

Volume 26 - Number 03 ■ 27 January 2022 ■ 25 Shvat 5782

south african Jewish Report

The source of quality content, news and insights

www.sajr.co.za



Matric Class Of 2021

**TAKING EXCELLENCE
TO ANOTHER LEVEL**

www.kingdavid.org.za



www.kingdavid.org.za
@kingdavidvictorypark

The Matric class of 2021 were hoping for an academic year which was not going to be disrupted by the pandemic to the extent that their Grade 11 year had been. Unfortunately, this was not to be the case as both teaching and assessment programmes had to be re-scheduled and adjusted. But, thanks to the determination of the incredible group of students and the teachers who were completely committed to supporting their students, the year ran to completeness in a typical cycle that was no different to any other year. This Matric group remained optimistic and upbeat no matter what came their way. We celebrate the entire group of students who have all achieved greatness and substantial personal growth through their commitment and dedication to their studies this year. Behind the students there is a dedicated team of exceptional educators who went to great lengths to ensure that everything was thoroughly covered in preparation for the finals. A hallmark of this cohort of students is the depth of their academic success. It is not just something for the top academics to enjoy but evidence can be found of excellence and fantastic achievement throughout the group. A particularly exciting statistic this year is the large number of students who achieved a "full house" characterised by achieving distinctions in every subject that they wrote.

The King David Schools have recently re-launched its Purpose Statement and Values. Amongst the Values of Neshama, Koach, Creativity, Torah & Israel and Community is the important one of Excellence. In the context of a Matric Result, Excellence speaks to each student ensuring that they are the very best version of themselves. They strive for personal best in every one of their subjects. I have never been a Head to chase meaningless lists of subject distinctions simply to show the world how many of these we are able to accumulate in a particular year. For me, what is truly important is the journey that we have been able to take each individual child on throughout their High School career.

"As teachers, it is our responsibility to open a child's world, no matter his or her background, and expose them to the range and variety of contexts and opportunities that exist outside their own world and range of experience. Give their minds an opportunity to explore the seemingly fantastical and alongside that exposure, give them the opportunity and the courage to engage confidently with the unfamiliar and the unknown, applying known concepts to address problems in unknown contexts (Anne Oberholzer - CEO of the Independent Education Board)." This philosophy epitomises our goal of preparing our children to be "ready for life." No matter which direction our matriculants choose to go, whether it be into tertiary study, the world of work or elsewhere, these young men and women have been prepared for their next chapter in life.

The Matric Class have shown themselves to be true "menschen" by insisting that their school celebrate their achievements both collectively and individually. I am of the belief that KD High School Victory Park provided a values-based educational environment that integrates educational studies with good middot (students constantly strive to correct their faults and improve their character) and a desire to make a substantial difference in the world.



Andrew Baker
Principal



www.kingdavid.org.za
www.facebook.com/KDLinksfeld

We are extremely delighted with the magnificent results of our students; this is testament to their tenacity, resilience and most importantly, their commitment to their education. Grade 11 is a year that lays the foundation for the matric examinations and much of their grade 11 year was spent in lockdown. To add to the complexity, their matric year started online. As teachers had to adapt to online teaching, our students had to adapt, and spend hours and hours in front of a screen as opposed to face-to-face learning. To be able to achieve these results, probably one of our best, is phenomenal. The achievements are proof of the professionalism of our teachers, the dedication of our students and the incredible partnership that we have with the parents.

We do not merely measure our successes in terms of distinctions, but rather by the improvement of each individual student, and how impressive it was this year. Some of our students did not believe they could pass, let alone achieve a university entrance. Of our total number of students, 13% were in our Educational Support Programme. These students, who have various barriers to learning, have succeeded to the best of their ability, with nearly all of them passing with a university exemption.

These results reflect the potential of every single student in matric. This was a particularly successful year, with an impressive average of 4 distinctions per student with an astounding 23 students who obtained an average of 90% and above. We also have 5 students who were placed on the IEB Outstanding Achievements List and 5 students who were placed on the IEB Commendable Achievements List, with 39 students placing in the top 1% in individual subjects. Five subjects obtained an average of over 80% (Accounting, Business Studies, French, Hebrew and Information Technology) and an impressive 55% of all papers written, resulted in an A symbol.

Our students reaped the benefits of a privileged education. My sincere wish is that they all go into the world and make their mark as well as a difference.

I wish the matriculants of 2021 everything of the best for the future and look forward to hearing of their further successes.

Lorraine Grage
Principal



russelkaplan rka
auctioneers

19th century
Moreau bronze
bust of a lady
SOLD R12,000



Large Japanese
Shibayama cabinet,
Meiji period
SOLD R20,000



Russian silver and
enamel Kiddush cup
SOLD R16,000



Keith Savel Alexander,
The Fallen General and
His Ruin, oil on canvas
SOLD R400,000



**Art, antiques, objets d'art,
furniture, and jewellery
wanted for forthcoming auctions**

For more information 011 789 7422 • rka@global.co.za • www.rkauctioneers.co.za
Bram Fischer Centre, Lower Ground, 95 Bram Fischer Drive Cnr George Street, Ferndale, 2194

South African Jewish Report

The source of quality content, news and insights

Volume 26 - Number 03 ■ 27 January 2022 ■ 25 Shvat 5782

www.sajr.co.za

Legal amendment puts Lithuanian citizenship in reach

NICOLA MILTZ

Thousands of Litvak Jews around the world stand a much better chance at getting Lithuanian citizenship based on ancestry since the law was amended last week.

A bill to amend Lithuania's Law on Citizenship was unanimously passed in Lithuania's Seimas (parliament) last Thursday, 20 January. It will have far-reaching positive implications for future applicants, many of whom had unsuccessfully tried and lost hope of obtaining citizenship.

This follows a year of extensive lobbying efforts from many quarters. It involved various iterations of a draft bill which was revised and redrafted several times, according to those involved, leading to last week's vote, in which 110 members of parliament from across Lithuania's political spectrum supported the bill.

Lithuanian Ambassador to South Africa Dainius Junevičius said the bill clarified that anyone who was a citizen of the Republic of Lithuania before 15 June 1940 was eligible for reinstatement of their citizenship on condition that there were no decisions adopted on their loss of citizenship.

This is a huge relief to many whose applications were rejected by the Lithuanian migration department, some pending indefinitely with others being placed on hold.

The application jam stemmed from a Lithuanian Supreme Court decision a few years ago which opened the law up for interpretation, making it much tougher, and which dramatically slowed down applications, causing enormous frustration.

In addition to what was always accepted as sufficient proof of Lithuanian citizenship, applicants were also required to provide proof that their Lithuanian immigrant ancestors actively sought to maintain their Lithuanian citizenship once in South Africa (or their new country of residence) until 15 June 1940.

This was a dramatic departure from the original position, which never required proof that citizenship was actively maintained after leaving Lithuania.

"This was a major obstacle for applicants as in almost all cases, no such proof exists. It also had far-reaching

implications for all future citizenship applications," said Lithuanian emigration consultant Nida Degutienė from Next Steps. Her company assists South Africans and others to obtain Lithuanian citizenship by helping to source the required documentation for reinstatement of their citizenship. She told the *SA Jewish Report* many of her clients' applications had been declined by the migration department because of this.

In some cases where families had applied at different times using the same source documents, some had been granted citizenship, while others had been rejected.

However, this will soon change, said an elated Degutienė, who believes last week's vote will pave the way forward for many South African Jews to successfully apply for citizenship.

"Less than a year ago, I was telling a story of a ridiculous court ruling which was applied to an unlucky Litvak family whose application for Lithuanian citizenship was rejected. Now I'm so happy to announce that the law has been amended, and this particular family, as many

more, will be free to receive their passports."

Degutienė and many others including politicians and lawyers in Lithuania and members of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies campaigned tirelessly for the amendment.

"I was really frustrated about the grey zone in the citizenship legislation which was used by Lithuanian institutions to create rules and obstacles that made many South African Litvaks ineligible for a Lithuanian passport," said Degutienė. "The only way to solve this impossible situation was to change the law as any other solution would have been too temporary, and we would have had to depend on court procedures which are lengthy and costly."

She said it had been a tough road.

"Not many colleagues or competitors believed I would succeed, but now as you see, if you put all your heart and effort into something, sooner or later it results in positive developments."

Said Junevičius, "As we welcome this move by the

Republic of Lithuania, removing many barriers to apply for the reinstatement of Lithuanian citizenship, we anticipate deepening connection with ancestral land and fully expect an exponential growth in economic relations and tourism."

The director of AccessEU, Nicole Marcus, said this week, "AccessEU looks forward to overturning the negative decisions and restoring our 100% success record. Over the years, we've experienced changes to the requirements and process, at times becoming very difficult if not near impossible, and at other times easing somewhat. We urge everyone who is eligible to use this opportunity to apply for Lithuanian citizenship before any new interpretations might close the doors once again."

Before the bill becomes law, Lithuania's president will need to sign the bill into effect, and this is expected to happen soon.

Once enacted into law, the effect of this amendment will be to remove the requirement that one's Lithuanian

Continued on page 4>>



"We could do much more together," Israeli ambassador tells Ramaphosa See story on page 2

Photo: Screenshot

CARING FOR THE COMMUNITY IS A **FULL-TIME JOB**

757

Permanent Staff

203

Outsourced Personnel

194

Unique Job Titles

www.jhbchev.co.za



ChevrahKadisha

Appliance Repairs on Site
 Fridges, Dishwashers,
 Washing Machines, Stoves
 Tumble Dryers & more
 Call Jason
 082 401 8239 / 076 210 6532
 ★ FREE QUOTATIONS ★

They are marching
to Pretoria Pretoria PRETORIA!
 Why? To take up residence
at Jaffa at JAFFA!
 Warm friendly atmosphere, fabulous food,
 gorgeous gardens, interesting activities,
 lovely accommodation, excellent care if needed.
SEE FOR YOURSELF
 Contact Mark
 www.jaffa.org.za | (012) 346 2006 | admin@jaffa.org.za

medicare
SAVOY PHARMACY PERCELIA PHARMACY
MONDAY – FRIDAY 8:30am – 6:00pm
SATURDAY: 9:00am – 1:00pm
LAST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH 9:00am – 1:00pm
 (011) 885-1200/1 savoy@medicarehealth.co.za
MONDAY – THURSDAY: 8:30am – 6:00pm
FRIDAY: 8:00am – 4:30pm
SATURDAY: CLOSED
SUNDAY AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS: 9:00am – 1:00pm
 (011) 640-4321/31 percelia@medicarehealth.co.za

FRANK SOLOMON HEARING CENTRE
Have a love at first sound experience.
Phonak Audéo™ Marvel
 A new all-in-one solution that improves your hearing in everyday life and even in the noisiest environments.
 • Experience exceptional sound performance
 • Connect seamlessly to Bluetooth® devices
 • Rechargeable so you'll always stay connected
 • Remote Support for the ultimate in convenience
AFFORDABLE RANGE FOR PENSIONERS
CONTACT US TODAY:
(011) 849-6256
082 953 4628
 Fairmount
 6 George Ave,
 Sandringham
 Additional branches in Benoni and Germiston
 We are COVID-19 compliant

VEHICLES WANTED
 Any make, any model, any condition
Best prices guaranteed!
 Arnold Orkin 082-823-7826
AUTO AFRICA

Terror accused in court



Photos: Ian Ossendryver

Brandon-Lee and Tony-Lee Thulsie appeared in the Gauteng High Court in Johannesburg on Wednesday, 26 January 2022, where live broadcasting of proceedings and the setting of a court date were discussed. The twins are accused of terrorist activity targeting Jewish institutions in South Africa, amongst other targets. They have been in custody since their arrest in July 2016.

“We could do much more together,” Israeli ambassador tells Ramaphosa

Israel's new ambassador to South Africa, Eliav Belotsercovsky, rubbed elbows with South African President Cyril Ramaphosa when he presented his credentials to him on Tuesday, 25 January, at the Sefako Makgatho Presidential Guest House in Tshwane. Ramaphosa was courteous and smiling as Belotsercovsky told him about how the relationship between their countries could improve and how Israel could help South Africa. “We believe there's tremendous potential in us working together,” the Israeli ambassador told Ramaphosa. “Together, we can share dreams and together, we can fulfil them.” Belotsercovsky said that South Africa was a shining example of a peaceful and dignified transition under the enlightened and courageous leadership of Nelson Mandela. He said the country's democratic transformation took place with an independent judicial system and a free press.

But most importantly, he said, it was achieved through dialogue and “Israel is looking forward to upgrading our bilateral dialogue. There's so much we can do together in the future in science and technology, education and training, food security, and climate change.” He used the example of South African and Israeli scientists working together to deal with the COVID-19 outbreak as an example of successful co-operation. Israel's government is based on “a rainbow coalition” Belotsercovsky said, which represents an excellent example of partnership between religious and secular Jews and Arabs, people of European and African origins, politicians and technocrats, all united in the task of fulfilling the dreams of the next generation. He went on to tell the president about the phenomenal ways Israel is already using its technology and knowhow to work successfully in South Africa, and said he hoped there was much more they could do together.

Torah Thought

Bribery makes you blind

Living in South Africa, we see how bribery and corruption result in the decay of our social institutions and unless checked, can lead to the breakdown of society. The Torah teaches that bribery could also undermine the moral fibre of our personal lives. This week, we read Parshas Mishpatim. The verse (Shmos 23:8) says, “You shall not accept a bribe for the bribe will blind those who see and corrupt the words of the righteous.” We assume this doesn't apply to us because most of us aren't judges in courts hearing disputes between litigants. The commentators explain that this isn't correct. As individuals, we make judgement calls many times each day. In making those decisions, we constantly need to be on guard to not take bribes. The Torah is teaching us that any time there's personal gain involved, be it physical pleasure, money, honour, or convenience, we are already “on the take” and our judgement is compromised. In his sefer Emunah V'Bitachon, the Chazon Ish writes, “Personal involvement is something that affects great and small people alike. This is nothing to be ashamed about and it doesn't call into question the person's piety. This is engraved into human nature”. The purpose of life was told to the Jewish people by G-d at Mount Sinai. Our souls were sent down to this world into our bodies for us to develop and grow spiritually. The mitzvos are the framework for this inner work. Our objective is to rise above our lower selves, beyond the urges of our physical existence. To live a life fulfilling the will of our creator rather than being fixated on our appetite for power and pleasure. This can be achieved only by rising above our own personal agenda. How do we live in a truthful way, overcoming our natural bias towards

lowly personal interests? Rabbi Frand advises following the teaching in Pirkei Avos (Avos 1:6): “Make yourself a rav, and acquire for yourself a friend.” We all delude ourselves saying, “I'm able to raise myself above my personal interests and come to a balanced and proper decision.” This is very difficult to do without the input

Rabbi Danny Sackstein, Sunny Road Kehilla



and advice of a non-compromised third party. Fortunate is the person whose spouse is that friend and objective advisor. We would all be wise to follow this advice in our wonderful journey through life.

Shabbat Times brought to you by
Spencer Schwartz from You Realty
 Residential Property Sales and Rentals (countrywide)

	Starts	Ends
Johannesburg	18:15	19:35
Cape Town	19:15	20:30
Durban	18:15	19:31
Bloemfontein	18:15	19:48
Port Elizabeth	18:15	20:02
East London	18:15	19:50
Jerusalem	16:30	17:47
Tel Aviv	16:51	17:49

 The earliest one may light the Shabbat candles on Friday afternoon is 1¼ halachic hours before the end of the day. In order to be sure that we do not kindle fire on Shabbat, the standard practice is to light the candles at least 18 minutes before the sun sets.
You Realty
 Spencer Schwartz • 084 524 4616
 spencer@yourealty.co.za

ROSH CHODESH Adar 1 courtesy of
Novis Inc.
 Attorneys & Conveyancers
 “The Sunday Lawyers”
 Over 17 years of personal and professional service in property law, wills, deceased estates, and pre-nuptial contracts.
 Shabbat Mavarachim: Parsha Mishpatim. Rosh Chodesh ADAR 1 will be on the Tuesday and Wednesday the 1st and 2nd February.
 TEL: (011) 440-2340/1 @E-MAIL: steve@novisinc.co.za

New hechsher stirs the kosher pot

NICOLA MILTZ

Three disgruntled former *mashgichim* (kosher supervisors) this week launched their own kosher hechsher in a bid to compete with the Beth Din, the country's foremost kosher certification under the Union of Orthodox Synagogues (UOS).

The three directors of Kosher Certified South Africa (KCSA) are Velvy Bokow, Akiva Mallett, and Aharon Bogatie. They have either had their *mashgichim* licenses revoked (Bogatie lost his this week following the announcement) or have given them up following ongoing tension and frustration which has led to a bitter souring of relations separately between them and the UOS.

KCSA purports to be a kosher certifying agency under the halachic supervision of Rabbi Avigdor Bokow, the father of one of its directors, Velvy Bokow.

This week, the company advertised itself via a colourful flyer sent to the community on WhatsApp. It features a smiling headshot of Rabbi Avigdor Bokow, formerly of Linksfield Senderwood Hebrew Congregation, saying that KCSA is under his rabbinical leadership.

It makes assurances of a quick certification process and response times, affordable rates, flexible payment plans, ongoing support, and other such commitments.

However, Velvy Bokow told the *SA Jewish Report* that the KCSA couldn't commit at this stage to reducing prices before a full costing and pricing model was structured, developed, and tested. However, they hoped to alleviate the costs of kosher chicken and meat, adding that "only time will tell".

Rabbi Bokow wouldn't comment to the *SA Jewish Report*, saying, "Please speak to the directors. I'm a simple helper for the community. I'm truly not the face. They simply wanted to give the assurance that there was an experienced kosher supervisor. I'm a retired rabbi over 70 that will help the community and provide services in many different ways."

The ongoing and messy saga that sowed the seeds of this "rebellion" began with the Stan & Pete *treif* chicken scandal, which placed *mashgichim* in the spotlight.

Bokow and Mallett were instrumental several years ago in setting up the Mashgiach Association in a bid to formalise the workplace and improve conditions of employment.

The directors insist that starting a new kosher certification isn't about "sour grapes", it's about

service delivery aimed at being "affordable, reliable, and available".

Bokow lost his *mashgiach* license last year for contravening the *mashgiach* code of conduct after advertising his strictly kosher but not under the Beth Din kosher meat and chicken smoker. He claims he was unfairly discriminated against.

Mallett, the former owner of AM Dairy Products, was one of the first to break away from the Beth Din hechsher in favour of Montreal Kosher when the ongoing saga of kosher food prices reared its head once again recently.

He was called before a hearing last year for allegedly providing kashrut advice to a non-certified caterer, which is in breach of his license.

He refused to attend the hearing, and sent an email to Kenny Rabson, a member of the UOS board, and to the managing director of the Beth Din's kosher department, Rabbi Dovi Goldstein.

In it, he accused Goldstein of being a liar, and said he had no faith in Rabson. "This from



Rabbi Avigdor Bokow

a religious organisation. The more I read books on the Holocaust, the clearer it appears Hitler didn't want to kill all the Jews, just the bad ones, think if you fit in that category," he wrote.

This week, Mallett told the *SA Jewish Report*, "We don't want a mudslinging situation. This is about healthy competition and doing what's in the best interest of kashrut and the consumer at the end of the day."

Bogatie, until this week a *mashgiach* with the

ALFIN
AUTO GROUP

I WANT TO BUY YOUR BABY... AND YOUR BOBBA!

MAD
PRICES FOR LOW MILEAGE CARS

Call Alan: 082 850 0004
www.alfinauto.co.za

Beth Din, said he joined as a board member of the KCSA because he felt there needed to be "a higher kashrus authority" and that for him, "the best way to ensure that it was run and maintained correctly was to be in the middle of it".

After launching, Bokow conducted a survey on social media this week, asking members of the community whether they would support a new kosher certifying agency in South Africa.

The board of UOS Johannesburg and the UOS Cape management committee issued a joint statement on 26 January, saying they were unable to comment on this new hechsher, given that there was "no track record or international acceptance to reflect on".

"In addition, we don't know what technical expertise and other resources the organisation has. We are, however, aware of the directors of the organisation, which were *mashgichim* for the UOS and were relieved of their positions in December 2021. We cannot comment on their knowledge of running a hechsher.

"We do, however, know what it takes to build a hechsher that's internationally recognised and accepted by the OU

(the largest hechsher in the world) and Badatz in Israel (which adheres to the strictest levels of kashrut) to outsource their inspections in southern Africa to us, which is a strong endorsement of the UOS kosher department.

"Importantly, the standards of kashrut in SA are certified by the *dayanim* of our Beth Din, with no hechsher being granted without their approval. These standards have been built up over decades. The depth and breadth

of infrastructure and knowledge network is immense. A kosher system is complex and intricate, and requires adequately trained personnel and a competent halachic authority to conduct the assessments required to provide kosher consumers with the necessary reassurance a kosher certification offers. This includes highly trained rabbinic field representatives, food technologists, and database administrators with a depth of experience."

The statement said that as an organisation, last year was a "extremely productive" for the UOS. "We're working hard to innovate continually in kashrut, to improve services to our customers and consumers, and to solve the market's needs quicker."

"I know nothing about the credentials of the KCSA, so it's difficult to comment," said Rabbi Yossi Chaikin, the chairperson of the Rabbinical Association of South Africa. "The Rabbinical Association supports the Beth Din of the UOS, which has an outstanding reputation locally and internationally."

Though there was always room for improvement, he wasn't sure that competition, given the South African context, was a positive thing or whether it would end up as more money in the pockets of the consumer. Once again, he said, "Time will tell."

"We share concern that this may sow confusion in the minds of people. We have a unique situation in South Africa in that kashrut is so widely observed and one of the blessings is that we have one kashrut agency, which makes things very easy for the consumer."

Ami Bolnick of Tenderchick, the only certified producer of kosher chickens in Johannesburg, said, "From my perspective, it's an open market, and if they feel they can make a difference, they should try. I don't dictate who decides to enter the kosher industry. I'll remain faithful to my license holder, the UOS hechsher."

Bokow said: "I am passionate about community and Judaism and if I can hopefully make a difference in kashrus and in Torah observance then I'll consider the venture worthwhile."

JAWITZ
PROPERTIES

**INVEST IN PROPERTY IN ISRAEL
FROM R5 MILLION**

Contact Herschel Jawitz in strict confidence
082 571 1829 | herschel@jawitz.co.za

**REAL
LIFE** Real Estate.



FOR SALE
SAVOY ESTATE | R 1 650 000
A rare "Gem" - a stone's throw away from Melrose arch in 24 hr guarded complex. So centrally located and in a beautiful, well-kept complex is this very modern home, consisting of 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms (both en suite). Spacious open plan reception area opening onto lovely covered patio and private walled garden. Bonus is a double lock-up garage. Easy access to Highways, schools and shops.
2 2
Joel Harris 082 926 0287
Lauren Shalpid 083 789 0229
Web Ref: RL83574



FOR SALE
GLENHAZEL | R 1 550 000
An immaculate, spacious and modern apartment, in sought after 24 hour guarded complex. Conveniently situated in Glenhazel. A huge bonus is the elevator in the building and the views of the attractive complex gardens and pool. This lovely apartment has 2 spacious bedrooms, a full modern bathroom and guest toilet. The generously proportioned open-plan lounge and dining room open out to a balcony with exceptional views. One underground parking, exceptional security and excellent location.
2 1.5
Joel Harris 082 926 0287
Lauren Shalpid 083 789 0229
Web Ref: RL84022



FOR SALE
WAVERLEY | ASKING R 5 000 000
Embracing elegance and practicality, this modern classic is gracefully styled and showcased with calm muted tones and tasteful interiors. Receptions merge completely with the patio and outside garden and pool with stacking doors. 3 large receptions open plan to the sleek kitchen with sep scullery/laundry, patio, guest loo, 4 bedrooms (all en-suite), study/pyjama lounge. Double garage and staff quarters. Many special features include excellent security and generator back-up. A home of enormous appeal.
4 4
Chrissie Hammer: 082 568 0440
Web Ref: RL81931



PRICE REDUCED
MORNINGSIDE | INVITING BUYERS FROM R 1 499 000
2 Bed, 1 Bath Loft Apartment with awesome energy! Superbly Positioned & situated in a highly sought after, well maintained complex. 2 Light & Bright Bedrooms. 1 Full Bathroom. Open Plan Living /dining area with great space & flow, leading to stunning entertainers patio with park like views. Open Plan Modern kitchen with grocery cupboard, & space for 3 appliances fridge/freezer. Fantastic upstairs loft .Study or chill area-your call! 2 parking bays. 24/7 Professional security + cameras. Sparkling Complex Pool. Awesome Lock Up And Go! A' No Brainer! Taking Offers!
2 1
Sandra Luntz: 083 679 1247
Web Ref: RL82411

East London rabbi fails in bid against Beth Din

TALI FEINBERG

The dispute between Rabbi Chanoch Galperin and the East London Hebrew Congregation (ELHC) that has kept this coastal community in limbo since 2018 continues to have a negative impact on it and on the authority of the Beth Din.

The rabbi was accused of forging the will of a community member, and was fired by the ELHC after a disciplinary hearing which found him guilty of more than 10 counts of misconduct.

He then went to the Beth Din, asking it to adjudicate on the fact that he had been fired. But, because of possible irregularities at a previous hearing at the Beth Din regarding the disputed will, the ELHC refused to submit itself to another hearing.

The Beth Din ruled that it couldn't adjudicate the labour dispute without both parties consenting to its jurisdiction. Galperin refused to accept this, and in June 2021, he brought an application before the Eastern Cape Division of the High Court to review and set aside the decision made by the Beth Din.

On 18 January 2022, the High Court handed down its judgment, finding that the rabbi's application to review and set aside the Beth Din's decision had no merit, and accordingly dismissed it. The rabbi was ordered to pay the legal costs of the ELHC, which had opposed the application.

The story started when the East London Chevrah Kadisha (ELCK) accused Rabbi Galperin of forging the will of an East London community member, the late Israel Bayer, in order to benefit from it. The ELCK was originally a beneficiary, but this was changed to the rabbi in a will that is also being disputed in court.

The rabbi has since admitted that his wife drew up the disputed will, which would automatically disqualify him from benefitting from it. Notwithstanding the disqualification, Galperin is asking for an order that the court declare him competent to receive the benefit in terms of the disputed will.

The Beth Din didn't oppose the rabbi's application against it, but the ELHC decided to do so. It contended, inter alia, that the rabbi was obliged, in terms of Jewish law, to accept the decision of the Beth Din.

The Beth Din granted its permission (known as a heter arkaos) for the rabbi to take his case to the secular courts. But the rabbi refused to abide by the decision, contending, inter alia, that the Beth Din had failed to "apply their minds" to the matter. He said its decision wasn't properly or correctly taken and was fatally flawed.

The judgment highlighted the fact that both parties to a dispute have to agree voluntarily to submit matters to the Beth Din, and then the decision of the Beth Din will be final and binding.

The High Court, therefore, found that there was no basis for the court to interfere with the decision of the Beth Din, whose decision had been made in accordance with Jewish law.

The advocate acting on behalf of the ELHC, Stanley Pincus, commented that the judgment was important

in that it upheld the principle that in accordance with Jewish law, the Beth Din wasn't entitled to determine disputes between parties where one of the parties didn't agree to submit themselves to its jurisdiction.

More importantly, the Beth Din granting the rabbi its blessing to proceed to the secular courts actually obliged the rabbi, in accordance with Jewish law, to accept the decision of the Beth Din.

In this regard, the judge stated, "the applicant [Rabbi Galperin] in accordance with Jewish law is bound to accept

don't consent to its jurisdiction. The judgment has further confirmed the Beth Din's authority to grant permission to a claimant to pursue a claim in the secular courts if the respondent refuses to submit to the Beth Din's jurisdiction.

"The Beth Din is hopeful and confident that other communities will respect the authority of the Beth Din," he said. "The Beth Din doesn't foresee that this judgment will have an impact on future community disputes being referred to the Beth Din in accordance with Jewish law."

Finally, "the Beth Din has again urged both the East London Hebrew Congregation and Rabbi Galperin to withdraw all of the High Court litigation and finalise their disputes in accordance with Jewish law by way of a private arbitration under the authority of the Beth Din," Weinberg said.

But Rabbi Galperin plans to appeal the judgment. "Our client is convinced that the judgment is incorrect, and we have received instructions to file a notice of leave to appeal," said Brin Brody of Wheeldon, Rushmere & Cole, representing the rabbi. "If the judgment is correct, which is not conceded, then it means that any member of the Jewish faith can simply ignore a dispute before the Beth Din. This can never be the case in accordance with halacha and Jewish law."

