



5772

2011-2012

Parent Handbook

*Midrasha in Berkeley
East Bay Jewish Community High School*

*Sponsored by the congregations of
Aquarian Minyan, Beth Abraham, Beth El, Beth Hillel, Beth
Israel, Beth Jacob, B'nai Israel, Kehilla Community Synagogue,
Netivot Shalom, Sha'ar Zahav & The Jewish Federation and
The Jewish Community Foundation of the East Bay.*

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A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Parents and Students,

You should already have received your Midrasha catalogue with its overview of our classes and programs. That catalogue presents teens with a streamlined look at Midrasha. We are certain, however, that families will still have questions about the program and this handbook will try to answer any questions you may have.

All of you, as part of the wonderful Midrasha community, are to be congratulated. Across the country, it is rare for students to come together from Reform, Conservative, Orthodox, Renewal and unaffiliated communities, much less for such a school to thrive and grow for 42 years. We are a true communal institution, sponsored by the congregations of the Aquarian Minyan, Beth Abraham, Beth El, Beth Hillel, Beth Israel, Beth Jacob, B'nai Israel, Kehilla Community Synagogue, Netivot Shalom, Sha'ar Zahav with major funding from The Jewish Federation and The Jewish Community Foundation of the East Bay.

Research has shown that the Jewish learning which takes place in the high school years is crucial to the formation of Jewish identity. Such learning is fostered at Midrasha, which provides a serious academic as well as an important social experience for our students. This dual focus is reflected in our course selections, school structure and special events.

Midrasha is open to any 8th – 12th grade student in the East Bay Jewish community with or without previous religious school experience or synagogue affiliation. We encourage our students to not only come on Sunday but to attend our Monday midweek text class, as well as classes of the other three East Bay Midrashot: in Oakland (Tuesday evening), Contra Costa (Wednesday evening), and Tri-Valley/ Tri-Cities (Sunday evening). Throughout the system teachers are dynamic, charismatic and knowledgeable and “you will find classes that will answer your questions and classes that will question your answers.”

If you have any further questions, either now or at any time during the year, I can be phoned at 843-4667, e-mailed at diane@midrasha.org, or faxed at 843-4642. Questions on financial matters should be directed to Desmid Lyon, desmid@midrasha.org. We look forward to a wonderful school year together.

Sincerely,

Diane Bernbaum
Director, Midrasha

Desmid Lyon
Assistant Director, Midrasha

SUNDAY MORNING CALENDAR 2011-2012 / 5772

*Orientation for 8th graders and new students and parents:
Tuesday, August 30 at 7:30 P.M.*

Sunday morning classes meet from 9:30-12:30

September	11	
	18	
	25	
October	2	
	9	
	16	
	23	
	30	
November	6	Parent / Student Study Brunch
	13	
	20	10/11th Let's Go Israel! Trip Recruitment
		11th/12th Program: "Packing for College"; 11th/12th Shalhevet Recruitment
	27	NO SCHOOL – Thanksgiving
December	4	
	11	9-12 th grade retreat, 8 th grade day program; No Midrasha classes
	18	NO SCHOOL – Winter Break
	25	NO SCHOOL – Winter Break
January	1	NO SCHOOL – Winter Break
	8	
	15	
	22	
	29	
February	5	8-12th grade RETREAT; No Midrasha classes
	12	
	19	NO SCHOOL Presidents' Weekend
	26	Parent/ Teen Communication Workshop (8th grade families); Building Healthy Relationships Workshop (9th grade families)

SUNDAY MORNING CALENDAR 2011-2012 / 5772 (Cont'd)

March	4	
	11	Midra-Shabang
	18	
	25	7th grade Open House
April	1	NO SCHOOL – Spring Break
	8	NO SCHOOL – Spring Break
	15	
	22	8-12th grade RETREAT; No Midrasha classes
	29	
May	6	
	13	
	20	Graduation and last session

Tanach Class with David Henkin

4:15-5:45 pm Mondays, beginning September 12

RETREATS

December 9-11	9-12th grade
February 3-5	8-12th grade
April 20-22	8-12th grade
December 11	8 th grade “Tasty Backward Adventure”

