vice president, alumni affairs and strategic development; Danielle Wietschner, daughter of Chaim Wietschner, treasurer of the RIETS Board of Trustees, now a Stern alumna; and Eliana Sugarman, daughter of Yeshiva College Associate Dean Fredric Sugarman, now bearing '16S after her name.

These stories just skim the surface of the deep sea of generational connections that bind graduates of YU into a tight-knit community that is also global in its reach.



Sharing

 Twitter

0

 Facebook

0

 LinkedIn

0

 Email this article

 Print this article

RELATED POSTS

[Anti-Semitism's Threats](#)

[President Joel: Anti-Semitism](#)

[Statement on Current](#)



Classroom Curators

February 14, 2017

Future Teachers Develop Hands-On Techniques in Museum Education Course

For the past decade or so, Ilana Benson, director of museum education at [Yeshiva University Museum](#) (YU Museum), and Miriam Hirsch, associate professor of education and co-chair of the Department of Education at [Stern College for Women](#), have worked together to plan museum sessions for education majors that link education course content with YU Museum resources and exhibitions.

Building on these visits and learning experiences, Benson and Hirsch developed "Introduction to Museum Education," an undergraduate course whose approach and content are more typical of graduate-level study. "The course is a way for teacher candidates to learn about other kinds of educators," said Hirsch, "and especially how museums can advance critical thinking skills, deepen understanding of social and historical context and promote learning outside a traditional classroom."



Dr. Jacob Wisse, director of the Yeshiva University Museum, speaks about how to evaluate works of art through both technical inquiry and informed intuition.

Jacob Wisse, director of the YU Museum, is a strong supporter of the course and credits both Benson and Bonni-Dara Michaels, the YU Museum's collections curator, for its solid success. "We are thrilled to partner with the education department to offer students a window into 'museum-style' education and experiential learning." He added that "the class will provide a model for teaching and learning that can inspire them in all their future professional paths, and perhaps might even inspire a few toward the vital and rewarding path of museum education."

The course takes place at the YU Museum so its fascinating artifacts and exhibitions can be incorporated into sessions. At a recent meeting, students in the course (who are mostly majoring in preschool and elementary education) had the opportunity to discuss the concept of "connoisseurship" with Wisse and inspect items selected by Michaels from the YU Museum's collection.

"Connoisseurship," as Wisse pointed out, is the act of evaluating works of art through both technical inquiry and informed intuition to assess their "value." Wisse explained that value is not just an object's worth in the art market but also its importance in multiple contexts—historical, social, economic, political and so on. Objects may not have a high economic worth but can still be considered valuable by the museum because of how they connect to the lives of visitors or the light they shed on a historical period.



Hedva Tirschwell examines a wedding goblet.

A lively discussion followed the presentation, touching upon the talents and training needed for connoisseurship, the ways objects exert their influence upon people and how YU Museum makes its decisions about what to accept into its collections. What came out of the back-and-forth was a respect for the custodial responsibilities of a museum and an appreciation of how difficult it is to articulate an object's "value" in a way that can be communicated to others.



Tova Hirt and Bethia Gindi examine a silver Torah crown.

For the second half of the class, Michaels wheeled in a cart of objects from the YU Museum's extensive collection so that the students could perform a close inspection of Torah pointers, a wedding headdress, a marriage goblet and other Judaica. They slipped on gloves, got a quick lesson from Michaels about the proper way to handle the pieces and then passed them around as Michaels asked them, based on the evidence in their hands, to estimate the historical period and the source country.

Feeling the weight of the articles, inspecting their imperfections, puzzling out an inscription or tracing an image gave the students a deeper insight how any physical objects exerts a pull on an observer. As one of the students said, "It's not just a 'thing' but everything that it went through – the people, the history, the stories."

Benson sees the course as a natural way for the two organizations to share their richness and

expertise. "In this class, advanced education students have their own museum 'lab' where they can literally get their hands on objects to explore museum curriculum options in-depth," she explained. "It's also a winning situation for YU Museum because we look to incorporate their ideas into future school program offerings."

Hirsch believes that the course "will strengthen the teachers' arts advocacy and the likelihood of improving and enhancing the education of their future students with arts-based inquiry and pedagogy."

Both Hirsch and Benson agree that, as Hirsch stated, "it has been very exciting to launch this course because it provides a clear example of how collaboration, creativity and commitment to the arts can improve teaching and learning for all."



(l-r): Bethia Gindi, Serach Botach, Atara Friedman, Hedva Tirschwell, Talya Cederbaum



Sharing

 Twitter

0

 Facebook

0

 LinkedIn

0

 Email this article

 Print this article

RELATED POSTS

[A Champion of Genetic Screening](#)

[Making Career Connections](#)

[Realism, Impressionism and 19th Century France](#)

TWITTER

Tweets by @YUNews



Realism, Impressionism and 19th Century France

February 21, 2017

Humanities in Dialogue Series Explores Social Change Through Art in Professor Young's Recent Book

The latest installment of the Humanities in Dialogue series—discussions between faculty members with different areas of expertise, presented by the Jay and Jeanie Schottenstein Honors Program at [Yeshiva College](#)—offered a lively interview of Dr. Marnin Young about his recent book, *Realism in the Age of Impressionism: Painting and the Politics of Time*. The interview was conducted by Dr. Rachel Mesch. Young is an associate professor of art history at [Stem College for Women](#), and Mesch is an associate professor of French and English and chair of the department of foreign languages and cultures at Yeshiva College.