The ELHC and ELCK have said they will submit themselves to Beth Din adjudication on all matters regarding the rabbi as long as there are trained legal professionals present. However,

according to Pincus, the rabbi has refused this request.

Meanwhile, the ELHC has brought an application before the East London Circuit Local Division of the High Court to evict Rabbi Galperin and his wife from the community property, which he refuses to vacate. The application has been set down for argument on 10 February 2022.

A community member, speaking on condition of anonymity, said they remained in limbo as the rabbi was refusing to vacate the accommodation needed for a new rabbi. "Nothing is happening. There's no one to do services. We cannot bring anyone down easily as he is in our [community] house. It's a real, never-ending nightmare."



The East London Shul

the decision of the Beth Din" and further stated "the applicant hasn't committed any sin or acted contrary to his religious beliefs as he has the blessing of the Beth Din to approach secular courts".

As for the Beth Din's thoughts on the matter, "We believe that the judgment of the High Court has vindicated and endorsed the position of the Beth Din," said Steven Weinberg of Moss Cohen & Partners, representing the Beth Din.

"The judgment is respectful of the Beth Din and Jewish law," he said. "It has confirmed that the Beth Din is entitled to decline to hear disputes if either of the parties

Legal amendment puts Lithuanian citizenship in reach

>>Continued from page 1

ancestor must have actively maintained their Lithuanian citizenship until 14 June 1940. That requirement was strictly enforced by the migration department since December 2020 following the Supreme Court decision in November 2020, when an application for citizenship with no supporting Lithuanian documentation was brought, causing serious ramifications for many other applicants.

Many applicants were refused citizenship on the basis that their Lithuanian ancestor had naturalised prior to 15 June 1940. Now the prospects of success for those applicants have been revived.

According to insiders, many hundreds of applications are believed to have been waiting for years for a decision following various procedural and then interpretative changes. Hundreds of applications which are currently held in suspense pending queries from Lithuania's migration department which had been almost impossible to satisfy will now need to be reconsidered.

The migration department will probably take some time to work through the backlog, and applicants shouldn't expect immediate results. They should keep in mind that the change in the law doesn't mean that every applicant will be successful as each application will depend on its own supporting documentation which varies from

one family to the next, insiders say.

Applicants are still required to prove that their Lithuanian ancestor left Lithuania after 16 February 1918 (the Republic of Lithuania's initial date of independence) and must still prove with Lithuanian documentation that they held Lithuanian citizenship and departed from Lithuania.

One of the questions still being asked is whether those whose ancestors arrived in South Africa prior to 1918 will be able to apply for a passport.

"The answer is no," said Degutienė. "This law does not extend the right of applying to those who emigrated earlier than the State of Lithuania was established, and it's unlikely this will ever change."

Degutienė said the amendment wouldn't have been made possible without the help of Lithuanian Member of Parliament Dalia Asanavičiūtė. "Without her persistence and resilience against huge pressure from the migration department and opposition, and her deep understanding and respect for Jews, this change would never have been possible."

Junevičius said the amendment was a very positive development, and would probably ensure the success of many pending and future

applications.

He encouraged prospective passport holders to show an interest in Lithuania, saying that amongst other things, the country offered a broad range of international study programmes taught in English in its 19 universities and 22 colleges at a highly competitive price.

Nearly 8 000 students from 127 countries in the world including South Africa and Israel studied in Lithuania in the 2020 to 2021 academic year, Junevičius said. "The reasons to choose Lithuania as your study destination are multiple, but the main ones are high quality world-class education for an affordable price in an attractive European country."

As for business opportunities, Junevičius said that for the past 20 years, Lithuania had been the fastest growing economy in the European Union in terms of gross domestic product per capita, with a "highly favourable business environment" with top rankings and ratings.

"Things here get done quicker and better because the doers – from students and engineers to the go-to advisors at Invest Lithuania – are agile, ambitious, and driven by big ideas. And when it comes to big ideas, we don't dabble, we explore, from gene and cell therapy to the latest in machine learning."

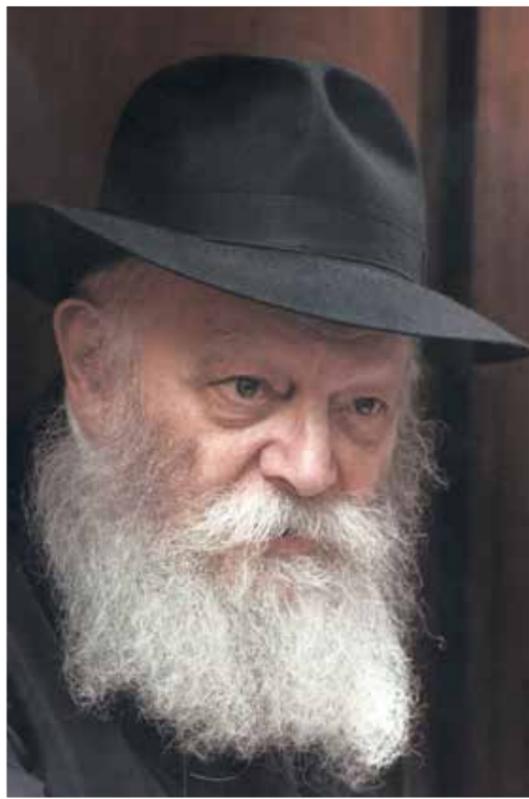
EL AL
IT'S NOT JUST AN AIRLINE. IT'S ISRAEL

www.elal.co.il

Changes may occur in the aircraft type due to operational considerations and the class may not be available. Terms and Conditions Apply. E&OE.

Mazelton Jubilee Anniversary

1972 - 2022 | 5732 - 5782



While there has been a Chabad presence in South Africa for over a century with Chassidic Shuls in Johannesburg and Cape Town, this week marks the official Jubilee Anniversary of Chabad-Lubavitch in our country.

We salute the founders and pioneers who established the first Chabad outreach organisation in South Africa 50 years ago with the arrival of **Rabbi Mendel and Rebbetzin Mashi Lipskar** from the United States. We thank Hashem for the remarkable growth and development of Chabad here which has transformed the spiritual stature and enriched our community with Torah, Mitzvahs, wisdom, inspiration, joy, and hope.

Our saintly teacher and mentor, the Lubavitcher Rebbe of righteous memory, repeatedly encouraged South African Jewry to remain steadfast and reassured us that our community would continue to flourish despite our country's challenges.

The presence of the undersigned institutions and spiritual leaders is an everlasting tribute to his vision and to the unwavering, faithful loyalty and dedication of his students to the cause of our South African Jewish community. Please G-d, may our collective efforts continue to be blessed with success and hasten the era of ultimate peace and goodwill with the coming of Moshiach speedily in our days.



RABBI KOPPEL BACHER
Chairman, Founder, and Board Member
of Lubavitch Foundation
REBBETZIN SELMA BACHER o.b.m



**RABBI MENDEL AND
REBBETZIN MASHI LIPSKAR**
The first Shluchim - the Rebbe's
Emissaries to South Africa
Arrived Shevat 1972



RABBI NM BERNHARD o.b.m
Board Member, Lubavitch Foundation
REBBETZIN JOAN BERNHARD

CHABAD CENTRES AND INSTITUTIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Lubavitch Foundation SA
Beis Menachem
Chabad Centre Cape Town
Chabad House Johannesburg
Chabad Nursery School
Chabad of Benmore / Riverclub
Chabad of Cape Town
Chabad of Fourways

Chabad of Glenhazel
Chabad of Greenstone
Chabad of Hurlingham
Chabad of Illovo
Chabad of Illovo Mikvah
Chabad of Lyndhurst
Chabad of Melrose
Chabad of Norwood

Chabad of Sandton
Chabad of Savoy
Chabad of Strathavon
- Jewish Life Centre
Chabad of Umhlanga
Chabad of the West Coast
Chabad on Campus Cape Town
Chassidim Shul

Gan Yisroel Camps
Johannesburg Torah Institute
Lubavitch Foundation
- Cape Town
Mikvah Chana Sandton
Rabbinical College South Africa
Sandton Central Shul
Sandton Hebrew School

Shalom Mikvah Umhlanga
Sinai Academy, Cape Town
The Shul @ Hyde Park
Torah Academy Nursery School
Torah Academy Nursery School
- Sandton
Torah Academy Primary School
Torah Academy Girls High School

Torah Academy Boys High School
Torah Academy Shul
Tzivos Hashem
Yeshiva Gedola Lubavitch

SHLUCHIM, SHLUCHOS, AND HEADS OF CHABAD INSTITUTIONS

Rabbi Mordechai & Tsvia Abraham
Rabbi Eitan & Gila Ash
Rabbi Levi & Chaya Avtzon
Rabbi Shaul Bacher
Rabbi Sholem & Chanie Bacher
Rabbi Yossi & Lieba Baumgarten
Mrs. Sara Bronstein
Rabbi Alex & Tziporah Carlebach
Rabbi Yossi & Rivky Chaikin
Rabbi Yehoshua & Esther Chaiton
Rabbi Shabsy & Ruth Chaiton
Rabbi Oshy & Zeesy Deren

Rabbi Oshy & Sarah Feldman
Rabbi Reuven & Risha Finkelstein
Rabbi Pesach & Nechana Fishman
Rabbi Gidon & Aviva Fox
Rabbi Yossi & Rochel Goldman
Rabbi Shmuly & Fruma Goldman
Rabbi Nissen & Ariella Goldman
Rabbi Kalmen & Nicole Green
Rabbi Sholom Ber & Dina Groner
Rabbi Motti and Betty Groner
Rabbi Motti & Temmi Hadar
Rabbi David & Chaya Haller

Rabbi Dovid & Feige Hazdan
Rabbi Yosef & Itty Hazdan
Rabbi Yossie & Raizy Hecht
Rabbi Pini & Chani Hecht
Esther Leah Hecht
Rabbi Michael & Messody Katz
Rabbi Mendi & Sheina Katz
Rabbi Dovi & Devorah Kazilsky
Rabbi Yosef & Sara Chana Kesselman
Rabbi Ari & Batya Kiezman
Rabbi Chaim & Ettie Klein
Rabbi Mendel & Yaffa Liberow

Rabbi Yossi Liberow
Rabbi Levi & Leah Lipskar
Rabbi David & Chaya Masinter
Rabbi Levi and Esti Medalie
Rabbi Shauli & Penina Minkowitz
Rabbi Pini & Rochie Pink
Rabbi Mendel & Avigail Popack
Rabbi Levi & Rosie Popack
Rabbi Dovi & Yael Rabin
Rabbi Shlomo & Goldie Raitport
Rabbi Berel & Sora Fraida Rodal
Rabbi Mordechai & Sorale Rodal

Rabbi Aharon & Mashi Rose
Mrs. Rebecca Sarchi
Mrs. Nechama Sarchi
Rabbi Eliyahu & Leah Sasson
Rabbi Nesanel & Efrat Schochet
Rabbi Ari & Naomi Shishler
Rabbi Mendi & Sara Malka Shishler
Rabbi Avi & Chanee Shlomo
Rabbi Levi & Leah Silman
Rabbi Shmuel & Goldie Simpson
Rabbi Eli & Pnina Spinner
Rabbi Yehuda & Estee Stern

Rabbi Azriel & Leah Uzvolk
Rabbi Avraham & Hadassah Vigler
Rabbi Noam & Devorah Wagner
Rabbi Shlomo & Devorah Wainer
Rabbi Dovid & Sara Wineberg
Rabbi Levy & Sterna Wineberg
Rabbi Zevi & Devora Leah Wineberg

Celebrating our youth as they matriculate

This is one of my favourite editions of the year, when we get to celebrate our children completing matric. We pay tribute to them as they move from school into the rest of their lives, from childhood into adulthood.

For parents, it's an emotional time because it's proof positive that their babies are growing up and getting ready to take on lives as independent individuals.

For matriculants, it's a little scary but extraordinarily exciting. Some know exactly what they want to do from here on. For others, the idea of choosing a career is daunting and almost impossible.

I was lucky. I knew what I wanted to do. I knew I wanted to be a messenger of the truth and use my writing skills and extreme inquisitiveness to do it.

Many people aren't so lucky, and finding their path isn't easy. It can be daunting because of fear of wasting time.

Can I say that taking a gap year, starting a course or degree that interests you, or even getting a job is never a waste of time? It represents life experience, even if it doesn't turn out the way you want it to. Any experience is worthwhile, and will take you to the next step in your life.

Besides, if you start studying or begin your career a year or two later, in the bigger scheme of things, it doesn't make a jot of difference.

In this edition, we profile as many matriculants as possible. However, no matter how many we do, we never seem to do enough, and someone or someone's parents are going to be upset.

I recall a few years back how I was accosted at shul by a grandmother who wanted her incredible grandson's profile in the newspaper. We didn't get it in for some reason, and she was livid and abusive. No matter how much I explained the situation to her, she took it personally and insisted that I was a bad person because I didn't tell the community about her phenomenal grandson.

I understand her. I understand the love and pride we have in our children and grandchildren. However, please understand that no matter how well your child or grandchild has done or how phenomenal their story, we only have so many pages. We can only do so many profiles. So, forgive us if their personal story hasn't made it into the newspaper.

I know there are many who question why we put some stories in the newspaper and not others. Some don't like what we put on the front page, and believe another story should have gone there. I'm grateful that people care enough to worry about this, but we do put a lot of thought into what we cover and what we don't and where it goes in the newspaper.

So, we led the newspaper today with the incredible news that those of us – myself included – who are of Lithuanian Jewish descent are likely to have an easier time getting Lithuanian passports.

This is a major step forward. However, I do hear the Lithuanian ambassador, Dainius Junevičius, calling for us to take more of an interest in Lithuania and what it has to offer us. Also, what we can do to form alliances with the country of our ancestors.

I also understand the terrible tragedy that befell many of our ancestors in Lithuania, which makes it uncomfortable for some. However, we do share so much and, as long as Lithuania acknowledges it and wants to make real amends, we should be looking at how we can do this.

This week, the Lithuanian ambassador visited the Holocaust memorial at Westpark Cemetery on the eve of Holocaust Remembrance Day (Wednesday). He said: "We will never forget the 200,000 brutally murdered Lithuanian Jews and will never forgive their killers."

However, as we always say, we can forgive, we just cannot and must not forget. See Sylvia Foti's piece on this page about her grandfather.

On page 3, Nicola Miltz writes about the new hechsher offered by disgruntled former Beth Din *mashgichim*. Although they say they're doing it for the community and not because they have an axe to grind, I wonder if it's in the interest of the community.

Though I believe competition is always good and keeps us on our toes, the truth is that we are a small community and don't need more than one hechsher, or do we?

Is it actually possible to bring costs down and do things better? I can't say. However, in the same way as I believe we have way too many Jewish schools and perhaps shuls for our community, having more than one hechsher seems unnecessary. Especially because if you really want to, you can find your way to acquiring the Canadian or other international hechshers.

Think of it this way: you have 200 children at a school as opposed to 1 000. That means you have far less money to pay for the best teachers and equipment because you get far less in school fees. It works exactly the same for shuls and in regard to a hechsher, or am I wrong? Time will tell.

Before I end off, I would like to welcome officially our new Israeli ambassador to South Africa, Eliav Belotsercovsky, and his spouse, Elena Esteban Oleaga. He submitted his credentials on Tuesday. May he have a successful tenure.

And finally, I want to congratulate our 2021 matriculants who did us proud. This group of youngsters have probably had the toughest and most challenging two years leading up to those finals, but they triumphed.

May you all go on to have successful careers and lives. Don't forget to let us know about your achievements.

Shabbat Shalom!
Peta Krost Maunder
Editor



Lithuania, admit it, my grandfather was a monster

OPINION

SILVIA FOTI



The woman I thought I was prior to beginning my research for *The Nazi's Granddaughter: How I Discovered My Grandfather Was a War Criminal* no longer exists.

That woman was proud to be a Lithuanian, basking in the can-do attitude of the people who overcame so much to be who they are today – a free and independent nation that's part of the European Union and NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation).



While growing up in Chicago in a Lithuanian community, I was raised to love Lithuania and to do all I could to help the country that was then occupied by the Soviet Union. It's one of the reasons I decided to become a journalist – it fed my fantasy of writing about this small country so the rest of the world could hear about it.

I started out as the granddaughter of Jonas Noreika, a Lithuanian hero who fought against the Communists in 1941 and won, and who fought again against the Communists in 1946, and lost.

He was arrested by the KGB, taken to their prison, tortured, and then shot twice in the back of the skull. Having died a martyr for Lithuania's freedom, he has a school and streets named after him as well as the Cross of the Vytytis, the highest honour anyone can receive posthumously.

As a young girl, I believed my grandfather to be one of the most splendid heroes of all time. As an adolescent, I was proud to be connected to his glorious name. But then, as an adult, the unspeakable truth of my grandfather's role in Lithuania's Holocaust was revealed to me.

It started out as just a whisper of a rumour that Jonas Noreika was involved in killing Jews, and eventually, I reluctantly confirmed that it was much more than hearsay.

I looked at countless documents, spoke to his colleagues and family members, and pieced his life together, careful to take note of what was going on around him while he was in charge. To my dismay, I concluded that everywhere he was in charge during the Nazi occupation, thousands of Jews were murdered.

A monster

The woman I have become after diligently conducting an investigation into my grandfather's life is radically different. Today, I have come to accept that I'm the granddaughter of a Lithuanian monster, one who participated in the murder of 8 000 to 15 000 Jews in Plungė, Telšiai, and the district of Šiauliai.

While in Plungė, he was the *komandantas* (commander), and ordered the killing of 2 000 Jews. He was also in charge in Telšiai, and sanctioned the killing of 2 000 Jews there. While governor of the Šiauliai district, he facilitated the murder of 4 000 Jews as well as working to distribute their property.

The government of Lithuania is engaged in Holocaust denial and revisionism, and heralds him as a national hero. He enjoys mythological status in the country. An intricate web of lies has been written about him while totally negating his horrendous deeds. What the government of Lithuania has done regarding my own grandfather is one of the greatest criminal cover-ups in history.

Truth and reconciliation

As a practicing Catholic, I simply had to do the right thing – write the truth no matter how painful and shameful it was. My greatest hope is that this book will light the flame of truth for Lithuania to recognise the terrible history of the Shoah as it unfolded in 1941.

Once this is truly recognised, and it will take time, it will allow the crucial healing process to begin for all Lithuanians. True reconciliation between Lithuanians and Jews can be based only on truth.

I know that I'm not responsible for my family and national guilt. Nonetheless, I feel humiliation, guilt, remorse, and overwhelming sadness.

I promise I'll do everything I can to make certain that the truth about my grandfather will be the only story of his life. The little girl that never met her grandfather but was raised to idolise him is now grown up and willing to tell the truth.

I implore the Lithuanian government to do the same. The cover-up and rewriting of history must be brought to an end.

United Nations report on Holocaust denial

In a related development, The United Nations General Assembly released a report on Holocaust denial on 13 January 2022. Lithuania signed this report, thus agreeing to the following points:

- To reaffirm its resolution 60/7 of 1 November 2005 that remembrance of the Holocaust is a key component of the prevention of further acts of genocide, and to recall that ignoring the historical facts of those terrible events increases the risk that they will be repeated;
 - To note that distortion and/or denial of the Holocaust refers, inter alia, to intentional efforts to excuse or minimise the impact of the Holocaust or its principal elements, including collaborators and allies of Nazi Germany; and
 - To urge all member states to reject without any reservation any denial or distortion of the Holocaust as a historical event, either in full or in part, or any activities to this end.
- My hope is that Lithuania will stop excusing and minimising my grandfather's role in the Holocaust as a collaborator of Nazi Germany who worked enthusiastically to murder thousands of Jews under his watch.

• *Silvia Foti is author of the memoir, The Nazi's Granddaughter: How I Discovered My Grandfather Was a War Criminal, released by Regnery History in March 2021. The paperback is coming out with a new title in June 2022: Storm in the Land of Rain: A Mother's Dying Wish Becomes Her Daughter's Nightmare. The book is also being released in Lithuanian in February 2022 during the Vilnius Book Fair, titled Vėtra Lietaus šalyje: Jono Noreikos anukės pasakojimai.*

Community acts to resolve Hebrew teaching crisis

TALI FEINBERG

Teaching our children Hebrew is one of the things that truly sets Jewish education apart, and it's a driving factor in the decision to send children to Jewish schools. But the subject is facing significant challenges.

Jewish schools in the Western Cape have been the most severely affected, and their counterparts in Johannesburg aren't far behind. The problem isn't limited to South Africa – experts say it's a dilemma facing diaspora communities worldwide.

Geoff Cohen, Jewish identity and community director at United Herzlia Schools in Cape Town, confirms that "one of the biggest challenges we face as a Jewish school in Cape Town is the scarcity of Hebrew teachers. The Jewish community has been shrinking, and this has had an effect on the number of Hebrew educators available to teach in our schools.

"Many of our existing Hebrew teachers have returned to Israel, and there are very few options for our community to study Hebrew at South African tertiary institutions. The pool of Hebrew teachers in South Africa is decreasing, and all Jewish schools seem to be in a similar predicament. Colleagues at Jewish schools in English-speaking countries around the world have indicated that they, too, are facing similar challenges."

Thankfully, the South African Jewish community has taken the first steps to remedy the situation, as 20 Hebrew teachers from around the country started an Advanced Hebrew Training Course through The Academy of Jewish Thought and Learning. The course is powered by Middlebury College in Vermont, the leading programme in the world on how to teach English speakers Hebrew as a second language.

"Two of our teachers have just started the Advanced Hebrew Training Course," says Cohen. "Another solution

could be to bring teachers from Israel, but this is costly and there are often cultural challenges. A different solution is to look at online Hebrew curricula that could possibly use expert teachers in other cities or even other countries."

Rabbi Ricky Seeff, the director of the South African Board of Jewish Education, says, "One of the things King David has tried is to bring *shlichim* – teachers who come for three years or a bit more and work in our system. They're Israelis, they're teachers, and we bring them out to teach, particularly the senior grades. But it's expensive and presents challenges in finding the right people.

"So thankfully, we've recently engaged with The Academy to start creating a pipeline. We are taking local South African talent who understand Hebrew and training them so that they can teach. At the same time, we're giving some Israelis in the system proper teaching degrees and contributing to their learning."

In spite of the challenges, "King David's results and the amount of kids taking Hebrew is still outstanding," says Seeff. "Hebrew forms the core of so much of what we do, so we're committed to finding a sustainable solution into the future."

The Academy course is possibly the first formal step in decades taken by the South African Jewish community to professionalise teaching Hebrew as a subject.

"South Africa is one of the few diaspora communities where there are no communal structures in place to train teachers and leaders entering the Jewish education system, specifically Jewish Studies and Hebrew," says Rabbi Ramon Widmonte, the dean of The Academy. "Various structures existed in the past, but for various reasons, they were discontinued. The net result is that, particularly over the past 20 years, there has been no programming directed towards Hebrew or Jewish Studies, both for teaching the subjects or for leadership."

"Hebrew has been worst hit," says Widmonte, "There



was a surge of immigrants from Israel to South Africa in the 1980s and 1990s, and many of those people became leaders in Hebrew teaching. However, many of them are at an advanced age and immigrants are no longer coming. This has led to a significant shortage of Hebrew teachers. In some places in South Africa, far fewer children are taking Hebrew as a matric subject."

"Our community relies on Jewish education in our school systems to ensure continuity," Widmonte says. "But without attracting qualified, capable Hebrew teachers and training them, it's simply not going to happen. We need to make it a priority. Until now, schools had no way to recruit new Hebrew teachers.

"The upskilling process includes professionalising the Jewish education space, and ensuring that South Africa has degrees and qualifications applying to teachers in these fields. Until now, South Africa has never had a Postgraduate Certificate in Education in Hebrew and Jewish Studies. From August this year, a local teachers' college will offer it," Widmonte says.

Widmonte says many schools have come on board. "They realise the need to search for solutions. If we don't act now, we simply won't have any Hebrew teachers. So we need to professionalise and recruit. Within a year, we'll see a major difference, please G-d."

Finally, there will be continual professional

development so that the quality of Hebrew education will remain high.

All this requires funding, and Widmonte is grateful to "visionary donors" who realised this need and are supporting these ventures.

Teachers have also reacted positively. "They have been the most worried about who will replace them and how to improve," Widmonte says. "Every teacher has come on board with tremendous vigour and energy. They know how important this is.

"Hebrew is an identity marker and a door opener to participate in Jewish life: religious, traditional, and Israeli," he says. "It allows you to read and participate in shul, lead the Pesach seder, or haggle on the streets of Tel Aviv. It's one of the 'binding factors' of our Jewish community. A lack of Hebrew makes our children uncomfortable in shuls, and strangers in Israel. It would undermine their Jewish identity."

He dreams of taking this even further, of Jewish children learning Hebrew at a young age at the same time as they learn to speak their mother tongue.

Widmonte believes the community should view this as a "sea-change moment" – a time to invest in infrastructure that underpins our schools. "Our kids should rave about their Hebrew and Jewish Studies teachers. We shouldn't be prepared to accept any less."

Enjoy all the rights and benefits of being an EU Citizen.



Investing in your children's future!

AccessEU offers all clients a Success Based Payment Option

- ✓ AccessEU has over 9 years of experience
- ✓ Large discounts for family applications (4 applicants or more applying together)
- ✓ Assistance with all civil registrations, including birth and marriage.
- ✓ Assistance with Retention of South African Citizenship applications
- ✓ Notary costs included where possible
- ✓ Credit Cards accepted

An applicant can be:

- Any child, grandchild or great-grandchild of a person who was a Lithuanian citizen and;
- The Lithuanian citizen needed to leave Lithuania after February 1919

Contact us for more details and pricing

Whatsapp: + 27 83 233 9080 | Email: info@accesseu.co.za

www.accesseu.co.za

Judge slams censure of chief justice's pro-Israel views

TALI FEINBERG

A trailblazing judge has emerged as a lone voice defending former Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng's support of Israel.

As one of three judges who reviewed his appeal, Judge Margaret Victor said, "muzzling judges is a slippery path that leads away from, not towards, democracy, and it leads in a direction from which there may be no road back."

Victor said she would have upheld Mogoeng's appeal in its entirety, but was outvoted by her fellow judges on the Judicial Conduct Appeals Committee. All three judges, however, decided to amend the original sanction as they all found issues with the original judgment. Mogoeng still needs to apologise for his comments supporting Israel in a 2020 webinar. However, this apology has been "severely curtailed", says Chelsea Ramsden, senior legal researcher at the Helen Suzman Foundation.

Victor called out the double standards within her fellow judges' arguments and those of the organisations that took Mogoeng to court. "As I read the comments made by Mogoeng in the context in which they must be read, I cannot see that the plea for peace and love for Jews and Israel and the love for Palestinians and Palestine, and any other utterances made in that context, can be construed in such a way as to undermine the dignity of his judicial office. Clearly, Mogoeng was expressing concern for love and peace globally, locally, and in relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. And that he was entitled to do."

She emphasised that "South Africa is a vibrant democracy and is still growing. Mogoeng asserts that judges, as citizens with fundamental rights and freedoms, shouldn't be 'censored, gagged or muzzled'. In my view, this is correct, for if we muzzle and gag a judge, justice, or chief justice from speaking out about world peace and stating on a public platform that nations shouldn't hate each other, then we are dispiriting

democracy instead of deepening it."

According to Victor, "South African democracy has been hard-won, and Mogoeng's emulation of the model adopted by President Nelson Mandela to be a mediator and game-changer is no random choice. The lifeblood of his comments was the successful Mendelian model of peace-making coupled with his deeply held convictions based on his Christian faith.

"This combination isn't sufficient to demonstrate that Mogoeng became involved in a political controversy.

"Ultimately, ours is a nation that believes in the public exchange of ideas and open debate. Whilst I agree that judges and officers of the judiciary, by virtue of the sacrosanct positions that they occupy, are called upon to exercise caution and restraint in expressing their constitutional rights, these are still rights that are extended to them," wrote Victor.

She said the chief justice's comments were "no different from saying that the internal wars in Ethiopia and Afghanistan should come to an end by mediated peace solutions. A plea for peace is not itself political."

To suggest that Mogoeng entered a "political dispute" sets a dangerous precedent, Victor said. "To find that a judge calling for peace among nations, and in particular between Israel and Palestine, has entered the realm of 'judicial politicking' leaves one wondering whether judges can comment at all or ever on peaceful solutions to global conflict.