FAMILY EDUCATION DAYS

November 6	Parent/Student Study Brunch
November 20	Israel Trip Recruitment (10 - 11th grade families)
	“Packing for College” (11-12th grade families)
	Shalhevet Recruitment (11 -12th grade families)
February 26	Parent/ Teen Communication (8th grade families) Building Healthy Relationships (9th grade families)

MIDRASHA STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Midrasha provides Jewish learning to high school students in northern Alameda and western Contra Costa counties in a supplementary setting. It offers a broad range of interesting and challenging courses to students with a strong Jewish background and to those with little former training or knowledge—classes ranging from Talmud and Hebrew to Jewish films and drama. The program provides students with the skills and knowledge they will need as committed Jewish adults. Midrasha offers a larger social group of Jewish teenagers than exists at any one synagogue and the opportunity to form lasting friendships. The program provides a warm social environment in the classroom and at retreat weekends. In addition, our faculty provides our students with positive, knowledgeable role models of successful young Jewish adults who are at home in Judaism and the secular world.

Midrasha is an inter-congregational school where members of all congregations feel at home. Midrasha in Berkeley is part of a community system of four supplementary high schools whose teens join together for retreats and other programs. Although our students represent a broad range of religious observance, Kashrut and Shabbat are observed. Midrasha is a communal institution, open to non-synagogue members as well as those affiliated. Financial aid is available to all in need.

ENROLLMENT AND LOCATION

Midrasha is open to all students in 8th through 12th grades. One need not be a member of a congregation or have previous religious school experience to enroll. Sunday morning classes are held at Congregation Beth El, 1301 Oxford Street, Berkeley. The midweek afternoon Tanach class is held at Congregation Beth Israel, 1630 Bancroft Way, Berkeley.

SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

First Hour (9:30-10:20)

Break (10:20-10:40)

Second Hour (10:45-11:35)

Third Hour (11:40-12:30)

THE RETREAT PROGRAM

On retreats students from all four Midrashot come together to learn, explore, celebrate Shabbat, make friends and have fun in a warm, welcoming, pluralistic and inclusive community. Staff members provide a wide variety of Jewish role models and retreats provide a safe environment for teens to explore, experience, and experiment with different ways of being Jewish while tackling the tough questions they face today. The retreats are co-sponsored by the Midrashot in Berkeley, Oakland, Contra Costa, and Tri-Valley/Tri-Cities.

Students from grades 9-12 attend the December retreat. While they are away 8th grade students from all four Midrashot will have a daylong “Tasty, Backwards Adventure: A Sneak-Peak at the Midrasha Retreats with Burritos, Blindfolds and The Beastie Boys.” Students from all grades will be on the February and April retreats. Retreats are held at Camp Newman in Santa Rosa.

When students register for Midrasha Retreats, they are making a commitment to attend weekly Core classes (Gesharim, Etgar, Keshet) and weekend retreats. **There is no prorating of fees for missed retreats. And we are not able to refund your money or prorate your fee even if you anticipate conflicts with sports events, performances or other activities.** You will receive RSVP e-mails before each retreat, reminding you to RSVP by the deadline. Families will receive a Parent Retreat Handbook in their e-mail, which will explain the retreats in more detail. The Handbook will also be posted on our website.

CORE CLASSES

GESHARIM (“Bridges” in Hebrew), the 8th grade Core curriculum, explores selected topics in Jewish ethics, concentrating on: tzedakah, disability, poverty and homelessness, social justice, parent-student communication and obligations, Jews by choice, drugs/alcohol/smoking, death and mourning, animal rights and protecting the earth. Parents are invited to join their teens on February 26 at 9:30 a.m. for a workshop on Parent / Teen Communication.

ETGAR (“Challenge” in Hebrew), the 9th grade Core curriculum, is the study of Jewish identity. Their curriculum units are 1) Who We Are, 2) My Piece of the Puzzle (including comparative Judaism), 3) To Whom We Relate (relationships, friendship, I/Thou, dating, marriage and family) and 4) How We Relate to Others. Parents are invited to join their students on February 26 at 9:30 a.m. for a workshop on Love Shouldn’t Hurt: Building Healthy Relationships.