In his book, Young explores how the economic and social changes cascading through French society of the late 1870s and early 1880s affected the shift from mid-19th century realistic painting, with its focus on order and “slow time,” to the “instantaneity” of impressionism, with its quick brush strokes and lighter touch. Impressionism was trying to capture the same one-tenth of a second that the newly invented technology of instantaneous photography was also trying to capture.

He focuses in detail on how Realist painting tried to hold on as a legitimate mode of expression as contemporary society became more attuned to clocks and moved away from the circadian rhythms and social quiescence of an earlier time.

Under Mesch's questioning, Young explained how and why he structured his book around five emblematic realistic paintings: Haymaking (Jules Bastien-Lapage), Decorative Triptych (Gustave Caillebotte), The Strike of the Miners (Alfred-Philippe Roll), The Absinthe Drinkers (Jean-François Raffaëlli) and Russian Music (James Ensor.)

Each of these painters, infused by the values of their society,



tried to “grapple with the puzzling and often frightening acceleration of the advanced urban life they called their own.” For example, in each of his selected pictures, while the people may appear to be inactive—a rural worker gazes off into the middle distance in Haymaking, or two hobos just pass aimless time in The Absinthe Drinkers—Young argues that they are in fact resisting the pull of the clock and the train schedule and the industrial system.



Dr. Marnin Young



Dr. Rachel Mesch

This tension mirrors many of the discussions within French society about that society’s future. A city population still only a generation or two away from being peasants on the land contended with new velocities of change that threatened to do away with rural life and the nostalgia for it, what Young called “the ideology of the countryside.”

Many other topics were covered in both the interview between Young and Mesch and in the Q&A afterwards, ranging over photographic technologies, Emile Zola versus Victor Hugo (with Balzac and Flaubert thrown in), the “ideology of romance” that enthralls Emma Bovary and the coming of Karl Marx’s work to France in the late 19th century.

Young’s next project is, appropriately enough, focusing on post-Impressionism along with a history of changes in exhibition strategies as galleries and museums moved away from crowding artworks together to the more modern practice of single pictures hung on a wall and spaced apart from each other.



Sharing

Twitter

0

Facebook

0

LinkedIn

0

Email this article

Print this article

RELATED POSTS

[A Champion of Genetic Screening](#)

[YU Announces Makor College Experience Program](#)

[The First Jewish Americans](#)

Profiles



A Champion of Genetic Screening

14 hours ago

As Co-Founder of JScreen, Caroline Gold '92S Promotes Healthy Jewish Families

Caroline (Katz) Gold '92S came to [Stern College for Women](#) in 1988, where she found a community as warm and friendly as the sunny climate of her native Atlanta, Georgia. "Coming from Atlanta without relatives nearby," she recalled, "the families of my friends became my extended family, welcoming me for countless shabbats and chagim [holidays] when I was not able to fly home. Many of the women I met at Stern then are among my closest friends today."

At Stern, she majored in psychology, eventually receiving a bachelor's in the discipline. "I have always had an interest in what makes people who they are," she said. "Motivation, decision making, and processing are different for everyone, and what better way to understand the human condition than to understand the psychology behind it?"

Being at Stern also gave her many gifts that she has treasured throughout her life. She loved living in New York City: "That was an invaluable experience because of the independence and confidence I gained while I was there." She also cherished the chance to meet women from all over the country and to learn from expert Judaic and secular teachers.

Gold went on to earn a master's degree in special education from Adelphi University in Garden City, New York, which prepared her for her early career teaching special education in Georgia's public schools. She also met Randy, her husband, while still living in New York City. "While I was dating him, my friends from Stern gave him the once-over, and, lucky for me, they approved. Many of these women have become an integral part of our family."

In 2008, however, their second child, Eden, was diagnosed with a neurodegenerative disease called Mucopolysaccharidosis Type IV (ML4). The prognosis for children with ML4 is that they will never learn to stand, walk or talk; have a mental capacity of about 18 months; go blind by the time they are 12; and only live until early adulthood. "In an instant, every dream we had for our daughter was shattered."

The couple had been tested before they were married for genetic diseases related to being Jewish, but neither of their doctors screened them for ML4. "Our immediate response to Eden's diagnosis," she said, "was to make sure that this situation didn't happen to another unsuspecting couple." To remedy what they saw as a serious lack of knowledge about screening for Jewish genetic diseases in the medical, rabbinic and young adult community, in 2010 they created the first genetic screening program supported by rabbis across the country, an effort that eventually grew into a nationally recognized screening program called [JScreen](#).