"Judges in South Africa have over time, expressed extra-judicial thoughts and input and these leave behind a legacy of rich thought and wisdom. Our democracy should encourage this, not merely tolerate it - particularly



Formet Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng

[not tolerate it] from some whilst not from others.

"There was a time in our jurisprudence when judges had to remain silent," Victor said. "With the arrival of the constitutional era, this changed. Even prior to it, judges have spoken out against immoral laws such as apartheid."

To her, "Judicial officers, as guardians of civil liberties and freedom, aren't barred from engaging in extra-judicial activities in which they speak out. Indeed, they have a duty to speak out when these rights are violated because, in doing so, they preserve the integrity of the bench. Judges frequently speak out on topics such as gender-based violence, sexual orientation, poverty, homelessness, and other socio-economic issues. They do so through their judgments and often in public addresses. If this is to be construed as political interference, political controversy, or a transgression of the separation of powers, then the limitations placed on a judge would be extreme and draconian indeed."

Local antisemitism expert and emeritus professor of history at the University of Cape Town, Milton Shain, has written extensively about the double standards applied to this case. "If Mogoeng had ventured a political comment on the Myanmar or Ukrainian/Russian conflict, it would have been met with silence," he says. "We have seen judge after judge entering the political field in the past. Judge Desai, for example, has spoken up on behalf

of the Palestinians without so much as a peep from those who challenged Mogoeng. When one country is regularly singled out, and when that country is the only Jewish state, this is antisemitism in effect if not in intent."

"The Helen Suzman Foundation is of the view that the minority decision [Victor's] was persuasive in that it considered the comments made by former Chief Justice Mogoeng in their whole context," Ramsden said. "Silencing a judge may lead to a situation where our democracy isn't enhanced but actually degraded."

She said the only other legal option open to Mogoeng at this stage would be to review the decision. "A review isn't an appeal, and he would have to motivate why the decision reached by the majority was irregular and irrational. If he feels strongly enough, he would most likely use every option available to vindicate himself."

Asked about its impact on the case against retired Judge Siraj Desai, she said, "The complaints against Judge Desai are distinctly similar. Both are accused of having breached the code by engaging in political controversy. The Judicial Conduct Appeal Committee's decision in respect of former Chief Justice Mogoeng will likely be extremely persuasive in any deliberations in respect of Judge Desai."

South African Zionist Federation (SAZF) National Chairperson Rowan Polovin said, "The SAZF is dismayed at the ruling against former Chief Justice Mogoeng which effectively censors comments made in the public discourse that are deemed to be pro-Israel. This is an attempt to silence any public figure in South Africa who expresses 'balance' or support for Israel by making him or her out to be a pariah.

"The former chief justice's comments weren't in themselves politically controversial, but were made so by the antisemitic BDS [Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions] movement. The consequences of this ruling may have a chilling effect on our judiciary and serve to embolden extremist groups wishing to make politically motivated accusations. We welcome the minority opinion from Judge Victor."

MOST SA JEWS (BOTH OF ASHKENAZI AND SEPHARDI HERITAGE) ARE ELIGIBLE TO REINSTATE EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP AND, ACCORDINGLY, AN EU PASSPORT.

A common misconception is that European citizenship and EU passports can only be obtained if one has documents providing his/her lineage. The fact is that not having any documents proving lineage, doesn't lead to disqualification of eligibility. Jews of Ashkenazi heritage can rely on documents obtained in Lithuania or Poland.

Jews of Sephardi heritage need no proof at all!

In his experience, the majority of South African Jews are descendants of Jews whose European citizenship was illegally deprived, and therefore they are entitled to reinstate it, and accordingly obtain an EU passport.



Adv. Horesh has been operating in SA market with the Jewish community since March 2018. He arrives regularly to South Africa, and can meet in person with Jews who are interested to do so.

Ashkenazi: This ad refers to Jews of Polish & Lithuanian heritage only.

The most important thing is the understanding that prior to the end of WW-I, the European map was very different than the one we know today. Countries like Poland and Lithuania did not exist as independent countries, and until 1918 these territories were only known as Lithuanian or Polish regions/counties of the Great Russian Empire who ruled all of north eastern Europe. Accordingly, until 1918, residents of these territories were Russian citizens, as Polish and Lithuanian citizenships didn't exist. Therefore, since applications for reinstatement of these citizenships can only be based on whether one's ancestor was a Polish or Lithuanian citizen, whoever is a descendant of an ancestor who left Europe prior to 1918 will not be eligible.

In addition, it is highly important to remember that since borders in Europe were shifted once again during and after WW-II, one's eligibility for Polish or Lithuanian citizenship depends on the city from which his/her ancestor hailed. Horesh explains: Shifted borders resulted in cities changing nationalities, and that the resultant effect for descendants of Jews left Vilnius is that their application for Lithuanian citizenship will be declined whereas a similar



Adv. Avi Horesh is an Israeli attorney, who lived in Poland for seven years. Horesh is recognised in Israel as one of the leading lawyers in the field of reinstatement of European citizenship.

application for reinstatement of Polish citizenship may very well be approved! Horesh has an in-depth knowledge and a full understanding of European immigration laws.

Sephardi: This ad refers to all Jews of Sephardi heritage – Jews who arrived from North Africa, the Middle East, Turkey, Greece, Italy, Yugoslavia, as well as many descendants of Jews who arrived from Holland and the UK.

Most descendants of Sephardi Jews (who were exiled 500 years ago) are eligible to reinstate Portuguese citizenship and, accordingly, an EU passport. If applicable, Adv. Horesh will apply for (on behalf of the applicant) an official certificate confirming such eligibility, on the basis of which, an application for Portuguese citizenship is most likely to be approved. Horesh resides in Israel – a four-hour flight from Warsaw and Vilnius – enabling him to travel to Poland and Lithuania, as well as to Portugal, where he collaborates with local professionals who assist him in tracing documentation required for successful applications of reinstatement of European citizenship.

Adv. Horesh closely collaborates with professionals who assist him in tracing documentation in Europe required for successful applications of reinstatement EU citizenships.

My next visit to South Africa is planned for the end of January/beginning of February 2022.
WhatsApp me on +48 783 953 223 • Email Avi Horesh adv.avi.n.horesh@gmail.com

Principals inspired by matriculants of 2021

In the second year of the era of COVID-19, when schooling was challenged to the hilt, our matriculants did the community and their schools proud. Here's what principals had to say:



King David High School Victory Park, Andrew Baker

We celebrate the outstanding achievement of our entire matric class of 2021 in the Independent Examinations Board (IEB) final examinations. The students surpassed our expectations yet again in another year filled with seemingly insurmountable challenges.

We salute their tenacity. This remarkable group of students all achieved a personal best and, in spite of the difficulties presented by two years of interruptions to their schooling, they remained upbeat and optimistic. This is testament to their attitude and work ethic.

At the same time, we recognise the academic excellence of our top performers. Many students this year achieved a "full house" characterised by distinctions for every subject that they wrote. With a 100% pass rate and 100% BD (university entrance) pass rate, it's certainly no mean feat for 98% of the grade to achieve averages of 60% and over. *Mazaltov* to the entire group and *kol hakavod* to all their teachers!

King David High School Linksfield, Lorraine Srage

Every new year is an opportunity to set goals for the year ahead but in doing so, is also an opportunity to measure the year that was – 2021.

The years 2020 and 2021 will never be forgotten.

We had so many deviations from the norm and so many missed experiences but, as a school, we were determined to protect the integrity of the matric examinations.

In spite of the upheaval and anxiety over the past two years, the matrics acquired new skills and had new experiences. This was a group of students who showed resilience, courage, and determination. Their positivity, graciousness, and appreciation ensured their success.

I commend their courage in getting through both their Grade 11 and Grade 12 years as best as they could, and now that we're celebrating their success, we know that the sacrifices they made weren't in vain.

So often teachers are unsung heroes, but the pandemic

has proven the value of teachers at every level. I thank them for their excellence.

We aspire to recognise the diverse strengths of our students and for every student to reach their potential. We strive to create a love for learning, to nurture our students' creativity and self-expression, and to create future leaders.

We instil Jewish values so that every student leaves school with a connection to their Judaism and to Israel. We inspire a life of purpose so that they leave with a worth of kindness, respect, generosity of spirit, and a sense of community and nation building.

I wish all our matriculants all of Hashem's blessings as they embark on their new journey. *Mazeltov!*



Herzlia High School, Marc Falconer

We're delighted with the exceptional achievements of our 2021 matric group. In any year, these results would have been noteworthy; in the light of the extraordinary challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, the results of the 2021 group are truly commendable.

This group achieved the highest aggregate ever by any Herzlia matric cohort.

All pupils irrespective of the distinctions they achieve deserve to be commended for their resilience, grit, focus, and dedication to several years characterised by change, loss, grief, but also by adaptability, determination, innovation, and camaraderie.

It's important to commend the dedication, adaptability, and unquestioned investment in each of our matric cohort by the teachers in 2021, who offered a level of support far beyond the normal. It's also important to recognise the extraordinary work of the counselling and educational support department (SEED).

For many pupils who are part of our inclusive school, their matric results need to be understood in their specific context, and we're often more proud of these less easy to discern triumphs than the more obvious achievements.

It's also important to remember that our school is privileged. We have the resources, staff, and infrastructure to ensure that our teaching programme has been far less disrupted than in many other schools. For this we are extremely grateful.

Education is about these results, but also about the values, skills, habits, and relationships that our pupils take out into the world after they leave school.

Mazaltov to our matric group of 2021!



Torah Academy Girls High School, Morah Rebecca Sarchi

At Torah Academy Girls High School (TAGHS), success and happiness lies within the individual. Our students measure themselves against themselves, always striving to be the best student and person they can be. When that is achieved, they have been successful.

So to our matric class of 2021 – *yashar koach!* We salute your tenacity, perseverance, growth, courage, self-belief, and hard work. You aimed high, and achieved your goals. You have made TAGHS proud.

Combining a dual curriculum of *kodesh* and general studies isn't easy. You did it with commitment and dignity while still managing to get the marks you wanted.

So to our outgoing matric class, keep on working, and continue to flourish and contribute to the wider community.



Hirsch Lyons, Rabbi Steven Krawitz

According to conventional wisdom, excellent matric results in 2021 were achieved in spite of two years of COVID-19-related difficulties. Maybe we should look at the situation from a different perspective: as a result of COVID-19, our students excelled.

True satisfaction and sense of achievement happens when a person overcomes challenges to achieve his or her latent potential.

Every year, our students at Hirsch Lyons tackle a full Torah learning programme as well as the demanding IEB matric. Rising to the challenge of a double curriculum results in students who have grown far beyond their comfort zones and who are more than ready to tackle the challenges of full-time Torah learning in yeshivas and seminaries and eventually excelling at university too.

COVID-19 was one more hurdle for our students to rise above, not just to produce excellent matric results, but to strengthen their core and lock themselves into a dynamic growth process.

Matric results aren't just the achievement of students, teachers play an integral role too. At Hirsch Lyons, we firmly believe that all our teachers aren't merely sources of knowledge and skill to be "downloaded", but living, breathing texts. At this time, they truly modelled how to turn adversity into opportunity.

The 25 graduates of Hirsch Lyons 2021 achieved a 100% pass, and all students qualified for tertiary study.

Yeshiva College, Rob Long

Yeshiva College is especially proud of its matriculation class of 2021 and the well-rounded *menschen* that they have grown into. We celebrate their academic success as they reap the benefits of their hard work and resilience throughout their school careers and in particular over the past COVID-19 infected months.

We need to imbue our children with rich values and a deep sense of purpose. To this end, our school runs a full dual curriculum throughout our boys' and girls' high schools. Each student writes seven IEB matric subjects and studies a full *limudei kodesh* syllabus. Our students also participate in our extra-mural programme of sport and cultural activities. Over and above this, a number of students take advanced programme subjects that are offered in mathematics, physical sciences, and English.

Our closely knit class of 30 students amassed 107 distinctions amongst them, achieving an excellent average of 3.5 distinctions per student and maintaining the school's 100% matriculation pass rate. We're especially proud of our grade average of 76% across all subjects.

Our students graduate with a close group of friends, happy memories, and a well-balanced and Torah-infused education. We look forward to watching them go out into the world with the will to make a positive difference.



Torah Academy Boys High School, Rabbi Motti Hadar

I'm so proud of and humbled by the Torah Academy Boys High matrics of 2021, not just for their 100% IEB matric bachelor's degree pass rate and

for every student achieving distinctions. I'm proud of how they each reached their personal goals in spite of many challenges, all while maintaining their passion and involvement in Torah studies as well as in school and communal activities.

I'm most proud of who they are – their achievements,

results, *mentchlichkeit*, grit, and determination, sense of values, kindness, intellectual curiosity, and creativity, passion for life, and excitement for their future.

The matrics of 2021 have taught me much about what it means to make the most of every situation, apply yourself fully, do your best, and reach your goals.

Although two of their most crucial years – Grade 11 and 12 – were years of extraordinary change and challenges, they remained optimistic, hardworking, and focused. They inspired me every day.

Matrics, even more important than your results are the life lessons you have learnt. To make the most of every situation, to apply yourself fully to whatever you do, to be flexible and adapt to change, to be resilient and maintain focus, and to remain positive and determined to do your best and reach your goals no matter the circumstances.

CONGRATS TO OUR MATRICS

ON THEIR OUTSTANDING RESULTS

1574 DISTINCTIONS NATIONALLY

- 1 STUDENT ACHIEVED 10 DISTINCTIONS
- 6 STUDENTS ACHIEVED 9 DISTINCTIONS
- 26 STUDENTS ACHIEVED 8 DISTINCTIONS
- 38 STUDENTS ACHIEVED 7 DISTINCTIONS

OPEN DAYS: 28 JAN | 18 FEB

If you want to create the best possible version of your child, come in for a chat.

Visit crawfordinternational.co.za for details.

Crawford

International

Every child a masterpiece

If there were distinctions for character, we would have a full house



RABBI RICKY SEEFF

OPINION

Matric results. Words that conjure up a plethora of emotions within the Jewish community – the students, their families, teachers, and many excited onlookers. It's these results that are the culmination of a 12-year journey through the schooling system, representing graduation from one phase of life to the next. For many students, it's these results that dictate the career path they take. High stakes indeed.

This has been the status quo of matric for decades. It would have been inconceivable two years ago how the educational landscape would change and how matric students would have faced this most important year compounded with additional challenges unlike any group before them. The class of 2021 had their entire Grade 11 and Grade 12 years within a pandemic which was disruptive to say the least. Unpredictable

educationally, unsettling socially, and often traumatic emotionally. These results are historic. These students have made history.

Though the results are a testament to the immense talent we have in our community and the superb instruction in the Jewish school system, they speak volumes about the tenacity, will, resilience, and commitment of our youth. They reveal the real success of matric, which is often overlooked.

Matric isn't a factory for results that adorn the papers and gives parents *nachas* and schools pride. Matric is a training ground for character development.

This generation is often derided as lazy, self-centred, entitled, and fickle. They are immersed in their screens and their social lives take place primarily in the virtual realm, robbing them – so we say – of meaningful, deep relationships and the ability to connect.

However, perhaps we're viewing them and the importance of school through a distorted lens. Perhaps this matric class and this generation have the exact temperament and skill set needed to progress, lead, and change our world. Particularly a post-pandemic world.

The pandemic has thrust the world into a state of flux. Our new reality of unpredictability has exposed the fallibility and frailty of governments and industry leaders as they scramble for solutions to contain and reassure their anxious populations and stakeholders. The systems and processes that provided security and predictability for so long no longer do so.

Another critical failing that has been exposed over the past two years is inequality. Rich nations have monopolised vaccine supplies to the detriment of poorer countries. Wealthier citizens have had the ability



to respond to the educational, financial, and social consequences of COVID-19, while those below the poverty line continue to languish in its wake with little sign of redemption from these hardships.

This is the context in which our superb class of 2021 is graduating. A world that's confused, rudderless, and deeply unequal.

When I reflect on my matric experience, it looked fundamentally different to that experienced by students today. I worked hard, but not as hard as them. Acceptance to the course of my choice was a virtual guarantee, not because I was smart, but because there was little competition and there weren't rigorous quota requirements. I recognised that we were privileged to have attended excellent schools like King David, but I don't think I was aware of South Africa's complexity and the challenges it would face as a new democracy. There was a sense of optimism for the future.

Today's matric students in our Jewish schools work harder than all those that came before them. They face stiffer competition, quota systems, a tougher job market, and a world of uncertainty. They constantly push themselves to achieve greater results, often experiencing tremendous pressure, to ensure that they increase their chances of future success (we will leave discussions about extra-lessons for another time). They have navigated a pandemic and managed to learn online, socialise, and collaborate online – something that has no precedent in modern times.

They have grown up in South Africa, a country in desperate need of leadership. The headlines of corruption, state capture, poverty, inequality, and poor

service delivery have been their reading material and Shabbat table talk. They are aware of and encounter this reality daily.

It's with this perspective that I believe that today's students are poised to make their mark on society – aided by their matric experience and what it is at its core.

Their social-media exposure has increased the social challenges they have faced, but also, paradoxically, it has helped to develop character. They have been exposed to the entire world – its opportunities and shortcomings – and are more in touch with trends in technology, business, social welfare, (and selfie technique), all in the palm of their hands, more than their parents ever were.

The combination of tenacity and determination needed to pass matric in the face of historic obstacles, the rapid development

of digital skills, a flexible mindset, and the awareness of the problems the world faces have truly created – by default and design – a group of young people who have the skills to be the future leaders of our world.

We need a new generation of leaders who understand the digital world and its unlimited promise. Leaders who are empathetic to the plight of others, who are moral and ethical. Leaders who are entrepreneurial and flexible. Leaders who aren't afraid to work hard, who roll up their sleeves to get the job done.

It's hard to predict what matric might look like in the future once this pandemic has left us. What we can know with certainty is that our students will need to work harder than ever before, and they will need to be supported by their families and

our schools to do so. They will need to increase their skills in the digital sphere and in entrepreneurship, to have more opportunities to do outreach, and more opportunities to develop character and empathy.

Our students have developed these skills on their journey through our Jewish schools, but particularly in matric. While their amazing results are the metric for their hard work and the dedication of their teachers and parents, there's sadly no objective measure of the character, empathy, and flexibility they have gained over the course of this year. We cannot give them distinctions for being outstanding people of immense potential – but if we could they would get a full house.

Rabbi Chanina in the Mishna in Pirkei Avot (Chapter 3:14) says, "Whoever is fear

of sin precedes their wisdom, then their wisdom will last. If their wisdom precedes their fear of sin, their wisdom will fade." These wise words indicate that in the eyes of the Torah, character and ethical behaviour are both a prerequisite for and the foundation of sustained wisdom. Only results built upon character have lasting value.

I have often been asked whether matric is easier now than it was back then due to the high number of distinctions. I believe that it's harder than ever. Our kids from this oft-derided generation are just better than we were in more ways than we realise.

• Rabbi Ricky Seeff is the general director of the South African Board of Jewish Education and former principal of King David Primary School Victory Park.

HIRSCH LYONS				
SEVEN DISTINCTIONS	SIX DISTINCTIONS	FOUR DISTINCTIONS	THREE DISTINCTIONS	ONE DISTINCTION
Yaakov Krengel: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, IT, LO, Maths, Physical Sciences.	Simi Schneider: English, History, IT, LO, Maths, Physical Sciences.	Chaya Krost: English, CAT, Hebrew, LO.	Eli Poyurs: Hebrew, IT, LO.	Areyh Berkowitz: IT.
HOËRSKOOL DRIE RIVIERE (Vereeniging, Gauteng)		EDENVALE HIGH SCHOOL		ST JOHN'S COLLEGE
SIX DISTINCTIONS Liron Freedman: Afrikaans FAL, LO, Maths, Accounting, Physical Sciences, Life Sciences.		THREE DISTINCTIONS Danielle Furman: Accountancy, History, and LO.		NINE DISTINCTIONS Joseph Goldblatt: English Home Language, History, isiZulu SAL, LO, Maths, Physical Sciences and Visual Arts, AP Maths, AP English

CRAWFORD SANDTON

EIGHT DISTINCTIONS



Joseph Palos: English, Afrikaans, Business Studies, History, Life Sciences, LO, Maths, Physical Sciences.

SEVEN DISTINCTIONS



Megan Kramer: English, Afrikaans, Business Studies, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Sciences.

SEVEN DISTINCTIONS



Michael Tankle: English, Afrikaans, Accounting, History, LO, Maths, Physical Sciences.

SIX DISTINCTIONS



Jared Rolfe: English, History, Life Sciences, LO, Maths, Physical Sciences.

SIX DISTINCTIONS



Alexa Snider: English, Afrikaans, Business Studies, Dramatic Arts, History, LO.

SIX DISTINCTIONS



Cole Wasserman: English, Accounting, Business Studies, Geography, Maths, LO.

FIVE DISTINCTIONS



David Jankelowitz: English, Business Studies, History, LO, Maths.

FIVE DISTINCTIONS



Romy Maron: English, Business Studies, Dramatic Arts, History, LO.

FOUR DISTINCTIONS



Alona Bahat: English, Hebrew, History, LO.

FOUR DISTINCTIONS



Janna Lasarow: English, Business Studies, Dance Studies, LO.

THREE DISTINCTIONS



Daniel Hack: Dramatic Arts, LO, Maths Lit.

ONE DISTINCTIONS



Adam Berger: IT.

ONE DISTINCTIONS



Saul Cohen: Maths Lit.

CRAWFORD LONEHILL

EIGHT DISTINCTIONS



Talia Powell: English, Afrikaans, Accounting, LO, IT, Maths, Physical Sciences, AP Maths.

ONE DISTINCTIONS



Seth Gorton: LO.

ONE DISTINCTIONS



Amber Hesselberg: Dance Studies.

ONE DISTINCTIONS



Julia Platt: LO.

ONE DISTINCTIONS



Adi Shaff: LO.

ONE DISTINCTIONS



Daniel Shapiro: LO.

CRAWFORD LA LUCIA

ONE DISTINCTIONS



Sebastian Frank Isack: Maths Lit.

IF WE ARE THE
SCHOOL OF CHOICE

SHOULDN'T YOU
CHOOSE TO VISIT US?



OPEN DAYS: 28 JAN | 18 FEB

If you want to create the best possible version of your child, come in for a chat. Visit crawfordinternational.co.za to book your personalised tour.

Crawford International Bryanston (Grade 0000 - 0) | Crawford International Bedfordview (Grade 000 - 9) | Crawford International Fourways (Grade 000 - 7) | Crawford International La Lucia (Grade 0000 - 12) | Crawford International Lonehill (Grade 0000 - 12) | Crawford International Pretoria (Grade 0000 - 12) | Crawford International Ruimsig (Grade 0000 - 12) | Crawford International Sandton (Grade 000 - 12) | Crawford International North Coast (Grade 000 - 12) | Boarding from Grade 7 - 12



Crawford
International

Follow your passion and get tech-savvy, experts say

SAUL KAMIONSKY

Though some say an international qualification is needed to get ahead, others say you can follow your passion without a degree and still be hugely successful.

There are many options. Suffice to say going to a local university isn't the only one anymore.

"Many companies, especially international ones, are removing the need for a university degree as an entry criterion," says Dr Graeme Codrington, the chief executive of TomorrowToday Global and an expert in the future of work. "For example, you can become a chartered accountant in the United Kingdom without a degree."

He contends that matrices shouldn't be asking themselves, "What degree should I study?" Instead, they should be pondering the skills and qualifications they need to pursue their passion.

"The concept of ikigai is useful here," says Codrington. "It's a Japanese model designed to help people find life fulfilment and looks at four interlocking areas – what am I good at, what do I enjoy doing, what can I get paid for, and what does the world need. The sweet spot is to find something where all four of these aspects overlap."

Codrington says it's crucial to be tech-savvy, no matter what career you choose. "Becoming a programmer or technology expert might be the very best way to ensure your employability in the future," he says. "Not many of the world's best programmers needed university degrees."

Some old-school thinkers might still prefer to employ graduates. "This mindset is diminishing with each passing year," says Codrington. "The advantage of thinking beyond university as the best, or even 'only' option is that you open a door to a massive new list of opportunities which might be much better suited to a young person's skills, interests, capabilities, and budget."

However, Liza Manoussis, the founder of Global Education, says, "If you have an international education and you apply to a company that has 300 applications, it's going to put your application on the top because you're bringing something it doesn't have."

COVID-19, the internet, and advances in technology have opened the doors to many new "mind-blowing" potential career paths, says Manoussis. "We've got something called pedagogical science – studying methods of teaching, gaming, and how minds acquire new information. There's a Bachelor of Jurisprudence – combined law subjects with non-law subjects. We've got wireless microwave vacuum engineering, and the list goes on."

She says the overseas options available to students are "everything and anything". "From hairdressing to medicine to whatever they want. They can do aircon refrigeration, which is vocational study."

COVID-19 has shown people that you can stay at home and connect with others via digital meetings, says Codrington. "It has taught young people that they can do online



Dr Graeme Codrington

career disappear entirely. "Almost every career will be effected by automation, artificial intelligence – I prefer to refer to it as intelligent assistance – and algorithms. Certain tasks will be able to be done by machines. So, instead of being concerned about which careers will



education. This should have the effect of opening people's minds to search for and complete more online training programmes. It will also mean that more online courses are available."

Codrington is convinced that advances in technology won't make any

disappear or become obsolete, whatever your chosen career, focus on pushing your knowledge and experience to the technological edge of that field. Make sure you are comfortable with how technology will be integrated into your chosen field, and even be part of making this a reality."

If you want to become a doctor, for example, Codrington suggests, "While you are studying, focus on doing electives and additional courses in medical robotics, software programming, or data analytics. All of these will be hugely valuable in your medical career, and might open doors to future-focused aspects of your chosen field. The same would be true if you are a lawyer, accountant, or plumber."

Manoussis advises matriculants to



Liza Manoussis

choose a career path they're passionate about. "Don't be driven by how much money you are going to make. You can go to the best university and do a degree that you aren't interested in, but how do you sell yourself? At the end of the day, you've got to get a job. If you can't sell yourself in something you enjoy, you *ain't* going to get anywhere."

Massive change afoot in the hallways of education

TALI FEINBERG

One of the most deeply-felt reverberations of the pandemic has been on education. While students, teachers, and parents spent those long months of lockdown at home, the very foundation of education was being broken and put back together in new ways.

Traditional schooling is just one of many options that are opening up now and into the future.

A freelancer (speaking on condition of anonymity) who has been involved in a new local online high school that launched two weeks ago says 5 000 local and international students have signed up, and it has been a thrilling time for all involved.

"What school takes on 5 000 new students first time?" she asks rhetorically. She puts it down to technology, and says that "miraculously, there have been very few teething issues".

"These parents and pupils are trailblazers, joining an online high school for the first time," she says. The students are from all demographics, even from overseas. "They have to write final exams in person at exam centres, and these parents have said, 'That's fine, we'll fly our kids in!'"

Many of the students are pupils whose lives no longer align with traditional schooling. They could be kids whose parents travel a lot, children who do sports or hobbies which take up a lot of their time, those who are marginalised in some way – for example, LGBTQI+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex) teens – or kids who were being home-schooled.

The many jobs a teacher does in a traditional school are now divided up amongst a number of professionals – one designs the course, one teaches, one is in charge of the child's emotional well-being, and there's even one person who just focuses on marking and remediation.

Online school is for students who are able to work independently and are self-motivated, she says. "You can work at any time of the day or night, from anywhere, but you have to put in the work and be in charge of your own education. There's only so much the school can do. It's all online – there are no live classes. All the lessons are animated and pre-made. Then there is weekly moderation to ensure students are keeping up. If not, they attend small live group sessions or one-on-one sessions with support coaches. The lessons are interactive, with videos, multiple choice questions, and so on."

There are many advantages to online high school, including working at your own pace, finishing a term early, getting used to the independent learning of university, and surprisingly low fees.

Being part of something so revolutionary is "sometimes cool and sometimes scary", she says. At this stage, there's no matric offering as a school can offer matric only after being established for a year. But she notes that online schools are becoming a phenomenon worldwide and will become just one option of many in the years to come.

Caryn Gootkin was one of the early adopters of online school for her son (16). Her daughter still goes to a traditional Jewish school. "It's a fully purpose-built

online high school. We started just before the pandemic," she says. "My son was part of the first cohort. He joined in junior high, which is an 18-month international qualification. They follow a United Kingdom curriculum."

"It suited us. My son's temperament wasn't suited to a brick-and-mortar school. He's much happier working on his own from home. It gives him lots of flexibility. It's not home-schooling – I have no part in his education. They've got their online classroom, he has live lessons every day, he has classmates and teachers – the only difference is that they're each sitting in their own location."