CORE CLASSES (Cont'd)

KESHER (“Connection” in Hebrew) students are divided by grade. Tenth graders in Keshet Aleph study Israeli history, culture, literature and politics. Eleventh and twelfth graders in Keshet Bet spend one year studying the American Jewish experience (history, demography, sociology, politics, literature and culture) and one year studying Jewish thought and spirituality. While Keshet, the 10th – 12th grade classroom and retreat program, is technically an elective and not a core class, nearly all students choose to participate.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS

MIDWEEK TANACH CLASS

David Henkin

4:15-5:45 p.m., Mondays

Class meets at Congregation Beth Israel, 1630 Bancroft Way, Berkeley

This course is an informal but intensive study group focusing on close thematic readings of the Tanach (Bible) in translation. There will be one theme, announced on the first day of class, that the group will follow through the Tanach. The class begins on September 12 and will continue weekly except for Jewish holidays and school vacations. The exact meeting schedule will be set with the students and teacher.

HADRACHA

Hadracha, our leadership training track, is open to 11th and 12th graders enrolled in Keshet. Participants meet regularly to learn leadership techniques and theory. Students work with the 8th and 9th graders on retreats, first as observers and peer role models, then gradually taking on leadership and programming roles. Enrollment is selective. Hadracha students are chosen and trained to be role models throughout the East Bay Jewish teen community and a significant time commitment is involved.

CONFIRMATION

Tenth graders from Congregation Beth El and Temple Beth Abraham are eligible to participate in their congregation’s Confirmation ceremony. Beth El and Beth Abraham 10th graders will be expected to enroll in a Midrasha class taught by their rabbi. Beth El’s class will be taught Sunday mornings, 3rd hour, during the entire year at Midrasha in Berkeley and Beth Abraham’s will be taught Tuesday evenings at Midrasha in Oakland during the second semester. Students wishing to participate should contact their congregational rabbi to learn further details.

ABRAHAM’S VISION

Open to 10-12th graders, this Inter-Group Muslim and Jewish Conflict Transformation Program combines class learning, group process sessions and field trips with students from an Islamic school to create an environment where students learn with and from the “other.” Further information on this program is found at www.abrahamsvision.org. There is an additional \$200 fee for this course to pay for the many field trips, extra food and other outside activities.

FEE SCHEDULE 2011-2012 (Cont'd)

There is a sibling discount of \$30 for the 2nd or 3rd Midrasha in Berkeley student concurrently enrolled from the same family.

Please contact the Midrasha Assistant Director, Desmid Lyon, desmid@midrasha.org or 510-843-4667, with any questions on the above fees or if you need to set up a payment plan or request a financial aid application.

We ask that your check accompany your registration form, made payable to MIDRASHA. Tuition fees listed above cover both Sunday classes and retreats.

Please make sure that the student's name is marked on the check.

EXPLANATION OF FEES

Midrasha is a community school. Each sponsoring synagogue pays a set amount per student to fulfill its institutional responsibility to support Midrasha. In addition, a substantial part of our operating budget comes directly from the Jewish Federation and the Jewish Community Foundation of the East Bay. Since synagogues contribute financially towards each student's education at Midrasha, synagogue members pay a tuition lower than that of unaffiliated families. The unaffiliated fee represents the amount we would have received from a synagogue if the family were affiliated.

Fees are NOT prorated for missed retreats.

LATE FEE: In an effort to eliminate first day confusion, there will be a \$25 late fee assessed to any family whose registration materials and first payment have not arrived at the Midrasha office by September 1, 2011.

Please note that any student attending Midrasha for five sessions is liable for tuition for the entire year. If you are unsure about your participation in the program, feel free to come and see what it's like for four weeks. However, please fill out all registration materials even if you are just "trying it out." We are required to have emergency contact information and signatures for every student who is onsite.