"Our objective is to create a comprehensive, accessible and affordable means of genetic screening through a simple saliva test so that every couple knows the results of over 100 genetic diseases affecting the Ashkenazic, Sephardic, Persian and Caucasian populations," she explained. With test results in hand, people then have the knowledge and the power to make informed medical and familial decisions.

Since the founding of JScreen, thousands of people in all 50 states have used the organization's services. In 2016, a partnership with YU helped 1,200 people undergo the testing, and JScreen has also been busy building partnerships with organizations like JCCs and AIPAC as well as synagogues, rabbis, physicians and Jewish community leaders. "Our goal has always been to make Jewish genetic disease screening a Jewish communal issue, so by empowering the patient and destigmatizing carriership (carriers like Randy and me are perfectly healthy), JScreen provides information that helps create healthy Jewish babies."

Now nine years old, Eden goes to a school designed for children with severe special needs, receiving 8 to 10 hours of therapy every week. She doesn't yet stand or talk, and her vision is significantly impaired, "but she is making progress: she is definitely the hardest worker I have ever seen and is absolutely inspiring."

With JScreen's success as a national program, Caroline and Randy turned their attention to the ML4 Foundation whose mission is to fund, support, and promote medical research dedicated to developing treatments and a cure for ML4. They have quickly become the leading catalysts behind the organization and have earned the respect of researchers, philanthropists and other families suffering from the disease. "We have funded some incredible and potentially life-changing gene therapy in the brain and retina, drug therapy focused on changing the disease mechanisms, and other groundbreaking science at institutions like [Albert Einstein College of Medicine](#), Harvard Medical School and Weizmann Institute of Science as well as at other institutions in Italy and Germany."

In the midst of all this important activity, life in the Gold household goes on. Eden's siblings – Natanel, 11, and Shai Emunah, 5 – are part of a family that's very active in the Jewish community. "Randy and I both grew up in homes that were open and welcoming to all, and our home is much the same," said Gold. It's not uncommon for the Golds to have 25 guests for a Shabbat meal ranging from educators, scholars, rabbis, entrepreneurs, scientists and everything in between.

"I am so grateful for the opportunity to have attended Stern," she said. "I tell my kids that I grew up in New York, which in a way is true, because even though my upbringing was in Atlanta, I really did grow up with so many great experiences while at Stern."



The Gold family at home: Randy and Caroline with (left to right) Natanel, Eden and Shai



Sharing

 Twitter


0


 Facebook

0

 LinkedIn

0

 Email this article

 Print this article

RELATED POSTS

[Making Career Connections](#)

[Realism, Impressionism and 19th
Century France](#)

[Classroom Curators](#)

TWITTER



Phil Friedman: A Champion of Jewish Education

March 1, 2017

Alexander Friedman Scholarship Fund Offers Financial Aid to Students From Around the World

When Phil Friedman, chief executive officer of Computer Generated Solutions (CGS) and vice chairman of the Yeshiva University Board of Trustees, learned Hebrew for his bar mitzvah, he had to study in secret because in the Soviet Union of the 1960s and 70s, outward expressions of Jewish spirituality were discouraged and even punished.



Friedman immigrated to the United States in 1976 in search of a new life that would allow him to embrace Judaism wholeheartedly. He took the \$500 in his pocket and his background in electronic engineering, economics and finance, and parlayed them into CGS, an international technology company that offers business applications, sophisticated enterprise learning, technology support and BPO (business process outsourcing).

Even as CGS became highly successful (it now employs over 7,500 professionals in North and South America, Europe, the Middle East and Asia), Friedman never lost sight of the fact that religious education was something every Jew should have the privilege of pursuing, regardless

of where they live. He immersed himself in YU's mission, joining the [Sy Syms School of Business](#) Board in 2003 and receiving an honorary degree from YU in 2011. In 2008, Friedman launched the Alexander Friedman Scholarship Fund, which not only honors the memory of his father but also the community that instilled in him a respect for learning and the power of traditional Judaic values.

The fund can award up to 15 need-based scholarships each year, complete with offers of paid summer internships at CGS for the students and possible full-time employment once they graduate.

On February 23, Friedman sat in a conference room at CGS and spoke to nine



current Friedman Scholarship recipients, who had come to visit him and thank him for his generosity: Daniel Bordan, Yosef Amihay Gerszberg, Itamar Ben David, Yossi Friedman (no relation), Daniel Amar, Adir Alon, Yael Saban, Mikhail Grayster and Majorie Rasinovky Martins Ferreira. The last three are currently paid interns at CGS.



Friedman spoke movingly about his upbringing in the Former Soviet Union and how his community struggled to keep its faith alive. He recalled a turning point in his life that occurred during a trip to Auschwitz when he stood before a crystal urn full of ashes and could not stop crying. "I grew up without knowing any of my grandparents, uncles and aunts, who were murdered during the Holocaust, and I realized that it was their ashes in that urn." He knew then he needed to take the risk and leave home.

Friedman's primary charge to the students was to "become leaders in your future lives. You have chosen to go to this institution dedicated to the Jewish people and to Jewish life, and you must become good, proactive Jews." He added, "Being a good Jew is the same as being a good human being. Don't shy away from taking responsibility. Don't wait for anyone else to do it. You can make a difference, and that is what I would like to see from all of you."

