

# List College

## Newsletter

Spring 2010

### Between Us - בינינו

Dr. Shuly Rubin Schwartz, Dean

What an exciting time to be at JTS! Chancellor Arnold Eisen has articulated a bold and exciting vision for the future of JTS, and List College lies at its heart. We at List College have long focused on the cultivation of future leaders, bringing together academically gifted, Jewishly curious, talented, thoughtful, and creative individuals at a formative moment in their lives to live and learn in a community brimming with intellectual engagement, religious character, and global purpose. In the coming years, we look forward to developing programs, partnerships, and paths that will enhance our efforts.

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## Tribute To Anat Dotan, ז"ל, JP '01

*In an untimely manner, a week after giving birth to her first child, List College alumna Anat Dotan died at age 33. Anat came to List College after completing her service in the Israel Defense Forces and brought her love of Zionism to JTS. She had a deep effect on many of her classmates, serving as List College Student Council, president. She subsequently earned an MA in International Politics from Hebrew University. More recently, Anat served as project director of the Jewish Peoplehood Closeness Index at the Reut Institute. She has also worked as director of Friends of Meir Hospital, and as a Jewish Agency shlichah to Sydney, Australia.*

*Thanks to Eric Levy, JP '02, for spearheading this tribute.*

How can we put into words how wonderfully unique and special Anat was? I will always remember her laugh, smile, loving nature, and outspoken attitude. She always spoke her mind and gave 100% effort...you could never mistake her sincerity. She *must* have been called to do something much greater because she was already so incredibly great here in this world. Anat, I will miss you dearly and will always hold

on to many fond memories and conversations. May your memory continue to bless each and every one of us. - **Miryam Rosental, JP '02**

List College students all remember that first day of Orientation when we are introduced to the entire class with a short bio. I remember the ambivalent feelings I had that day. Having spent a year in Israel and feeling certain that I would one day make aliyah, what was I doing at college orientation in the US? Then they introduced Anat, an Israeli, and I thought, OK, someone from my "home." Throughout college and once I finally made aliyah, Anat and I constantly crossed paths professionally and socially, and I saw how her work and passion helped Jews from around the world connect with Israel. Her influence was clear to me just the other night at a learning session in Anat's memory. I saw people who I knew from various places and through different connections – all of them were connected to Anat. יהיה זכרה מבורך - **Toby Appel, JP '01**

The first thing that comes to mind when I think of Anat is the way she would enunciate her name. Nearly every day when she was student body president, I'd hear her thick Israeli pronunciation of it over the JTS voice message system before she informed us enthusiastically about the next Shabbat dinner, study break, or talent show. I don't think Anat ever knew this, but it was her enthusiasm that led to my decision to join student council. If not for her persuasion, support, and friendship, I would never have run for or won the presidency. I looked up to her and wanted to follow in her footsteps because her obvious dedication to the bettering of her surroundings was contagious. She was an inspiration to me and to just about everyone she met. I will miss her tremendously, and I know her memory will serve as a blessing and continued inspiration. - **Eric Levy, JP '02**

I met Anat the first week of my freshman year. It was a tough year for me, and Anat was always someone I could talk to, laugh with, shop with, dance with... She had an infectious laugh and a strong presence. She was quick to action, and she motivated others. I remember how she lovingly teased me in Hebrew. That was Anat - strength, laughter, focus, fun, friend. I am sure these same qualities made her a wonderful wife and mother. - **Shanna (Ackerman) Hocking JP '01** (continued on page 9)

## List 101 Service Evolution: Anshe Chesed Homeless Shelter

Ron Shapiro, JP '13

I think I can speak for most List College students when I say that my biggest fear as an incoming student could be summed up in one word: *time*. With six classes at two different schools, how do you manage all of your work while still being able to have a vibrant social life? We live New York City and have two social spheres at each school to take advantage of, but will we even have time?