For Amanda Weltman, home-schooling became part of the way her family navigated the rollercoaster of the pandemic. When the leadership of her children's Jewish

approach, and now we are questioning whether we would even consider traditional schooling.

"We're not 'traditional' home-schoolers, but rather have loosely followed an approach known as 'unschooling'," they say. "This approach essentially values self-directed learning, particularly through unstructured play, with a strong focus on nature and innate trust in a child's capacity and desire to learn. This has allowed us to follow our son's interests and nurture his curiosity instead of imposing on him what we think he should learn. In an odd way, COVID-19 seemed to endorse our home-schooling journey. The 'unschooling', nature-based approach we have followed has meant that our son has had an enormous sense of freedom over the past two years."

"COVID-19 also revealed how many incredible resources are available online. Our primary challenge has been socialisation, and we have attempted to counter this through regular meet-ups with other families following a similar philosophy to ours as well as through extra-mural activities such as Forest School, which he attends weekly."

"Another challenge has been his Jewish education. We understand that we will need, at some stage, to outsource parts of his Jewish education. However, in our home, Judaism plays a central role in terms of how we think about the world. We encourage our son to grapple with concepts such as what Hashem is, what Hashem

wants from the Jewish people, and what our role and responsibility as Jews is."

Technology has been one of the forces that have heralded this education revolution. But according to local tech expert Arthur Goldstuck, "there are two sides to this coin. If you have good connectivity and a teacher who understands how to make it work, then it's not difficult to make the transition. But large sectors of our population don't have that."

He says teaching with technology requires a whole new methodology that needs to be taught – to teachers. "Teachers aren't properly trained in how to use technology and teach remotely. They continue using the same style, techniques, and content that they do in a regular classroom. But it should be blindingly obvious to educators that they need to adapt their style and content in a virtual environment."

Another issue is that "children have to develop both the skills and mindset to learn in this environment. But if you are geared for online learning, incredible new opportunities are opening up."

Still, he thinks that the average South African family won't jump on the alternate education train just yet. "The typical family will prefer physical school for social interaction, sport, and needs like a Jewish education. In the longer term, there will probably be a move to a true 'hybrid' education, where kids attend school but also learn virtually."

He emphasises that "the most important attribute for the future is to be flexible to new ways of doing things. Don't try to hold onto outmoded ways of thinking." He predicts that people will turn to online courses and learning throughout their careers to continue up-skilling and adapting to a changing world.



school announced in mid-2020 that they were closing at the end of the year, she decided to home-school her sons (then in Grades 2 and 3) for the next two terms.

"We registered them with the Department of Basic Education as home-schoolers. We followed our own curriculum although we also had lists to track what they needed to learn. They started school at the beginning of 2021. We then home-schooled them again for some of the third term. This was because the Delta variant was circulating, and I was in my third trimester of pregnancy [so it was safest]. This time, the school provided the curriculum. They went in for tests. They did really well, and it was a smooth transition back to school."

"It's been lovely home-schooling them and in an ideal world, I would have been happy to home-school them permanently," she says. "But because my husband and I both work full-time, it would have been too demanding to put in the full energy required. I also think it's important for them to be exposed to other peers, adults, social activities, and sport. As much as I loved teaching them, I want to keep my 'mom' role as my primary role!" Her children have had private lessons with a local rabbi to ensure continuity of their Jewish education.

She notes that "there's a huge home-schooling community and always has been. It's obviously growing even more now."

David Jacobson and Heidi-Jane Esakov-Jacobson have always educated their son at home. "We have never sent our six-year-old to school, but always had the intention – at some stage – to send him. The longer we delayed sending him to school, the more we realised that we didn't want to rely on the schooling system to be a primary source of his educational and social values. At the same time, we witnessed the enormous value of our

REDHILL

EIGHT DISTINCTIONS



Rachel Hertz: Afrikaans, Dramatic Arts, English, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Sciences, Tci Practical 7 (Music).

SIX DISTINCTIONS



Liam Segal: English, Business Studies, Geography, History, LO, Maths.

FIVE DISTINCTIONS



Joshua Lawrence: English, Business Studies, History, IT, LO.

FIVE DISTINCTIONS



Elijah Sherman: Business Studies, English, IT, LO, Life Sciences.

TWO DISTINCTIONS



David Kirsch: Business Studies, LO.

TWO DISTINCTIONS



Elle Velalis: Dramatic Arts, LO.

CLASS OF 2021: INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE (IB) RESULTS



Teagan Noach
42 points out of a possible 45.



Danielle Zaslansky
42 points out of a possible 45.

Redhill excels on international level

Redhill School has excelled on an international level with its class of 2021 International Baccalaureate (IB) results.

The school's class of 2021 IB students achieved an exceptional average point score of 37 out of a potential 45. In addition to these outstanding results, five of the 18 students achieved a score of 40 points or more, placing them amongst the top students internationally.

These results place Redhill's IB students in a category where a student scoring the average alone would qualify for consideration by some of the top universities around the world. More than 66% of students scored 36 points and above, the benchmark result for access to some of the most prestigious universities in the United Kingdom and United States.

The school couldn't be more proud of both students and teachers for these extraordinary results, says Executive Head Joseph Gerassi.

"Redhill is currently the only South African school to offer students the option of graduating with either an Independent Examinations Board matric or IB Diploma. While offering two very different curricula and navigating the various staffing and venue challenges that arise, it's incredibly rewarding to see our students excel on an international level while also potentially gaining access to some of the very best universities in the world," Gerassi says.

"Our students' success comes after two extremely challenging years that required them to dig deep, navigate between online, hybrid, and on-campus learning, and partner with their peers in new ways to achieve their full potential. Not only have they earned the respect of Redhill teachers, they have also inspired students following in their footsteps who have witnessed their journey and learned from their example."

Gerassi says two of the top-five students have applied to international universities, one in the United States and one in Canada, while the remaining three have opted to study in South Africa.

"The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme isn't just for students wishing to study abroad but also those wanting to drive their own learning, learn to think critically and solve complex problems, become more culturally aware and able to engage with people in an increasingly globalised, rapidly-changing world, and develop strong academic, social, and emotional characteristics that will serve them throughout their lives going forwards."

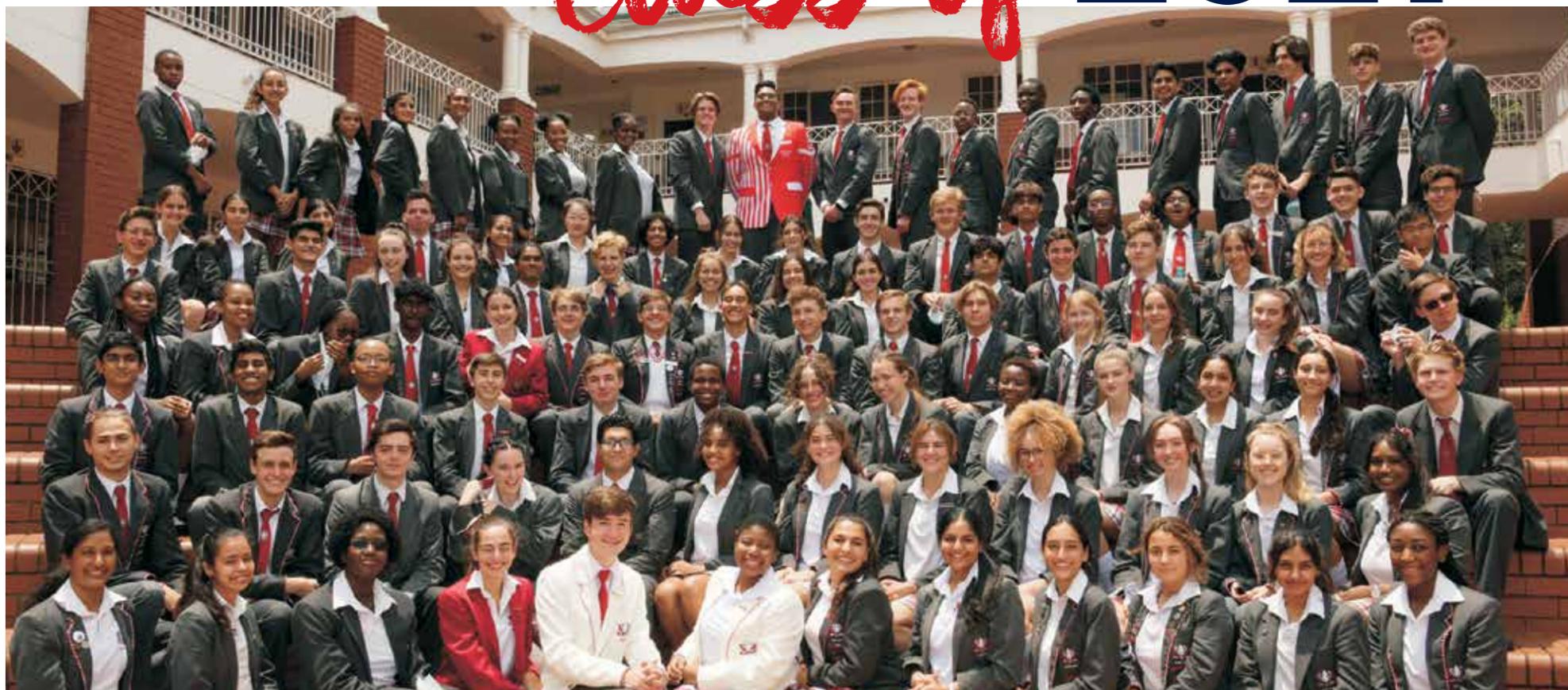
Redhill's IEB Class of 2021 also achieved exceptional results with 100% university entrance (Bachelor Degree pass) and

five students receiving an Outstanding Achievement Award. This is awarded to students who achieved within the top 5% of IEB candidates in South Africa in six or more subjects, and achieved a rating level of 7 in Life Orientation.

In addition to this, 13% of students received a full house (7 or more distinctions), 35% of students received an A average, 76% of students received a B average or above, and 86% of students received at least one distinction.

"I am extremely proud of all the students who made up the Class of 2021, both those in the IB and IEB," concludes Gerassi. "I will remember them for their determination, commitment, passion and fun-loving attitude that will forever leave a mark on the school. These young men and women have been successful in all they have done, whether it was on the sports field, on the stage or in the classroom. They have set the benchmark for future success and will leave our school as proud Redhillians, free to build, and ready to take on the world."

MATRIC *Class of* 2021



»»» 100%

university entrance
(Bachelor Degree pass)

»»» 35%

of students received
an A average

»»» 76%

of students received
a B average
or above

»»» 13%

of students received
a full house
(7 or more distinctions)

»»» 86%

of students received
at least
one distinction



OPEN DAY FOR GRADE 8 (2023): »»» Monday 7 February 2022 at 17:00

20 Summit Rd, Morningside | admissions@redhill.co.za | www.redhill.co.za

Redhill School
INNOVATE • EDUCATE • CONTRIBUTE

KING DAVID HIGH SCHOOL VICTORY PARK



Jayden Arenson



Liat Benbenishti



Rivka Berelowitz



Jacob Berkowitz



Jayden Berman



Joshua Bild



Samuel Class



Aerin Cohen



Dannica De Aguiar



Katelin Drinkwater



Ilan Fainman



Angie Fisher



Isabella Goldberg



Gabriel Gordon



Michaela Grasko



Judd Greenhill



Jacob Hamlyn



Loren Hrustinszky



Faryn Isakow



Noah Judin



Daniel Kamener



Amira Karstaedt



Gabriel Katz



Michael Katz



KING DAVID VICTORY PARK

www.kingdavid.org.za

email: vpmarketing@sabje.co.za

Tel: 011-4467865



OUR SIZE IS OUR STRENGTH

● INDIVIDUAL RECOGNITION

● 21ST CENTURY LEARNING

● JEWISH ROOTS

KING DAVID HIGH SCHOOL VICTORY PARK



Dina Kay

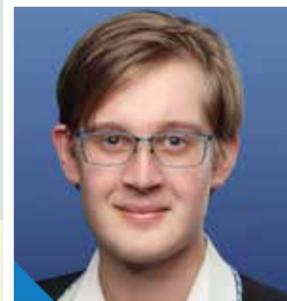
Evan Koton

Aron Lazer

Ethan Lewis

Tamir Lipschitz

Lucy Macrae



Mia Martheze

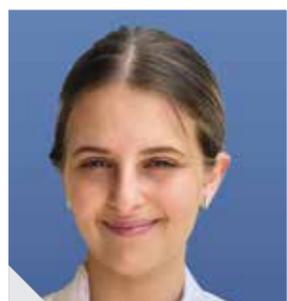
Rowan Mervis

Amber Michel

India Milne

Aiden Milner

Sarah Nathan



James Norwitz

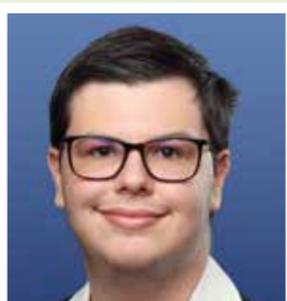
Paris Obel

Max Perlov

Savanah Robbins

Levi Rosenthal

Adam Rozentvaig



Alexander Sack

Talia Sitsakis

Daniel Steele

Daniel Sundelson

Micayla Taylor

Eli Worms



100% BD Pass rate
(University Entrance)



49 candidates wrote the NSC Examinations



11 subject results were in the Top 1% of all IEB candidates



2 students placed on the IEB Commendable List



1 student placed on the IEB Outstanding List



93.75% of all students achieved an average of **60%** and above



Average of **3.67** distinctions per candidate



180 individual subject distinctions out of **368** individual subject results



Full House 14.29%

MAZAL TOV MATRIC 2021



100% BD Pass ...100% Prepared for Life

Open Day: 19 May 2022

vpmarketing@sabje.co.za | 011 466-7865
www.kingdavid.org.za



“Never give up,” says cancer survivor who wrote matric six years later

PETA KROST MAUNDER AND SAUL KAMIONSKY

He was the King David High School Victory Park (KDHSVP) matric student most likely to become anything he set his sights on. In 2015, Jarred Wood was popular, looked up to, excellent academically, on the stage, and in his boy band, Goldilox.

He was charismatic, and everyone knew and admired him. That's until his worst nightmare came true.



Jarred Wood

He fell down stairs, bumped his head, and developed a haematoma. When going for x-rays, the doctors did further tests to find he had a brain tumour. “When I heard cancer and brain tumour, I thought I was going to die – never leaving the hospital. I was terrified,” Wood told the *SA Jewish Report* this week on celebrating getting his matric six years later.

He remembers the date as 20 October 2015. He had just turned 18. He found out he had Stage 4 cancer and they initially said there was little they could do and that he had two months to live without an operation. If he had the operation, he wouldn't live past 20.

However, through some miracle, his brain formed a sheath around the tumour and stopped it metastasising which meant it could be successfully removed and he could recover.

“I wasn't willing to die,” Wood, now 24, said. “I had and have way too much to do in my life. I was willing to do whatever it took to heal, but I was going to heal no matter what. Then I was going to get on with my life.”

He had the tumour removed, and then literally had to start all over again. “I was in hospital for six weeks, and spent a year at home. My vision went funky and I had no energy. I wasn't able to walk, or even make a cup

of tea. After a year, people still asked me if I was 100%, but I still feel like I'm in recovery,” he said.

He soon became sick and tired of being upstairs at home every day on his own, so he practiced getting up and down the stairs until he could do it.

Wanting to find something to get him out of the house, he accepted a part-time job at a music store in Illovo. “It got my mind working again, got me looking at books and codes, and I had to work. It was great.”

He then went on to get a job in security, then in a banking firm, before taking on employment at a wholesale distributor, before going back to complete his matric.

“I didn't want to go back to matric,” he said. “I had so much anger. I was a really exceptional student back then, and didn't want to do it all over again. However, [KDHSVP deputy head of teaching and learning] Mandy Gruzd contacted me and told me to do my matric through King David, and they would do what they could to help me.”

And so he did. “They were amazing! They prioritised me and gave me the most amazing support. I didn't pay a cent, and whenever I needed help, they helped.”

He mostly studied online in the form of private lessons. “I think some of the kids at King David were aware of me because the teachers were proud of me and may have spoken about me.”

He chose not to be at the school because, he said, “I would have felt awkward.”

It wasn't easy for him as there were numerous stumbling blocks to learning post-tumour, but he persevered and eventually wrote his finals in a sanitised private venue at King David.

His journey has given him what he calls “a spiritual wake up call to be more appreciative”.

“I used to be quite arrogant and took so much for granted. I don't anymore,” he said.

He got mostly Bs and Cs in his matric, and has considered university at some point. “I used to want to go into music, but now I want to become an orthopaedic therapist. I taught myself to use my body again, now I want to help others.

“I'm cancer-free and excited about the rest of my life,” he said. “Getting diagnosed offered me a new path to share my story and tell people never to give up. I didn't think I would survive, but I was determined to, and I did. It's okay to fail, but don't stop trying.”

“Never give up”

SAUL KAMIONSKY

Lexi Davies, a kind, hardworking, friendly, popular student and the head of the Judaica committee at King David High School Linksfield, was about to write matric prelims in April 2021, when tragedy struck.

Her father was fatally shot in a robbery. Although it meant she lost her mentor, she managed to complete her duties as a student leader, and achieved six distinctions in her final exams.

No one can really tell you how to overcome a tragedy like losing your father, she says.

“You just have to overcome it yourself. I've tried to do my best in such a stressful time with a lot going on. But having a good support system and a lot of good friends and family to help you through it makes it so much easier. Also, just letting yourself know, ‘I will try my best, but if I don't get my best marks, or if I don't get what I want to, it's okay, it's not the end of the world.’”

She says she had “a very close relationship” with her dad. “Every time I had a sports match or something at school, he was always there for me. He was always the one to come and support. He would always be there shouting for me, and pushing me on. He played such an important role in my high school career because he would always make sure I did my best. He knew I was proud that he was proud of me. No matter how well I did, he was always proud of me, and always wanted to tell his friends.

“But he also made me tougher. He made me realise that sometimes you do have to work for things in life, you're not always going to get everything straight away, and some things don't come easily. He taught me not to give up and to have resilience.”

During her matric year, many of her lessons were online, but she could go in a lot more often than 2020.

She believes the pandemic made her situation easier and a bit harder. “People were a lot less strict about a lot of things because they knew there were often times when people couldn't make things and do things. A lot of people were more sympathetic, they learnt that sometimes you can't do everything. COVID-19 did help in that regard. But it also made it a

bit harder. Sometimes you couldn't see your friends and you couldn't be with people that you wanted to be with. That made it tough.”

She says the school and teachers were supportive. “Having a personal relationship with a lot of the teachers helped because they understood. I was able to talk to them and tell them that I was feeling a bit stressed or needed a bit more time here and there.”

The teachers responded by comforting, helping, and advising her without putting any pressure on Davies.

Her mother also played a big role. “She was going through her own thing, but she made sure my high school and matric year was amazing,” says Davies. “And all my friends were a big help.”

Being observant and the head of the Judaica committee taught Davies a lot of lessons. “I believe everything happens for a reason, and I do have a lot of faith, so I think that helped me get through everything.”

Originally, she wanted to study straight after matric, but after everything she experienced in a stressful year, she'll probably take a gap year. “I've been accepted to a few universities, but I think I just want to use the year to regroup and decide exactly what I want to do, where I want to focus. Maybe I'll au pair or tutor and do something constructive with my time.”



Lexi Davies

Yeshiva heads unite youth in support of Israel

SAUL KAMIONSKY

Yeshiva College's head boy, Akiva Fox, and head girl, Kayla Sifris, gave student representatives of each Jewish school in South Africa an opportunity to express their support for Israel during the upsurge of anti-Israel and antisemitic sentiment in South Africa last year.

In response to the vitriol following the outbreak of violence on the Israel-Gaza border in May 2021, Fox had the idea of uniting Jewish schools in support of Israel. So, he and Sifris crafted a powerful video of student representatives from each school passionately expressing support for Israel.

On 23 May, Fox read out a joint message from Jewish youth at the pro-Israel rally organised by the South African Zionist Federation at Beyachad in Johannesburg. “It was a powerful display of pride, hope, and support for Israel,” he says.

Sifris reached the international finals of the Chidon HaTanach, the Bible Quiz in Israel the previous year.

“The Tanach is the most magnificent book ever written, and it's incumbent upon every Jew to explore its pages to truly understand Jewish history and Hashem's *hashgacha*,” she says. “As I began my studies for the Chidon

HaTanach in Grade 8, I fell in love with the Tanach, and it was this passion that inspired me throughout my journey. I was incredibly privileged to be exposed to great rabbinic teachers through Yeshiva College who truly uplifted the level of my studies. It was these teachers alongside my passion for the majestic book that drove me to reach the international finals.”

Sifris was elected head girl of Yeshiva College amid the COVID-19 pandemic during September of the same year.

“School as we knew and loved it for the past 11 years had come to a sudden halt,” she says. “Our team committed ourselves not to let this pandemic detract from all the wonderful things the school has to offer its students. We innovated by pioneering a hybrid online assembly system which abided by COVID-19 regulations and ensured that the great tradition of Yeshiva College assemblies with guest speakers, Israel-advocacy workshops, and ‘big buddy, little buddy *tochniot*’

continued, as well as maintaining the fun and *gees* [spirit] Yeshiva College is famous for.”

As head boy, Fox was entrusted with making Yeshiva College proud. “This broad definition manifested in organising school-wide projects, representing the school at external events and, on a personal level, living in accordance with the school's core values,” he says.

Since he also headed up the unity and inspiration committee, he organised events and initiatives which helped fellow students connect to the Torah, Israel, and their Jewish identity.

“A matric year is stressful, but a matric year during COVID-19 while playing a leadership role in the school is extremely pressured,” he says. “However, my major success was not being brought down by all these challenges, but rather uplifted by them. Pushing through the

restrictions of COVID-19, our leadership group revolutionised the committee system at our school while also managing to maintain our academics. Most importantly, we were also able to have fun and take time to chill. In short, our major success was finding a way to enjoy a really difficult year.”

Sifris says it's difficult to pinpoint a singular success in a year filled with the challenges, interruptions, and uncertainty of COVID-19. “However, the fact that my matric year prevailed is testament to our grit in our final school year,” she says. “We never gave up. We kept our eye on the prize. We worked hard in our academics. We lent a hand to our friends. We laughed and had fun. We grasped every opportunity to give to our school and community. And we emerged as the second year of COVID-19 matriculants with both the glorious education and the *derech* [halachic lifestyle] of Yeshiva College to carry with us into our future. That will always be our greatest success.”

Online schooling is certainly a challenge, but Sifris and her fellow students were a lot more prepared last year, having become accustomed to Zoom schooling in 2020. “We were incredibly lucky that all our teachers went the extra mile to make sure

each of us were able to connect to lessons and understand the syllabi in spite of technical difficulties. Although we spent the majority of our school days in-person, to a large extent, my matric experience was a virtual one, with many after-school lessons on Zoom and classwork posted on Google Classroom.”

School last year was absolutely unique in both its challenges and opportunities, says Fox. “Being online for a significant period was certainly an obstacle, yet I and my classmates were extremely privileged to have all the correct facilities and devices to make it work. Though COVID-19 disrupted the year with its tumultuous peaks and relieving lows, my school and teachers made sure that all of us were more than prepared to excel in our matric year. More than just schoolwork, the year made me appreciate family and friends who helped to make a stressful time that much easier.”

Fox is excited to be learning at Yeshivat Har Etzion in Israel this year. “I'm doing it through Bnei Akiva's incredible MTA [Midreshet Tora v'Avodah] programme,” he says.

Sifris also aims to attend the Bnei Akiva MTA programme in Israel, studying at Midreshet HaRova in the Old City.



Akiva Fox



Kayla Sifris

KING DAVID HIGH SCHOOL LINKSFIELD

NINE DISTINCTIONS



Samara Jay: Accounting, English, Hebrew, History, IsiZulu, LO, Maths, Physical Sciences, AP Maths.

NINE DISTINCTIONS



Cody Levy: Afrikaans, Business Studies, English, Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Sciences, AP Maths.

NINE DISTINCTIONS



Daniel Strous: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, History, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Sciences, AP Maths.

NINE DISTINCTIONS



Riki Toubkin: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Sciences, AP English, AP Maths.

NINE DISTINCTIONS



Samuel Witt: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, IT, LO, Maths, Music external option, Physical Sciences, AP Maths.

NINE DISTINCTIONS



Shannon Wolpe: Accounting, Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Sciences, AP Maths.

EIGHT DISTINCTIONS



Talya Atie: Accounting, Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, History, LO, Maths, Physical Sciences.

EIGHT DISTINCTIONS



Daniel Azoulay: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, IT, LO, Maths, Physical Sciences, AP Maths.

EIGHT DISTINCTIONS



Jacob Boner: Accounting, Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, IT, LO, Maths, AP Maths.

EIGHT DISTINCTIONS



Gabriella Davis: Afrikaans, English, French, Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Sciences.

EIGHT DISTINCTIONS



Gabriel Etkind: Afrikaans, English, IT, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Sciences, AP Maths.

EIGHT DISTINCTIONS



Erin Hertz: Accounting, Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, History, LO, Maths, Physical Sciences.

EIGHT DISTINCTIONS



Demi Kaplan: Afrikaans, English, IT, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Sciences, AP English.

EIGHT DISTINCTIONS



Dylan Kruger: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Sciences, AP Maths.

EIGHT DISTINCTIONS



Ethan Meltzer: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, History, LO, Maths, Physical Sciences, AP Maths.

EIGHT DISTINCTIONS



Max Mendelow: Afrikaans, English, IT, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Sciences, AP Maths.

EIGHT DISTINCTIONS



Daniel Rakusin: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, History, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Sciences.

EIGHT DISTINCTIONS



Tanya Russo: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Sciences, AP Maths.

EIGHT DISTINCTIONS



Hanna-Abby Sass: Accounting, Afrikaans, Business Studies, English, Hebrew, LO, Maths, Physical Sciences.

EIGHT DISTINCTIONS



Benjamin Shmukler: English, Hebrew, IsiZulu, LO, Maths, Music, Physical Sciences, AP Maths.

EIGHT DISTINCTIONS



Shayna Slom: Accounting, Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, History, LO, Life Sciences, Maths.

SEVEN DISTINCTIONS



Jaime Aviv: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, History, LO, Life Sciences, Maths Lit.

SEVEN DISTINCTIONS



Jesse Brodtkin: Accounting, Afrikaans, English, History, LO, Maths, Physical Sciences.

SEVEN DISTINCTIONS



Liora Chertkow: English, Hebrew, IsiZulu, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Sciences.

SEVEN DISTINCTIONS



Raphael Da Costa: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Sciences.

SEVEN DISTINCTIONS



Kayla Feinberg: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Sciences.

SEVEN DISTINCTIONS



Joshua Frame: Afrikaans, English, History, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Sciences.

SEVEN DISTINCTIONS



Natanya Gaddin: Accounting, Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, LO, Maths, Physical Sciences.

SEVEN DISTINCTIONS



Gabriella Gordon: Afrikaans, English, History, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Sciences.

SEVEN DISTINCTIONS



Adam Hurwitz: Accounting, English, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Sciences, AP Maths.

SEVEN DISTINCTIONS



Daniel Jacobson: Accounting, Afrikaans, Business Studies, English, LO, Maths, Physical Sciences.

SEVEN DISTINCTIONS



Daniel Joseph: Accounting, Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, LO, Maths, Physical Sciences.

SEVEN DISTINCTIONS



Tyra Liebmann: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Sciences.

SEVEN DISTINCTIONS



Eden Lipshitz: Accounting, Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, History, LO, Maths.

SEVEN DISTINCTIONS



Eyal Mindel: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Sciences.

SEVEN DISTINCTIONS



Jamie Ossip: Accounting, Afrikaans, English, IT, LO, Maths, Physical Sciences.

SEVEN DISTINCTIONS



Ricky Sarakinsky: Accounting, Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, LO, Maths, Physical Sciences.

SEVEN DISTINCTIONS



Jenna Schloss: Afrikaans, English, Geography, Hebrew, History, LO, Maths.

SEVEN DISTINCTIONS



Megan Seef: Accounting, Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, LO, Maths, Physical Sciences.

SEVEN DISTINCTIONS



Adina Sender: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, IT, LO, Maths, Physical Sciences.

SEVEN DISTINCTIONS



Jamie Shur: Accounting, Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, LO, Maths, Physical Sciences.