Adir Alon, who grew up in Haifa, Israel, and went to a Baptist college in North Carolina before attending YU, spoke for many when he said that the scholarship made it possible for him to attend the University. He is now an upper senior majoring in marketing at Sy Syms, and plans "to represent Israel in the world and become an ambassador of the country which gave me so much, and to which I would like to give something back in return."

Ferreira, originally from São Paulo, Brazil, is studying business management and marketing at Sy Syms. "I am honored to receive support from such an outstanding and generous man who continues to use his professional success as a way to help international students achieve their academic and professional goals," she said.

As they parted, Friedman repeated a point that he had made with them several times earlier in his talk: "If and when you are in a position to help another Jewish student, I expect you to stand up and do what is right. I don't need any thanks; I only want you to promise that you will do for someone else what this scholarship has done for you."



Phil Friedman, fourth from left, and students supported by the Alexander Friedman Scholarship



Sharing

 Twitter

0


 Facebook

0

 LinkedIn

0

 Email this article

 Print this article

RELATED POSTS

YU Presents Inaugural Day of Giving

YU Establishes The Katz School of Graduate and Professional Studies

Double or Triple Giving in December

TWITTER

Tweets by @YUNews

FACEBOOK



Dr. Alec Miller '93F to Receive Distinguished Alumni Award

February 6, 2017

A Quarter-Century of Helping Adolescents and Their Families Find Emotional Health



On March 30, 2017, Dr. Alec L. Miller will receive the second annual Distinguished Alumni Award from [Ferkau Graduate School of Psychology](#) for the work he has done over the last twenty-five years with multi-problem suicidal adolescents.

He will have a scholarship created in his name and also deliver a public lecture, titled "Self-Harm: The Coping Strategy for Youth in the 21st Century – Guidelines for Families, Schools, and Mental Health Professionals." ([Register here](#) for the lecture and contribute [here](#) to the scholarship fund.)

"This is a wonderful honor for me to receive this award, especially to have a scholarship created in my name because Ferkau is near and dear to my heart, and I hope students who receive this scholarship will have a strong interest in working with suicidal youth."

As his extensive list of books, research publications, lectures and conferences shows, he has achieved significant success in working with this population by adapting a therapeutic approach, Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), to provide these teenagers and their families with tools that help keep them alive and lead positive and productive lives.

Miller will be the first to admit that he did not achieve this success single-handedly "because I love the notion of 'team,' and as much as possible I carry that into my professional life." He works closely with a talented group of collaborators at Montefiore Medical Center (particularly Dr. Jill Rathus, currently teaching at Long Island University), and at Cognitive and Behavioral Consultants LLP (CBC), the group practice and training center he co-founded in 2004 with Dr. Lata K. McGinn, who is also director of clinical psychology in the PsyD program at Ferkau.

Intrigued by the challenges and puzzles of human psychology from an early age (both of his parents worked in health professions, his father as a psychiatrist), he headed off in 1984 to the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, where he obtained both a BA in Psychology and a lifelong devotion to the

Michigan Wolverines, the University's football team. (MGoBlue paraphernalia graces a good bit of shelf space in his office.)

During his college summers at home, he worked at Cornell University's Westchester Division of Psychiatry, now called NewYork-Presbyterian/Westchester Division, doing recreational activities with patients. "That work really solidified my interest in the field of mental health after working with patients diagnosed with schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and other significant psychiatric conditions."

After graduating from Michigan, Miller moved back East to be with family and friends and attend Ferkauf. He was accepted into the PsyD program and found himself exhilarated by "the fantastic faculty who gave me a tremendous breadth of training in different theoretical orientations, including cognitive behavioral therapy, which is evidence-based, researchable and researched, and skills-based – which suited me very well."

After graduating from Ferkauf in 1993, he took a job at Four Winds Hospital in Katonah, New York, working with teens and families in acute distress on a short-term outpatient basis, and then, a year and a half later, took over the directorship of a sub-specialty clinic called the adolescent depression and suicide program at Montefiore Medical Center.

He quickly realized that, while he had what he called his "dream job," he was ill-equipped to deal with suicidal adolescent outpatients – an underserved and crisis-oriented population. He recalled, with a touch of wry humor, that "I had psychology students and psychiatry residents asking me, 'What do we do?' and I'd say, 'That's an excellent, excellent question – let me get back to you on that.'"

He partnered with Rathus, a colleague at Montefiore and the research coordinator of his clinic, to find evidence-based treatments developed for suicidal adolescents. But despite the fact that suicide was the third leading cause of death for young people (following accidents and homicides), there were none.

However, they did learn that with DBT, created by Marsha Linehan at the University of Washington for adults with borderline personality disorders, the symptoms DBT addressed – impulsivity, negative responses to distress and limited self-understanding of urges – mapped perfectly onto the lives of the suicidal adolescents within their clinic. They believed they had found the solution to their problem and immediately traveled to the University of Washington to train with Linehan.

