

Einat Kramer 32, Founding Director of *Jewish Nature*, Eschar, Lower Galilee



“‘Jewish Sustainability’ is my definition of 21st century Zionism. It speaks of peoplehood, Tikkun Olam, and a common agenda that will strengthen all of us.”

Einat Kramer is a computer engineer by profession. But the “links” she has decided to tackle are human, not cyber. Growing up in a conventional “national religious” home in Rehovot, Einat’s boundless energy and strong moral compass directed her to environmental causes. “We were extreme Greens,” she smiles, when remembering her environmentally active days at Ben Gurion University.

Five years ago, Einat and her husband Shmulik joined a group of young families interested in building an ecological community. Two years ago they realized their dream with 12 other families in Eschar, a religiously mixed Galilee village. Today the project boasts 40 families.

Einat reasons that Judaism must project flexibility. “Much of Orthodoxy today is occupied with defining and refining the halakhic “niche,” leaving more and more people out of the framework. Halakhah does not need to divide. It is not the only measurement of your Judaism,” she explains.

Einat founded *Jewish Nature* in 2010, partially in response to “the post-modern disconnect” she feels is threatening Israel and the western world. She also feels that “Jewish Environmentalism” can restore the spiritual and ecological balance we all are searching for. “We are no longer connected to the ground we walk on, or the sky above us; neither to God nor his heavens. I maintain that my identity as a Jew and my environmental activism are one integral whole. This is true ‘Jewish Sustainability,’” she says.

Lacking specific Jewish knowledge for her imposing agenda, Einat turned to Schechter and its M.A. program. “Schechter was an amazing experience. The faculty allowed me to build a special curriculum around ecology and Judaism and they encouraged me in my research,” she says.

Jewish Nature has become Einat’s “fourth baby” (She is a mother to three, all under the age of 5!) The organization has created leadership training seminars, a special program for Shabbat Noah, curricula for TAL schools and community center-based learning programs.

“Our work is about bringing Jews from all backgrounds together, focused on a common goal and passion. Environmental awareness has become a crucial element of Judaism and we are getting this message out.”

Amnon Magid 35, Program Director



“I am a secular Jew who finds pleasure in a page of Talmud. The learning process brings to bear a complexity of thought and richness in detail that can approach the spiritual.”

Critical thinking and values education. These two principles have guided Amnon Magid for as long as he can remember. He lives in an urban kibbutz; works to bring white-collar professionals to the classroom for mentoring with children from weak socio-economic backgrounds; and most recently, has devised a current-events curriculum for schools and educators that stresses individual thought, while employing strategies to defuse the “hot topic” potential for a blow-up.

of *A Different Lesson*, Bet Shemesh

Judaism plays a critical role in determining both Amnon's lesson plans and his "long view of life." "I am a secular Jew," he states simply. "Secular Judaism is a way of life that seeks out meaning through our Jewish roots and sources and is crafted through a community-based world view and Tikun Olam," explains Amnon.

"In my current events program, I rely heavily on what I call 'Israel' sources, which are in fact, 'Jewish sources.' But today, in Israel's politically charged climate, 'creative language' can help bridge cultural divides," he explains with a smile.

Amnon is currently studying Jewish Education and Midrash at Schechter. "I wanted to enhance my independent study of Jewish sources. I knew that I wanted an academic environment whose curriculum could augment program and community building. I found all this and more at Schechter."

Amnon's heightened social consciousness began at a young age. Coming from the central Negev town of Arad, he "grew up" in Israel's labor youth group, Ha'Noar Ha'Oved V'Halomed. He stayed with the movement through the army and beyond, actively working as a youth counselor and program coordinator. A seminal moment came for him when reading a text by one of the pioneers of modern Hebrew literature - Yosef Haim Brenner.

"I remember thinking 'this is a text full of hidden meaning and ties to Jewish sources.' I have always had a love affair with language, linguistics and the relationship between words and phrases. Here I was, only getting half of what this titan of Jewish/Zionist thought had to say. I was determined to open up that second half of the world that had not existed for me."

Dafna Garfunkel 48, Teacher, *Hand in Hand* Bi-Lingual School, Jerusalem



"I often thought, 'my father built this country. What is left for me to do?' I too want to contribute in a significant way."

Dafna Garfunkel's 6th grade class is not your standard Jerusalem fare. It is multicultural and bi-lingual, made up of an equal number of Jewish Israelis and Muslim and Christian Arabs. All classes are taught in Hebrew and Arabic. Two teachers lead each class: a Jewish Israeli and an Arab Israeli. Dafna works in tandem with her counterpart, Ulfat, from the Jerusalem neighborhood of Bet Safafa.