Note that due to IRS regulations we CANNOT accept any tuition check which says "donation" anywhere on the check. Any check containing tuition only, or tuition and a donation, which is marked "donation", will be mailed back to you with a request for a new check. Please save us the cost of mailing your check back to you and do not write the word "donation" anywhere on your tuition check. If your check includes tuition in full plus a donation (but is NOT marked donation), or if you send us a separate donation check, we will send you a tax receipt in the mail for the donation amount.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

REACHING US

The Midrasha office, as well as our Sunday morning program, is housed at 1301 Oxford Street, Berkeley, CA 94709. Our phone number is (510) 843-4667. Our fax number is (510) 843-4642. Our e-mail address is diane@midrasha.org and for financial questions, desmid@midrasha.org. We send out frequent updates and announcements via e-mail, including separate weekly announcements, usually on Thursdays, to both parents and students. Weekly announcements are also posted on the Midrasha website. Please print your e-address clearly on your registration form. Since the vast majority of families are on-line, we often use e-mail as our only means of communication. Please make every effort to update us with accurate e-addresses and if you don't have one, ask a friend to alert you to any important announcements. Please also make sure Midrasha e-mail is not getting caught in your spam filter.

MIDRASHA WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK

Check out our website at www.midrasha.org. We update it frequently and post the weekly parent and students announcements on the site. If you can't find what you're looking for, let us know so we can add it to the website. We also have a Facebook page called Midrasha in Berkeley. Please find it and "like" it so you'll know when we have new posts.

REGISTRATION AND CLASS CHOICE

If you are receiving this handbook, you have probably already enrolled your student at Midrasha. Keep in mind that some students decide on courses based on subject matter and some by the teacher. (Choosing classes solely because a friend is in the class, is probably the least effective way to ensure that students will enjoy the course!) New students may want to consult with returning students. Although there is room for everyone at Midrasha, space in courses is filled on a first-come, first-served basis, so it is to your advantage to return your registration form as soon as possible. If your child is unhappy in a class, encourage them to talk to the Director to switch into a class they will enjoy more.

PARENT HELP

Included in the registration material is a parent survey to indicate the skills and talents parents and teens can share with Midrasha, including social action through our homeless meal program. Midrasha continues to be grateful for the generosity of its parent volunteers who help make the program run so smoothly. Weekly e-mails often contain volunteer opportunities.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (Cont'd)

JOB BANK

Midrasha publishes a list of students who are available to do various jobs such as baby-sitting, tutoring, party help, yard, computer, or office work, pet sitting, sukkah building, lifting and moving or community service. If a student is interested in having his or her name listed as available to perform these services, please fill out that section on the registration form. Copies of the job bank are given to anyone requesting them. Our job bank has become very popular, particularly among parents looking for babysitters. It pays to sign up.

SPECIAL NEEDS

Midrasha seeks to accommodate a diverse student body. If your student has physical, emotional or educational special needs, please speak with the Midrasha Director. Because there are always many choices each hour, both in terms of instructors and courses, we can help you choose the most appropriate one for your student. We are offering a new class created for those with special needs called She'arim: Gateway to Midrasha, funded by a micro-grant from the Jewish Federation. For additional information, you may also contact Elana Naftalin-Kelman, Director of Special Education at The Jewish Federation, 318-6426.

APPLYING TO COLLEGE AND FOR JOBS

The Director of Midrasha provides letters of recommendation to all seniors to add to their college applications and to students and graduates applying for jobs. While some students think that attendance at Midrasha might interfere with time doing homework, those who attend find that, on the contrary, their attendance at Midrasha is impressive on their college applications and is often the basis for their college essays.

CLASS PASSES AND VISITOR PASSES

We have a liberal class change policy, when adhering to the rules; however, Midrasha has a strict policy that teachers NOT allow students in their rooms who are not on their rosters without a "class change slip" from the office. If a student does not like the class they have chosen, they should go to the office to discuss changing it. All visitors to Midrasha must stop in the office for a visitor pass.