At our first List 101 (First-Year Seminar) session in the fall, the to-do list was lengthened when we were told we needed to fulfill eight hours of community service to complete the course. Eight isn't a staggering number, but it is still considerable when you factor in the time necessary to research options, travel, perform the service, and then factor in the lost homework hours. On top of that, most of us were new to New York, so we didn't know where to start. Naturally, I was a bit overwhelmed.

Thankfully, the Student Life office was there to help. Through the Va'ad Gemilut Chasadim (Center for Community Outreach), I learned I could volunteer by spending a night at the homeless shelter at Congregation Anshe Chesed. I was told it was close, not too difficult, and I could complete all eight hours in one night. It was a no-brainer, so I signed up right away.



Leading up to the night, I was extremely nervous about sleeping at the shelter. I had no idea what to expect and had a feeling that something would go wrong. Thankfully, the early-evening volunteer explained the routine and calmed me down once I got to the synagogue. I was able to log on to the internet, do some work, and study for an upcoming final while all of the men at the shelter watched TV. I even got a good night's sleep, starting at 10 p.m. Thinking back, I realize that was the earliest I went to bed all year. We woke up at 5:30 a.m., and before I knew it, everyone had showered, changed, eaten, and cleaned up. We left the shelter, and I was shocked at how little I had done to fulfill my eight-hour requirement. I almost felt like I cheated the system.

But as we walked out, each of the men who had stayed overnight thanked me for giving them a place to sleep for the previous night. I thought I did nothing; they thought I did everything in the world. Like most service projects, the amount of work accomplished is much greater than the time and energy spent.

Since I felt that I didn't put enough work into completing my List 101 service requirement, and because I saw the appreciation of all the men in the shelter, I decided that I would sleep over at least once per semester at the shelter for the rest of my time at List College.

Looking back, I'm glad I was able to find a service project to complete my hours, but far more importantly, to make a connection with a wonderful place. It turns out that the List 101 service wasn't a roadblock in my transition to New York, but it actually helped me feel a part of the Big Apple.

# Between Us - בינינו (continued from page 1)

Dr. Shuly Rubin Schwartz, Dean

As part of the [strategic plan](#), JTS will streamline its academic structure by replacing the multiplicity of departments and programs with four broad areas of study: Jewish Languages, Jewish Texts and Interpretation, Jewish Cultures and Communities, and Jewish Leadership. Organizing faculty interests and resources around these areas will enhance multidisciplinary collaboration and promote increased synergy within the curriculum.

The five schools will be focused in three major areas: Religious Leadership, Educational Leadership, and Graduate and Undergraduate Studies. In heading up the lattermost division, I will focus my attention on the Graduate School as well as List College. Since I have been dean of List College for seventeen years, my heart remains with the College and its students. As an alumna of the Graduate School, I am also excited to build upon the successes of the college to find ways to fortify the Graduate School to meet the needs of today's students and communities. As I work to strengthen academic Jewish studies on both the graduate and undergraduate levels, I am confident that new programs and avenues of collaboration between the schools will emerge. At the same time, I will continue to focus on what makes each school distinctive.

In concert with the JTS strategic planning process, List College has undergone its own planning process over the past year. With participation of faculty, administration, students, advisory boards, and alumni, the List College Planning Committee took a comprehensive look at our program in light of our mission to "cultivate responsible Jewish citizens and leaders." Top on our agenda was a review of our curriculum: how we could enhance our curriculum to ensure that we provide a first-rate core, areas of specialization, leadership cultivation, and opportunities for synthesis, all within the framework of a four-year dual-degree program. I am deeply grateful to the committee members — Professor Barbara Mann; LC Advisory Board chair Rachelle Kaiserman; board member and LC parent Keith Shapiro; Dr. Andrea Wershof Schwartz, JP '04; Jonah Meyerhoff, JP '10; Associate Dean Rebecca Grabiner; and Assistant Dean Rebecca Hammerman — for their dedication to this process and for their wisdom, creativity, commitment, and good sense. While still in the middle of this work, the group has begun the process of refreshing the curriculum in ways that will preserve what we do best while providing enhanced opportunities for future List College students.