For Dafna, Arabic is a familiar sound. Her grandfather rode into Jerusalem on a mule in 1917, a widower from

Iraq with three children left motherless. Her father, born in Jerusalem in 1925 to a second wife from Saloniki, grew up in a mixed neighborhood of Arabs and Jews near Yemin Moshe.

"We learned Arabic in 7th grade, but the sub-text was 'know your enemy.' My father was a moderate man. His creed was always, 'know your neighbor.'"

Dafna, taking her father's lead, enrolled in a one-year course on co-existence offered by the David Yellin Teacher's Seminary, where she also received her degree in education years earlier. In 2005, a teaching position opened up at *Hand in Hand*. She grabbed the opportunity.

"Children in grades 1 through 3 learn comparative religion together, based on the Five Books of Moses. In fourth grade, they split up according to their religion," she explains.

"In this environment of sharing cultures, knowledge of Judaism becomes even more important for the Jewish kids." It was important for Dafna to teach Judaism to her Jewish students in a meaningful way. "Many of the parents come from a very ideological place where co-existence and equality, if given the chance, could co-opt their Jewish identity. I wanted to bring the two together." The M.A. degree she earned at Schechter gave her the credibility and the credentials to impart Jewish knowledge coming from a place "that encouraged biblical criticism and the right to question and probe."

"I see both *Hand in Hand* and Schechter as true educational models in Israel. They don't *talk* co-existence, they *live* it, and most importantly, share it with all willing to take."

The Graduate School

Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies

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Academic News

■ **Growth:** Schechter, for the 3rd consecutive year, runs the largest M.A. program in Jewish Studies in Israel with students coming from over 150 cities and towns throughout Israel.

■ **Record Numbers:** Schechter recruited 140 new M.A. students in 2009, bringing the total number of M.A. students to 613.

■ **New Track:** Hebrew and Jewish Literature, the 15th M.A. track at Schechter, opened in 2009-10, with 10 first-year students enrolled in the program.

■ **New Course:** *Jewish Sources and Environmental Ethics*, taught by Schechter graduate Dr. Jeremy Benstein, Associate Director of the Heschel Center for Environmental Leadership, and sponsored by the JNF and Masorti Olami.

■ **Library Acquisitions:** The libraries of **Rabbi Moshe Sachs z"l**, donated by his son, Noam Zion; **Dr. Aryeh Geiger z"l**, donated by Tanya Geiger | Books from the libraries of **Prof. Moshe Greenberg z"l**, donated by his wife, Hava; **Bernard White z"l**, donated by Judy White; **Prof. Shalom Paul; Colette Avital; Nitza Elazara** | Fall 2010: **Dr. Ora Lifshitz** Collection of

20,000 volumes on the Bible and the Ancient Near East

■ **Looking Ahead:** Schechter will co-sponsor: a conference on *Students Against the Holocaust: Jewish and Christian Seminary Students who Spoke Out Against the Nazi Genocide*, with JTS, UTS, Targum Shlishi and Columbia University, November 10, 2010, New York City; an international conference on *The Actuality of Sacrifice* with Bar Ilan University, the University of Tilburg and Protestant Theological University, the Netherlands, at Schechter and Bar Ilan University, January 2010.

FOCUS ON: Handmade Midrash in the Artist's Home staged an impressive art exhibit at Schechter in January 2010. Nine students, together with their mentor and teacher, **Dr. Jo Milgrom**, studied and created works that visually depicted their personal dialogue with Biblical sources.

Alumni News

Alumni newsletter published twice a year; 2nd Alumni Conference held at Schechter in December 2009 with **Prof. Eliezer Schweid**, 60 graduates in attendance; 3rd Alumni conference held

in May 2010 with **Prof. Jonathan Sarna** and **Jacky Levy**; alumni development campaign launched; plans underway to develop joint learning between Schechter graduates and Schechter Batei Midrash.

Dear Prof. Golinkin and Faculty,

I am sure that I made the right decision coming to Schechter. I even convinced my wife, Orna to join me. Schechter's approach to Jewish study and the warm environment in which we learned touched me profoundly. I am telling all my colleagues about Schechter.

David Vaknin, Director, Municipal Sport Center, Tel Aviv

Faculty News

Kekst Faculty Fellowship

The Kekst Fellow for 2009-11 is **Prof. Guy Miron**, Associate Prof. of Modern Jewish History at Schechter and leading expert on German Jewry before the Holocaust.

