



Winter 2009



Newsletter Global Edition

Between Us *by Dr. Shuly Rubin Schwartz, Dean*



With the spring semester underway, I am thrilled to announce the launch of the Fellowship in Jewish Social Entrepreneurship (FSJE), which will enable us to

move one step closer to fulfilling our mission of cultivating Jewish leaders and developing responsible Jewish citizens. Thanks to the vision, keen interest, and financial generosity of List College Advisory Board member Jon Lopatin, this program is now in its pilot phase. Through an internship, fellowship seminar, and ongoing special programming, FSJE will prepare List College students to become Jewish social entrepreneurs whose understanding of social justice and whose work for social change is rooted in and nourished by Jewish values.

Over the years, many List College students have participated in short

and long-term social service projects, and an increasing number of graduates are pursuing careers in the field of social justice. Our students and alumni are deservedly proud of their efforts and of the difference that they are able to make through volunteerism. They recognize the Jewish imperative for engaging in serious social justice and social service projects, and they want their work in the social sector to have an even greater impact both during their college years and as they enter the workforce. To meet this need, the FSJE will give students the necessary skills, experience, and perspective to help them face the serious challenges they will confront as they seek solutions to some of society's greatest problems.

The Fellowship consists of three central components:

- * An intensive training/orientation program at the beginning of the semester;
- * An internship at an organization or business that demonstrates effective

modes of social change. Internship sites include Safe Horizons, Federation Employment Guidance Services, Educational Alliance, and the New York City Coalition Against Hunger

* A bi-weekly seminar designed to help cultivate connections between Judaism, activism, and professional achievements.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)

| Inside this edition: | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Study abroad profiles | 3 |
| Alumni news | 5 |
| Interview with Dr. Fishman | 6 |
| EcoReps on campus | 7 |

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

We are proud to partner with AVODAH: The Jewish Service Corps, a leading Jewish social justice organization, on the development of materials and the student orientation for the FJSE.

This Fellowship will help train students to recognize and understand the underlying causes of social problems, to think about modes of change and consider possibilities for initiating wide-scale social transformation, and to integrate what they are learning in the classroom with their work in the social sector.

I am grateful for the sustained vision and generous support of the List College Advisory Board and especially, the personal involvement and support of Jon Lopatin. We have also had the benefit of the wise counsel and creative thinking of alumni, of Anna Levy (an educational consultant who helped develop the program), and of a group of distinguished leaders in the field of Jewish social justice who have graciously agreed to advise the program.

We expect that this program will become a signature program at List College, galvanizing the energy and focus of students—current as well as prospective—towards improving society both at home and around the globe.



Fellows in Jewish Social Entrepreneurship

This year's fellows:

Shoshana Brownstein

Educational Alliance

She works with the Chief Marketing Officer, mainly on the teen section of the new website that is going to be launched in June, among a few other things.

Mollie Flink

West Side Campaign Against Hunger

She works in the food pantry with customers and is involved in advocacy, writing letters to Congress Members and Senators to pass bills to end child hunger in the near future.

Bara Levitt

New York Coalition Against Hunger

She is working with the Interfaith Alliance Against Hunger to engage faith based student groups in hunger advocacy.

Ariella Rosen

WE CARE

She works with a program that helps people with various medical limitations find employment. She mainly researches factors that contribute to success in the program and does administrative work that helps clients move smoothly through the process.

Nicole Yeroshalmi

Bronx CDT

Her job is to organize the annual Wellness Week for their mental health consumers, which will be a week of speakers coming to talk about various issues relating to health and wellness.

Condolences

Aaron Gaber (JP '91) on the death of his mother

Ali Yares (JP '04) on the death of her father.

Deena Fox (DD '03) on the death of her mother.

Annie Levenson (JP '99) on the death of her father.

Noah Weingarten (JP '12) on the death of his grandfather.

Harry (JP '11) and Daniel (JP '12) Schley on the death of their great grandmother.

Jael Goldstein (DD '12) on the deaths of her grandmother and grandfather.

Where in the World Are List College Students?

Many List College students have chosen to study abroad in exciting places this year. We caught up with three of them to learn about where they are and why.

Marla Schwartz



Major: Jewish History and Mathematics

School: Joint Program

Year: 2010

Where are you? Prague, Czech Republic

Why did you choose to go there?