What made DBT powerful was the "dialectical" in the title, referring to the balance of acceptance and change strategies applied to patients. "We help our patients adopt the dialectical notion that they are both doing the best they can in this moment and, at the same time, they need to do better, try harder and be more motivated to change. We give them an array of new skills, such as replacement behaviors, and help them find a middle path approach to how they think, feel and act."

Over the ensuing two decades since that fruitful discovery, in collaboration with others like Rathus and Lars Mehlum, director of the National Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention at the Institute of Clinical Medicine, University of Oslo, Norway, Miller has generated a profound body of work explaining how DBT can help vulnerable people manage emotional states that when, out of control, can be dangerous for themselves and the people around them. (For instance, Dialectical Behavior

Therapy with Suicidal Adolescents, published by Miller, Rathus and Linehan in 2007, is used by clinicians worldwide to treat suicidal teens and their families.)

Miller has also brought DBT into school systems. For the past decade, Miller and his team at CBC have been working with about 30 schools in the tri-state area on DBT techniques, so that school personnel can teach DBT “life skills,” such as mindfulness, emotional regulation, distress tolerance, interpersonal effectiveness and walking-the-middle-path skills, to all students, not just to those identified as having difficulties. Miller and his colleagues recently published a book for general education teachers, guidance counselors and others. Titled DBT Skills Training in Schools: The Skills Training for Emotional Problem Solving for Adolescents (DBT STEPS-A), the skills are segmented into 30 lesson plans so that they can be taught within a standard class period.

Miller is extremely satisfied that CBC finds itself in the midst of an exciting process of growth and change, not only with the clinical care they provide but also through the internships, externships, and training programs they are offering. “We’re big proponents of training both students and established professionals to disseminate the knowledge into the community.”

Outside of CBC, Miller is a School Board Trustee at the IDEAL School in Manhattan and serves as a Board Member of Project 375 with Brandon Marshall of the New York Jets, an organization created by Marshall to reduce stigma surrounding mental illness. He also serves on numerous committees of professional organizations as well as on editorial boards of several professional journals. He’s been honored many times over for his work during the last quarter-century

Miller also works hard to find the middle path in his own life. “I’m passionate about the work we do, so I have to balance my enthusiasms to ensure adequate time for my other passions, like family and friends and all the things important to me.” This includes spending quality time with his wife, Samantha, who also graduated with a PsyD from Ferkauf in 2001, coaching his son’s and daughter’s sport teams (soccer and softball) and playing keyboards for a local band. “I feel like I’ve done a reasonably good job at finding the balance, and I am content with where my life is at the present moment.”



Sharing

Twitter

0

Facebook

0

LinkedIn

32

Email this article

Print this article

RELATED POSTS

- YU to Present Inaugural Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony
- Young Alumni Share Career Insights
- YU Hosts Spring Career Fair



Lights! Camera! And...

August 3, 2016

Leah Gottfried '14S Creates Web Series on Modern Orthodox Dating



Leah Gottfried '14S is notable for graduating as the first film major from [Stern College for Women](#). "When I was eight years old," she said, "I fell in love with acting. From there I started writing my own roles, and then got behind the camera, falling more and more in love with this kind of storytelling." When she arrived at Stern College after spending a post-high school year in Israel, she worked with Traci Tullius, assistant professor of art, to craft a "shaped major" composed of courses already being offered at Stern, such as screenwriting and film history. "I had to fight for it because it had never been done before at Stern," she said.

While at Stern College she began her own production company, Dignity Entertainment, whose mission, as Gottfried explained, is "to create meaningful visual content" that is both entertaining and inspirational. Her first work under the Dignity name was with the singer Shaindel Antelis, and since then she has branched out to music

videos, commercial work for the company MeMoí, producing Operation: Candlelight (an action/adventure film for women and girls directed by Robin Garbose) and directing Angie's Song (about the power of song and having one's own voice).

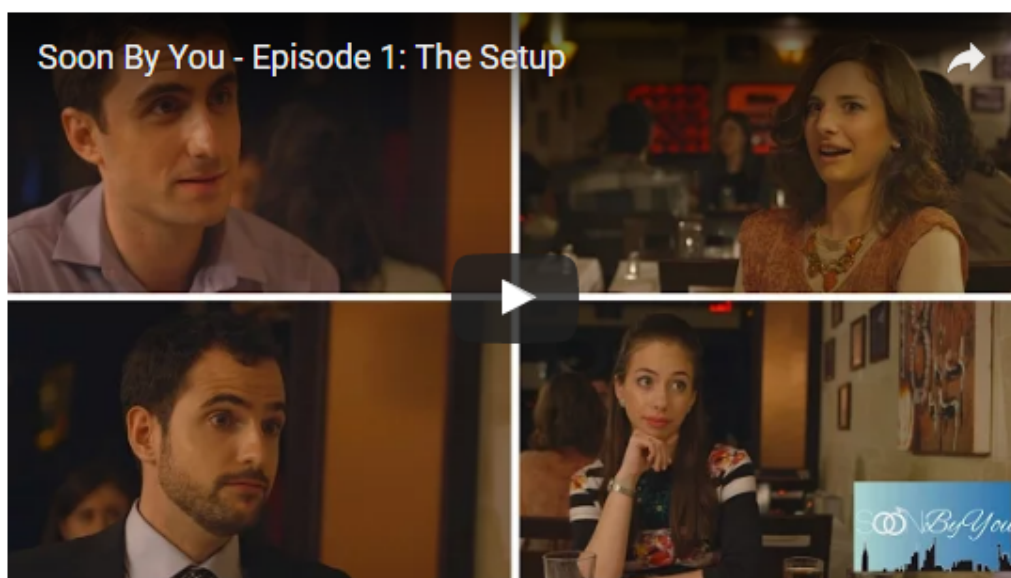
Her current project, *Soon By You*, has garnered notice at New Filmmakers New York, Indie Fest and the Washington Jewish Festival (where it won Best Short Film). *Soon By You* chronicles the fraught and sometimes hilarious dating scene for Modern Orthodox men and women in New York City. It takes its title from a phrase commonly said to young unmarried women and men attending weddings, meaning both "I hope you're next" and "Don't lose hope – somebody will still want you."