SIGNING OUT

Any student who leaves Midrasha before 12:30 dismissal must sign out in the Midrasha office.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In the event of a severe catastrophe, please pick up your son/daughter as soon as possible. Students providing their own transportation will be asked to sign out before they leave. Any student not called for after a reasonable amount of time will go to the home of the Director.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (Cont'd)

TRAFFIC PATTERNS AND CAR POOLS

These Traffic and Parking Rules are designed to provide a safe environment for everyone, maximize pedestrian and vehicle safety, and to minimize vehicle congestion, queuing, and parking on public streets by vehicles associated with Beth El. Keep parking spaces on Oxford and Spruce Streets available for neighborhood use. Please promote respectful driving and parking practices.

General Beth El Parking and Traffic Rules

1. Please note that Berkeley Police will issue citations for traffic and parking violations.
2. The driveway is one-way eastbound.
3. When entering the driveway, you must be headed northbound on Oxford, turning right (east) into Beth El. Left turns are not permitted into the Beth El driveway.
4. When exiting the driveway, all cars must turn right (south) onto Spruce.
5. California Vehicle Driving Code and/or Beth El policy prohibit the following actions:
 - a Double parking in our neighborhood
 - b Parking in a red zone
 - c Blocking neighbors' driveways, even "just for a minute or two,"
 - d Making U-turns in the street or in neighbors' driveways
 - e Honking horns in and around our property, except in emergency.

Specific Traffic Rules for Midrasha

1. Form or join a carpool. If you phone the Midrasha office, we will provide you with a list of families in your area.
2. Please make a meeting place to pick up your student or carpool somewhere other than right in front of the building. Choose a spot a few blocks away.
3. Drop-off students along the Beth El driveway, pulling forward as far as possible.
4. For pick-up, students should wait for pick-up along the Beth El driveway. Always pull to the right to stop so that others can pass.
5. Students who drive should park in the Computer Courage parking lot on the corner of Rose and Shattuck or in the underground garage at Safeway (both are free to Beth El / Midrasha users). Students who drive - please provide rides to other students if you can LEGALLY do so.

If you have any questions about the Traffic and Parking Rules, please contact Norm Frankel, the Beth El Executive Director at 510-848-3988, Ext. 212.

SCHOOL STRUCTURE

BREAK AND BREAKFAST

For 10 minutes before Midrasha begins, students can purchase baguettes, donuts, bagels and drinks. This gives students a chance to grab a bite to eat, see friends and get to class on time. There is also a 20-minute break between first and second periods where students can socialize and snack. All food on sale and food at all Midrasha functions is Kosher. During break students may participate in making sandwiches for the homeless or just “hanging out”. Students may not leave school grounds during the break.

ATTENDANCE

Parents often ask how they can help with the school. Here’s how: Encourage good attendance and promptness. We urge you to help create the proper learning environment by making sure your children come promptly by 9:30 a.m. and maintain excellent attendance. When teachers are able to teach a consistent group of students, classes are more enjoyable for everyone. Much of what constitutes a rich Jewish education consists of the acquisition of value concepts and language skills, requiring the interchange that takes place in the classroom. Therefore consistent attendance is very important.

TZEDAKAH

Midrasha is committed to Tikkun Olam (repairing the world). Teachers collect tzedakah at the beginning of the first hour class. At the end of the year each class decides how to allocate the funds it has raised. Last year’s tzedakah went to Heifer International, Kiva Club, Wilderness Society, Grassroots Soccer, and American Cancer Society.

PARENT EDUCATION

PARENT/STUDENT BRUNCH

On November 6 we will hold our annual parent-student brunch during regular school hours, 9:30 – 12:30. The morning will consist of a brunch and classes with our faculty. This is an excellent opportunity to study as a family and meet the Midrasha teachers.

FAMILY WORKSHOPS

Parents and teens will have workshops on Parent Teen Communication (8th grade, February 26), Building Healthy Relationships (9th grade, February 26), and Jewish issues to consider in preparing to leave for college (11th and 12th grade, December 4).