I had never been to Prague, but I had heard incredible things about its magical atmosphere and the surrounding region. My program

focuses on Central European Studies and offers courses in Jewish History, so I have the opportunity to continue my study of Jewish history in a new context.

What were you looking forward to most?

I was excited to step out of my comfort zone while experiencing Czech culture.

Jessica Fisher



Major: History of the Americas and Midrash

School: Joint Program

Year: 2010

Where are you? Ecuador

Why did you choose to go there? My reasons for choosing the program and the

things I am most excited about are really the same. I'm excited about waking up every morning and speaking Spanish all day. I also couldn't wait to really immerse myself in a culture that is so completely different from the one we are surrounded by and accustomed to in New York.

Shayna Busch



Major: Biophysics and Midrash

School: Joint Program

Year: 2010

Where are you? The holiest city in the holiest land, studying at a Midrasha (women's learning institute) called Nishmat*

Why did you choose that program? Jerusalem

seemed like an obvious place to want to be. It has everything from restaurants and museums to parks, gardens, and ancient archeological ruins. Also I wanted to be close to the Old City and the Kotel (Western Wall). I chose Nishmat because it is probably the most diverse learning program out there. It's an Israeli institute with learning programs for Ethiopians, Israelis, and of course English speakers (with participants from South Africa, England, Australia, Chile, Brazil, Poland and the US). Here, I am submerged in a fusion of Jewish backgrounds that really enrich my learning experience and knowledge of other cultures.

What was your best experience so far? I had the honor of participating in Sigd, an Ethiopian festival that I had never even heard of before. The women prepared ethnic foods and performed a play, then showed us their traditional style of dance. Even with the communication barrier it was one of the best experiences here so far. My second favorite experience was just stopping and looking at all the women in the Beit Midrash studying, some Ashkenazi, some Sephardi, married, not married, older, and younger. It gave me a real feeling of *Klal Yisrael* (the unity of the community of Israel). Then my Israeli roommate walked by and snapped "Mah Pitom, Tachzeri Lalemodim!" - What's going on? Get back to studying!

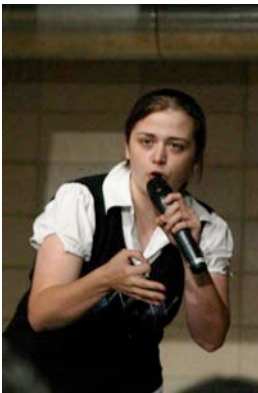
*Please note this program is not for credit

News Briefs

| September | November | December | January |
|--|--|---|--|
| <p>2 School begins - welcome, class of 2012!</p> | <p>4 Barak Obama (CC '83) is elected President of the United States</p> | <p>New York approved Columbia's use of eminent domain for its new Morningside Campus</p> <p>Congratulations to December graduates: Jamie Diamond, Rachel House, Alyson Miller, Ariella Rosen, Nathan Schumer, Gabriella Theisen, and Nicole Yeroshalmi!</p> | <p>15 Fellowship in Jewish Social Entrepreneurship launched</p> |
| <p>12 Then-senators Obama and McCain come to Columbia for the Service Nation debate</p> | | | |

A New Day After Election Night

By Yocheved Tupper, DD '11



Exhausted.

That's how I felt the night Obama was elected. I'd had a paper for Yiddish Lit due, needed to finish my reading, and was trying to change my work schedule. Even as Obama was being elected in a historic voter turn-out, the world hummed along. But the moment was too great to pass up. I wanted to enjoy the night. More than two years of formal and informal campaign work had brought me to this point, and the election had

been personally exhausting for me.

Because I was a known Obama supporter, people of all political walks had been coming up to me, initiating conversations on the latest campaign attack ad, asking if we could debate the candidates' economic stimulus plans, and professing their beliefs about who was more prepared to serve and why. Everywhere I went, there were so many students caught up in the election.

As I walked the streets of Morningside Heights and Harlem the night the election was called, I reflected on the new levels and styles of engagement in this election from both sides of the aisle. With speeding cars honking, strangers hugging, and friends dancing on street corners and brownstone stoops, I thought about all the cutting-edge ways President Obama and Senator McCain tried to get our votes, and how America paid

attention. Almost 57% of the voting-age population voted in this election, a great increase from previous years, and the increase is even more significant for voters of color.