What makes dating so difficult, Gottfried noted, is that "the stakes are high in Orthodox dating because it's for the sake of settling down, not fun. I wanted to tell a story to show these people they aren't alone, and I also wanted to present Modern Orthodox Judaism in an authentic way to a wider audience."

The story she tells in *Soon By You* is by turns touching and laugh-out-loud funny and tense and

desperate and sweet. The initial film submitted to the festivals has now become "Episode 1: The Set-Up," followed by the recently released "Episode 2: The Follow-Up." In Episode 1, David, a rabbinical student, meets Sarah Feldman, whom he thinks is the blind date that has been arranged for him. They hit it off immediately, but he finds out that she's the wrong Sarah. A running joke is how common a name Sarah is among Jewish women.) His date is Sarah Jacobs at the next table over, played by Gottfried, whose vapid and self-centered chatter makes David long for the first Sarah, who by this time is sitting with her blind date, Ben, a vapid and self-centered law school student whom she can't help but loathe.

By the end of the evening, though, Sarah F. manages to slip David her phone number, and Episode 1 ends with the expectation that the mismatch will get unraveled and all will be sweetness and light. Except that Episode 2 starts with David having lost her phone number and proceeds with a looped and loopy search through New York City by David and Sarah J. (who wants to find the cute Ben), aided by David's roommate, Z., and Sarah J.'s feminist friend Noa. As the curtain falls on Episode 2, we see the six characters seated around a table at a restaurant having a spirited conversation and thoroughly enjoying each other's company.



Episode 3 is in production at the moment. Gottfried explained that they're producing it as they procure funding. "Our resources for the next episode come from product placement contracts, sponsorships, and a [donation page](#) set up at JEN|LA," she said. "As the money comes in, we film." The slow pace has not kept Gottfried and her crew from thinking about future episodes, where they've already blocked out stories around Shabbos and family pressures.

Gottfried has a simple goal for the future: "I am going for the big time!" She wants to continue producing her own content, which means getting herself into a position where she has ready funding that she can draw upon to reach a wider audience. Writing, producing, directing—what she is doing now is what she wants to continue doing for as long as she can.



Articles Where I Wrote Copy
and Took Photos



Local High Schoolers Get College EDge

April 5, 2017

Mentoring Program Promotes Post-Secondary Education for Underrepresented High School Students

On March 31, [College EDge](#) held its seventh annual Seminar and Fair Day for approximately 200 New York public high school students in Furst Hall 501. A nonprofit founded in 2011 at Yeshiva University, College EDge's mission is to help underrepresented high school students apply to and attend college by offering application assistance at the seminar and fair, where students can listen to inspirational speakers, attend workshops and meet with college admissions representatives.



High school students register for the College EDge Seminar and Fair Day

The seminar was completely organized by YU students in collaboration with multiple campus offices, ranging from the Office of the President to YU Security.

Senior Briana Friedman, president of the College Edge Board of Directors, said that the fair is the highlight of College EDge's year-long programming because "we're giving them inspirational and knowledgeable speakers, workshops on every step of the journey and access to college representatives."

Isaac Krasnopolsky, also a senior, is the board's vice president for events and public relations. In addition to the resources the fair will provide to the high school students, "it's important for students like us, who have been through the process, to give back to other students the knowledge we have about this complicated process," he said.

The morning session kicked off with presentations by Rabbi Dr. Joshua Joseph, senior vice president; Dr. Karen Bacon, the Dr. Monique C. Katz Dean of Undergraduate Faculty of Arts and Sciences; Lolita Wood-Hill, pre-health counselor in the University's academic advising department and a member of the College EDge executive board; Rafael Quiles, admissions representative from Hostos Community College; and Phil Goldfeder, assistant vice president for government affairs. Each speaker gave a rousing motivational speech that expressed a strong belief in the students' ability to succeed and a promise to provide them the support they needed.



Phil Goldfeder, assistant vice president for government affairs, speaks to the assembled students.