■ **Promotions** **Prof. Guy Miron** (Modern Jewish History) and **Prof. Yossi Turner** (Jewish Thought) from Senior Lecturer to Associate Professor; **Dr. Doron Bar** to Senior Lecturer in Land of Israel Studies; **Dr. David Frankel** to Senior Lecturer in Bible.



Numbers 2009-10

- 613 students
- 75 faculty members
- 15 interdisciplinary M.A. tracks of Jewish Studies
- 81 graduates in 2009 for a total of 995 graduates since 1988
- 11 books published
- 9 academic conferences sponsored or co-sponsored





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1. 2009 Schechter graduation ceremony 2. Dr. Jo Milgrom (second from right) with students at a Handmade Midrash exhibition of student works 3. Liebhaber Prize recipients Shlomo Gronich (center) and Jacky Levy (right) with Prof. David Golinkin 4. Dean of the Graduate School, Prof. Renée Levine Melammed 5. Prof. Jonathan Sarna speaking to the faculty 6. Kekst Fellow Prof. Guy Miron 7. M.A. students in the library 8. Graduates of the Judaism and the Arts M.A. track with advisors (far left and far right) Dr. Tamar Kadarri and Dr. Shula Laderman

Faculty Feted Dr. Michal Govrin was selected to attend the Paris Writers' Salon of France's 60 best writers and the world's 30 best writers, March 2010; Kekst Fellow Prof. Guy Miron received an impressive grant from the Israel Science Foundation for his book *The Waning of Emancipation - Historical Memory Under the Impact of Fascism: Germany, France and Hungary*; Dr. Yaron Harel received the Shazar Prize for Research on the History of Israel, October 2009.

FOCUS ON: The Marc and Henia z"l Liebhaber Prize for Religious Tolerance in Israel was conferred upon by well-known Israeli artists, singer Shlomo Gronich and media personality Jacky Levy. The two, who bring Israelis together through song and comedy, gave a memorable performance at the ceremony held in Jerusalem on December 13, 2009.

Scholarship News

■ **The Judge Simon Rifkind and Harry Meresman Scholarships for Outstanding Scholarship and Commitment to Jewish Pluralism** were awarded to eight graduates at the Schechter Commencement Exercises in December 2009.

■ **Prof. Alice Shalvi Scholarships for Outstanding Students in Gender**

Studies and Judaism and the Arts were awarded to two top students in the field at the graduation ceremony.

■ **The Sidney Frank Foundation Scholarships in Women's and Gender Studies** were awarded to two exceptional students in the field at the graduation ceremony

■ **The Grinspoon Scholarships for M.A. Students in the TALI Leadership Program** were awarded to 13 TALI teachers and principals of merit.

■ **Scholarships for Students from Development Towns and Underprivileged Neighborhoods** allowed 43 students to study at Schechter in 2009-10. Among these students are five from the Ethiopian community and one new immigrant from the FSU.

In Memoriam

Schechter mourns the loss of two beloved colleagues, giants in the field of modern Bible Studies, Prof. Moshe Greenberg z"l and Prof. Jacob Milgrom z"l. Both men made a tremendous contribution to the academic life at Schechter for many years through their teaching and as members of Schechter's Academic Senate. Their scholarship and humanity will be sorely missed.

Research Institutes

The Center for Judaism and the Arts was established in 2001 for the enrichment of educational and cultural life in Israel and includes the M.A. track in Judaism and the Arts and TALI's Visual Midrash Electronic Archive which went "live" in 2009 and has met with positive feedback from educators and students around the world. (see TALI, p. 24)

The Center for Women in Jewish Law was established in 1999 in order to enable women rabbis to research, publish and educate the public on the rights of women from the perspective of Jewish Law. Its publications include *Jewish Law Watch*; *Za'akat Dalot (The Cry of the Wretched)*; *Halakhic Solutions for the Agunot of our Time*; *To Learn and To Teach*; and *Ask the Rabbi*, a collection of responsa culled from the *Ask the Rabbi* website.

The Institute of Applied Halakhah was founded in 1997 in order to publish a library of Halakhic literature in Hebrew, English, and Russian for Jews throughout the world. It has to date published 22 volumes on Halakhah and related topics.