But why did we vote in higher numbers? Certainly the election was high stakes, and our failing economy gave many Americans a harsh reminder that our votes matter, but more than anything, I think President Obama engaged Americans in a way we had not experienced from most politicians. He was thoughtful, honest, and (of course) hopeful.

But Obama is a politician - not our best friend, and not moshiach. He has to play the games involved in running the U.S. government just like any other politician. Whichever side we were on during the election, we should remember how he got there by continuing our participation: paying attention to the stakes, contributing whatever time and money we are capable of, and by talking to friends and family in honest and thoughtful ways about what we expect from President Obama.

Americans got President Obama into office by engaging with our government, and in the months and years ahead we cannot forget this. The best thing we can do is to engage with our government - not trust our politicians to the extent that we ignore them or, worse still, become cynical or apathetic from past political wounds. In order to fashion the best possible government for all Americans, we must be vocal about what we want not only during election time but throughout the entire four-year term. Though President Obama is a charismatic leader and (in my opinion) one of the most thoughtful politicians we've had in some time, we should not surrender to the temptation to give him all our agency by saying "Here, you fix it. I like you and I'm really busy." Instead, we must make sure President Obama keeps his promises to the American people. He got into office because of our collective voice. Let's keep our new President accountable by doing the same.

Alumni News

1995-2001

Eliav Bock (JP '00) recently started working as the Director of Ramah Outdoor Adventure - Ramah's first specialty camp, expected to open in 2010, located in the Colorado Rockies. He plans on graduating May 2009 from JTS Rabbinical School and Davidson School...**Reena (Blinkoff) Boltax (JP '95)** and Jason Boltax announced the birth of their daughter Abigail Sara Boltax on January 26, 2009...**Scott Gilman (JP '96)** moved to Austin, TX in fall 2008 and is working for Convio...**Rachel Kahn-Troster (DD '01, RS '08)** works for Rabbis for Human Rights North America as Director of Education and Outreach...**Racel Grundfast Lappen (DD '00)** and Justin Lappen announced the birth of their son, Gavriel Sasha Lappen, on July 4, 2008...**Annie Levenson (JP '99)** earned her MBA from Fordham University in 2007 and currently the Director of HR & Recruiting at Sagent Advisors...**Robbie Millstein (JP '01)** and Pete Cohen announced the arrival of their twin sons, Noam Samuel and Saul Phillip Cohen-Millstein, on October 25, 2007...**Hadara Stanton (JP '99)** and Jerry Hersh announced the birth of their son, Leor Beryl Hersh in June 2008. Hadara is the Deputy Attorney General at the California Department of Justice in San Francisco. CA.

2002-2005

Jamie Billow (JP '02) is pursuing an MBA from Indiana University's Kelley School of Business, and expects to graduate in 2010...**Aimee Brookhart (JP '05)** is an Admissions Officer for Hebrew University's Overseas Programs...**Adam Farber (JP '02)** and Sara Roizen were married on September 21, 2008...**Deena Fox (DD '03)** graduated from New York University Law School in May 2008 and began a two-year fellowship at the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law in September 2008. She recently became engaged to Warren Bass, and is living in Washington, DC...**Ilan Glazer (JP '03)** moved to Boulder, CO and began working as the Rabbinic Assistant to Rabbi Tirzah Firestone and Congregation Nevei Kodesh, one of Boulder's Renewal synagogues. He is pursuing rabbinic ordination from Aleph (Jewish Renewal) Rabbinic Path...**Rachel Gildiner (JP '05)** began a Master's Degree in Higher Education Administration at George Washington University while working as Senior Associate for the Campus Entrepreneurs Initiative at Hillel's Schusterman International Center...**Erin Kade Greenbaum (JP '03,)** is the Assistant Manager of Individual Gifts at the Jewish Museum...**Sonia Gordon-Walinsky (JP '04)** creates beautifully hand calligraphed Judaic artwork including custom ketubbot, personalized verses connecting one's name to Torah, and other blessings, prayers and teachings from Jewish texts. You can visit her website at PasukArt.com or call Sonia at (917) 822-7963... **Jaime Hecht (JP '05)** and Eliot Horowitz announced the birth of their daughter, Sara Madeline Horowitz, on December 15, 2008... **Josh Mohrer (JP '04)** along with his band, Six 13, performed two songs before a Mets game and during the 7th Inning Stretch at Shea Stadium in the fall: http://media.tumblr.com/bm3zCorQfd1p0ySeSXVufEyN_500.jpg...**Hila Ratzabi (DD '03)** had her poem "Horatio Street," published in *Coal Hill Review*, and was nominated for a Pushcart Prize (www.coalhillreview.com). Her chapbook, "The Apparatus of Visible Things," was selected for publication by Finishing Line Press. Hila was promoted to junior project manager in the marketing department at Guilford Publications, an academic publisher specializing in psychology and education texts...**Emily (Brodie) Remba (DD '04)** started an MSW program at San Diego State University in September 2008...