After a pizza lunch and the chance to interact with each other, the students attended workshops on financial aid, writing effective personal essays and navigating college requirements, and then had the chance to speak with representatives from 15 colleges.

Vanessa Luna, a guidance counselor from Gregorio Luperon High School for Science and Mathematics, was excited by how everything being offered "was helping the students set up their future – writing the personal essay, exploring all kinds of internships, investigating all types of college. I wish I had had this kind of help when I was in high school."

Jocelyn Aponte, a guidance counselor with the New York City Department of Education, echoed Luna's enthusiasm, calling the event a "great day" for all of her students.

Joyce Emanuel de La Rosa, 17, wanted to gather as much information as he could from colleges that offered mechanical or chemical engineering, two passions of his. "This is a very good experience, and I'm really honored to be here."

Anabel Hernandez, 17, found the day “pretty awesome, and I really felt encouraged to follow my dreams,” which might include majoring in psychology. Her classmate, Jireinny Rodriguez, also 17, is working hard at becoming an expert software programmer in Python, and she was really excited by “how many different opportunities there are to accomplish whatever you want to accomplish.”

Issac Friedman, a senior who is the HR director of the board, works hard for College EDge because the program “helps students who may not have the same options or opportunities as we have had to gain educational success.” His colleague, Miriam Pearl Klahr, vice president of mentorship, likens what they do to “a big brother-big sister relationship with our students – we are there every step of the way with them to help them deal with the stress of going to college.”



Members of the College EDge Board of Directors. (left to right, standing): Chaim Szachtel, Eitan Dechter, Akiva Rosenzweig, David Kahane, Izzy Friedman, Shira Wein, Miriam Rosen, Ailin Elyasi, Zahava Schwartz, Michal Schechter (left to right, seated): Yisroel Schatz, Isaac Krasnopolsky, Briana Friedman, Miriam Pearl Klahr, Elana Perlow



Sharing

 Twitter

0

 Facebook

0

 LinkedIn

8

 Email this article  Print this article



Our Neighbors on The Street

December 15, 2016

Students Host Panel Discussion Addressing Causes of Homelessness and How to Combat Them

On Tuesday, December 13, students, staff and community members attended a panel discussion on what can be done to address homelessness. The event was organized by the [Yeshiva College](#) Tzedek Society, the [Stern College for Women](#) Social Justice Society, and the Jay and Jeanie Schottenstein Honors Program.

Titled "Our Neighbors on the Street," the panel featured four experts on the topic: Dale Williams, executive director of Midnight Run, which collects and distributes basic living items to homeless individuals; Noel Concepción, department director of BronxWorks Adult Homeless Services, a human service organization and settlement house based in the Bronx; Giselle Routhier, policy director for Coalition for the Homeless, which advocates for affordable and supportive housing; and Dr. Mike Rowan, assistant professor of sociology at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, who researches the sociological and psychological aspects of crime, policing and homelessness.

Facilitated by Yosie Friedman, president of the Tzedek Society, the discussion focused on firsthand experience, advocacy work, public policy and academic analysis.

Williams, who had been homeless for three years, spoke strongly about the emotional and psychic toll it takes on a person, even with something so ordinary as cleanliness. "It may be difficult for you to imagine what it's like to be dirty, to smell," he said, "knowing that no one wants to sit next to you." Fortunately, he received help from Midnight Run, and once his life stabilized, he volunteered for the organization, became a board member and eventually became executive director, a position he has had for the last 17 years.

An audience member pointed out the need for feminine hygiene products also being made available so that women on the street can retain their personal dignity, and both Routhier and Concepción noted that distributing these products is now mandated in all facilities and programs dealing with the homeless.

However, taking care of the immediate physical and medical needs of homeless people does not



Dr. Mike Rowan, assistant professor of sociology at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, researches sociological and psychological aspects of crime, policing and homelessness.

address the root causes of the problem, and the bulk of the evening's discussion analyzed what is being done and what needs to be done to achieve that. The short answer to these questions, according to Rowan, was, "not enough and so much more."

He cited statistics to show that the core problem of homelessness is simply the lack of places for homeless people to call home. "The theory in combating homelessness was to get people into homes before you addressed any of their other issues," he noted. "However, the reality is that there are just not enough spaces for people. For every family who gets a housing voucher, three more are eligible but won't get one."

Concepción concurred with that assessment. "Since the United States has given up on providing public housing," he said, "everyone on the street who needs a home is competing with everyone else on the street who needs a home. Only a relative few can win that competition, especially given the real estate dynamics that are happening in this city."

Routhier added that the city and state, together, need to do more to fill the gap between housing availability and housing need. "But the problem is often that alleviating homelessness, while discussed and worried about, does not rise to the level of being a priority."

Other causes for homelessness include the massive deindustrialization of the American economy, which has put families one paycheck or one illness away from economic disaster; the shortfall in mental health services; real estate pressures and the resulting evictions; and the distaste on the federal level for any public housing programs.



Several audience members had questions for the panelists. One student wanted to know if he should believe the signs that street people display saying that they're homeless and need money. "Yes and no," said Williams. "No doubt some people are telling the truth and some people aren't. I usually don't give money – granola bars are what I usually hand out, though a lot of people don't like granola bars. The only advice I can give is that you have to follow your own conscience."