Schechter Scholarship for the Community

Conferences and Lectures Sponsored by Schechter

Brain Research and Jewish Law, a symposium in conjunction with the Ministry of Science, June 2010

Closing Faculty Study Evening, *The Future of American Judaism in the 21st Century*, Prof. Jonathan Sarna, June 2010

Coercion and Consent in the Marriage of Minors in Ashkenaz in the Middle Ages, Meira Schnitzer-Maimon, May 2010

Development of Belief in the Trans-Migration of the Soul, Dr. Doron Danino, Bar Ilan University, May 2010

Remembering the Shoah: From a Literary Perspective, Dr. David Roskies, JTS, May 2010

Unique Aspects of the Commentaries of the Book of Chronicles, Dr. Eran Weisel, Hebrew University, May 2010

Annual Limmud in Memory of Rabbi David Clayman z"l, English, Prof. Jonathan Sarna; Hebrew, Jacky Levy, May 2010

The Tower of Babel: Ancient Story with a Modern Message, Dr. Zvi Shimon, Bar Ilan University, April 2010

Life and Death in Ecclesiastes, Dr. Shirley Natan Yulzary, Open University, April 2010

27th Annual Study Evening in memory of Prof. Saul Lieberman, The Schocken Institute, March 2010

"Cinema Get" on Agunot and Study Session, Rabbi Diana Villa, March 2010

Urban Planning and Preservation in Jerusalem, Study evening in memory of Aryeh Gini z"l, January 2010

Annual Rabbi David Aronson Memorial Symposium on the poetry and philosophy of Prof. A.J. Heschel, Dr. Alexander Even-Chen, January 2010

Schechter Alumni Conference, *The Relationship between Secularism and Religion*, Prof. Eliezer Schweid and Schechter faculty, December 2009

Conservative Judaism: Halakhah, Culture and Sociology, International Conference, Prof. Hanan Alexander, Prof. Arnold Eisen, Prof. David Golinkin, Dr. Guy Miron, Dr. Einat Ramon, December 2009

Job in the Writings of the Sages, Dr. Hananel Mack, Bar Ilan University, December 2009

Who's Afraid of Virginity? Women Write on Femininity, Tamar Mishmar, December 2009

Book launching of *Sabbath Desecrators in the Talmudic Period*, by Dr. Moti Arad, Van Leer Institute, November 2009

FOCUS ON: Jewish Festivals Schechter faculty took part in Jewish learning festivals around the country including *Limmud Galil* (Rosh Hanikra), Dr. Einat Ramon and Rabbi Diana Villa, December 2009; *Sukkot 2009: Hakhel*, Rabbis Diana Villa (Agunot and Women Rabbis) and Hagit Sabag (the Masorti Siddur), Ramat Efal; *Limmud Negev*, Sderot, Rabbi Hagit Sabag; *Gateways (She'arayikh)*, Dr. Sara Strasberg-Dayan.

Conservative Congregations Study with Schechter Best

The Rebecca Goldstein z"l and Rabbi Noah Golinkin z"l Educational Outreach Program enables Schechter lecturers to teach at Masorti synagogues throughout Israel. In 2009-10: Dr. Ari Ackerman, Prof. Renée Levine Melammed, Kehillat Ya'ar Ramot, Jerusalem ■ Dr. Moti Arad, two-part series, Hod V'Hadar, Kfar Saba ■ Prof. David Golinkin, Prof. Moshe Benovitz, Dr. David Frankel, Kehillat Moriah, Haifa ■ Dr. Ari Bursztein, four-part lecture series, Kehillat Ra'anana

Women's Study Day – Record Attendance

440 women – a record-breaking number – attended the 11th annual Masorti Women's Study Day in Jerusalem in June. Coming in busloads from throughout Israel, the women chose from a variety of courses offered in four languages on *Building a Better Self, Community and Nation*. Sponsored by the Schechter Institute, Women's League for Conservative Judaism and the Masorti Movement, and organized by Diane Friedgut, the study also takes place in three locations each February, drawing 400 women. Of special note was the February study in Kibbutz Hanaton which brought 23 young immigrants from the FSU.