For all of us at JTS—students, faculty, deans, advisory board members—this is a moment of challenge and great opportunity. I look forward to sharing new developments with you in the upcoming year as we work together to solidify JTS's role in providing leadership for the decades ahead.

# Congratulations to our May 2010 Grads!



## Senior Reflection

Becca Walker, JP '10

There are so many reasons why I love List College and why I miss it now that I have graduated. Coming to school as a freshman, I knew JTS was a Conservative Jewish institution, but I didn't realize the impact that would have on my day-to-day life. At first I felt like a bit of an outsider when I couldn't join in conversations about common friends from USY or Ramah. As a Reform Jew at JTS, I encountered many customs and traditions that I was unfamiliar with. While at first this was a source of discomfort, it is something that I have come to treasure. I did experience an occasional good-humored jab at Reform Judaism, but for the most part my Conservative classmates were tolerant and would answer my questions when something came up that I was confused about. During the late-night conversations about Judaism that are inevitable at List, it was great to hear varied attitudes about Jewish practice and Judaism as a whole. I was also able to share and teach my classmates about Reform Judaism. As a college graduate looking back on my experiences, I would say: don't be afraid to share your opinions, but be tolerant of peoples' beliefs. The environment at List College is a special one, so continue to take advantage of it while you still have time. Keep an open mind about how people observe Judaism. Even if it isn't the right way for you or you don't agree with it, at least ask them about it - you might learn something. My classmates and I certainly did.

[\[Click Here to Watch Becca's Commencement Speech\]](#)



## 2009-2010 LC Professor of the Year

Dr. Stephen Garfinkel, Assistant Professor of Bible

**Q: What is your favorite part of teaching List College students?**

A: Most List College students bring lots with them into the classroom, including a willingness to learn new ideas along with a willingness to challenge new ideas (and old ones, too); enthusiasm; and, in many cases, a relatively strong Hebrew background. What's more, LC students are usually lots of fun!

**Q: What do you like about teaching Bible at JTS?**

It's a living. (Sorry, that's the punch line to an old joke.) One of the great benefits about teaching at JTS is that students are here entirely by choice, which means they usually want to study the kind of material – even in classes that aren't *precisely* of interest to them – that we offer. Most JTS students also want to study the material in the ways that are our educational signature, trying to understand the texts in an analytical or “critical” way without losing an appreciation for their essential religious and cultural value.



**Q: If you were to teach a class in one other department of JTS, which would you choose?**

If Prof. Visotzky would let me, I might want to teach a course in Midrash. As it is, occasionally I teach a course in Peshat and Derash, looking at two interpretive approaches to the same biblical verses. It's important to understand the purposes and roles of different exegetical methods in order to appreciate what each method can add to one's understanding of the Tanakh as well as realizing what each method doesn't provide. Both have limitations; both can have merit.

**Q: What is your favorite class to teach?**

Some semesters I enjoy teaching one of the introductory classes, and sometimes I prefer teaching with greater focus on some of the so-called “minor” prophets. I always love teaching Qohelet (Ecclesiastes), which I think is not nearly as pessimistic as its reputation would have us believe.

**Q: If Feinberg Auditorium [the largest room at JTS] were open for a one-session lecture for all List College students and you are asked to teach, what would you talk about?**

Either the Knicks or “How True is the Torah?” Talking about the Knicks is usually more complicated.

**Q: What brought you to JTS?**

JTS is one of the very few institutions in which I can combine the tools of my academic training (from the Columbia Graduate School of Arts and Sciences) and those of my “religious” training (from the JTS Rabbinical School), sometimes explicitly stressing one over the other and at other times trying to keep the two in balance. What keeps me here is the great mix of student populations as well as the wonderfully renowned, interesting, and fun faculty colleagues. I never have a boring day at JTS!