SEVEN DISTINCTIONS



Tyla Shur: Accounting, Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, History, LO, Maths.

SEVEN DISTINCTIONS



Jayden Smith: Accounting, Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, LO, Maths, Physical Sciences.

SEVEN DISTINCTIONS



May Yuan-Klitzner: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, History, LO, Maths, Physical Sciences.

SEVEN DISTINCTIONS



Aiden Zeifert: Accounting, Afrikaans, English, IT, LO, Maths, Physical Sciences.

SIX DISTINCTIONS



Ilan Ben Melech: Accounting, English, Hebrew, IT, LO, Maths.

SIX DISTINCTIONS



Chad Bernitz: Afrikaans, Business Studies, English, History, LO, Life Sciences.

SIX DISTINCTIONS



Kelsey Bernitz: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, History, LO, Life Sciences.

KING DAVID HIGH SCHOOL LINKSFIELD

SIX DISTINCTIONS



Joshua Berson: Accounting, Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, History, LO.

SIX DISTINCTIONS



Samuel Bloch: Accounting, English, History, IT, LO, Maths.

SIX DISTINCTIONS



Dean Chilewitz: Accounting, Afrikaans, IT, LO, Maths, Physical Sciences.

SIX DISTINCTIONS



Lexi Davies: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences, Maths.

SIX DISTINCTIONS



Gabriella Friedman: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, History, LO, Life Sciences.

SIX DISTINCTIONS



Matthew Furman: Accounting, English, History, LO, Maths, Physical Sciences.

SIX DISTINCTIONS



Sophie Hoffmann: English, Hebrew, History, LO, Life Sciences, Maths.

SIX DISTINCTIONS



Benjamin Kallner: Afrikaans, Business Studies, English, History, LO, Maths Lit.

SIX DISTINCTIONS



Amy Katzman: Afrikaans, Hebrew, History, LO, Life Sciences, Maths Lit.

SIX DISTINCTIONS



Georgia Kerem: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, History, LO, Life Sciences.

SIX DISTINCTIONS



Zachary Kerr-Phillips: Afrikaans, Hebrew, LO, Maths, Music, Physical Sciences.

SIX DISTINCTIONS



Tanna Koonin: Afrikaans, Business Studies, English, Geography, LO, Maths Lit.

SIX DISTINCTIONS



Cassidy Levy: Afrikaans, Business Studies, English, History, LO, Life Sciences.

SIX DISTINCTIONS



Sabrina Molitano: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, History, LO, Life Sciences.

SIX DISTINCTIONS



Farra Rabinowitz: Afrikaans, Dramatic Arts, English, Hebrew, History, LO.

SIX DISTINCTIONS



Shaina Resnik: Consumer Studies, English, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Sciences.

SIX DISTINCTIONS



Chad Silver: Accounting, Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, History, LO.

FIVE DISTINCTIONS



Daniel Behr: Accounting, Business Studies, English, History, LO.

FIVE DISTINCTIONS



Ahron Biddle: Business Studies, Geography, Hebrew, LO, Maths Lit.

FIVE DISTINCTIONS



Tia Gekis: Accounting, English, Geography, IsiZulu, LO.

FIVE DISTINCTIONS



Talia Gingell: Dramatic Arts, English, Geography, LO, Maths Lit.

FIVE DISTINCTIONS



Hannah Lever: Dramatic Arts, English, History, LO, Maths Lit.

FIVE DISTINCTIONS



Natalia Levin: Afrikaans, English, History, LO, Life Sciences.

FIVE DISTINCTIONS



Saffron Lieberman: Business Studies, English, History, LO, Maths Lit.

FIVE DISTINCTIONS



Gabriella Mamulis: Afrikaans, Business Studies, English, History, LO.

FIVE DISTINCTIONS



Azriel Nafté: Business Studies, English, Geography, History, Maths Lit.

FIVE DISTINCTIONS



Doron Romberg: Accounting, Business Studies, English, Geography, LO.

FIVE DISTINCTIONS



Judd Rothbart: Accounting, Business Studies, English, Hebrew, LO.

FIVE DISTINCTIONS



Jake Shapiro: Accounting, English, History, LO, Maths.

FIVE DISTINCTIONS



Lia Solomon: Dramatic Arts, English, History, LO, Maths Lit.

FIVE DISTINCTIONS



Ricky Toker: Accounting, History, LO, Maths Lit, Visual Arts.

FOUR DISTINCTIONS



Daniel Bear: Accounting, History, LO, Maths Lit.

FOUR DISTINCTIONS



Georgia Berman: Business Studies, English, Hebrew, LO.

FOUR DISTINCTIONS



Jarred Berman: Business Studies, Computer Applications Technology, LO, Maths Lit.

FOUR DISTINCTIONS



Marc Blechman: Accounting, History, LO, Maths Lit.

FOUR DISTINCTIONS



Aron Defries: Accounting, English, LO, Maths.

FOUR DISTINCTIONS



David Eitzman: English, History, LO, Maths.

FOUR DISTINCTIONS



Kyle Godfrey: Accounting, Business Studies, Hebrew, LO.

FOUR DISTINCTIONS



Kerri Markowitz: Business Studies, Geography, LO, Maths Lit.

FOUR DISTINCTIONS



Zachary Myer: Business Studies, Hebrew, History, LO.

FOUR DISTINCTIONS



Alex Nowitz: Business Studies, English, History, LO.

FOUR DISTINCTIONS



Michael Rock: English, Geography, LO, Maths.

FOUR DISTINCTIONS



Cody Rosin: Business Studies, LO, Maths Lit, Tourism.

FOUR DISTINCTIONS



Jared Sandler: Geography, History, LO, Life Sciences.

FOUR DISTINCTIONS



Zisi Stein: English, History, LO, Maths.

FOUR DISTINCTIONS



Steve Superfain: Business Studies, History, LO, Maths Lit.

FOUR DISTINCTIONS



Amber Touyz: Business Studies, English, LO, Maths Lit.

THREE DISTINCTIONS



Ashley Block: History, LO, Maths Lit.

KING DAVID HIGH SCHOOL LINKSFIELD

THREE DISTINCTIONS Jade Copans: Afrikaans, English, LO.	THREE DISTINCTIONS Adam Drieband: English, LO, Maths Lit.	THREE DISTINCTIONS Amber Gusinow: Geography, LO, Maths Lit.	THREE DISTINCTIONS Jesse Joffe: Business Studies, LO, Tourism.	THREE DISTINCTIONS Aaron Kahanovitz: Business Studies, LO, Maths.	THREE DISTINCTIONS Jamie Kruger: Computer Applications Technology, LO, Maths Lit.	THREE DISTINCTIONS Jake Levin: Business Studies, LO, Maths Lit.	THREE DISTINCTIONS Jayden Levy: Business Studies, LO, Maths Lit.
THREE DISTINCTIONS Amy Pogir: English, Hebrew, LO.	THREE DISTINCTIONS Gabriel Raz: English, IT, LO	THREE DISTINCTIONS Jesse Schroder: English, LO, Maths.	THREE DISTINCTIONS Jenna Stoch: Business Studies, History, LO.	THREE DISTINCTIONS Dale Wasserman: Business Studies, History, Maths Lit.	TWO DISTINCTIONS Danielle Beinart: Business Studies, LO.	TWO DISTINCTIONS Jared Bernstein: LO, Tourism.	TWO DISTINCTIONS Itamar Bocobza: Hebrew, Maths Lit.
TWO DISTINCTIONS Ella Brozin: English, LO.	TWO DISTINCTIONS Chad Class: English, LO.	TWO DISTINCTIONS Tali Froehlich: English, LO.	TWO DISTINCTIONS Ashley Herson: Business Studies, Geography.	TWO DISTINCTIONS Liat Leiboff: English, LO.	TWO DISTINCTIONS Michael Matheson: Business Studies, LO.	TWO DISTINCTIONS Jessica Sacks: English, LO.	TWO DISTINCTIONS Sasha Said: Dramatic Arts, English.
TWO DISTINCTIONS Limor Sananes: Hebrew, Maths Lit.	TWO DISTINCTIONS Aaron Stoch: English, LO.	ONE DISTINCTIONS Jenna Allison: Business Studies.	ONE DISTINCTIONS Kiran Benjamin: Geography.	ONE DISTINCTIONS Hayden Cigler: LO.	ONE DISTINCTIONS Jamie Cimring: Maths Lit.	ONE DISTINCTIONS Tyler Cohen: IT.	ONE DISTINCTIONS Joshua Gordon: Tourism.
ONE DISTINCTIONS Jessica Hurwitz: LO.	ONE DISTINCTIONS Adam Jaches: LO.	ONE DISTINCTIONS Dani Moritz: Afrikaans.	ONE DISTINCTIONS Simone Nish: Maths Lit.	ONE DISTINCTIONS Joshua Adam Smith: IT.	ONE DISTINCTIONS Jordan Steele: Business Studies	ONE DISTINCTIONS Hannah Zulberg: Maths Lit.	

Mazaltov to the Matrics of 20 Twenty-WON

Our matric class of 2021 achieved a **100%** pass rate

728 distinctions with an average of **4** distinctions per student

25% of students achieved a full house of 7 distinctions or more

55% of students obtained an overall **A** average

23 students obtained an aggregate of **90%** or above

IEB Outstanding Achievements - Shayna Slom, Daniel Strous, Riki Toubkin,

Samuel Witt, Shannon Wolpe

IEB Commendable Achievements - Jesse Brodtkin, Demi Kaplan, Max Mendelow,

Daniel Rakusin, Benjamin Shmukler

students placed in the **Top 1%** of their subjects - **39**

85 students offered **Hebrew** with 68% resulting in an 'A'



Welcome to the
KDHL Hall of Fame

App ups the game for KDVP leaders

SAUL KAMIONSKY

Dannica De Aguiar, Amira Karstaedt, and Aerin Cohen leave King David High School Victory Park with a combined tally of 24 distinctions, but they also leave behind an app to help the school's future matriculants.

The app they created, called EVE, was introduced by the student representative council (SRC) last year.

"It serves as a platform for students to stay up to date with any important information, to express concerns, and share ideas," says De Aguiar. "Ultimately, this app was developed by students for students, to meet their needs."

As head girl, De Aguiar's main role was to lead and support the SRC, while Karstaedt was its chief whip.

Cohen, the school's deputy head girl, came up with the idea for the app when she noticed that students needed a platform to express their needs and have their voices heard.

"EVE was created to make the normal school day easier and happier, as well as to provide an easy way for students to communicate new ideas and concerns," says Cohen. "We found a platform that allowed us to develop and distribute our own app."

The student leaders, in turn, responded to the submissions from students on the app and took necessary action. EVE is also the place where students can access timetables, find out about the school's upcoming events, and order from the tuck shop.

"EVE was constructed for the well-being of students," says Cohen. "Therefore, in addition to a holiday countdown that boosts morale and motivation, EVE provides details of how students can reach out to [counselling service] Hatzolah Connect."

"This app has great potential for growth and I hope that one day, EVE will be developed professionally to serve many

more schools and their students," she says.

EVE is being further developed by Victory Park's deputy head girl and boy and SRC of 2021/22.

During De Aguiar's time as head girl, she represented the students and the ethos of the school as best as she could, and ensured the smooth running of numerous procedures.

Together with the SRC, she oversaw a variety of portfolios. "We had the opportunity to run initiatives, committees, and introduce [activities]," she says.

Karstaedt was involved in assisting various portfolios to execute their ideas, and ensured that each SRC member was heard and supported.

She helped to organise the Fempower virtual event along with the rest of the school's executive committee, which she describes as "a memorable and inspiring project".

As mayor of the Johannesburg Junior Council, a prominent youth-led, non-profit organisation, Cohen was responsible for ensuring that fellow councillors had the support, guidance, and motivation they required to reach their goals.

"It was my role to encourage and organise to make sure that all councillors had the opportunity to learn together while serving the community around us," she says.

Two Grade 11 students are elected to represent the school on the council each year. "I was honoured to be elected with my best friend, Paris Obel, who served as head of arts and culture," says Cohen.

Deciding to run as mayor, Cohen went through multiple rounds of impromptu and prepared questions and speeches before the council voted her into the position. "I was up against some of the most brilliant minds and inspirational



Dannica De Aguiar



Amira Karstaedt



Aerin Cohen

Hard-knocks are a great teacher

SAUL KAMIONSKY

Torah Academy Boys High School student, Eli Zlotnick, began matric in 2021 feeling as if he couldn't take any more life blows. However, he managed to overcome his stumbling blocks and end the year with his head held high.

"The hurt I felt will make me never forget the extremely valuable lessons I learned," he says.

He started 2021 with a negative mindset, which, he says, "wasn't to set high goals".

"I had low expectations due to my shocking Grade 11 marks as well as failing my learner's licence. I had quite a few family issues too, and was missing my siblings tremendously. I blamed all of my failures on my ADD/ADHD [Attention Deficit Disorder] and severe anxiety. I lost a few friends, but my bonds with true friends became even tighter," he says.

His marks improved significantly after the first term. "So, I reset my goals and was more determined," says Zlotnick. "My second-term marks weren't great, but my prelim marks were even worse. I was rejected by the gap-year programme I wanted to go on. I was considering dropping out, but realised that I had come too far."

He persevered, finding an even better gap-year programme. "I started baking for my family, and studied hard for finals with the help of a tutor, and I had multiple epiphanies," he says. "My family and I are much more relaxed [now]. The experience really helped me learn a lot of life lessons."

Zlotnick's fellow Torah Academy student,

Gavi Shaw, took his matric year as it came, and had what he describes as "a kind-of chilled year".

"At the end of the day, stressing doesn't actually help your marks," he says. "Whatever is going to happen is going to happen, regardless. My passion isn't school. I really didn't want to have the attitude last year of doing it for a piece of paper, for the marks. Not that I want to do badly, but I wanted to finish what I had started as I had got so far."

Shaw, who says his marks were fine throughout matric, began school last year with one or two weeks online because of the bad surge in COVID-19 cases in January 2021. "Other than that, we wrote a few prelim exams online, but they were focused on keeping us at school, so we mostly went into school every day," he says.

In spite of the pandemic, Zlotnick felt safe at school because the teachers, principal, and staff cared about him and his success. "You can't spell principal without 'pal'," he jokes.

COVID-19 also helped Zlotnick to learn some unforgettable life lessons. "Unfortunately, I learned these lessons the hard way, there was a lot of pain and tears, but I guess they happened for the best because I was able to push through and succeed."

Pre-COVID-19, Shaw was actively involved in sports, playing cricket, and soccer. In addition, he was the leader of the Friendship Circle, and the head of first aid for the nursery school, primary school, and boy's high school. "I ran first aid for about a year and a half, and I handed the reins to another boy last year," he says.

Shaw is heading to New York to study in a yeshiva this year after the travel ban scuppered his chance of going there in December last year.



Gavi Shaw

Eli Zlotnick

young people. I suppose I just really believed in myself and in my ability to turn passion into real, tangible change."

De Aguiar considers receiving the Aileen Lipkin Sculpture for Good Fellowship her biggest success in her final school year.

"This award was voted for by my peers, and is awarded in recognition of commitment to the values of integrity, tolerance, and respect as well as commitment to the school," she says. "This award is special to me because although good marks are something to be proud of, they don't define you as a person."

Karstaedt won the Israel Quiz in 2020, and achieved full colours in creative writing.

"My path to success in the 2020 Israel Quiz was gradual, requiring endurance and dedication," she says. "But being able to expand and refine my knowledge of Israel's history, culture, and geography during the three years I participated in the quiz was a rewarding and enjoyable experience."

Her passion for creative writing has been a constant in her life, and was further consolidated when she became a

member of the Writing Club in Grade 8.

"I especially love writing poetry," she says, "and am thankful for the many opportunities that I received throughout high school to share my poems with others and listen to some of the exceptional pieces written by my peers."

Karstaedt and De Aguiar put their good results down to hard work in a matric year in which they wrote mid-year exams at school during the third wave, and having early morning lessons and bi-weekly webinars.

"I worked hard to obtain the results that I expected of myself, and that motivation played a significant role in my approach to completing assignments, studying, and writing exams," says Karstaedt.

"You need to focus in class, practice at home, and put in the hard work to prepare for your exams," says De Aguiar.

She says 2022's matrics should expect a tough year, but they should accept the challenge and rise to the occasion.

"In the end, you'll be rewarded for all the effort. Most importantly, make sure you remember to have fun and enjoy the year."

"Work consistently as opposed to hard"

SAUL KAMIONSKY

Hirsch Lyons student Simcha Schneider struggled to maintain a work ethic throughout high school and encountered a few curveballs along the way, so he could have found himself without anything to celebrate in his matric year.

However, this aspiring computer engineer took matters into his own

hands by crafting a diligent approach to studying, and managed to achieve his goal of putting in the work and feeling satisfied with the effort irrespective of his final marks.

"Upon completing matric, I have finally managed to establish a work ethic which will hopefully make the transition into tertiary education easier. That's definitely my greatest matric achievement," he says.

In Grade 11, he wasn't happy about his marks in science, maths, and Afrikaans. To make matters worse, he encountered unforeseen obstacles in two of those subjects.

"My science teacher in Grade 11 was unable to teach me properly because there was a substantial language barrier, and I was consistently getting 60s," recalls Schneider. "I knew that if it continued, I wouldn't do well in matric science, and spent hours teaching myself the work and watching videos explaining certain concepts. By matric, I had improved my science marks upwards of 25%."

Also in Grade 11, the departure of his class's maths teacher halfway through the year resulted in, he says, "a rather difficult adjustment period with our new teacher, and we ended up not finishing the syllabus entirely, which came back to bite us in matric as we started the section we left out for the first time only weeks before

prelims".

In addition, he didn't care about Afrikaans, and started off Grade 11 getting 20% and ending up with a 40% on his term-one report card. "Like science, I knew I needed to improve, and spent hours reading Afrikaans books, short stories, and watching kids shows until I improved my vocabulary enough to be getting consistently more than 75%."



Simcha Schneider

A further hurdle was the challenge of balancing matric and social life during the pandemic. "The pandemic definitely increased my anxiety. And the transition between remote learning and physical learning, which happened about three times last year, really disrupted the flow of learning."

Schneider believes the key to a successful matric year is to work consistently as opposed to hard. "Small amounts of work every day will prevent you from falling behind, making preparations for exams and tests a lot easier. Make sure you have a healthy outlet such as a sport, musical instrument, or exercise to prevent burnout."



**THINK CAPE TOWN.
THINK QUALITY.
THINK HERZLIA.**

Herzlia is an independent Jewish day school in Cape Town with six schools across four campuses from pre-primary to matric. Herzlia has an open admissions policy and is academically inclusive.

Herzlia has been ranked in the Top 10 Performing Schools in South Africa for the last three years.*

*www.gradesmatch.co.za

www.herzlia.com



CALL +27 (0)21 286 3300 **EMAIL** admin@herzlia.com



HERZLIA HIGH SCHOOL



Idan Aaron



Aidan Brand



Chad Brouze



Noa Castro



Rebecca Chin



Tziyona Cohen



Ariella Cohn



Jonathan Cohn



Angelo Constantaras



Keanu Craucamp Levin



Benjamin Daniel



Massimo Diliberto



Filipa Do Vale Cartaxo
Ferreira Mota



Mia Flax



Samuel Forman



Michael French



Dylan Friedman



Darby Futeran



Benjamin Gluckman



Jordan Goldberg



Gabriel Gottlieb



Adam Gradner



Kayla Hammerson



Georgia Helfrich



Kieran Jeffery



Nicole Joffe



Adam Julian



Guy Julian



Julia Kaimowitz



Jedd Katz



Ariella Katzeff



Atarah Katzeff



Sam Kilborn



Shani Lahav



Cody Lawrenz



Claudio Levy



David Levy



Hannah Levy



Jake Lockitch



Noah Maisel



Daniel Marsden



Tomer Mazor



Itai Melnik



Rafaela Meltz



Jayden Moore



Allana Morris



Daniel Nahum



Ayala Nathan



Eron Norrie



Oliver Norrie



Jonathan Paterson



Julia Peters



Carly Reznik



Rachel Rod



Shallya Samakosky



Emma Saven



Ryan Schapiro



Daniel Schiff



Jonty Schkolne



Georgina Seeff



Jesse Sher



Jarred Sher



Keryn Shochot



Joshua Sifren-Sher

HERZLIA HIGH SCHOOL



CLASS OF 2021 TOP ACHIEVERS

93 matric candidates

100% pass rate

2 matrics achieved 8 distinctions

7 matrics achieved 7 distinctions

17 matrics achieved 6 distinctions

12 matrics achieved 5 distinctions

339 individual subject distinctions

80% matric class aggregate
(Herzlia's highest ever)

3.6 average subject distinctions
per candidate

100% matrics on
Educational Support Programme
passed with a Bachelor's Pass

No subject failures

Eight Distinctions:

Gabriel Gottlieb
Joseph Zelezniak

Seven Distinctions:

Chad Brouze
Tziyona Cohen
Nicole Joffe
Adam Julian
Hannah Levy
Jake Whitesman
Rachel Wohlman

Six Distinctions:

Jonathan Cohn
Benjamin Daniel
Dylan Friedman
Sam Kilborn
David Levy
Tomer Mazor
Itai Melnik
Ayala Nathan

Six Distinctions (cont):

Ryan Schapiro
Daniel Schiff
Jonty Schkolne
Georgina Seeff
Keryn Shochot
Joseph Valkin
Franceska Van Huyssteen
Jake Videtzky
Justine Williams

Five Distinctions*:

Ariella Cohn
Adam Gradner
Guy Julian
Jake Lockitch
Daniel Marsden
Rafaela Meltz
Rachel Rod
Nathan Wells
Benjamin Zar
(*Three matrics opted not to feature)



Tomas Sola

Jaimie Stevenson

Benjamin Sulcas

Gideon Sweijd



Hannah Szapira

Thabiso Tshishonga

Joseph Valkin

Franceska Van Huyssteen



Jake Videtzky

Nathan Wells

Jake Whitesman

Justine Williams



Rachel Wohlman

Daniella Wolfsohn

Benjamin Zar

Joseph Zelezniak



UNITED HERZLIA SCHOOLS
בתי"ס המאוחדים הרצליה

“Don’t feel bad about taking a break”

SAUL KAMIONSKY

Rachel Hertz didn't just focus on academics to get her average of 94% in matric at Redhill in 2021. She was an integral part of the leadership team, orchestra, and was involved in the school's musicals, interhouse cultural events, and public speaking trophy team.

And now, with her eight distinctions – of which seven were over 90% and she got 99% for drama – she's determined to become a doctor, just like her mom, Dr Sheri Fanaroff.

She was placed on the Independent Examinations Board's (IEB's) outstanding achievement list due to six subjects being in the top five percent and five subjects in the top one percent in the IEB matrics in South Africa.

“My mom is my greatest inspiration,” Hertz says of the Johannesburg-based general practitioner. “If I can be half as great a doctor as her one day, I'll be happy.”

The reason why Hertz's heart is set

on becoming a doctor is more a case of inspiration than stipulation.

“I've seen the past three years and with COVID-19, my mom's become a beacon of hope,” says Hertz. “Seeing the incredible work she does, how much she cares, and how hard she works to make her patients' lives better and to make sure they are healthy, I'm in awe.”

Having studied subjects that she loves, working hard in matric wasn't so difficult for Hertz because, as she says, a spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down.

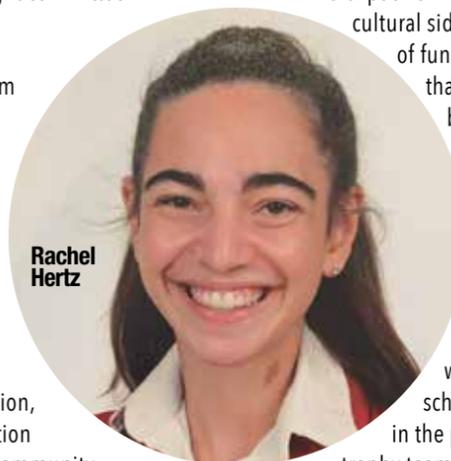
“I knew I wanted to do something in the health-sciences realm, so I knew I needed to do science, biology, and AP Maths,” she says. “To fill out the rest of my subjects, I chose music and drama, which are things I love and come easily to me.”

She loved being part of the leadership at her school. “I had a great team, so it was amazing to be able to be a part of that.”

In her role, she was in charge of the school's eight committees. “I oversaw

what all of them did and helped with planning and administration. I guided all of the eight committee heads.”

In 2020, students from the arts and culture committee headed by Hertz came together to host a food drive for the Dlala Nje Foundation, an organisation that runs a community centre in the Ponte City Apartments for children living in the inner-city area. Hertz spearheaded the initiative. “Many of the families there haven't benefitted from government social programmes and food grants,” she told the *Sandton Chronicle*. “I was worried about the children whom we have come to know, and decided to launch a food



Rachel Hertz

drive to support them at this difficult time.”

Hertz put her heart and soul into the cultural side of Redhill. “It's a lot of fun to become involved in that, make friends, and be part of school life through all of those cultural events.”

Last year, she bagged distinctions in the Grade A Trinity drama and music exams. “I was in the musical at school, and participated in the public speaking trophy team. I was happy with the 99% I got for drama at the end of this year. What helped me do well was the fact that I was having so much fun in the play and doing those exams, participating in public speaking, and debating.”

COVID-19 increased her appreciation of in-person teaching. “That said, I felt lucky just to be in an environment

where the switch to online was so seamlessly incorporated, and where my teachers were so willing to have Zooms and to record lessons for us that we could watch again and again. We adapted because of how well it was handled. I wasn't affected by it.”

She says finding a balance between working hard and relaxation will be just what the doctor ordered for this year's matrics. “Hard work comes in moderation because, in order to maintain their work ethic and not become burned out halfway through the year, they have to keep up their relationships with their family, socialise with friends, and sometimes know when they need an early night or when they need to go to a party, take a walk, or relax because it's a really long year and it's a lot of hard work. To maintain the work ethic and keep going, they have to take things in moderation and listen to themselves. When they need a break, they should take a break. They shouldn't feel bad about taking time to make sure they are okay.”

“Hard work always beats natural talent”

SAUL KAMIONSKY

“Don't let anyone tell you what you can and can't do, because you're the one that ultimately defines your success. Like I always say, ‘When you're determined, no one can stop you.’”

This is the advice Torah Academy Girls High School matriculant Yakira Sacks gives to any student facing challenges.

When Sacks was younger, she had lots of obstacles. Her pace of reading, writing, and processing was slower than the average student. This meant she had to attend a remedial primary school.

“When it was time for my parents to choose a high school for me after finishing Grade 7 at Crossroads, they went to a meeting with the principal, teachers, and therapists,” said Sacks during her speech at Torah Academy's 2021 matric farewell. “They all suggested that I had to go to a remedial high school because there was no way I would manage in a mainstream school. At one point, they even questioned if I was going to be able to do matric.”

Determined to send their daughter to a Jewish high school, Sacks' parents met Morah Rebecca Sarchi, the principal of Torah Academy Girls High.

“My parents were so thrilled at how willing she was to help me navigate my high school career, they didn't look any further, and enrolled me at Torah Academy, starting in 2017,” recalled Sacks about the moment that would shape the person she would become.

Five years later, Sacks has now completed matric, and says, “The year went well, besides general matric stress. I felt more in control last year as opposed to the previous year, because I didn't do online school apart from a couple of weeks at the beginning and in the middle of the year. Most of the year was in person at school, *baruch Hashem*.”

Looking back on the impact of the pandemic on her situation, Sacks does find some positives, one of which is that she could communicate with her

teachers on WhatsApp.

“When I did do school online, I found the Zoom recordings helpful because, if needed, I could go back to a topic to get a clearer understanding. However, while on Zoom, I did feel I needed to put in that extra effort, spending more time on tasks

because of distractions at home and because I didn't have that extra guidance from teachers that you have in person.”

Sacks remained on top of her work by, amongst other things, studying in advance, and starting projects and assignments early.

“Since I have been at Torah Academy, my confidence has grown in ways that are surprising even to me,” she said during her speech. “Giving speeches and being the centre of attention seem less intimidating to me now. I'm also able to answer questions more quickly than before.”

The teachers, Sarchi, and Sacks' parents have all played a crucial role in making her the person she is today, and she believes her

challenges have made her stronger, enabling her to deal with situations that she never thought possible.

“Overcoming obstacles isn't easy but it's all worth it in the end,” she said. “I've learnt that there's more than one way of doing things, even if it may not be the most popular way or the way that everyone claims ‘works’.”

Sacks loves to help people. Hearing them say, “I understand now” or “This makes more sense now” makes her smile.