MIDRASHA PROJECTS AND SOCIAL ACTION

MONTHLY HOMELESS DINNERS

Midrasha is committed to helping the community by preparing and serving dinner on the first Wednesday, third Tuesday and fourth Thursday night of each month at the men's shelter run by the City of Berkeley. We need volunteers to assist in shopping, cooking and serving. This is a perfect family activity. If you can't come to the shelter, consider baking cookies at home. We are also always in need of donations to underwrite this activity. This project is coordinated entirely by Midrasha students. Scheduling questions should be directed to Dina Blanter, dblanter@college-prep.org, (510) 816-0628.

SANDWICHES AT BREAK

Each Sunday Midrasha students prepare sandwiches during break, which are delivered by volunteer parents to a local shelter.

SUPPORT-A-FAMILY

Midrasha participates in a program to support one or more needy families with Chanukah gifts through Shalom Bayit. This is organized by Midrasha students or parents.

OPPORTUNITIES TO FULFILL COMMUNITY SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

Whether it's cooking at a shelter, tutoring reading or providing holiday gifts for the needy, Midrasha provides various ways to fulfill community service obligations at our students' secular schools. Just ask the Midrasha office to sign off when students volunteer through one of our activities.

JEWISH COALITION FOR LITERACY

Midrasha families have the opportunity to volunteer through the Jewish Coalition for Literacy. JCL tutoring emphasizes reading aloud, comprehension and developing a mentoring relationship with the student, helping on a one-to-one basis, an hour a week in the Berkeley schools. Tutors can be adults, teens 16 and older or even younger family members if accompanied by a parent. There is a two-and-a-half hour training session for all tutors. Being a tutor requires a commitment of a semester, although a yearlong commitment is preferable. If you have more questions about this program, visit the JCL website at www.jclread.org or contact Helene Tinkler, helene@jfed.org, 839-2900 ext. 272.

FUNDRAISING

ANNUAL APPEAL

Each fall Midrasha mails out an Annual Appeal. This brings in much-needed and much-appreciated support. We have tax exempt 501 (c) 3 nonprofit status and appreciate any donations made. We are grateful that many people choose to send in contributions to commemorate happy and sad occasions during the year. You can also donate on-line by going to our website, www.midrasha.org and clicking on the “Donate Now” button.

MIDRA-SHABANG

Although we are delighted with the funds raised through our Annual Appeal, we find that we need to raise extra money for our scholarship fund through our annual Midra-Shabang. This event combines a live and a silent auction with an evening of good food and fun and will be held on Sunday, March 11 at Congregation Beth El. Treat yourself to an enjoyable evening out and support Midrasha as well....and let us know beforehand if you have goods or services to donate.

THE REBECCA FEILER MEMORIAL MIDRASHA DIRECTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

The family of Rebecca Feiler z"l, Midrasha Class of 2000, in appreciation to Midrasha and the Midrasha community, initiated a memorial fund to be used as a “Midrasha Director’s Discretionary Fund.” This fund is to be used at the discretion of the Midrasha director to support the needs of the program or to fill other needs of the Midrasha community and to provide indirect scholarship assistance to Midrasha students. Contributions are welcomed.

WE NOW TAKE CARS

Midrasha would be happy to accept your used cars in exchange for a tax deduction. Please call the Midrasha office if you have a car we could have.

GRANTS

We are very pleased and thankful to be the recipient of several very generous grants. The Jewish Federation and The Jewish Community Foundation of the East Bay provide much needed funds for operations. Sinai Memorial Chapel and many family foundations also generously help support our program. This year we also have a Special Needs Micro-Grant from the Jewish Federation to support our Chaverim program.

TRIPS AND ISRAEL OPPORTUNITIES

LET'S GO ISRAEL! AND OTHER SUMMER TRIPS

Each year many of our students, at the end of their tenth or eleventh grade year, travel to Israel with our community trip, Let's Go Israel!, sponsored by the Jewish Federation of the East Bay. In addition to the community trip, there are a variety of other summer trips for teenagers available. Midrasha encourages its students to participate in any of them. A detailed list of trips available can be obtained from the Midrasha office or from Loal Isaacs, the leader of the Let's Go Israel! trip. They will be at Midrasha on November 20th to talk to 10th and 11th graders and their parents. They can be reached via email at elad@jfed.org 318-6455 or loal@jfed.org 318-6467.