## New Yachad City: Together We Explore the Diversity of Judaism in New York City For “New” Approaches to Shabbat

By Ilana Cohen and Ya'arah Pinhas, JP '12, Co-Presidents and Co-Founders of New Yachad City

In fall 2008, as freshmen and new residents of New York City, we decided to explore Kabbalat Shabbat services at synagogues around Manhattan, experiencing everything from traditional Yemenite praying to Renewal/yoga/meditation services. These experiences were intriguing, enjoyable, and fulfilling. More importantly, they opened our eyes to the great diversity of the Jewish people, represented here in New York.

We thought it would be great to have friends join our excursions, so in fall 2009, we founded New Yachad City (NYC). NYC enables students to experience diverse Jewish communities through synagogue excursions, and we also create our own alternative, independent Kabbalat Shabbat service, integrating tunes and customs from the synagogues we visit. We welcome anyone who has a desire to learn and experience Jewish communities around New York City to join us for an excursion, a Shabbat service, or both. Together, *yachad*, we explore the diversity of Judaism in New York City and learn new approaches to Shabbat.



Since last fall, we've held three of our own Kabbalat Shabbat services that integrated tunes from the five synagogues we visited. At our services, people can pray silently on their own as we hum a *niggun* [wordless tune] and/or join in with a beat of a drum. Although our services are egalitarian, we strive to visit and experience the unique traditions of both Orthodox and liberal communities. As part of each excursion we meet privately with a community leader. A few highlights of our excursions include:

At Congregation Shearith Israel, the choir sang beautiful tunes, and Rabbi Marc Angel spoke with us about the history of the Spanish/Portuguese Jewish community and the congregation's founding in 1654.

At Romemu (Neo-Hasidic/Renewal), Rabbi Ingber explained the congregation's recent founding and the spiritual need it fulfills for people, and we discussed the role of *halacha* in our lives.

At Temple Emanu-El (the first Reform synagogue in New York), we met with a community member/docent and learned about the Temple and the classical Reform movement's history in New York. Our group arrived early for Shabbat services to listen to the organ processional, played on the biggest synagogue organ in the world.

Other highlights of the year included a multi-cultural Tu B'shvat Seder, a Shabbat dinner with Columbia/Barnard Hillel's Sephardic Club, and a Hillel-grant-funded tour of the historic Eldridge Street Synagogue. We have also started an ongoing project to produce

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“Kabbalat Shabbat at the Manhattan Sephardic synagogue was a special experience. Even though I was unable to join in with their distinctive melody, listening to their tunes was amazing, and I learned much from them.”

~ Daniel Sucher, JP '12

“New Yachad City is more than an exploration of New York City synagogues. It is an opportunity to experience other Jewish communities by attending their services. The visit is only the beginning – back on campus we incorporate new traditions and tunes into our own services.”

~ Rivka Friedlander, JP '12

## Alumni News

**Jeffrey (JP '98) and Senda Newman (JP '95)** announce the birth of their son, Max Potter Newman on December 24, 2009.

**Sara Weiss-Poland (JP '99) and Alan Poland** announce the birth of their son, Samson Jack Poland, on January 12, 2010.

**Eliav Bock (JP '00, RS '09, DS '09) and Dina Danon** announce the birth of their son, Matan Danon Bock, on February 11, 2010.

**Toby Appel (JP '01)** recently became engaged to Tommy Galili. Toby and Tommy live in Israel and plan to be married in November 2010. Toby serves as Career Developer at Nefesh b'Nefesh.

**Elizabeth Seabrook Earne (JP '01) and Matthew Earne (RS '06)** – announce the birth of their daughter, Gabriella Lily Earne, on February 1, 2010.

**David Schnitzer (JP '01)** will begin Georgetown Law School in fall 2010. He will pursue this degree part-time while still working full-time at the Pentagon.

**Rachel Kahn-Troster (DD '01, RS '08) and Paul Pelavin,** along with big sister Liora, announce the birth of Aliza Gavriela Pelavin on January 25, 2010.