“That's why I want to help kids who need that extra help,” she says. “I want to let them know that there's nothing wrong with that because hard work always beats natural talent. My goal is to become that teacher who helps children realise that having challenges and overcoming them only makes you a stronger person.”

Sacks plans to take a gap year this year, using the time to do short courses on subjects she's interested in such as child psychology because it will help her gain further insight into young minds.

“Hopefully, this will benefit me when I go into further studies,” she says. “I would also like to do further courses on computers as I've gained a lot of interest while taking CAT [Computer Applications Technology] as a subject in school. I also need to do my driver's license, and I would like to have the opportunity to get some work experience with kids.”



Yakira Sacks

Making matric work amidst a contagion of apathy

TALI FEINBERG

Matriculants have had to adapt to an ever-changing learning environment in a pandemic, and for many students, it hasn't been easy. United Herzlia School graduate Dylan Friedman was one student who not only survived but thrived in these circumstances.

“Maintaining a good work ethic in online school was my biggest challenge,” he says. “My teachers understood the importance of the matric year, and made themselves available with a genuine interest in helping me.”

Amidst all this, he also headed up his school's culture portfolio, but faced apathy from classmates in taking part in new offerings. But he never gave up, and managed to turn the situation around.

“Coming back to physical school felt different at first. Students were used to being online, so there wasn't as much school passion as there used to be. This posed a challenge,” says Friedman. “The biggest challenge, besides the workload, was to gain their attention and interest.”

“I was elected onto the Student Leadership Council as the head of the culture portfolio with two goals,” he says. “The first was to create a culture website for students to publish personal content, whether it was music videos, blogs, creative essays, and so on.”

“The second was to create a cultural space underneath the high school stage where students could express themselves, host events, and pursue their interests. Students were happy to have a space dedicated to them, and I was fortunate to see how it was used. For example, they created a three-part podcast interviewing musicians at Herzlia.” He's thrilled to have started something that he hopes will grow in the years to come.

He and his fellow culture committee heads, Benji Anstey and Gabriel Sieff, worked as a team.

“Such an amazing team inspired me to work harder and accomplish my goals,” Friedman says. “After we created the culture website, we held a photography competition to engage

students and collect material for the site. This was when I first ran into the infamous apathetic attitude of high schoolers – my sympathies go out to the teachers,” he quips. “I found the most effective way to get participation was to create a simple system with as few steps as possible. For example: just scan the QR code on our poster, and enter your picture.”

He believes matric offered him a great deal of opportunity and independence, and a chance to pursue his passions. “I've always cared for the environment, so I thought that a beach clean-up would be the perfect opportunity to bring awareness to fellow

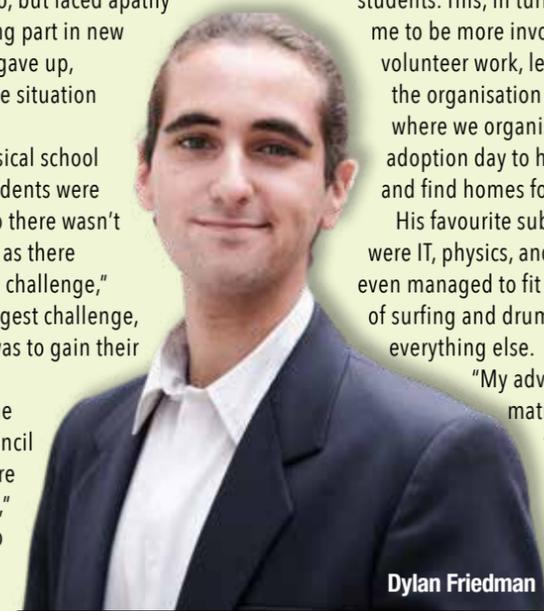
students. This, in turn, inspired me to be more involved in volunteer work, leading me to the organisation Fallen Angels, where we organised a dog adoption day to help raise funds and find homes for puppies.” His favourite subjects in matric were IT, physics, and maths, and he even managed to fit in his hobbies of surfing and drumming amid everything else.

“My advice to future matrics is to take the opportunities given to you because your matric year comes only once

and it has so much to offer,” he says. “I plan to study a Bachelor of Science at the University of Cape Town as well as continue drumming and music. In the future, I hope to be doing what makes me happy, and right now, that's drumming and surfing. I dream of creating something that I'm proud of that has a positive impact on people.”

Says Friedman, “I managed to fit my passions into school life by using the effective time-management skills that the learning centre assisted me with. The school was always supportive and encouraging. I was fortunate to have such amazing teachers and support structures.”

He jokes, “Looking back, I can happily say that I didn't catch a case of apathy. In such a contagious time don't let others' apathy contaminate you!”



Dylan Friedman

YESHIVA COLLEGE BOYS & GIRLS HIGH SCHOOLS

MATRIC RESULTS



100% PASS RATE • 3.5 DISTINCTIONS PER LEARNER
OUR MATRIC GRADE AVERAGE ACROSS ALL SUBJECTS WAS ABOVE 76%

YESHIVA COLLEGE CLASS OF 2021

כִּי בְשִׂמְחָה תֵּצְאוּ וּבְשָׁלוֹם תִּוָּבְלוּ.

You shall go out with joy and be led forward with peace
(ישעיהו נה יב)



30 Learners • 19 girls and 11 boys

THE CLASS OF 2021 AMASSED AN INCREDIBLE 107 DISTINCTIONS IN TOTAL

It is a remarkable achievement that our Matric classes have maintained an average of above 3.5 distinctions per learner for the last 9 years.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF 'DISTINCTION'

- 3 learners attained 8 distinctions each
- 4 learners attained 7 distinctions each
- 2 learners attained 6 distinctions each
- 1 learner attained 5 distinctions
- 5 learners attained 4 distinctions each
- 3 learners attained 3 distinctions each
- 3 learners attained 2 distinctions each
- 3 learners attained 1 distinction each

- 107 distinctions across the grade from 30 learners = average of 3.5 distinctions per learner
- 100% French distinctions
- 100% Economics distinctions
- 83% History distinctions
- 75% Hebrew distinctions
- 67% English distinctions
- 63% Life Orientation distinctions
- 57% Accounting distinctions
- 54% Science distinctions
- 50% Maths distinctions
- 50% Life Science distinctions
- 50% Maths Lit distinctions

LEADING FROM THE TOP

Top 1% of students per subject

- Dramatic Arts: Kelly Wald
- English: Sara Barnes, Akiva Fox, Adam Marks and Kayla Sifris
- History: Akiva Fox
- Life Orientation: Akiva Fox, Adam Marks and Kayla Sifris
- Life Sciences: Adam Marks

Outstanding Achievement:
(An accolade reserved for the top performing students nationally)

Adam Marks

Other Achievements include:

- 80% of students achieved one subject distinction or more
- 16 subjects achieved averages over 70%

REMARKABLE ACHIEVEMENTS IN ACADEMIC, EXTRA MURAL AND TORAH GROWTH FOR ALL LEARNERS

The Next Step



Two-thirds of our matrics will be spending their first year after school in Israel.



Over 57% of our learners will be studying in a Yeshiva/Midrasha



Working in the community



Proudly contributing to the future of the Jewish people.

YESHIVA COLLEGE

The Torah School of Excellence



Campuses to reopen – but only for the vaccinated

SAUL KAMIONSKY

The class of 2021 is unlikely to attend university remotely this year like its 2020 peers, but it will have to be vaccinated to attend. It may not do everything on campus, but university life will go back to being a mostly campus-based experience.



The University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), University of Cape Town (UCT), University of Pretoria (UP), and Stellenbosch University (SU) either have a mandatory vaccination policy or are likely to implement it.

On 1 January 2022, the Wits Council passed the university's COVID-19 mandatory vaccination (MVax) policy. To access Wits' precincts, you will be required to be vaccinated against COVID-19 unless you have been granted reasonable accommodation. Wits University's cut-off date to be vaccinated or to have applied for reasonable accommodation is 1 March 2022. All students in Wits' residences will have to be vaccinated.

"The policy seeks to enable the return of employees and students to the university precincts while protecting the health and safety of the Wits community and all who

work, live, learn, and participate in activities on campus," says Buhle Zuma, Wits senior communications officer.

Wits staff and students were invited to upload their vaccine certificates from 20 January this year. "The response has been overwhelmingly positive, with almost 10 000 certificates having been uploaded in just three working days," says Zuma.

Once the vaccination status of Wits students is verified, it will be uploaded to their online profiles and will be linked to their access cards, thus giving them entry to the university's campuses.

Those who are granted reasonable accommodation may also gain access to the university's precincts, but will have to take weekly antigen tests. They may not be permitted to participate in group activities.

This year, Wits will continue with its blended approach to learning. "This means some activities will take place on campus including experiential learning, interactive learning, and teaching sessions," Zuma says. "Other activities such as presentations and formative assessments may be conducted online."

First-year students will commence their journey at Wits with the Gateway to Success programme, a compulsory three-week programme starting on 7 February 2022. It will include some online and some on-campus activities.

Asked how Wits will respond to the concerns raised by the Student Representative Council (SRC) over mandatory vaccination, Zuma says, "The university has made several arrangements to ensure Wits' students and staff are able to comply with the MVax policy."

One such arrangement is Wits' hosting of a vaccination and testing site, which will offer access to vaccines and boosters. "The university continues to engage with the SRC, most of whom are vaccinated," says Zuma. "We believe the majority of students and staff at Wits have been or will get vaccinated before 1 March."

UCT's draft policy proposes the introduction of a campus-wide vaccine mandate that will apply to all staff, students, and other visitors.

All events held on the university campus and in residence are also covered by this draft policy.

"The draft policy provides for staff and students to

apply for an exemption to the vaccine mandate on narrow medical grounds and on the grounds of sincerely and intensely held beliefs grounded in religion and/or conscience," says Nombuso Shabalala, UCT's head media liaison.

In October 2021, the UCT's Senate approved the Framework for Teaching and Learning in 2022.

One of the basic elements of the framework requires students, whether they are South African or international, to be in Cape Town throughout the academic year and to come on campus as required.

UCT has prepared study spaces on campus that align with COVID-19 protocols. In addition, students will have increased contact time with academic staff.

Almost 1 500 kilometres away, UP is consulting staff and students about vaccination and other COVID-19 measures. "We're planning to finalise this process by the end of this month," says Rikus Delpport, UP's director of the department of institutional advancement.

The university recently conducted a survey in which about 10 000 students participated. More than 70% indicated they were fully or partially vaccinated. Just less than 10% of students said they were planning to get vaccinated.

UP started opening up campus to a limited number of students under strict health regulations during the last quarter of 2021, and now plans for a more significant re-opening for the 2022 academic year.

"Because of the restrictions on the size of gatherings and venue occupancy, combined with the large number of students in some of the undergraduate programmes, it's not possible to resume all contact classes immediately while ensuring everyone's safety," says Delpport. "Nevertheless, we're looking at introducing face-to-face classes on a rotational basis for at least some of the programmes."

Travelling back to the Western Cape, on 3 December 2021, SU embarked on a process of public participation on its intended institutional vaccination rule. "The period of public participation came to an end on 15 January 2022, and comments and inputs are now being considered," says Martin Viljoen, SU's media

manager. "The vaccination rule will then be finalised for internal consultation and approval."

The institutional rule states that no person will be registered as a new SU student or re-registered as a SU student, and no person may enter the university's campus unless they have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or are exempted either automatically or by SU.

How successful has online learning been?

"Students have readily participated in online classes, with pass marks remaining on par with that of previous years," says Zuma.

According to a 2020 survey conducted among UCT students about their experience of emergency remote learning, students overwhelmingly missed in-person contact, but many valued the much greater flexibility provided by online learning and the freedom to learn at their own pace in a way that suited them.

"Students reported deeper engagement with the material and appreciated open-book assessments, which were less stressful than traditional sit-down written exams," says Shabalala.

UP's experience with hybrid teaching and learning made its transition to online learning fairly smooth when the pandemic struck.

"A large number of our programmes were available online for a number of years," says Delpport. "In spite of issues such as connectivity problems and the lack of online devices, we managed to support students by telephone tutoring, the delivery of material to the homes of students in remote areas, and by providing them with data and laptops."

Shabalala says the challenges experienced by students included finding a quiet space at home to study, interrupted electricity supply, mental-health issues, course-content overload, not liking the designs of some course websites, difficulties understanding the assessment instructions, not feeling strongly connected to other students in the online education space, insufficient data for remote learning, and not seeing the value in live sessions on synchronous tools such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams.

Much ado about studying Shakespeare

MIRAH LANGER

The study of a play by William Shakespeare is a compulsory part of the English Grade 12 syllabus and one of two core works assessed in the final matriculation literature paper.

Its place in the curriculum remains a "perennial question" and the catalyst for an "ongoing debate about the relevance of Shakespeare in the school syllabus," says Professor Christopher Thurman, the director of the Tsikinya-Chaka Centre in the School of Literature, Language and Media at the University of the Witwatersrand.

Thurman says there are two key stances to the argument. "One side of the argument is that Shakespeare arrived in South Africa as part of a colonial imperial project. Therefore, the way in which he has been taught for centuries has reinforced that project and what it has to say about race, the global north versus the global south, and the assumptions about the centrality of European and specifically British culture and perspectives."

As such, "proponents of this view, would suggest that in the South African context, if we want to decolonise the minds of young learners, we need to think about knowledge production that comes from the south and literary and cultural production that has come from our part of the world".

Here, the view might be that "Shakespeare has to go" in favour of South African and African works.

On the other side of the argument, says Thurman, is the idea that "we owe it to our learners to introduce them to a cosmopolitan global perspective on literature and literary production, that it's part of their education as citizens of the world to exchange ideas about important cultural points of reference. This is where the idea of Shakespeare and the timeless universality of his characters and themes often becomes a central proponent, one that suggests Shakespeare captures something of the collective shared human experience."

Yet, cautions Thurman, "If we are thinking about

Shakespeare's universality it's only because he has sometimes borrowed, adapted, or stolen or sometimes written his own versions of stories and archetypes that respond to the universal human condition. That's a very different way of thinking about Shakespeare as relevant rather than placing him on a pedestal."

In addition, the idea that the language of Shakespeare is the entry point into his work is one which worldwide pedagogical studies have shown is inaccurate, says Thurman. "In fact, it's in countries where Shakespeare is encountered as a linguistic fellow rather than a linguistic other; where students encounter Shakespeare in performance and in their own language that's shown to be the most successful and the least likely to be perceived as boring, inaccessible, and irrelevant."

After all, proposes Thurman, essentially, "Shakespeare always comes to us in translation. Even if you are an English monolingual speaker, when you engage with Shakespeare's early modern English, you are already embarking on a process of translation."

Moreover, along with being interpreted linguistically, "it's also interpreted on stage and screen. There's no such thing as a kind of authentic, original Shakespeare."

This should be celebrated, he suggests, especially in South Africa, where many students have apt abilities to move across languages. It falls into a long but little known history of translating Shakespeare into African languages, starting with those made by Sol Plaatje, a founding member of the African National Conference. It should also allow students a sense of "playfulness" when engaging with the text, Thurman says.

For Justine Sandler, the head of the English department at King David High School Linksfield, and matric English teacher David Kaplan, the often cited inaccessible language, too, is a red herring.

"To say it's a controversy isn't really accurate, it's just a perception," says Kaplan, "one which is soon overcome by the power of the works." From an initial sometimes trepidatious response, students end up "with a real

sense of achievement that they've completed a Shakespeare, understood it, and accessed it," says Sandler.

"There's no question it's meaningful. The characters stand apart," says Sandler. Seeing how "students identify the links within the Shakespeare texts and their own situations" makes it a most gratifying teaching experience.

Kaplan affirms this perspective, describing how "as a teacher, you cannot help but enjoy teaching it; it's giving people an idea of life. It shows us that no matter whether you are the king or clown, you are imperfect."

When it comes to social comment, "If we look at governments of any kind, Shakespeare's narratives parallel their power dynamics perfectly," says Sandler.

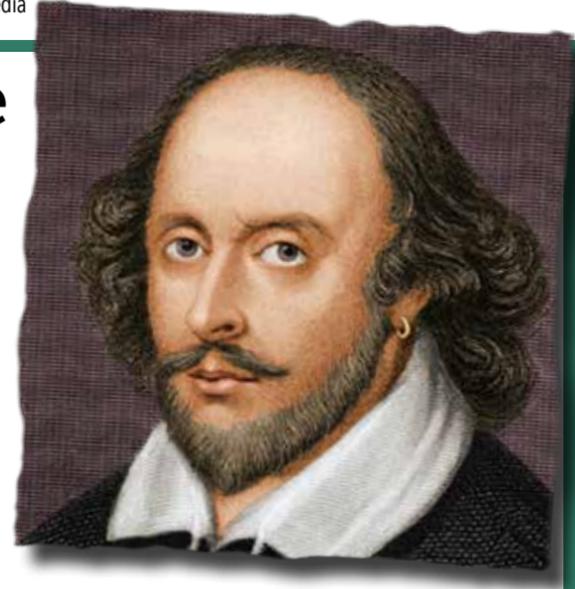
There is, say the teachers, something for everyone. For example, stories about leaders like Coriolanus and Henry V are "identifiable and accessible to team sportsmen who love the idea of being motivated and inspired", Sandler says.

Even *Antony and Cleopatra*, which was a recent matric network, might at first have seemed problematic in how distant its context is from our own. However, the students found the central romance compelling. "They understood the dynamic between the man and the woman. This hasn't changed," says Kaplan.

In the Independent Examinations Board curriculum, along with the Shakespeare text, a novel is taught and assessed. Each school is given a choice between a novel considered a classic or a South African text.

Demi Kaplan, a King David Linksfield matriculant from 2021, suggests that it's important that the Shakespeare play is studied alongside these other texts, saying that she particularly enjoyed the South African novel which was selected in her year.

"I'm an avid reader, but I've not read a lot of South African novels and this experience really opened me up to reading more. South African novels are unappreciated, and I really enjoyed it. If we could get



another book in, I think we should read other classics like *The Great Gatsby* or *A Tale of Two Cities*."

Samara Jay, another matriculant from the same cohort, feels the same, saying that along with the Shakespeare play, an African or South African text should be mandatory. "Something with our heritage would be interesting and connect us to our South African identity," Jay says.

For both students, Shakespeare had powerful resonance. "I'm a feminist and it's just so interesting to see the perspective and the status of women at that time and how it's completely evolved," says Jay.

Kaplan says that her matriculation Shakespeare text, *The Tempest*, "made me reflect on my own ideas of power and how a society should be run. As a teenager who can now legally vote and who is going into the big world, it's a very important concept to think about. It made me realise that it's not realistic to expect a perfect society where everything is fair, but at the same time, a dictatorship where one person rules with an iron fist cannot ever work."

Ultimately, she muses, the study of Shakespeare gave her deeper insight into humanity. "The characters teach us what to do and what not to do with our own flaws and feelings. It teaches us to have compassion for people around us who are struggling in that same way."

Josh Blecher: on the road to success

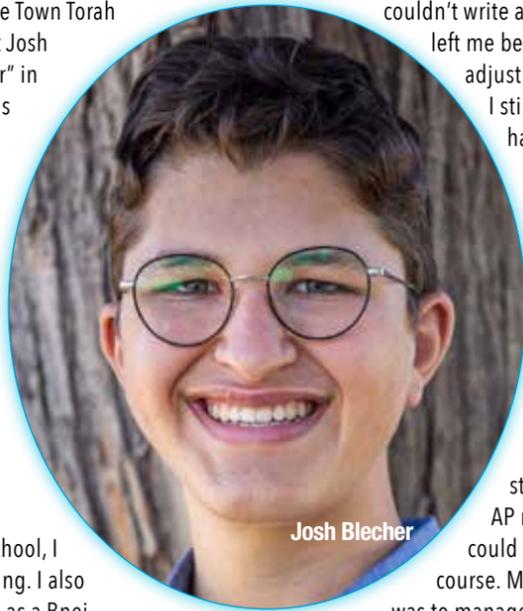
It's one thing to score in the highest possible percentile on international college entrance (SAT) exams and do advanced college-level AP maths and science courses. It's quite another to break your thumb in a cycling accident a month before the end of school and still achieve those results. But avid sportsman and Cape Town Torah Academy (CTTH) student Josh Blecher took this "detour" in his stride as he cycled his way to success in matric 2021.

A born and bred Capetonian, Blecher went to United Herzlia Schools until Grade 9 and moved to CTTH for Grades 10 to 12.

"My favourite subjects at school were physics, maths, and economics, with psychology coming in a close second. Outside school, I enjoyed cycling and hiking. I also spent time volunteering as a Bnei Akiva madrich," he told the SA Jewish Report in early January 2022.

CTTH is unique, he says, in that it allows self-pacing and self-teaching, and there are an "insane number" of available courses. "Combined, these things lead to a very personalised education." "There's something for everyone and every level. The system is designed to enhance personal growth and achievement. It gave me a positive experience every year of high school."

He's passionate about many things, but first and foremost, he wants to understand the world around him. "CTTH helped me by teaching me how the world works. I'm also passionate about living a balanced lifestyle. The school's unique structure allowed me to adapt my school schedule to do other activities. For



Josh Blecher

example, I went ahead in my studies before the Cape Town Cycle Tour so that I could spend just that little more time training for it."

The toughest aspect of matric was finishing the school year after his injury. "The problem was that I injured my right thumb, and I'm right-handed. I couldn't write anything for about a month, which left me behind in my work. Luckily, I could adjust my timetable to move tests. But I still lost too much time. I actually had to come back to school for two days after we finished the year to write tests. It wasn't fun!"

Asked what the biggest achievement of his matric year was, he responds modestly. "I managed to fit in quite a lot of courses, including three maths courses. I realised at the beginning of the year that for the university degree I wanted to study, I needed both semesters of AP maths, not only one. The school could thankfully facilitate the extra course. My second biggest achievement was to manage to maintain a healthy lifestyle in spite of the amount of time I had to spend doing school work."

In that context, his advice to future matrics is to "take the year seriously, but don't be too serious and don't compromise on your other passions and goals."

His plans are open-ended in 2022. "I didn't accept my offer at UCT [the University of Cape Town] in the hope I would get accepted at Technion in Israel. If I do get accepted, I'll go to Israel somewhere around June. Until then, I'm going to work and relax with my mates."

His ultimate goal is to study engineering in Israel. "After that, I have no idea! I'll probably make aliya, but I can't say where I'll be in five years' time," he says. Whatever he chooses to do, he's sure to be on the road to victory.

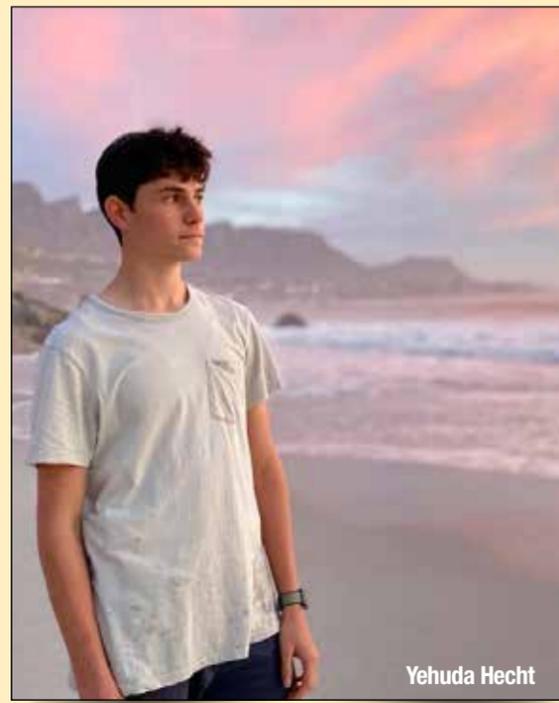
Finishing matric early: all in a day's work

TALI FEINBERG

Matric is known to be a hard slog. You have one year to do your best and not a minute more. But can you imagine finishing matric in just seven months? This was what Cape Town Torah High (CTTH) student Yehuda Hecht achieved in 2021. And he didn't do it for glory or extra chill time, but rather so that he could attend yeshiva.

"I set a goal to finish early so that I could go and join yeshiva at the start of the Jewish year," Hecht says. "The CTTH system allows us to have more control over what we learn so we're not stuck doing courses that we have no interest in. It also allows us to work at our own pace which is what let me graduate five months early."

He set this goal before he started the year, and "the hardest part was doing a full year's worth of work in seven months. Most of the time I didn't feel under that much pressure because my parents and friends were helpful and the school was accommodating. But when it did get tough, I always found that leaving my work for an hour and going for a run or cycle on the promenade did wonders for productivity after I got back."



Yehuda Hecht

His favourite subjects are psychology and physics, and he also enjoys cycling, hiking, and photography. He quips that besides finishing matric five months early, his biggest achievement was "managing to bluff my way through wearing civvies for a week!"

He's still figuring out what he wants to do in the future, but the next step is to go to yeshiva hopefully in Israel or in the United States. He also hopes to go to university. Ultimately, "my hopes and dreams for my future are to have an enjoyable and meaningful life shared with good people". If finishing matric early is any indication, he's sure to achieve any goal.



MAZAL TOV MATRICS 2021

Mazal tov to our Matric students of 2021 for their dedication, drive, efforts and excellent results.

We celebrate YOU. Your achievements. Your marks. Your grit and determination. Your sense of values. Your kindness. Your intellectual curiosity and creativity.

At Torah Academy, we are committed to quality education of Torah and General Studies, alongside pursuing a life of meaning and values.

We could not be more proud of our students' outstanding results this year. Above all, our highest achievement is ensuring our students reach their full potential.

<p>Esti Cohen</p>	<p>ACADEMIA</p>	<p>Rachel Arenson</p>	<p>100% PASS RATE</p>	<p>MENTORSHIP</p>	<p>78% OF STUDENTS ACHIEVED DISTINCTIONS</p>	<p>Tyler Friedman</p>
<p>Yakira Sacks</p>	<p>DUAL CURRICULUM</p>	<p>NURTURE</p>	<p>Devorah Leah Fischer</p>	<p>A SCHOOL FOR ALL JEWISH CHILDREN</p>	<p>Dovi Zukerman</p>	<p>Eli Zlotnick</p>
<p>80% AVERAGE FOR HEBREW</p>	<p>Shayna Dorfan</p>	<p>SOUL</p>	<p>Callie Saul</p>	<p>LEADERSHIP</p>	<p>Gavi Shaw</p>	<p>ENRICHMENT</p>

We congratulate our 2021 Matriculants on reaching their personal goals and opening the doors for the future of their dreams. We wish them much success in their upcoming studies at acclaimed yeshivas, seminaries and universities.

UNIVERSITY OF THE
WITWATERSRAND,
JOHANNESBURG



100
1922
2022

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL SUCCESSFUL MATRICULANTS FROM THE CLASS OF 2021!

We look forward to welcoming top
achievers - our future leaders and
innovators - to our campus.
#WitsCentenaryClassOf2022

This year, 2022, we
celebrate **100 years** of a
great institution.

In its **centenary** year, Wits celebrates the
significant achievements of our Jewish
alumni spread across the world and the
strong bonds Wits has with our local and
global Jewish communities.

Your support is key to Wits
remaining a national treasure.

For more information visit
wits100.wits.ac.za

WITS. FOR GOOD.

Going backwards to move forwards

TALI FEINBERG

When Ella Maughan stepped out of Herzlia High School's gates at the end of matric in 2021, she had achieved something that few had ever done before. She returned to Cape Town without her family after emigrating to England just so that she could complete matric in the warm Herzlia environment that meant so much to her.

"My decision to make my way back to Herzlia was definitely not a light hearted one," she says. "Since the moment we decided to immigrate, my family and I didn't think we would be going backwards – although I would call my journey a huge step forward. After a couple of months in the United Kingdom (UK), I decided that I missed Herzlia too

much to miss out on my last year there. My parents completely agreed, and we decided it was best that I finish my matric year in Herzlia, where I belonged.

"There was a lot to plan, but it was all manageable and worth it!" she says. "I stayed with my mom's friend, and was escorted around by my mom's sister and my friends, for which I cannot thank them enough. Without their help, the move wouldn't have been possible."

Her experience shows the possibilities of remote learning in a post-pandemic world.

Before actually getting back to Cape Town, she started matric at Herzlia, but online in the UK. "At the start of the year, all the matrics were online, so I stayed in the UK for term one, and then came to finish the last three terms in Cape Town," she says. "Being away from my family was extremely hard, but

the support I was given by friends and teachers was unconditional and made me feel right at home.

