



SHAPELL'S - DARCHÉ NOAM
MIDRESHET RACHEL V' CHAYA



5786 IMPACT REPORT

Inside Shapell's and MRC



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A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN/ROSH YESHIVA



On Rosh Hashanah we add to our prayers, זכרנו לחיים... למענך אלקים חיים: "Remember us for life... for Your sake, O living God." We ask not simply for life, but for a life of purpose, one in which the Torah we learn, the abilities we develop, and the blessings we receive are used in service of something greater than ourselves. What we receive matters because of what we do with it.

At Shapell's and MRC, that idea is central to what we hope our students take with them. The Torah they learn, the skills they develop, the relationships they build, and the growth they experience are not meant to remain within the walls of the Beit Midrash. They are meant to shape the lives they build afterward.

What are you taking with you? It is a question we want every student to be able to answer: Torah that strengthens a marriage and a family; the skills and confidence to continue learning throughout their lives; a deeper connection to and appreciation for the Land and people of Israel; and a sense of responsibility that leads them to contribute to their communities and to the Jewish people.

We are deeply grateful to you, our supporters, for making this possible. Your generosity gives our students the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills, relationships, and confidence to make Torah an integral part of their lives. The impact reaches far beyond each student, to the families they build, the communities they strengthen, and the Jewish future they help shape. Thank you for investing in all that our students will take with them and in all that they will give because of it.

This Rosh Hashanah, please invest in our students and our community:

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SHAPELL'S/ YESHIVAT DARCHE NOAM

This year, support for Shapell's made possible tremendous growth in Torah learning, community, and commitment. During the summer semester, Shapell's reached a 15-year high, with more than 50 students enrolled. Through the Jack E. Gindi Pathways Plus program, Shapell's also welcomed Bnei Akiva, the OU, and college groups for special learning programs.

Outside the Beit Midrash, students strengthened relationships with one another and their rabbis through trips, Shabbat programs, and programs with other Jerusalem yeshivot. Faculty strengthened their own community through a special Shabbaton at Kibbutz Chofetz Chaim and a new faculty chaburah for high-level Torah learning.

Our students moved forward to advanced Torah study, universities, careers, and roles in their communities with the Torah knowledge, learning skills, relationships, and confidence they developed at Shapell's.

Yarden Levy, (Boston) Ramat Gan, Israel

From Tradition to Transformation. Raised in a secular Israeli-American family in Newton, Massachusetts, Yarden experienced Judaism primarily as tradition rather than faith. As a student at U-Mass, friendships with Orthodox students introduced him to the warmth and commitment of Shabbat and Jewish community, changing his understanding of what Judaism could be.

Yarden came to Israel to serve in the IDF, and after completing his service he came to Shapell's with a modest goal: "to become a functioning Orthodox Jew, to learn how to daven, and to study a little Gemara and basic halacha." That quickly changed. "I fell in love with learning and wanted to transform through my study." Over a year and three months, Yarden became a top student and leader in the Yeshiva, developing the skills and confidence to build his life around Torah. "Torah is now a central pillar of my day, halacha is non-negotiable, and none of it is insignificant." Leading his first chaburah and teaching Torah at Shapell's marked another milestone, as he began sharing with others what he had worked so hard to acquire.



Since leaving Shapell's, Yarden has married, taken the MCAT, and begun applying to medical school in Israel. He came to Shapell's looking for the basics of Orthodox life. He left prepared to build a life shaped by Torah, continued learning, and a serious commitment to halacha.

“I fell in love with learning and wanted to transform through my study.”

Ariel Gans, (Toronto) Woodmere, NY

Engineering His Jewish Future. When Ariel Gans came to Shapell's, he had just completed an engineering degree at the University of Waterloo and knew that there were significant gaps in his Jewish education. Raised in a Conservative home in Toronto, Ariel became involved with Chabad during university, taking on Shabbat and kashrut and developing a serious interest in Torah learning. He came to Shapell's with two clear goals: to gain the skills to learn Gemara independently and to develop relationships with rabbis who could continue to guide him.

During his two years at Shapell's, Ariel became a serious and capable Torah learner, but the change went beyond his learning skills. "I came to see myself not just as a 'good Jew' but as a ben Torah with an important mission," he says. The hashkafah he learned, his relationships with his rabbis, and experiences like Shabbatonim helped him think more deeply about the kind of life he wanted to lead and his responsibility to the Jewish people.

Today, Ariel is learning full-time at Yeshivah Gedolah of the Five Towns and plans to build a career teaching math and science. He came to Shapell's wanting the skills to learn Gemara on his own. He left with the skills to keep learning, a community to turn to for guidance, and a clearer sense of the Jewish life he wants to build.



OUR STUDENTS SAY IT BEST...

"I can't thank everyone enough for how much I've learned even in the short time I've been at MRC. I feel like my teachers and rabbis invested in me." - *Sophie G.*

"Both my learning skills and my emunah have increased more than I even expected" - *Gershon Goldes*

"Rabbi Silverberg's shiur was transformational in finally being able to unlock the daf. I am going back to the US with the resources to be a real Torah Jew"
- *Ovadia Machado*

"I experienced a revolution in my gemara learning. Whereas before it was a struggle. Now I have a method and tools. It's a very 'teach a man how to fish' kind of education." - *Shachar Binyamin*

"I'm so thankful for the diversity of ideas, sources and thoughts explored here."
- *Anonymous*

"I appreciated the diversity of classes and high-level learning. I am so grateful to MRC for supporting my growth. I cannot wait to be a part of the alumni community. Thank you." - *Anonymous*

"I feel I have grown tremendously as a person and as a Jewish woman." - *Chassida L.*

"I'm so glad that I got this opportunity to learn at MRC! I found the teachers to be exceptionally caring and available for guidance on personal and Torah questions." - *Nechuma S.*

MIDRESHET RACHEL V'CHAYA

Through the generosity of its supporters, MRC continued to build a holistic curriculum combining core Torah studies with a growing range of electives and evening classes. The expanded MRC Library was officially dedicated at a special event with Rabbi Avi Berman of OU Israel, providing an important resource for independent learning.