**Ivy (Epstein) Weingram (JP '02) and Josh Weingram** announce the birth of their son, Nathan Jack, on February 28th, 2010 (Purim!).

**Sarah Slobodien (DD '03)** recently became the Associate Director of the Barnard Fund. She also became engaged to Isaac Dove. They plan to marry in February 2011.

**Audrey Rose Shore (JP '04) and Hal Nathaniel Beerman** were married on March 27, 2010. JTS alumni in attendance

were officiant Rabbi Loel Weiss (RS '75), Shoshana Holzberg-Pill (JP '06), Matt Lowe (JP '05), and bridesmaids Suzie Schwartz (JP '05) and Molly (Shaffer) Parr (JP '01).

**Ali Kaufman Yares (JP '04)** earned a Doctorate of Communication Design (DCD) from the University of Baltimore this May. Ali did the layout and design for the new B'kol Echad *bencher*, a product of United Synagogue Youth.

**Eitan Konigsburg (JP '06)** became engaged to Alexandra de Shazo. Eitan is a software developer for *NY Times* Digital.

**Justin Rosen (JP '07)** will begin a dual MPA/MA in Jewish studies at NYU in fall 2010. He was awarded a Wexner Fellowship for his studies.

**Shoshana Brownstein (JP '09)** will begin Hunter College School of Social Work in fall 2010.

**Sarit Horwitz (JP '09)** will begin JTS Rabbinical School in fall 2010 and was awarded a Wexner Fellowship.

**Rachel Lipsky (JP '09)** was awarded the Shapiro Family Fellowship. She will begin Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine in fall 2010.

### Condolences:

To Leslie Slavitt Goldress (SC '68, GS '75) on the death of her mother.

To Dr. Beverly Gribetz (SC '72, GS '95) on the death of her father.

To the family of Anat Dotan, z"l, (JP '01).

To Eytan Kenter (JP '03, RS '00) and Doron Kenter (JP '05): on the death of their grandfather.

To Audrey Rose Shore Beerman (JP '04) on the death of her father.

To Carly Siegel (JP '09) on the death of her father.

## Tribute To Anat Dotan, ז"ל, JP '01 (continued from page 3)

I can't believe over a decade has gone by since I first met Anat – I have so many vivid memories of her. We became good friends when we roomed together in Goldsmith Hall for two years. I remember Anat would take Pilates lessons during the day, and then come home and teach us what she'd learned. She loved romaine lettuce salads with feta cheese and balsamic vinaigrette, and it was not unusual for us to make one large salad for everyone in the apartment. During finals week, Anat and Tamar [Zaken, JP '01] would skillfully lighten everyone's mood by dancing around the apartment and getting us all to join. Almost a decade ago, Anat took me to The Heights to celebrate my 21st birthday and even asked the waitress to card me after she had originally taken my order without asking to see my driver's license.

Even after Anat moved back to Israel after graduation, we still touched base a couple of times a year. Anat would update me on everything from her travels to Honduras and Australia to meeting her husband Hagay. Anat was always up for an adventure, and she pursued all life had to offer. I last saw her a little over six months ago in Israel when she celebrated another milestone with me – my wedding. She kept checking on me throughout the evening to make sure I was ok. She brought me water and food to keep me hydrated and fed. At the end of the night she pulled me aside and told me, with a huge smile and her beautiful hazel-brown eyes sparkling, that she was expecting her first child. She was so excited about her marriage and her growing family. She was radiant and full of life. It is very hard for me to believe that my good friend Anat is gone. I am comforted to know that she lived her life fully and without regret. She was a truly unique and inspirational individual. My heart goes out to Anat's family, to her husband, Hagay, her newborn son, Rotem, her mother, brother, and sister. May her memory forever be a blessing. Her friendship certainly was.