"Herzlia made joining online a smooth and enjoyable experience," she says. "My teachers never failed to make me feel included and be a part of the classroom environment."

"The thought of coming back to Herzlia, while comforting, was also a bit scary, as I had missed out on almost a year of school life with my friends. The workload was also scary, as you need Grade 11 work for Grade 12! But with the support of my teachers, I managed to get back on top of things and be at the same pace as my class in no time. Herzlia's warm, welcoming environment helped me to feel like I had never left.

"The nurturing atmosphere that has surrounded me for 12 years of schooling has helped shape me into who I am today," Maughan says. Even when faced with difficult decisions, she felt supported. "For example, I chose economics, biology, and accounting as my three electives. Halfway through Grade 10, I decided I wasn't enjoying accounting, and the teachers couldn't have been more helpful and understanding. They helped me to find the right subject. I changed to business studies, and it was a perfect fit."

She also enjoyed participating in everything school

had to offer. "I took part in some clubs and always appreciated how many options there were. I have a passion for helping and spending time with children, and Herzlia helped me to embrace that. I was able to express my interest in outings after school."

She's still in Cape Town for now, "but I'm heading back to the UK in just a few days", she told the SA Jewish Report on 13 January. "I plan to go to Israel in the near future, and from there on, it's undecided!"

To future matrics, her advice is not to go into matric with a negative mindset. "Yes, the work is hard, and there's a lot of it, but you will get through it. The teachers are always there to help and accommodate you with whatever is needed. Don't let fear of the workload be daunting, there's still time to live your life in matric!"

Matric helped her to "discover sides to myself that I didn't know.

Matric has that effect on you. It makes you want to persevere and work as hard as you can, as in the end, it's worth it. You can learn so much about yourself – your capabilities and strengths."

Maughan's hopes and dreams for the future are "to be genuinely happy. I can without doubt say that because of my experience at Herzlia – the values it taught me, and the friends I made – I definitely will be. I want to thank Herzlia for incredible years that I'll never forget. I couldn't have had a better schooling experience, and I'm so grateful for the life lessons I have been taught, and how much Herzlia made me learn about myself."



Ella Maughan

Exceptional leaders, exceptional talents

SAUL KAMIONSKY

Leadership comes in many forms, but this group of four young leaders from King David High School Linksfield's (KDHSL's) 2021 matric class were pretty unique.

Their group included an exceptional sportswoman, a talented dancer, a staunch human-rights activist, and a qualified pilot.

Each occupied a leadership role in the school, and together, they achieved a combined tally of 39 distinctions.

Talya Atie, the school's head girl for 2021, is an exceptional sportswoman who won the Best All-Rounder Award at the school's valedictory last year. She participated in tennis, touch rugby, netball, and soccer.

"More than physical achievement in our sporting endeavours, the camaraderie and friendships we formed were the most notable achievements," says Atie, who became the third person in her family to be a head boy or girl in as many years. "There was no better feeling than running onto the sports field with fellow Davidians."

Shannon Wolpe, the school's deputy head student leader and the head of the awareness and advocacy committee last year, has been dancing for 12 years and was the only male dancer in his year.

"For me, dancing is an exquisite form of expression," he says. "Music has a way of connecting to emotions and connecting me to my true humanity."

Samara Jay, also the school's deputy head student leader in 2021, is a human-rights activist who is passionate about issues such as poverty, inequality in education, institutionalised racism, and politics. She's most passionate about women's rights and misogyny.

"There wasn't a day at school where I wasn't jabbering on about some social-injustice that bothered me," she says. "As a young woman, I feel I'm no different to any other human. I can do and accomplish anything I put my mind to without the barriers of race, religion, gender and any other form of societal-identification."

Benjamin Shmukler, the school's head of the sound, media and communications committee last year, has loved aviation since his first flight at the age of six months.

"I started my training back in 2017, and slowly started to build up the hours and work towards my private pilot license [which he obtained in 2020 after flying twice a month throughout Grade 11]."

Shmukler has also achieved either merit or a distinction in three Royal Schools of Music Piano Exams and one Rockscool Drum Exam. "I play the drums, piano, and enjoy singing and harmonising, especially in shul. I also enjoy producing/composing my own music," he says. He achieved the top Independent Examinations Board final practical mark out of all King David's music students.

In addition, this captain of KDHSL's cycling team for 2020 has completed two 94.7 cycle challenges and three

King David Cycle Tours.

In the first term last year, he would be at school at 06:00 for cycle mornings. Wolpe, especially in his younger years, and Jay would also be there at that time, and leave only late in the evening.

"I loved to wake up at the crack of dawn to go to early morning cross country training, finish off my school day with a tennis match followed by dancing rehearsals, and then still do play practise until 21:00," says Jay, who played all sports and acted, danced, and sang in all the school's productions. "I thrived on being busy, and served my school and various charities as well as I could."

She and Atie managed to juggle studying with everything else they did. "I made sure that I was working enough hours daily while still making enough time for the other things that I found essential in my matric year," says Atie.

"Playing sport, listening to music, reading, and time with my family and friends acted as a break from all the hours of learning. Planning was my personal way of finding a balance between working hard and playing hard."

Atie and the others tried to help their fellow students to grow and flourish in their chosen paths. "Our student-leadership theme for the year was, in English, 'The power of baseless love,'" she says. "We wanted to create an environment at school and beyond that was accepting, and displayed unconditional and endless kindness without needing a reason."

Wolpe, who intends to study medicine, is proud that his committee put on an assembly in spite of facing many obstacles such as him having to go into isolation during that week.

"It was really heartbreaking to work so hard for something only to lose it at the last minute. But thankfully, we put in the hard work, and we did it the week before our preliminary exams even though it was a pressured time."

They were able to be at school for most of the year. "It was really refreshing that in a time of world crisis and when everyone else was panicking, the school was a place of stability, reliability, a safe haven, and a second home," says Wolpe.

"The school's support system helped. The teachers did an incredible job. Because of COVID-19 and the online aspect, we were more in touch with our teachers. If you were struggling with something, you could always reach out. They would always reply. That was an advantage rather than a penalty or an obstacle."

This year's matrics should "befriend pressure", says Jay, because it's inevitable. "To avoid panic, get organised and work steadily and continuously throughout the year. Make sure to enjoy the last months with your friends and teachers. The year goes by in the blink of an eye, so take in every moment and take everything as it comes. And sometimes, just let go and breathe."



Talya Atie



Shannon Wolpe



Benjamin Shmukler



Samara Jay

south african
Jewish Report
The source of quality content, news and insights

www.sajr.co.za

BREAKING NEWS

NEW LITHUANIAN PASSPORT CHANGES

It's now much easier
to reclaim your Lithuanian passport

Thursday 27 January 20:00 SAST

Register NOW: bit.ly/sajrweb130

Sponsored by

NEXT
STEPS

Heritage
and
Beyond

European citizenship
with Adv. Act Bureau

INJURE

CITIZENSHIP EXPERTS
Law Firm Vilnius Lithuania

If you miss the webinar visit our YouTube channel.
<https://bit.ly/WebinarsSAJR>

Lipskars celebrate 50 years of following their calling

SAUL KAMIONSKY

Fifty years after being sent as the first Chabad emissary to South Africa, Rabbi Mendel and Rebbetzin Mashi Lipskar are being recognised for transforming this community.

"They are an inspiration to me and Gina personally and to so many across our community," says Chief Rabbi Dr Warren Goldstein.

"Their leadership and service to South African Jewry has been a beacon of light and wisdom, of positivity and boldness, of compassion and kindness. Through their relentless commitment and love, they have made and continue to make an historic contribution to the flourishing of our community by bringing us all closer to Hashem and His Torah."

This week marks half a century since the rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson of righteous memory, sent a young Rabbi Lipskar and his wife to South Africa. He was the first Chabad rabbi to be sent as a *shaliach* (emissary) to southern Africa.

"It's been a wonderful 50 years, which is a lifetime," says Lipskar. "We have seen tremendous growth and development. It wouldn't be honest if I didn't say we're exceedingly proud of what Chabad Lubavitch accomplished here in South Africa."

The Lipskars were in their early 20s when they arrived in apartheid South Africa in 1972. They had never been to the country before, and the political system was completely foreign to them.

They immediately got started in turning the Chassidim Shul in what was then Harrow Road in Yeoville, Johannesburg, into a beacon of Yiddishkeit. Hundreds of Jews, young and old, went there for inspiration.

The first Chabad House, which the Lipskars opened in Harley Street, Yeoville, became a centre of Jewish activity and education.

Today, Chabad in South Africa has shuls, schools, and a Yeshiva Gedolah. There are 20 Chabad Centres and more than 60 *shluchim* of the rebbe in the country.

Lipskar is the head of Chabad Lubavitch in South Africa, the rabbi of the shul at Hyde Park, former chairperson of the Rabbinical Association, and the founder of Torah Academy. He's known as a charismatic orator with the ability to inspire audiences with passion and purpose. He's a husband, the father of nine children, a grandfather, and great-grandfather.

A few months before the Lipskars married, a position for a rabbi became available at the then popular Chassidim Shul on Harrow Road. Rabbi Koppel Bacher, a qualified Chabad rabbi living in Johannesburg, opted to work in his family business rather than become a congregational rabbi. But he was determined that an official Chabad office should be opened in this country. He made this known to the rebbe whenever he could.

Bacher had initially gone to the Chabad Yeshiva in New York in 1955 when he was just 14. Nine

years later, he returned to South Africa with the intention of creating what he called "a Jewish environment" in Johannesburg. He saw his opportunity at the Chassidim Shul.

In the United States, the rebbe put word out that he wanted someone who was prepared for this challenge. Lipskar and his betrothed put up their hands.

"The rebbe told us, 'With my blessing, you should go and establish and develop Chabad Lubavitch in southern Africa,'" says Lipskar.

Bacher brought them to the country and financed their start-up. "I used to go every year to the rebbe and I have since brought lots of rabbis here," he says. In addition to the Lipskars, Bacher also brought *shluchim* such as Rabbi Yossy Goldman to South Africa.

Being an emissary of the rebbe isn't seen as a

system, we tried to improvise as best as possible within its limitations."

"Mendel would walk the streets of Hillbrow," recalls the rebbetzin. "We were so young. Hashem gifted us with wisdom, but one would consult with the rebbe and not make decisions on one's own."

Lipskar says it wasn't too difficult to adjust to life in South Africa. "For a Jew, particularly an observant Jew, to come to a place and find other observant Jews is in itself immediately welcoming. The warmth of South African Jews is unique throughout the world."

"The other beautiful thing when we first came here in 1972 was the fact that there was no television. Social interaction was the order of the day. We made a lot of good friends relatively quickly, and that helped us to settle in."

Just before the Soweto uprising in 1976, Lipskar

to the country. "Chabad filled that gap most significantly," says Goldman. "Today, thank G-d, we have many home-grown rabbis and rebbetzins."

Goldman worked closely with Lipskar for 10 years. "I was the director of the first Chabad House in Yeoville," says Goldman. "We both had our offices there. He gave me lots of space and room for initiative, but I always valued his insight and advice."

When Nelson Mandela's release from prison was imminent, the South African Jewish community was nervous about how the country might change.

"Rabbi Bacher visited the rebbe in New York and mentioned this," recalls Lipskar. "The rebbe said, 'It will be good there till Moshiach, and better after Moshiach comes.' Although there were tremendous challenging moments, such as in 1976, the rebbe kept on reassuring the community and part of our role was to deliver that message. Though many people decided to emigrate to different parts of the world, some making aliya, many remained because of the rebbe's reassurances."

Lipskar says the Jewish community has certainly become smaller over the years. "One doesn't feel it as much as one would in other places where you don't have the infrastructure that you have here. For instance, you have the Chevrah Kadisha, Hatzolah, many shuls, and Jewish schools.

"Fifty years ago, South Africa was a very different place, not only because the community was larger, but it was a very different type of community. It was an extremely traditional community. People went to shul on a Friday night a lot more than they do today. There was a natural respect for religious observance. The tragedy was the tremendous ignorance about things Jewish. We felt that one of the first things that we had to do was to create an awareness of those things."

The Lipskars dedicated a lot of time towards contacting young people, inviting them for Shabbat. "We had classes and we had all sorts of activities," recalls Lipskar. "We had Lag B'Omer parades. A thousand people would come to the giant Chanukah menorah."

This all became part of the revival of Jewish life, says Lipskar. "We soon brought out *shluchim* to Cape Town. We started a play school which developed into Torah Academy. The rest is history."

"In South Africa, the vast majority of the Jewish community comes from a *baal teshuva* environment [secular Jews who return to religious Judaism]," says Lipskar. "We were involved in bringing that into being. Young and old were brought into a passionate, vibrant, and committed Jewish way of life that the country didn't have before."

But the Lipskars aren't resting on their laurels. "The emphasis isn't so much to reflect upon the past - which we do with tremendous pride and joy - but to look to the future and see what else needs to be done," they say.



Rebbetzin Mashi and Rabbi Mendel Lipskar

job, Bacher says. Lipskar, who grew up in Toronto, comes from a Lubavitch family rooted in the tradition and history of Chabad, so he wanted to become a *shaliach*. "So I didn't have to convince him much," says Bacher. "The rebbe has 5 000 *shluchim* all over the world today because they are brought up with this desire to fulfil the rebbe's wish to go to places and build Yiddishkeit."

Lipskar says he was a bit worried about coming to South Africa where there were no Chabad rabbis and there was a political system in place that they didn't understand. "Rabbi Bacher and a couple of other rabbis were here, so there was some sort of a presence. I was concerned that it was a different type of community. I had no idea what it was like before I came here.

"Though we didn't understand the political

was joined in South Africa by his friend from the Yeshiva in New York, Rabbi Goldman. The rebbe had chosen to send Goldman to South Africa. Lipskar had already been encouraging Goldman about coming to the country.

"He said it's a beautiful community with tremendous potential for spiritual growth," recalls Goldman.

When Goldman arrived in the country with his wife and their two sons, most South Africans thought they were mad. "But the rebbe was telling people there was no need to panic or emigrate, and he backed up his reassurances by sending his students here with their families," says Goldman.

South Africa's political situation was becoming more tense, and the rand was depreciating, meaning overseas rabbis were reluctant to come



BALTHORNE

SAFE DEPOSIT CENTRES

London, UK

Contact us for further information

E: admin@balthornegroup.com

T: +44207431200

HQ Address: 575 Finchley Road,
London, NW3 7BN, United Kingdom

PROTECT THE IRREPLACABLE

Balthorne Safe Deposit Centres London, UK

Branches across Central and North London

Safe, Discreet, Confidential and Professional Services

Experts in dealing with international clients.

Multiple sizes of safe deposit lockers available for rent – further information can be found on our website

www.balthornegroup.com

Eastern European Jewish culture revived in massive archive

SAUL KAMIONSKY

As an archivist at the National Library of Lithuania was opening boxes to show off some recent discoveries, she pulled out a Yiddish theatre poster to the amazement of visitors there.

"That's my principal from Melbourne, Jacob Waislitz!" exclaimed Australian visitors to Lithuania, Irene Kronhill and her friend Onella Stagol.

Kronhill and Stagol were on a Yivo Study Trip to Poland and Lithuania two summers ago. Founded in 1925, the goal of Yivo, the Institute for Jewish Research, is to preserve, study, share, and perpetuate knowledge of the history and culture of Eastern European Jewry.

They were both stunned to be so suddenly connected to their own past by the poster. Waislitz, a world-renowned Yiddish actor and director, had been the principal of the Yiddish school they attended on Wednesdays and Sundays during their childhood in Melbourne.

"We went there after school," Kronhill told the SA Jewish Report. "We learnt Yiddish, literature, and history there."

Some of the newly discovered material they saw in the library back then are now being digitised as part of the Edward Blank Yivo Vilna Collections Project.

This project comprises about 4.1 million pages of original books, artefacts, records, manuscripts, and documents. It's the first of its kind in Jewish history, and is the single largest digital collection related to East European Jewish civilisation.

It forms part of an historic seven-year, \$7 million (R106.4 million) initiative to

process, conserve, and digitise the New York-based Yivo Institute for Jewish Research's divided pre-war library and archival collections.

Material has been digitised into a dedicated web portal and is now accessible worldwide. The Edward Blank Yivo Vilna Online Collection was completed on 10 January.

Many of the documents were destroyed in 1941 when the original Yivo Institute in Vilna was ransacked. However, a group of Vilna ghetto workers (many of whom had been associated with Yivo) were forced to sort through the collections and select material to be shipped to Frankfurt for use in the Nazi Institute for the Study of the Jewish Question.

However, many of these ghetto workers, commonly known as the Paper Brigade, risked their lives by hiding material on their bodies to smuggle into the Vilna ghetto to preserve it.

In 1946, the United States Army recovered many of these documents and sent them to Yivo in New York. Then, the smuggled material was uncovered after the war and saved from the Soviets by Lithuanian librarian Antanas Ulpis in 1948. These remained hidden in the Church of St George (converted by the Soviets into the Lithuanian Book Chamber) until they were discovered in 1989.

In the Yivo archives, Kronhill also found a photograph of a protest march conducted by a youth movement from the 1930s. "I recognised a woman in the front because she was the mother of someone who I had gone



Newspaper article devoted to Rudolf Zaslavsky to the youth movement with.

A former United States ambassador to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, Meryl Frank, also uncovered much in the Yivo archives. She discovered the facts behind the stories she had heard about her actress cousin, Franya Winter, and her cousin's lover, Rudolf Zaslavsky, also an actor.

"I was stunned by the volume of information I was able to find," she says. "I found that the stories told by my family weren't exaggerated as I had earlier thought."

Frank is writing a book about Winter, who played the role of Tzeitel in *Tevye the Milkman*. She had heard about Yivo's archives while attending a Yivo class on the history of Yiddish theatre.

"Stephanie Halpern, the director of archives at Yivo, brought to our class artefacts from the Yivo collection including theatrical posters, one which featured Rudolf Zaslavsky," Frank said. "I was told about the volume of theatrical artefacts and papers that it had, and was delighted to find information about my cousin that had been hidden by the Paper

were meant to be destroyed, just as those who wrote them ultimately were," Frank says.

Before using Yivo's archives, Dr David Crossley, based in the United Kingdom, had just a vague idea about his paternal grandmother's cousin, Nachum Lipovsky (1874-1928).

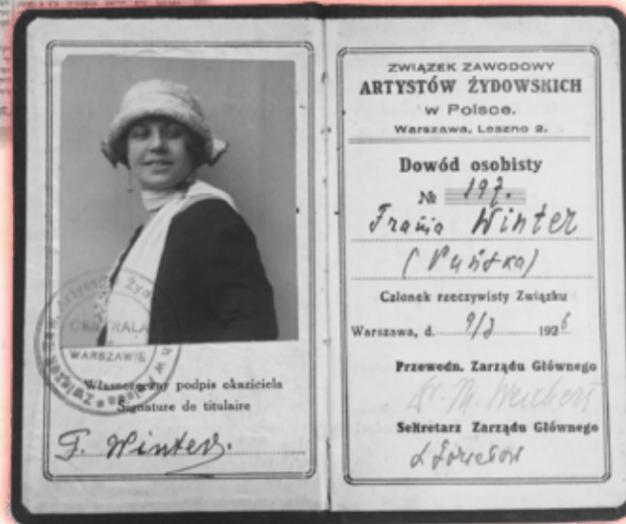
Lipovsky, the founder and first director of the Vilna Yiddish Theatre, has now been brought to life through his compendium of correspondence in the archives.

"Yivo has compiled Nachum's collection, which comprises various hand-written manuscripts of plays and ephemera, mainly in Yiddish, which my sister has tried to decipher," says Crossley. "Even her expertise in speaking and writing in Yiddish cannot do justice to reading or even understanding his written words."

With a deeper reading of Lipovsky's work needed, Crossley has printed out the archives so his future family can engross themselves in "translating their relatively famous predecessor's works and gain pleasure in being associated in the rebirth of Yiddish as a still extant language of life and culture".

Crossley cannot praise Yivo highly enough. "My experience of the archivists and researchers has been extremely friendly and responsive," he says.

Dr Samuel Kassow, whose book *Who Will Write Our History* was adapted into a documentary film, has used the archives to find material on cultural life in Vilna between the two world wars.



Jewish Actors Union ID card of Franya Winter

Brigade beneath the Vilna Ghetto and rescued by the Monuments Men [the art detectives of World War II] in Germany. "All archives are special places, but these papers are particularly precious because they

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND JOHANNESBURG 100 1922-2022



Aura Herzog (née Ambache)
1924 - 2022

Wits University extends its deepest sympathy and condolences to the Herzog family on the passing of Aura Herzog who obtained her BSc at Wits in 1945.

Aura served as the First Lady of Israel from 1983 to 1993 as the wife of the late Chaim Herzog, sixth President of the State of Israel, and was the mother of the current president, Isaac Herzog.

ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A FUNCTION VENUE?
WE CAN ASSIST!

genesis WORX



PLUS CATERING AND DECOR !!

- ▶ BARMITZVAHS
- ▶ BATMITZVAHS
- ▶ BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS
- ▶ ENGAGEMENTS
- ▶ BACHELORETTE PARTIES
- ▶ WEDDINGS
- ▶ BABY SHOWERS
- ▶ BRISSES
- ▶ DINNER PARTIES
- ▶ SHABBAT DINNERS
- ▶ WORKSHOPS

+27 (0)79 961 6760 | +27 (0)11 274 5300 | angelique@gof.co.za
10 Sandler Road, Fairmount, 2192

Exercise and a good marriage: tips from world's oldest gym instructor

MICHAEL BELLING

Meish Jaffe is probably the oldest gym instructor in South Africa and at 97 years of age, possibly the oldest in the world.

A resident of Jaffa, the Jewish retirement home in Pretoria, Jaffe introduced his fitness regime soon after he came to the home four years ago. His exercises are specifically designed to meet the needs of older people with varying levels of physical activity and mobility.

Jaffe has another remarkable achievement to his name, one he shares with his wife, Bella, (92). They have been married for almost 72 years.

They have known each other since they were young children in Rosettenville in the south of Johannesburg, where Bella Aronowitz was born.

Jaffe hails from London's East End. He was three when his family came to South Africa in 1927.

His grandparents had moved to Cape Town from London many years earlier with their children. At the age of 20, his father decided he wanted to see the world, which he did by joining the merchant navy. He finally

settled in London after meeting his wife there, returning with his new family to South Africa a few years later, settling in La Rochelle, a suburb bordering on Rosettenville.

Jaffe often went to Bella's home when his father had his

jockeys. We got to know all of them, like Tiger Wright and others."

He and Bella parted ways for a time after they attended different high schools, and he left school at the end of his junior certificate year, to use the old terminology, (Grade 10 today).

He then qualified as a panel beater. After a few years, he went to Durban, where he worked repairing ships.

matter-of-fact manner. "After a while, we got together. She realised that I was the right guy for her, and that's the story." They were married in the South Eastern Hebrew Congregation shul in Rosettenville on 25 June 1950.

Sometime later, with Bella also working as a bookkeeper and shorthand typist, he decided to open a panel beating shop in Germiston. After operating successfully for six years, he lost everything after making some poor investments.

His brother, Henry Jaffe, who lived in Pretoria, insisted that Jaffe, Bella, and their three small children, Brian, Neil, and Caron, come to Pretoria to stay with him until they could get back on their feet. Moving in with Henry for about three months in 1960 proved a turning point in their lives. Jaffe raised the money to buy a shop in the Pretoria central business district, which he ran for six years.

Then, 45 years ago, he bought the business which has remained in the family ever since, Valhalla General Dealers. At the time, "it sold everything from bicycle parts to ladies' panties", Jaffe says. "I threw everything out, and turned it into a hardware store."

The business expanded over the years into several adjoining shops, and Jaffe bought the entire property.

Jaffe and Bella retired in 2000 to live permanently in their holiday flat in Umhlanga. Their sons, Neil and Brian, who had joined the business early on, took over from their father and their grandson, Craig, also now works there.

They moved into Jaffa when Jaffe was 84. "But I wasn't ready for it," he says, so they moved back to Umhlanga, returning to Jaffa finally when he was 93 and Bella was 88.

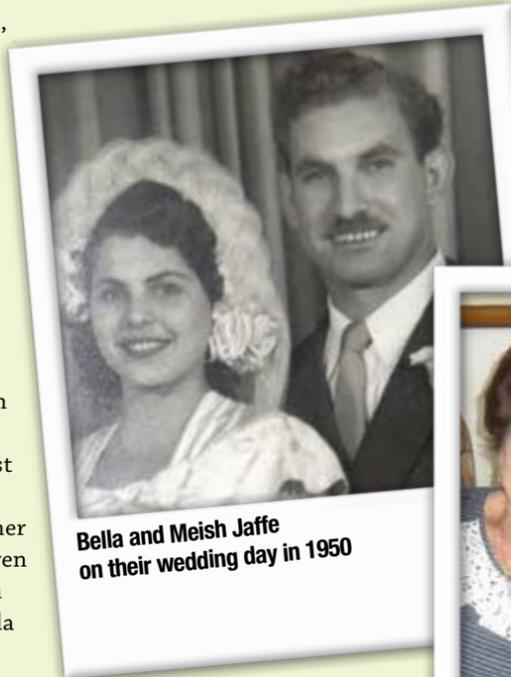
They are both happy at Jaffa. "I would say Jaffa is the best Jewish old-age home in the country," he says.

It didn't take long for him to start his exercise classes at Jaffa, eventually taking them three times a week. He is the oldest in the group, with several in their nineties and others in their eighties and seventies.

"They are getting fitter now," he says, "exercise improves their flexibility and mobility."

Their recipe for a good marriage? Bella says simply, "Just listen to your husband."

"I married the right partner," Jaffe says. "We've never had an argument of real foundation. We've had a very good marriage. We've got three children, eight grandchildren, and 11 great-grandchildren."



Bella and Meish Jaffe on their wedding day in 1950



Bella and Meish Jaffe, still smiling after almost 72 years of marriage

regular klaberjass game with Bella's father.

He was fascinated by the people he met through Bella's father, a shoemaker, focusing on one specific product.

"The Turffontein Racecourse was right next door," Jaffe explains. "He specialised in making upmarket boots for

"I wrote to her from Durban, but she didn't answer me. So I went back to Joburg," he says in his

MOST SA JEWS (BOTH OF ASHKENAZI AND SEPHARDI HERITAGE) ARE ELIGIBLE TO REINSTATE EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP AND, ACCORDINGLY, AN EU PASSPORT.

A common misconception is that European citizenship and EU passports can only be obtained if one has documents providing his/her lineage. The fact is that not having any documents proving lineage, doesn't lead to disqualification of eligibility. Jews of Ashkenazi heritage can rely on documents obtained in Lithuania or Poland.

Jews of Sephardi heritage need no proof at all!

In his experience, the majority of South African Jews are descendants of Jews whose European citizenship was illegally deprived, and therefore they are entitled to reinstate it, and accordingly obtain an EU passport.



Adv. Horesh has been operating in SA market with the Jewish community since March 2018. He arrives regularly to South Africa, and can meet in person with Jews who are interested to do so.

Ashkenazi: This ad refers to Jews of Polish & Lithuanian heritage only.

The most important thing is the understanding that prior to the end of WW-I, the European map was very different than the one we know today. Countries like Poland and Lithuania did not exist as independent countries, and until 1918 these territories were only known as Lithuanian or Polish regions/counties of the Great Russian Empire who ruled all of north eastern Europe. Accordingly, until 1918, residents of these territories were Russian citizens, as Polish and Lithuanian citizenships didn't exist. Therefore, since applications for reinstatement of these citizenships can only be based on whether one's ancestor was a Polish or Lithuanian citizen, whoever is a descendant of an ancestor who left Europe prior to 1918 will not be eligible.

In addition, it is highly important to remember that since borders in Europe were shifted once again during and after WW-II, one's eligibility for Polish or Lithuanian citizenship depends on the city from which his/her ancestor hailed. Horesh explains: Shifted borders resulted in cities changing nationalities, and that the resultant effect for descendants of Jews left Vilnius is that their application for Lithuanian citizenship will be declined whereas a similar



Adv. Avi Horesh is an Israeli attorney, who lived in Poland for seven years. Horesh is recognised in Israel as one of the leading lawyers in the field of reinstatement of European citizenship.

application for reinstatement of Polish citizenship may very well be approved! Horesh has an in-depth knowledge and a full understanding of European immigration laws.

Sephardi: This ad refers to all Jews of Sephardi heritage – Jews who arrived from North Africa, the Middle East, Turkey, Greece, Italy, Yugoslavia, as well as many descendants of Jews who arrived from Holland and the UK.