SHALHEVET

Shalhevet ("flame" in Hebrew) is an experiential learning opportunity for Bay Area 10th and 11th graders that includes a 2-week trip to Poland and Israel with a local Holocaust survivor in the spring. Beginning in January students participate in classes before and after the trip, studying European Jewish history, the Holocaust and Israel. Shalhevet is a program of the Bureau of Jewish Education. For interest and questions go to http://www.bjesf.org/teensnav_shalhevet.htm. As with all Midrasha programs, financial aid is available.

POST HIGH SCHOOL IN ISRAEL

Each year many of our Midrasha students elect to spend the year following their high school graduation studying in Israel. There are scholarship grants available, including the Irving and Shirley Fields Fund which is especially for graduates of Midrasha in Berkeley. For a list of possible opportunities, go to www.masaisrael.org.

BRONFMAN FELLOWSHIP

The Bronfman Fellowship is a five-week, all-expenses-paid intense study trip to Israel for students during the summer between their 11th and 12th grades. Only 26 students are selected nationally each year, but Midrasha has been fortunate to have a Fellow in almost every year of the program. Juniors seeking more information should contact the office or board chair Yossi Fendel, a past Fellow.

JEWISH SUMMER OPPORTUNITIES

The Midrasha office annually compiles a list of local and national opportunities for Jewish teens which is posted on our website and available in hard copy as well.

MIDRASHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Midrasha is governed by a Board of Directors, which is comprised of representatives from our partner synagogues, our faculty, our student body and the community. Questions about the Board should be directed to Yossi Fendel, Board Chair, joefendel@hotmail.com. As of press time the members of our 2011-2012 Board of Directors are:

YOSSI FENDEL, Chair, is a Midrasha alumnus, class of 1991 and for 12 years served on the faculty. He represents Congregation Netivot Shalom.

RIVKA GREENBERG is the parent of three daughters who have graduated from Midrasha. She represents Congregation Netivot Shalom.

LILY HALEM is a former member of the Midrasha faculty.

AARON LEVI is a former member of the Midrasha faculty.

ANNA MARTIN, a Midrasha alumna from the class of 2000, is the faculty representative to the Board of Directors.

ARIELLA NECKRITZ is a student representative to the Board.

LISA NELSON is the parent of one son who has graduated from Midrasha and another who is a current student. She represents Congregation Beth El.

MAYA PRAGER is a student representative to the Board.

BONNIE RODITTI is the parent of a son at Midrasha and she represents Congregation Beth El.

BARRIE ROKEACH is the parent of one son who graduated from Midrasha, one son who is a former student and two daughters who are current Midrasha students. He represents Congregation Beth El.

JAN SCHMUCKLER is the parent of a son and a daughter who are Midrasha graduates.

BEN SHEMUEL, Secretary, is the parent of a son who is a Midrasha graduate.

MARIANNE SMITH is the parent of a daughter who is a Midrasha graduate. She represents Congregation Netivot Shalom.

MIDRASHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

VICKI SOMMER is the parent of a son who is a Midrasha graduate and a daughter who is a current student. She represents Congregation Netivot Shalom.

HOWARD ZANGWILL, Treasurer, is the parent of two daughters who are Midrasha graduates and another who is a current student. He represents Temple Beth Abraham.

MIDRASHA FACULTY

ERICA CROWELL ALTOBELLI begins her twenty-second year at Midrasha. She is a clinical social worker and has her M.S.W. from U.C. Berkeley and her M.A. in sociology with a specialization in religion from U.C. Davis where she also received her B.A. She teaches behavioral science at Santa Rosa Junior College.

ERICA FINK has a B.F.A. from the School of Art and Design at the University of Michigan. Besides being a painter, she is also in an indie rock band.

DAVID HENKIN begins his twenty-fourth year of teaching at Midrasha. He is a professor of history at U.C. Berkeley. He received his Ph.D. in American History from U.C. Berkeley and B.A. from Yale University. He is a co-founder of the Mission Minyan.