Routhier added that there were many efforts in New York City to provide services and combat these inequalities. "It is important to get involved in these campaigns," she advised, "and pressure those leaders who say they're concerned about inequality to do something about it."

One student inquired about the balance between the public and private sectors when it came to housing and wanted to know if the private sector might be more effective in this regard. Routhier pointed out that developers are incentivized by making money, which is their goal. "There is simply not enough money to be made in making affordable housing compared to other kinds of housing. And even if they do mix affordable housing in to their developments, they will pick the highest level of 'affordability' in terms of rents that they can. Without strong government intervention, this won't change."

Rowan added that the private sector is already deeply involved through landlords who accept

Section 8 housing vouchers. "It gives them a steady revenue stream," he said, while also pointing out that "many societies not as wealthy as the United States don't experience U.S.-levels of homelessness because of concerted efforts by the governments against control of the housing market by the private sector."


Friedman was immensely pleased by the turn-out and the earnestness of the discussion. "We organized this event following Isaiah's charge in chapter 58 that we must take care of our poor, not only because it's right but also because it elevates ourselves. The Tzedek Society plans to do more of these events so that we can foster a culture of compassion and make ourselves better people."





(l-r) Giselle Routhier, Dale Williams, Moses Dyckman, Mike Rowan, Noel Concepción, Hillel Field, Yosie Friedman





Sharing

 Twitter 0

 Facebook 0

 LinkedIn 20

 Email this article

 Print this article

RELATED POSTS

Exploring Nanoscale
Checkerboards

Understanding the
Transformation of Spousal Law

Defining a Movement

Sample Emails for Annual Fund Campaign

What follows are samples of emails I created with the Office of Annual Giving for the close of year campaign in 2016. I wrote the text, created the images, and built the emails in iModules for distribution.

Michael Bettencourt
Communications Specialist
Yeshiva University



MISSION: HANUKKAH

Your Hanukkah mission,
if you decide to accept it...

...is to light a candle for Yeshiva University by making your year-end gift of `$$$YU_AskString##` to the [YU Annual Fund](#) by midnight on December 31, 2016!

Illuminate our students' lives and support YU's mission through this one simple but important act.

Thank you and Hanukkah Sameach.

[Visit our web site](#) | [Make a gift to YU](#)

© Yeshiva University | Annual Fund

500 West 185th Street | Furst Hall Suite 530 | New York, NY 10033

646.592.4490 | annualgiving@yu.edu

Office of Annual Giving
500 West 185th Street
Furst Hall Suite 530
New York, NY 10033

If you wish to be removed from this group's mailing list, [click here](#)



Yeshiva University

Wurzweiler School
of Social Work



GIVE TODAY

MISSION:
IT'S POSSIBLE

Your mission, if you decide to
accept it...

...is to make your year-end donation of [\\$\\$\\$YU_AskString##](#) to the
[Wurzweiler Annual Fund](#) by midnight on December 31, 2016!

With your support of our mission, we can start the new year out
making so many good things possible for our students.

Thank you, and have a wonderful holiday season.

Froma Benerofe
Chair
Wurzweiler Board of Overseers

[Visit our web site](#) | [Make a gift to YU](#)

© Yeshiva University | Annual Fund

500 West 185th Street | Furst Hall Suite 530 | New York, NY 10033

646.592.4490 | annualgiving@yu.edu

Office of Annual Giving
500 West 185th Street
Furst Hall Suite 530
New York, NY 10033

If you wish to be removed from this group's mailing list, [click here](#)



Whether your dreidel landed on Gimel or Shin, on this eighth night of Chanukah [please make a gift of \\$##YU_AskString## to the YU Annual Fund.](#) Gifts made by 11:59 pm Eastern tonight will qualify for a 2016 tax deduction.

Your gift will touch every aspect of a YU education.

Thank you.

If your gift and this email have crossed, thank you for your support.

[Visit our web site](#) | [Make a gift to YU](#)

© Yeshiva University | Office of Annual Giving

500 West 185th Street | Furst Hall Suite 530 | New York, NY 10033

646.592.4490 | annualgiving@yu.edu



Yeshiva University

Ferkauf Graduate
School of Psychology



GIVE TODAY



**KEEP
CALM
AND
MAKE THE
NEW YEAR
BRIGHT**

Light a light for the new year by making your end-of-the-year donation of \$##YU_AskString## to the Ferkauf Annual Fund. Gifts made by 11:59 Eastern tonight will qualify for a 2016 tax deduction.

Thank you.

If your gift and this email have crossed, thank you for your support.

[Visit our web site](#) | [Make a gift to YU](#)

© Yeshiva University | Office of Annual Giving

500 West 185th Street | Furst Hall Suite 530 | New York, NY 10033

646.592.4490 | annualgiving@yu.edu

Office of Annual Giving
500 West 185th Street
Furst Hall Suite 530
New York, NY 10033

If you wish to be removed from this group's mailing list, [click here](#)