Rachel (Einhorn) Saks (JP '05) started her own Personal Chef business while she completes her degree in nutrition from New York University. You can reach Rachel at rdaks@gmail.com...**Tamar Zaken (JP '01)** recently became engaged to Asher Grinner. They plan to marry in summer 2009. Tamar graduated from the Wurzweiler School of Social Work summer in 2007 and is currently the Director of Youth Leadership at Memizrach Shemesh, the Center for Jewish Social Leadership in Jerusalem.

2006-2008

Debbie Appel (JP '06) and Toby Mintz were married on September 21, 2008. Debbie is working at Project Renewal Vocational Services, and is pursuing an MSW from Hunter College...**Adam Baldachin (JP '06)** began JTS Rabbinical School in Fall 2008 and also received the Gladstein Fellowship...**Stefanie Blechman (JP '07)** recently became engaged to Yoni Shoag and will be getting married September 6, 2009 in Michigan...**Meryl Kramer Brown (DD '06)** and **Benjy Brown (JP '06)** were married in July 2008. Meryl started Columbia University's College of Dental Medicine in September 2008, and Benjy is working as an analyst focused on structured credit at a hedge fund in NYC...**Stephen Davis (JP '06)** began Washington University Law School in September 2008...**Etan Greenbaum (JP '06)** is a business analyst at AXA Equitable and was recently promoted...**Jeff Haberman (JP '06)** and **Amanda Harris (JP '07)** are engaged and plan to marry in August 2009. Jeff attends Cardozo Law School and Amanda is studying at Duke University Law School...**Alex Helfand (JP '06)** and **Ilanit Shtul-Leiber (DD '07)** were married during summer 2008. They currently live in the Boston area where Ilanit is pursuing a PhD in Math from Northeastern University and Alex is completing a post-baccalaureate program from Harvard University in Medicine...**Dina Herbert (JP '05, Graduate School '08)** was married to Benjamin Cooper during summer 2008. They currently live in Washington, DC...**David Hoffman (JP '07)** is working as a full-time educator for Central Synagogue...**Dani Holtz (DD '06)** started the History PhD program at the University of Pennsylvania in September 2008...**Seth Lyons (JP '05)** was promoted to Computer Network Security Administrator at Forex Capital Markets...**Hy Safran (JP '06)** worked for Obama for America and Barack Obama's presidential campaign for more than a year and a half, and is now working as congressional liaison for the United States House of Representatives...**Stephanie Schwartz (JP '06)** completed an MA in Education from Hunter College in May 2008 and began teaching third grade at River East Elementary school in NYC...**Andrea Shelton (JP '08)** was promoted to Sergeant and will be commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army on April 2, 2009. She is currently stationed in Ft. Benning, GA...**Yael Tischler (JP '07)** is a fellow at the Center for Leadership Initiatives in Vancouver, Canada. She will be developing programming to train emerging leaders in the Jewish Community - www.leadingup.org...**Sarah Waxman (DD '08)** moved to Philadelphia, PA and is now the Director of Informal Education and a Tanakh teacher at Jack M. Barrack Hebrew Academy (formerly Akiba)...**Leah Yomtovian (DD '07)** and Eric Roush were married in December 2008. Leah is pursuing an MBA from Case Western Reserve University while working as a controller for GF Properties and serving as a youth-group advisor for B'nai Jeshurun's Kadima. They live in Cleveland, OH.

Meeting Our Professors



Professor David Fishman is a Jewish history professor at JTS, the major advisor for modern Jewish studies majors, and the Director of Project Judaica. He recently returned from a trip to Russia. For this global issue of the List College Newsletter, we spoke with him about his travels, studies, and work abroad.