NOEMI HOLLANDER, a Midrasha alumna, begins her fourth year teaching at Midrasha. She holds a degree in comparative literature from Barnard College and has spent her time since then in religious education and publishing. She is the 2009 staff recipient of the U.C. Berkeley Chancellor's Award in Public Service and was selected to attend the 2010 Institute for Educators at the Jewish Women's Archive in Boston.

RABBI YOEL KAHN, rabbi at Congregation Beth El, is a graduate of U.C. Berkeley. He was ordained at Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion and has a Ph.D. from the Center for Jewish Studies at the Graduate Theological Union.

SACHA J. KOPIN begins her fourteenth year teaching at Midrasha in Berkeley and her twentieth in the Midrasha system. She has served as Director of Midrasha in Contra Costa and of Beth Chaim Religious School in Danville. She is a graduate of U.C.L.A. with a B.A. in Psychology, has done graduate work in Judaic Studies at the Graduate Theological Union, is a former Ti-ke-a Fellow, was awarded the 2005 Grinspoon-Steinhardt Award for Excellence in Jewish Education, is a 2007 winner of the Helen Diller Family Award for Excellence in Jewish Education, was an MTEI fellow, and was staff on the 2008 Shalhevet trip to Poland and Israel.

MIDRASHA FACULTY

OREN KROLL-ZELDIN begins his third year teaching the Abraham's Vision Unity Program at Midrasha. He received his B.A. in Religious Studies and Philosophy from Skidmore College and is currently a PhD student in Social and Cultural Anthropology at the California Institute of Integral Studies where he recently received his M.A.

ANNA MARTIN, a Midrasha alumna, begins her fourth year at Midrasha in Berkeley and her fifth teaching in the Midrasha system. She holds a B.A. in Comparative Literature from Barnard College and a teaching credential from San Jose State University. She is an instructional coach at a middle school in San Jose, has staffed the Let's Go Israel! trip and in 2010 studied on a Fulbright Fellowship in Morocco.

BETH MEDANIK-BLUM a Midrasha alumna, begins her second year at Midrasha. She graduated from the University of Washington with a B.A. in both International Studies and American Ethnic Studies. She also studied at the University of Virginia's Semester at Sea and the Child & Family Health International Women's Reproductive Health Program in Mexico. Her day job is working at Planned Parenthood.

ILAN PERSING begins his second year at Midrasha. He has a B.A. in Communications and a Film Studies Certificate from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He also teaches at Midrasha in Oakland. Ilan grew up in both Haifa and Boston.

WAAFA SABIL has undergraduate degrees from the University of Paris VI and the University of Montreal. She received an M.A. in Architecture from the Georgia Institute of Technology. She is a professional architect with a diverse portfolio ranging from affordable housing projects to community centers and retail stores.

MUNI SCHWEIG begins his eleventh year at Midrasha. He has a B.A. from U.C. Berkeley in Comparative Literature, an M.A. from the Hebrew University in Jewish Civilization and has been a student in the Joint Doctoral Program in Jewish Studies of U.C. Berkeley and the Graduate Theological Union.

DAY SCHILDKRET begins his fourth year teaching at Midrasha in Berkeley. He has a B.A. in Judaic Studies and Political Science from Binghamton University and has studied at Hebrew University in Jerusalem and the Art Student League in New York. He is the Director of Tri – Valley / Tri – Cities Midrasha.

LARA WALKLET completed her B.A. in Jewish Studies from McGill University, with minors in Linguistics and Middle Eastern Language [Hebrew and Arabic]. She recently returned to Berkeley after finishing her M.A. in Jewish Education from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. She is a Midrasha alumna and begins her second year on the faculty.

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DESMID LYON, Midrasha's Assistant Director, has a B.A. in Near Eastern Studies and an M.S.W., both from U.C. Berkeley. She begins her fourteenth year at Midrasha and is the parent of four Midrasha graduates.

DIANE BERNBAUM begins her thirty-first year as director of Midrasha. She graduated from Brandeis University majoring in Near East and Judaic Studies and in History and has a Master of Arts in Teaching from the Harvard University School of Education.

MIDRASHA DIRECTORY

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