Most descendants of Sephardi Jews (who were exiled 500 years ago) are eligible to reinstate Portuguese citizenship and, accordingly, an EU passport. If applicable, Adv. Horesh will apply for (on behalf of the applicant) an official certificate confirming such eligibility, on the basis of which, an application for Portuguese citizenship is most likely to be approved. Horesh resides in Israel – a four-hour flight from Warsaw and Vilnius – enabling him to travel to Poland and Lithuania, as well as to Portugal, where he collaborates with local professionals who assist him in tracing documentation required for successful applications of reinstatement of European citizenship. Adv. Horesh closely collaborates with professionals who assist him in tracing documentation in Europe required for successful applications of reinstatement EU citizenships.

My next visit to South Africa is planned for the end of January/beginning of February 2022.
WhatsApp me on +48 783 953 223 • Email Avi Horesh adv.avi.n.horesh@gmail.com

Antisemitism “must be combatted immediately and forcefully”

SAUL KAMIONSKY

The military campaign between Israel and Hamas in the summer of May 2021 and the COVID-19 pandemic caused a significant spike in antisemitism over the past year.

So said Dr Nachman Shai, Israel’s minister of diaspora affairs, during a webinar about antisemitism ahead of International Holocaust Remembrance Day on 27 January.

“The spike followed a period of three years in which we witnessed a certain

decline,” said Shai. “Suddenly, antisemitism is back, alive and kicking. The rise in antisemitism is disturbing. It calls for action. It cannot remain the same.

“The way antisemitism has taken a new form from COVID-19 is also disturbing. It seems like a lot of antisemitic groups and individuals were waiting for another chance to inject antisemitism into the public discourse.”

Shai said his ministry’s monitoring of several social-media networks had shown that at least 3.5 million antisemitic messages were posted by more than 400 000 users in the past year.

The webinar revealed that Holocaust-related language and words like “apartheid”, “ethnic cleansing”, and “genocidal policies” were often used by antisemites when they referred to Israel.

“When you use words like ‘apartheid’, and when you use

ANTISEMITISM CAN ACQUIRE MONSTROUS DIMENSIONS. IF IT HAPPENED ONCE, IT CAN HAPPEN AGAIN. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF LEADERS AND JOURNALISTS, IF I MAY SAY, IS TO CONTROL THIS IMMEDIATELY.

tactics like BDS [the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions movement], which inspired the notion of apartheid in Israel, you legitimise a certain violent worming against Israel,” said Carol Nuriel, the director of Anti-Defamation League (ADL) in Israel. “It’s totally unacceptable. We see it a lot on social media. This is why we have to educate [users of] social-media

platforms to understand the very hidden antisemitism.”

Dani Dayan, the chairperson of Yad Vashem, said, “Antisemitism must be combatted forcefully, decisively, and immediately because we know what the world didn’t know in the 1930s. Antisemitism can acquire monstrous dimensions. If it happened once, it can happen again. The responsibility of leaders and journalists, if I may say, is to control this immediately.”

The main antisemitic lie, according to new research cited by Israeli journalist

Ben-Dror Yemini, is that the Jew is a great danger to humanity. “It was said in the 30s again and again,” he said. “People have been brainwashed with this kind of thinking.”

Arun Gandhi, one of Mahatma Gandhi’s grandsons, published an article claiming that Jews have created a culture of violence. “He doesn’t even distinguish between Israel and Jews as the biggest players, and that culture is eventually going to destroy humanity,” said Yemini.

Yemini gave an example of an article written by a Jew in a very prestigious

magazine, the *London Review of Books*, in 2002.

“A paragraph claims that gas chambers aren’t the only way to destroy a nation,” said Yemini. “It’s enough to develop high rates of infant mortality, meaning that’s what we in Israel are doing to the Palestinians – we’re using infant mortality to commit genocide against the Palestinians. In reality, just to set things straight, the infant mortality of Palestinians decreased dramatically from 1967 up to now, which means the

writer published a blood libel. Can I define him as antisemite? He is Israeli, he is a Jew.”

The ADL notes that people still hold antisemitic attitudes in many places around the world, and there has been an increase in the intensity and severity of antisemitic incidents.

“We are seeing more targeting of synagogues, but also more targeting of other houses of worship, churches, and mosques all over the world,” said Nuriel. “It shows us that extremists chose their targets carefully and know religious institutions are vulnerable.

“There’s also an increase in the danger antisemitism poses to Jewish communities and individuals. It started 15 years ago with Ilan Halimi [being murdered] in Paris, then the Toulouse massacre, and then Brussels. It leaked to the United States. We had the Charlie Hebdo [shooting]. In the United States, it really took us by surprise because we were all raised on the notion that it was the safest place for Jews worldwide.”

Nuriel said we need to be aware of the potential danger of antisemitism online. “We also have to push the platform to take responsibility to monitor and remove antisemitic content.”

She said media coverage should be balanced and impartial when covering incidents. “It’s okay to be critical of Israel. Make sure not to cross the line to the total delegitimisation of the state of Israel. You can definitely be critical of policies. That’s totally fine.

“It’s important not to create an impression that Jews are too sensitive to antisemitism. It’s also important not to perpetuate stereotypes about the communities you cover, whether they are Jews or non-Jews.”



Dani Dayan



Carol Nuriel



Ben-Dror Yemini

TALK TO US ABOUT FINDING AND SECURING YOUR PROPERTY IN ISRAEL.



Savyon View
JERUSALEM

Since 1985 - Hold is the premier real estate firm for property investment in Israel.

With a global portfolio of clients, Hold also manages over 170 rental properties in Israel.



NEW RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS

Ra'anana | Jerusalem | Haifa | Harish
Netanya | Ir Yamim | Ramat Beit Shemesh
Tel Aviv | Modi'in | Jaffa



CUSTOMER FOCUSED BROKERAGE

We help buyers to find properties that are relevant and meet their requirements.



HOLD SERVICES

Legal representation, banking services - including opening bank accounts and organising mortgages and project management.



PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

We will find tenants and manage your apartment so you capitalise on your investment immediately.

HOLD REAL ESTATE

SECURING YOUR FUTURE IN ISRAEL



Contact
Julian Nathan

✉ julian@hold.co.il
☎ +27 87 551 0734
📞 +972 58 631 9754

Visit our website: www.hold.co.il

Locked Upside Down reopens theatre for business

The Theatre on the Square finally reopens with *Locked Upside Down*, an almost wholly Jewish cast and crew bringing us a revue on living in the time of COVID-19 in the northern suburbs of Johannesburg. The *SA Jewish Report* speaks to **Alan Swerdlow**, the director of the show.

This is the first production in the revamped Theatre on the Square. What does that mean to you and your cast?

A theatre lives only when there's an audience seated, watching, and engaging with a performance, and the act of performance is a reflection and recreation of experiences. For the general public, the past two years have been a time of deprivation from the communal shared experience of attending live shows, but I don't think the public at large is aware just how devastating the impact of COVID-19 has been on the entertainment industry.

For two years, everyone connected with that industry has been effectively denied the chance of making a living – from stage hands, ushers, ticket sellers, to stage technicians, writers, composers, musicians, designers, performers, directors, and producers.

Worldwide, the profession has been effectively gutted, with severe consequences for everyone connected with it.

For us to be the first production in the Theatre on the Square is unbelievably thrilling and inspirational as we help to bring a theatre back to life. Theatre is an



Sharon Spiegel-Wagner, Lorri Strauss, and Cathrine Hopkins in *Locked Upside Down*

audience will recognise these themes and realise that they weren't alone.

You have a predominantly Jewish cast. Does that mean there are Jewish-isms throughout? Give us some examples to look out for.

Because both Lorri and Sharon are "nice Jewish girls", they wrote from their own experience, so the entire show is suffused with a Jewish *neshomah* that I think any Jewish audience will recognise.

There are all sorts of hints and passing references to things like the Jewish Mommies WhatsApp groups to the competitiveness of some parents in things like home-schooling and bread baking.

act of community, and the pandemic paused or distorted all communal engagement, yet here we are, extending a hand to our community and actually looking into their eyes.

How would you describe this production?

It's a revue, a reflection of the pandemic experience through songs, sketches,

monologues, and dialogue, and like all revues, it's funny, satirical, sometimes more heartfelt and emotional, and contemplative. It's thematic rather than narrative, but at its heart, it's story-telling, which is the oldest and most enduring performance – from grannies telling bedtime stories to the grandest, glitziest entertainment.

Who wrote the play and why? How was it put together?

The revue has been written by Sharon Spiegel-Wagner and Lorri Strauss. Their frustration during the "time of COVID" led to a lot of introspection and an overwhelming desire to create something, even if its ultimate realisation on a stage in front of an audience was uncertain.

Once the entire production team had been assembled, creative input came from everyone, and as director, I helped shape the sketches and monologues.

Tell us about your cast and what makes them bring the characters to life?

Both Sharon and Lorri have lived the experience of mommies with demanding children during lockdown and coped with it in their own way, and Cathrine brings her experience of a singleton living through lockdown. It's real, immediately recognisable, and the audience can identify with it.

What will make this production memorable?

Being able to be part of one of the first shared experiences of a live performance in a theatre in Johannesburg is memorable enough, but there's also some glorious singing and some sharp, witty observations about the way we live now. I think the relief that people will feel at "I wasn't the only one reacting like that" will be palpable.

What type of audience will appreciate it, and what should they be prepared for?

Anyone who has been through the past two years will find that the show resonates with them and they should be prepared for some good laughs, some nostalgia, a few home truths, and the sheer joy of being back in a theatre watching people do what they do best.

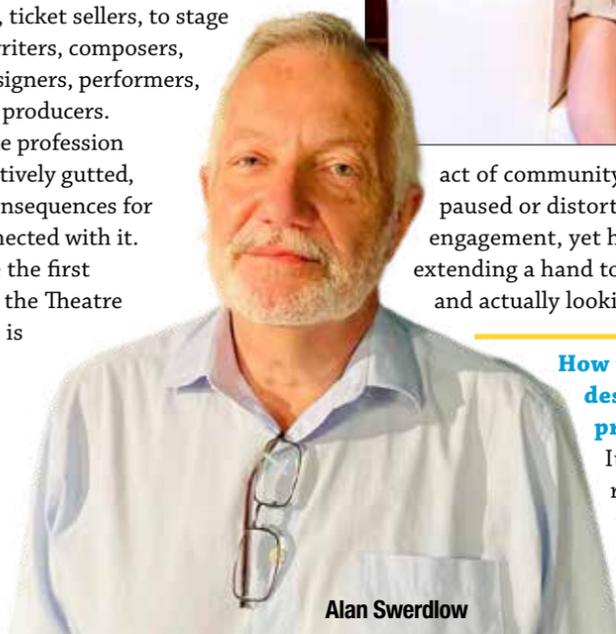
As actors, directors, and entertainers, how have you all managed lockdown in South Africa?

I won't lie – it has been really, really tough. But lockdown has given us one gift, the gift of time to reset, reflect, consider, and find new ways of harnessing our creative impulses. There has been a lot of writing, philosophising, acquisition of new skills, and the sorting out of priorities – in addition to the cleaning out of cupboards, learning to sort laundry properly, and keeping a sourdough starter alive.

What impact has it had on your personal lives?

As mentioned, we've had the chance to sort out our priorities and discover resilience out of necessity. Having one of the most important things in our lives taken away from us gave us a new appreciation for what it is that we love – our creative expression. For me personally, it was learning not to take anything for granted ever again.

• "*Locked Upside Down*", starring Sharon Spiegel-Wagner, Lorri Strauss, and Cathrine Hopkins will be at Theatre on the Square from 9 to 26 February. Tickets are available at computicket.com or contact 083 377 4969 or 011 883 8606.



Alan Swerdlow

ADVERTORIAL

Farewell to the Angel who inspired us

**Annette Angel
Passed away Sunday, 23 January 2022**

It's with immense sadness that all of us at the Jewish Women's Benevolent Society (JWBS) mourn the passing of our vibrant and inspiring president, Annette Angel. A dedicated and hardworking honorary life president and volunteer for more than 56 years, Annette will be sorely missed.

The JWBS has been in existence for 128 years, extending a hand of support and friendship to the most vulnerable members of our Jewish community, helping them to live with dignity and hope. Annette was involved in various aspects of the JWBS, making a vital and meaningful difference to so many.

She loved to knit and inspired others to do the same, co-ordinating the donation of countless warm items to those less fortunate – blankets and jerseys for adults and children, and beanies for all, including premature babies.

In 2021, her JWBS knitting club donated 312 blankets to Warm the World for distribution to the broader community. Always recruiting knitters to assist with the creation of wonderfully warm blankets, Annette's knitters plan to continue knitting in her memory. Anyone who would like to assist with this initiative should call the JWBS office on 011 485 5232 to find out more.

Annette was articulate, smart, energetic, and always immaculately groomed. She loved and lived life to the full, was an organised and capable lady who always got things done. She was admired by all who knew her, her presence adding a bright light wherever she went.

Raising four children with her husband, Aubrey, she held down several jobs and ran several businesses concurrently, including a successful catering company. She is renowned for her delicious baklava-style cheesecake, and many of her recipes form part of the menu at Melrose Manor where she resided.

Survived by her children, 11 grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren, Annette leaves an amazing and inspiring legacy of hope and determination. The JWBS was, indeed, blessed to have her as one of our stalwart members. Rest in peace dearest Annette.



JEWISH
WOMEN'S
BENEVOLENT
SOCIETY
P.O. Box 100, 2011, Johannesburg



A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

We Remember campaign packs punch locally

International Holocaust Remembrance Day on Thursday, 27 January, was designated by the United Nations General Assembly in November 2005 to commemorate Jewish and other victims of Nazi genocide during World War II. The date 27 January was chosen because it was on that day in 1945 that the Red Army liberated Auschwitz, the death camp whose very name today is synonymous with the horrors of the Nazi regime and the industrial-scale mass murder it perpetrated.

Over the past several years, the World Jewish Congress has run a #WeRemember campaign, in which individuals around the world are encouraged to write the words "We Remember" on a sheet of paper, take a picture of themselves holding the sign, and post it to social media using that hashtag. The global impact of this simple but powerful demonstration of solidarity and commemoration has been considerable, with the South African Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD) successfully implementing the initiative on a local level.

We were moved last year when Clive Mashishi, a social-justice activist with whom we have worked extensively to bring relief to areas especially hard-hit by the COVID-19 lockdown, decided to use the #WeRemember model to educate the communities he engages with about the Holocaust and counteract the toxic antisemitic conspiracy theories that are taking root in certain quarters.

Among the most malignant of these conspiracy theories is that which holds that the Holocaust itself is a Jewish hoax that Jews, through their alleged secret control of world events, have somehow imposed on a gullible humanity. Last week, the United Nations recognised the dangerous and hateful nature of this phenomenon

ABOVE BOARD

Karen Milner



by adopting a resolution condemning it. Sponsored by Israel and Germany, the resolution declares that the Holocaust was real, and that "to deny or distort the historical facts is wrong on every level and dangerous to society, and needs to be countered with education". It further urges governments and "social-media companies to take active measures to combat antisemitism and Holocaust denial or distortion by means of information and communications technologies, and to facilitate the reporting of such content."

Fittingly the resolution was adopted (with only Iran objecting) on the anniversary of the infamous Wannsee Conference, where on 20 January 1942, senior leadership of Nazi Germany met to decide upon and plan the annihilation of European Jewry.

Holocaust remembrance isn't only about commemorating those who died, but also to the living victims of Nazism. Part of the SAJBD's work in this area has been to assist local Holocaust survivors wishing to claim under various compensatory, hardship, and relief funds that have been set up for those who suffered at the hands of the Nazi regime. Over many years, this task has been carried out with characteristic dedication and thoroughness by Shirley Beagle, who continues to go the extra mile to ensure that our survivors are given all the logistical, technical, and moral support they need to negotiate this complex and often intimidating process.

• Listen to Charisse Zeifert on Jewish Board Talk, 101.9 ChaiFM, every Friday from 12:00 to 13:00.

This column is paid for by the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

Let's not throw the baby out with the bathwater

In our rush to get back to what was considered normal in a pre-COVID-19 world, I'm concerned that we might be "throwing the baby out with the bathwater".

Where there is, of course, a great need to do away with restrictions so that we can rebuild our economy, relationships, and get on with things, it might be worth considering if perhaps we might want to consider holding on to some elements of the restrictions.

Like the Friday night curfew. And perhaps the requirement for that extra space between people and their neighbour in shul. But Friday night curfew, for certain.

There was a simplicity to life in the days, or rather nights, when curfew was imposed. For a short time, Shabbat meals started promptly, and there was no danger of having to consider eating one's own arm just to stay alive while waiting for guests to walk to Glenhazel from Morningside. Or for the final salad to be made just as people are about to pass out from starvation.

That was also a time before curfew when one couldn't feel confident that the meal would end before midnight. I recall, with some embarrassment, occasions when in desperation and panic, tears streaming down my cheeks, I found myself begging our host to end the meal before I took my own life with the help of a dessert spoon just so that I could rest.

The meal would invariably and uncomfortably hurry towards conclusion and in no time at all, we would find ourselves on the pavement with assurances that we should do this again sometime. Soon.

The walk home on those evenings

INNER VOICE

Howard Feldman



was never pleasant as I endured lecture after lecture on the appalling nature of my behaviour. But we were on our way home.

There are other aspects of lockdown that might be worth considering holding on to. Social distancing in shopping malls, extra space in shul, and the need to hug people that you don't want to hug. It's all good and well when both parties are close and are in a hugging relationship, but the awkwardness around hugging uncertainty isn't something I have missed at all over the past few years. It would be a great pity for that to become a concern again.

Masks, on the other hand, need to go. The longer we wear them, the deafer I find myself. More and more, I catch myself leaning forward and pulling down my own mask when trying to hear what someone with a covered mouth is saying.

It makes no sense, but I'm convinced that COVID-19 or lack of listening practice has contributed to the fact that I currently hear about 30% of what people are saying. As a consequence, I have taken to filling in the gaps of the missing 70%, which has made people a lot more interesting than they used to be. You wouldn't believe some of the things that they didn't say.

There is little doubt that we're ready to move on. COVID-19 in South Africa is very last year. But like every good fad, it might be worth holding on to a few of the gains before trashing them with the losses.

Letters

WHY DOES PANDOR WANT A BANTUSTAN IN THE MIDDLE EAST?

Gaza has been independent since 2005. As Gaza's southern border borders Egypt, Gaza is of interest to the African Union. Israel is on Gaza's northern border, so Israel is indirectly associated with the African Union, via Gaza.

In 1973, there was a civil war in Jordan. An "illegal" land claim to the West Bank, occupied by Jordan from 1948 to 1967, was ceded to the Jordanian terrorists to end the Jordanian civil war.

Now, in South Africa, we know that Bantustans don't work. So, why does Dr Naledi Pandor want a Bantustan in the Middle East? A Bantustan between independent Gaza and former Jordanians?

As the Palestinian issue started only after the Jordanian civil war, Jordan was and is the Palestinian state. Lobbying for a United Nations mandate for Egypt to once again administer Gaza is constructive.

– Michael Bagraim – MP

NO EGOS, NO LEADERS IN DPSC

In Terry Shakinovsky's obituary about Max Coleman (*SA Jewish Report*, 20 January 2022) she describes the remarkable man he was. She writes of his courage and determination, his integrity, as well as his enormous generosity and kindness. This is all absolutely true. I can attest to that. When my then boyfriend and later husband was acquitted after his trial for terrorism, Max and Audrey allowed us to stay in their luxurious Plettenberg Bay townhouse. This was for us, and for Alan particularly, a time of recovery and healing after the ordeal of detention and trial.

It's time to correct some facts. Max and Audrey didn't start the Detainees' Parents Support Committee (DPSC). The DPSC was started by David Webster and Glenn Moss, and I think prior to his own detention, Nicholas (Fink) Haysom was also instrumental. The significant thing about the DPSC was that

there were no egos, no leaders, no individuals who staked a claim to their own importance. We all contributed in our own spheres of skills and influence, and we were all present to further the well-being of our family members, to develop a modus operandi for managing the security police, and to give each other support. Members such as David and Glenn played an important role in our political education about detention legislation, the court processes, and what our family members might be going through.

Some months after its inception, Max and Audrey joined the group, and there's no doubt that they remained involved long after most of us had moved on. Max and Audrey's contribution to the struggle for the rights of detainees was important, and I wish the Coleman family long life.

– Diane Fine, Johannesburg

Heartiest Mazaltov to the MATRICS OF 2021

IT'S TIME TO CELEBRATE! BRING YOUR MATES, FOR PIZZA, PASTA, VEGAN BEYOND BURGERS, FISH OR SALAD

We have the perfect venue for you to Chillax!



www.phatlarrys.co.za | +27 (0)63 411 6655



From seminary to Olympic skating

HILLEL KUTTLER – JTA

When Josh Groban's cover of the 1965 song *The Impossible Dream* blares from the loudspeakers at Beijing's Capital Indoor Stadium on 18 February, its lyrics will ring true for the Winter Olympian figure skaters Hailey Kops and Evgeni Krasnopolsky.

That's because as recently as 8 June, when she returned to the United States after a gap year of study at a Jerusalem seminary, Kops had put competitive skating behind her.

A modern Orthodox Jew from West Orange, New Jersey, Kops has plans to attend Touro College's nursing school in Manhattan. But she put those plans on ice after Boris Chait, the Israel Ice Skating Federation's New Jersey-based president, telephoned that afternoon to offer Kops a chance to vie for a spot on the country's Olympics team.

By late September, after practicing together for just three and a half months, she and Krasnopolsky secured an Olympics berth by finishing fifth at an international qualifying event in Obersdorf, Germany.

That occurred on a Friday night, and Steven and Lisa Kops – who had accompanied their daughter abroad and, like her, are Shabbat-observant – embraced the pair in the arena's concourse but couldn't celebrate by calling loved ones back home.

"It means a lot to skate to that music," Kops, 19, said in an early January phone conversation. "I didn't necessarily see myself coming back to skating. But the opportunity [Chait] offered was something it would be crazy to refuse."

Modern Orthodox athletes who observe Shabbat are an extremely rare sight in the Olympics – even on Israel's teams, Chait said.

But in Beijing, Kops and Krasnopolsky will be skating on Shabbat. Kops explained that she's comfortable with balancing her commitments to skating and religious observance.

The pandemic-driven, bubble-like conditions at the Olympics also mean that the skaters' families, like all athletes' loved ones, won't be in Beijing to cheer them on.

"Of course, I want to be there," said Lisa Kops, who until 2016 was her daughter's skating coach. "I wish I could be there to support her."

This will be the third Olympics for Krasnopolsky, 33, who at the age of three moved with his family from Kiev, Ukraine, to the small Israeli town of Metula, home to the country's premier ice rink, where he trained.

Kops lauded Krasnopolsky's experience. "Having him as a partner is also like having him as a mentor [who has]



Photo: Amit Schussel

Skaters Krasnopolsky and Kops at Israel's national championships on 1 December 2021

helped guide me through this crazy journey," she said. "Without him, none of this would be possible."

The pair practice each day for nine hours, beginning at 07:15 at Codey Arena in Montclair, New Jersey.

Great Specials on Bosch Appliances and Sealy Posturepedic Bed and Mattress Sets

152cm Sealy Pole Double Base Set **R5999** (Save R500)

Plus many other specials in store

Stockists of Simmons, Rest Assured and Cloud Nine Mattress Sets

Furniture: Lazy Boy, Linea Classica Alpine & Grafton
Beds: Sealy, Simmons, Rest Assured & Contour
Appliances: Bosch, Defy, Samsung & LG

011 887 5456 | 011 440 9571
 Nathan: 082 854 5706

Midways Mall, 280 Corlett Drive, Bramley Gardens
 Monday to Friday 8:30 – 17:00
 Saturday 8:30 – 13:00 | Sunday 10:00 – 13:00

i-deal FURNISHERS

"Their chemistry and how they understand each other, work together, and communicate with each other – that's been really exciting to be around," said Galit Chait-Moracci, the pair's coach and a three-time Olympics ice dancer for Israel. She is also Boris Chait's daughter.

Israel's other four athletes heading to Beijing are figure skater Alexei Bychenko (coached, too, by Chait-Moracci) and short-track speed skater Vladislav Bykanov, both making their third Olympics appearances, and Alpine skier siblings Noa and Barnabas Szollos.

Krasnopolsky was selected to bear Israel's flag at the opening ceremony on 4 February. "It's one of the best things that could happen to me," he said of the honour.

Like most of Israel's elite athletes who compete internationally, the six 2022 Olympians train abroad: the figure skaters in New Jersey, the skiers in Austria, and Bykanov in the Netherlands.

Kops and her mother became Israeli citizens in 2013, when Hailey joined Israel's national juniors figure-skating team. Aside from the gap year, Kops spent a summer in Israel and has made what she called

"numerous" skating-related trips there, including for three national championships.

One Israeli who will be closely following the Olympics competition is an 11-year-old girl who was paired with Kops in a programme for children in foster care based at the Jerusalem seminary last year. The two spent many afternoons together.

They have stayed in touch, and the girl plays Kops' skating videos on YouTube, proudly promoting the Olympian to her peers.

"It's crazy to think that an 11-year-old girl could inspire me," said Kops. "I look at her as like a little sister."

That's understandable, given that Kops is sandwiched between two older brothers and two younger ones. That dynamic brought about Kops' nickname: Bird.

As a child, she bemoaned her fate as the lone daughter, and demanded explanations. Steven played along, telling Kops that she was hatched from an egg and found by her parents in a nest. The gag stuck, and eventually fit when Kops entered figure-skating, which entails graceful soaring and leaps.

While no one predicts that she and Krasnopolsky will emerge with medals, it's no longer an impossible dream.

KosherWorld

TRULY KOSHER

MANY MORE SPECIALS IN-STORE

4.99 EACH
BAKERS MINI ASSTD FLAVOURS 40G EACH

33.99
MONTAGU MIXED DRIED FRUIT 250G

15.99
GEFEN RAMEN VEGETABLE FLAVOUR 85G

Yummy!

137.99
Beef and Guinness family size pie for 4

29.99
PAINBLOK PAEDIATRIC SYRUP 100ML

27.99
PAINBLOK SYRUP PLASTIC BOTTLE 100ML

16.99
RHODES SPAGHETTI IN TOMATO SAUCE 410G

36.99
NATURES GARDEN GREEN BEANS CUT 1KG

148.99
EFRAT MASSORET GRAPE JUICE 1L

52.99
SUNLIGHT DISHWASHING POWDER AUTO REGULAR 1KG

28.99
PAMPERS BABY WIPES FRESH REFILL 64'S

65.99
COLGATE T/BUSH 360 MED TP 2'S

Hometown Pharmacy
Where the pharmacist knows your name

087-803-4000 | 082-711-4342
 HOMETOWNPHARMACY@PROPHARM.CO.ZA

KOSHER AT EVERYDAY PRICES

Offers valid till **2 FEBRUARY 2022** or while stocks last

CONCIERGE SHOPPING SERVICE
 orders@kosherworld.co.za
 1 Long Avenue, Glenhazel
 011 440 9517 | www.kosherworld.co.za

Actual offers may differ from visuals shown. We reserve the right to limit quantities. While stocks last. EGOE

Matric Class Of 2021

TAKING EXCELLENCE TO ANOTHER LEVEL

King David Victory Park & King David Linksfield Combined Results

Mazel tov to our matriculants on their outstanding results. We derive such nachas from their results because we know what it took to achieve them. We know how hard they worked, how much they sacrificed, and what they have endured. We also know that beyond the results lie students of integrity, character, kindness - good people and world-changers, who are proud of their Jewish heritage. With the tutelage and guidance of their superb teachers and the support and love of their parents, these Davidians, the Class of 2021, have taken excellence to another level. Kol hakavod.

85%

Average for Hebrew

49%

of students received "A" averages

92%

of all papers written achieved a "C" symbol or higher

3.98

Distinctions Per Pupil

78.4%

Overall Grade Average

5

Students in the Top 1% in IEB in Maths

96%

of students received "C" averages or higher

6

Students on the Outstanding List
Top 5% in IEB in 6 or more subjects (and an "A" in Life Orientation)

228

Candidates

16

Students in the Top 1% in IEB in English

7

Students on the Commendable List
Top 5% in IEB 5 Subjects (and an "A" in Life Orientation)

53%

of all papers written achieved an "A" symbol

www.kingdavid.org.za



► Instill Jewish Values ► Deliver Exceptional Education ► Inspire a Life of Purpose



King David Schools' Foundation