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1. NASHIM team, from left: Dr. Shula Reinharz, Prof. Renée Levine Melammed and Debbie Greniman 2. *Memoirs of Graduates of European Rabbinical Seminars* 3. *NASHIM*, Vol. 18 4. *Perspectives on Jewish Law and Contemporary Issues* 5. Women's League Leadership, from left: Janet Tobin, Rita Weintraub, Evelyn Seelig and Cory Schneider 6. Remembering the "Six Million," Yom Hashoah ceremony 7. Jacky Levy, keynote speaker at Rabbi David Clayman z"l Memorial Lecture 8. New immigrants from FSU attend Women's Study Day, Kibbutz Hanaton 9. Dr. Rebecca Cook delivering Yom Hashoah lecture 10. German theology students attend a Schechter lecture 11. Dr. Josh Kulp lectures on *Schechter Haggadah* at Kehillat Ya'ar Ramot, Jerusalem 12. Board Member Yehiel Leket opens conference on Jerusalem Urban Planning 13. Second printings of *The Schechter Haggadah* and *Taking the Plunge*

FOCUS ON: A New Psalm-Weekly Online Commentary Launched

The Schechter Institute is sponsoring a weekly commentary on the Psalms, authored by Rabbi Benjamin Segal, writer, lecturer and former president of the Schechter Institute. Commentaries for all 150 psalms will be published in book form. *A New Psalm*, as well as Schechter's *Responsa in a Moment*, *Faculty Forum*, *Iyunei Shabbat* and *Ask the Rabbi* can be found at www.schechter.edu.

New Books 2009-10

(published by the Schechter Institute or authored by Schechter faculty)

FOCUS ON: The Midrash Project

Through the *Midrash Project*, Schechter is publishing eight critical, user-friendly editions of many midrashim which have never appeared in a modern format. Each midrash will include the text utilizing the best manuscript, selected variant readings, *mesoret hamidrash* referring to all rabbinic parallels and a commentary. Published to date: 3-Volume *Legends of the Jews* (in Hebrew) and *Midrash Shmuel*.

Perspectives on Jewish Law and Contemporary Issues, Rabbi Wayne Allen, Jerusalem: Schechter Institute, 2009

Taking the Plunge, Miriam Berkowitz, 2nd edition, Jerusalem: Schechter Institute

Kuntress Ha-Teshuvot He-hadash:

A Bibliographic Thesaurus of Responsa Literature Published from ca. 1470-2000, Vol. 4, ed. Shmuel Glick, Jerusalem & Ramat-Gan: co-published with Bar Ilan University Law Faculty and the Schocken Institute, 2010, (Hebrew with English summaries)

Ask the Rabbis by Monique Susskind Goldberg and Diana Villa, eds. David Golinkin and Yisrael Warman, Jerusalem: Schechter Institute, 2010

The Schechter Haggadah: Art, History and Commentary, 2nd edition, commentary, Joshua Kulp; illuminations, David Golinkin, Jerusalem: Schechter Institute, 2010

The Student Struggle Against the Holocaust, eds. Rafael Medoff and David Golinkin, Jerusalem and New York: co-published with JTS, David Wyman Center, 2010

Encyclopedia of the Ghettos During the Holocaust, 2 Vol. + DVD, ed. Guy Miron, Jerusalem and NY: Yad Vashem and NYU Press, 2009

NASHIM, A Journal of Jewish Women's Studies and Gender Issues, academic editor, Prof. Renée Levine Melammed, managing editor, Deborah Greniman, a joint publication of the Schechter Institute, Hadassah-Brandeis Institute and Indiana University Press: No. 18, *Iranian Jewish Women*, Consulting Editor: Farideh Dabanin Goldin, Fall 2009; No. 19, *Women and*

Jewish Poetry, Consulting Editor: Kathryn Hellerstein, Spring 2010

Malki Bakodesh, Vol. 2, by Rabbi Hayyim Hirschenson, ed. David Zohar, Jerusalem: co-published with the Hartman Institute, 2010

Memoirs of Graduates of European Rabbinical Seminaries, ed., Assaf Yedidya, Jerusalem: co-published with Carmel Publishers, 2010

FOCUS ON: The Schechter Haggadah

– A Second Printing *The Schechter Haggadah* sold out its first printing of 2500 copies in three months. Authors Dr. Joshua Kulp and Prof. David Golinkin gave pre-Pesach lectures at Kehillat Ya'ar Ramot, Moreshet Avraham and Shevet Achim and The Conservative Yeshiva, Jerusalem; and to Judaism and the Arts M.A. students.

Books to be Published in 2010-11

Esther Rabbah, eds., Yosef Tabori and Arnon Atzmon

Responsa in a Moment, Volume 2, David Golinkin

Responsa of the Vaad Halakhah, Volume 7, eds., Monique Susskind Goldberg and David Golinkin

Megillat Hahatulum, an illuminated Megillah

The Hebrew Writings of Prof. A.J. Heschel, ed., Avraham Shapira and Dror Bondi