What was the purpose of your recent trip to Russia?

I am director of a JTS-sponsored program in Moscow called Project Judaica. PJ (for short) is a joint Jewish studies program with Russian State University where forty-one students currently take Judaica courses under its auspices. Some of our faculty teach there, and some Moscow students come here, to JTS. I travel to Russia twice every year, during winter break and in either May or June. Since I've been directing the program for 18 years, I must have been there more than 35 times.

You also study Eastern European Jewry. Do you also gain information that

contributes to your research when you go to Russia as well?

These are not, strictly speaking, research trips. But I do buy many books on my trips to Moscow, and they enrich my research and teaching. An enormous amount of Russian-language literature on Jewish subjects is now being published, both in Russia and in Israel. Some of it is of real scholarly importance.

What do you think people should know about the region that they are not aware of, with regard to modern life and the Jewish communities there?

Russia is so full of paradoxes. On the one hand, it is now a prosperous and modern country, and Moscow is as exciting and interesting a city as New York. On the other hand, Russia is ruled by an autocratic regime. All television news is state-censored, and political opposition is suppressed.

On the other other hand, Jewish life is thriving. More than 90 Jewish newspapers and magazines are published in Russia today. In Moscow, there are two lively Jewish Community Centers, several kosher restaurants, day schools, etc.

What other countries have you visited in the course of your research?

Since my field is East European Jewish history, I've traveled to other countries in the region; mainly to Ukraine, Belarus, and

Lithuania. I spent a semester last year (spring 2008) on a Fulbright in Lithuania, with my wife and three-year-old son.

What was the best experience you had on this trip?

The semester in Lithuania was very emotional. Due to the Holocaust and waves of emigration, there are only 4,000 Jews left in the country. Before the war there were 225,000, and the capital city of Vilna (now Vilnius) was called "the Jerusalem of Lithuania". It was very moving and inspiring to see the tiny Jewish community doing so much to preserve the memory of the past and maintain Jewish life. The highlights of the trip were, first, a Purim celebration for kids, with a clown and a play (which my three-year old son loved), and second, the Limmud week-end, which attracted almost a thousand people. The Israeli diplomats I met were also very impressed by the spirit of the small Jewish community in Lithuania.

Why is foreign travel important to Jewish studies?

I think study or travel in Europe is very important for any committed Jew. For almost a thousand years until the Holocaust, Europe was the center of Jewish life. And today's Jewish world is much larger, and more diverse, than just America and Israel. There are more than 2.5 million Jews in Europe, and we should try to get to know these communities.

Ghana and the Brotherhood of Man

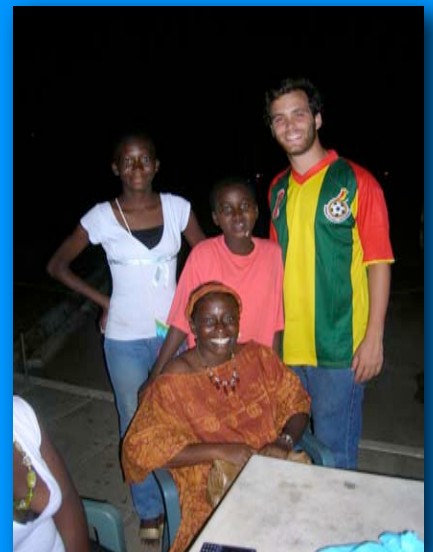
By Yoav Guttman, JP '10

Fall 2008 took me abroad to Ghana, West Africa, where I saw first-hand the challenges that the developing world faces. I saw poverty unlike any I had ever seen before, unlike the poverty that exists in America. Open sewers, dirty water, child labor...all these things made me appreciate immensely how lucky I am to have grown up in 20th-century suburban America.