- Shira (Tropp) Osher JP, '02



## Adventures to the Real World: The *New Yorker* Cartoon Business

Jody Zellman, JP '11

I've been cartooning ever since the *Columbia Spectator* put out an ad my sophomore year asking for cartoons. Like Moses, I was up for the challenge. This past semester, I interned in the *New Yorker* cartoon department. It makes for a nice internship when all of the papers being pushed are cartoons. I have two cartoons published every week in the *Columbia Spectator* and I get ten cartoons rejected every week from the *New Yorker*. I am hoping to have one published before I turn 120. I think of most my ideas during the wee hours of the morning (~2 a.m.), and in the shower. Unfortunately, the latter is a once-a-week event, so it becomes a serious time investment and it soaks up the water bill. Luckily, I make a lot of money with the cartoons... I am an anthropology and Modern Jewish Studies major, so do not be surprised when you see me quietly lurking in the back of your synagogue observing you in your natural habitat.



## New Yachad City Initiative (continued from page 8)

binders for participants that include information, pictures, and lessons learned from synagogues we've visited; a *siddur* with excerpts and alternative readings from all of Judaism's religious movements; and a section about the global Jewish community. We also plan to include information about upcoming local Jewish events.

We were excited to receive a Creatively Helping Engage Community grant (see box below). We're using this grant to invite the organization "Jewish Awareness Through Music" to give a concert and workshop on campus this fall. Stay tuned for more information!

You can see pictures and keep track of our events on New Yachad City's [Facebook Page](#), and if you have any questions and/or suggestions you are welcome to [email us](#).

The 2009-2010 List College Social Entrepreneurship Fellows created the [Creatively Helping Engage Community \(CHEC\) Grant program](#). CHEC empowers JTS community members to take initiative in changing their world. To achieve this objective, FJSE fellows awarded micro grants of up to \$1,000 to individuals and groups seeking to engage the JTS community in pursuing social justice.

In addition to New Yachad City, grantees included: JTS EcoReps, to start a rooftop garden and winterize the residence halls; Sarah Sechan (JP '11) to create an after-school music program at P.S. 125; Sam Shuman (JP '13) to hold a mental health awareness forum at JTS; Deborah Stack (JP '13) to found a JTS knitting club that will donate blankets and hats to local hospitals and shelters; Mick Fine (RS, '14) to run a hunger awareness program at the West Side Synagogue; and LCSC to host a JTS-wide trivia night to raise funds for [Heifer International](#).

"I believe that enabling other students in the JTS community to learn and experience Kabbalat Shabbat in different forms can help Jewish community members appreciate Jewish history and each other. For this reason, I believe that New Yachad City's goals and ideas can bring about discussions about Jewish identities and religious affiliation, while also teaching the JTS/Columbia/Barnard community about prayer and Jewish music."

~ Ya'arah Pinhas, JP '12

"Giving individuals the opportunity to step beyond their boundaries, if only temporarily, and to encounter different types of services, traditions, and communities will reduce the prejudices, sectarianism, and biases that are unfortunately strong in the Jewish world. It is our goal that these first-hand encounters with Jewish diversity will result in a Jewish community that respects all those who comprise it."

~ Ilana Cohen, JP '12

"I found the services [at Temple Emanu-El] to be rather different than what I am accustomed to and am interested to learn more about why classical Reform Jews choose to pray as they do."

~Lauren Tuchman, Graduate School '10

"Traveling to Temple Emanu-El allowed me to explore a tradition with which I was unfamiliar and in which I am very interested. I came out with a new appreciation for the community's carefully maintained practices."

~ Gabriel Seed, JP '12



Ilana Cohen, JP '12 and Ya'arah Pinhas, JP '12, co-founders and co-presidents of New Yachad City.

## Thank You To Our Donors!

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Rachel Gildiner

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### YAD Scholarship

Benjamin and Meryl Brown

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Jenny Labendz

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**Correction:** In the Winter 2010 edition of the *List College Newsletter*, a graphic included a map of Israel without the "green line" demarcating the boundaries of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. No political implication was intended; the List College Newsletter takes no editorial position on Israeli or American politics.