But after a few weeks in Ghana, things began to change, and I no longer saw the divide between the locals and me. Rather than looking at them as victims, I began to see their love for life. Every Saturday, they attended funerals. These were about mourning for the passing of a life, but they were also great social events in which entire communities came together. Often, I saw cultural groups drumming and dancing,

vigorously taking back the African identity which has long been under attack by the Western world. At other times, I saw mothers enjoying the simple smiles of their children, working hard to better their children's lives, and encouraging their children to do their schoolwork. If I was going to see poverty in this community, I also had to see the strength of the family network, the kindness of a communal structure, and the richness of a culture that does not praise individual wealth and competition, but rather the collective bettering of a people. Once I was able to see this beauty, the local music sounded intentionally communal, with drum orchestras, numerous singers and dancers, and an infinite number of songs that demanded complicated rhythms to clap your hands to. The daily cramming into a 21-passenger, nearly broken mini-van called Tro-tros was no longer an unpleasant, hot experience, but rather a social opportunity to make new friends. Drinking local gin from one cup was no longer an unhygienic experience, but rather a statement about our unity as

one people under the same blue sky. This unity as a collective human experience is certainly what enlivened my travels and conversations with Ghanaians. Now that I have returned to America, I can only hope to 'spread this gospel' with my Jewish and Gentile brothers and sisters.



Shaping the Green Conscience of Future Jewish Leaders

By Renna Khuner-Haber* (DD '09) and
Adi Segal (JP '11)

JTS EcoReps, the student environmental group on campus, was founded by four concerned students in the Spring of 2008. A year later,

it is a fully-functioning student group with twelve board members who meet weekly. EcoReps serves as the student arm of the JTS



Administrative Green Committee, and creates environmental awareness and education within the community. Chancellor Arnold Eisen has signed the American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment (presidentsclimatecommitment.org), pledging to make JTS carbon neutral within the next decade. This will not only reduce the institution's impact on the environment, but more importantly, it sets a precedent for all Conservative movement communities and their leaders.

As part of this commitment, EcoReps has helped promote policies and infrastructural changes at JTS, including the purchase of Energy Star appliances; installation of water saving technology, such as low-flow showerheads and a rain sensor sprinkler system; and the methodical replacement of light fixtures with compact fluorescent lights (CFLs). JTS is currently undergoing an energy audit to assess how it can further and most efficiently reduce its carbon

footprint. Moreover, EcoReps has revamped JTS's recycling system, installing recycling centers in each residence hall that not only collect usual items, but also allow for the proper disposal of batteries, light bulbs, and plastic bags. This addition helps reduce each student's impact on the environment and creates an important "green" mindset in our community.

Last semester, EcoReps sponsored a Sustainable Shabbat. More than 40 students attended this potluck Shabbat dinner featuring local foods, followed by homemade desserts and a guest speaker who discussed the Torah's take on what food is, how our food system works today, and how what we eat relates to our impact on the environment. The event taught the importance of sustainably grown food as part of sustainable living in



society today. Among other projects, the group is planning Earth Week, April 20-26, which will include lunch-and-learns, movie screenings, volunteer opportunities, inter-school learning sessions, and a Sustainable Shabbat dinner. The week will culminate with a beit midrash study session with the Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life, a leading American Jewish environmental group. These programs will convey the importance of Jewish environmentalism, shaping each future leader at JTS into an environmental emissary.

Please visit <http://jtsecoreps.com> for more information about the JTS EcoReps, future programs, and additional resources.

*Photo taken from *New Voices Magazine* article featuring Renna

News From JTS Graduate Admissions

The Davidson School and The Graduate School

The Graduate School at JTS offers 15 areas of study with over 50 full time faculty members in Jewish Studies for its MA. JTS offers part-time and full-time MA and EdD degrees at the William Davidson Graduate School of Jewish Education, America's largest pluralistic school of Jewish education. The doctoral program priority deadline is March 31 and the MA priority deadline is May 1. For more information, please contact Abby Eisenberg, Director of Graduate Admissions, at (212) 678-8022 or abeisenberg@jtsa.edu. You can also learn more about The Davidson School at www.jtsa.edu/davidson or The Graduate School at www.jtsa.edu/graduate.

The Rabbinical School

Although the deadline for fall 2009 applications has passed, The Rabbinical School often grants generous extensions to promising candidates. Prospective students can also arrange Rabbinical School visits, which include classes, daily minyan, and personal meetings with students and faculty. After visiting the school, a candidate may be encouraged to submit an application. For more information about The Rabbinical School, contact Rabbi Mordecai Schwartz at (212) 678-8817 or moschwartz@jtsa.edu. You can also learn more at www.jtsa.edu/rabbinical.

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