Learning extended beyond the classroom through our Holocaust Education Program, Shabbatonim, chess initiatives, and educational tours that strengthened students' connection to the Land and people of Israel. A new Meditation and Mindfulness class also became a popular addition.

Through the Jack E. Gindi Pathways Plus program, MRC welcomed Jewish learning groups from Australia, London, Toronto, Montreal, Stern College, FJL, and OU Israel.

Shanna Gilardi, Los Angeles, CA

Speaking Hashem's Language. For Shanna, Rabbi Zelig Pliskin's *Guard Your Tongue* opened the door to a new way of thinking about Judaism. Fascinated by the Torah's detailed approach to speech, she began exploring more, eventually taking on greater observance and developing a serious desire to learn.

Raised in a traditional Sephardi home in Los Angeles, Shanna wanted more than access to Torah through English books and classes. She wanted to be able to learn it for herself. After attending MRC's two-week summer program in 2023, she knew she wanted to return for an extended period of full-time learning. She came back for Fall Zman 2025, working closely with teachers, chavrutas, and tutors to strengthen her Hebrew and develop the skills to approach Torah texts independently. "MRC gave me the tools to truly shine through Torah," she says. Being able to open a siddur, Tehillim, or other Hebrew texts and understand the words for herself changed both her learning and her tefilla. Her time at MRC also strengthened her relationship with Hashem and helped clarify the kind of Torah home she hopes to build.



Today, Shanna is already putting those skills to use, teaching Torah to Jewish girls in public school while preparing for a career as an occupational therapist. She came to MRC wanting to access Torah for herself. She left equipped to bring it to others.

“MRC gave me the tools to truly
shine through Torah.”

Olivia Feterman (Templeman), (Sydney) Jerusalem, Israel

Impact Investing Turned Inward. Growing up in Sydney with no Jewish family background, Olivia never imagined that an internet search about why Jews don't eat pizza on Pesach would lead to a life of Torah and Mitzvot. Her curiosity eventually led to a years-long conversion process and the feeling that she had finally come home. After her conversion, Olivia pursued Torah through books, shiurim, and chavrutas, but knew she needed the skills to go further.

Taking a sabbatical from her career in finance, Olivia came to MRC for her first experience of full-time Torah study. She learned to approach original sources, engage with commentaries, and develop a deeper understanding of Jewish thought. "The passion that my teachers had for Torah inspired me," she says. "And the families who welcomed us into their homes for Shabbat and holidays gave me a living model of the warm, Torah-centered home I hoped to build."

Today, Olivia is married and living in Jerusalem, studying in ulpan and returning to finance and business consulting. She also leads a popular young women's tefilla chaburah in Rechavia. An exceptional MRC student, Olivia brought intellectual rigor, curiosity, and deep dedication to her learning. Today, that same passion has taken her from student to teacher, sharing the Torah, skills, and commitment she gained at MRC with others.



SHAPELL'S AND MRC IN PICTURES



MARRIED COUPLES PROGRAM

The Married Couples Program creates a unique opportunity for couples to continue growing together with guidance from teachers and rebbeim at Shapell's and MRC.

Couples enjoy classes on healthy communication, raising children, finding community, and building Jewish homes centered on Torah and communal leadership.

In 5786, the program was enriched by guest speakers including renowned marriage expert Chana Levitan; a representative of Mesila, an Israeli nonprofit providing financial education to the religious community; and certified therapists, with separate classes for men and women. Couples also enjoyed a Shabbaton in Ramot and a year-end banquet connecting new and veteran participants.

Married students became role models for their peers, demonstrating the value of dedicating time to Torah learning at this stage of life and opening their homes to students for Shabbat and holidays. Their presence added a family dimension to campus life, inspiring younger students while strengthening their own foundations for Jewish life together.

Ben and Cami Ozur, New York, NY

Building a Torah Home Together. Ben and Cami Ozur came to Shapell's and MRC as newlyweds with a clear goal: to build their marriage and their future around Torah. Both bright and accomplished, they were recipients of the Shapell's Married Couples Fellowship, enabling them to put their careers on hold for a year and throw themselves into the opportunity to become serious Torah learners. Ben was working as an attorney in Manhattan and Cami had recently finished her graduate degree in animal studies and an internship at NASA.

They began the year in introductory-level classes, working intensively on the Hebrew and Aramaic skills they needed to learn independently. Within a year, both had advanced to the high-level shiurim. Cami's weekly chavruta with Rabbi Manning pushed her learning further, while Ben embraced his first yeshiva experience, the give-and-take of the Beit Midrash, and the challenge of working through a Gemara. They brought that same energy outside the classroom. Ben and Cami became leaders within the Shapell's and MRC community, regularly opening their home for Shabbat meals and helping create the kind of warm, serious Torah community they wanted for themselves.



Now, they are taking that with them. Ben has returned to his legal career, and Cami is pursuing advanced Tanakh studies at Stern College while teaching Jewish studies at a NY City day school. They left with stronger Torah learning skills, and also as a couple who understands that building a Torah life means contributing to the community around them. They did that at Shapell's and MRC, now in NY, and we have no doubt they will continue to do it wherever they go.



Max and Sylvie Librach, (Toronto) Jerusalem, Israel

The Greatest Gift. For more than seven years, Max dreamed of spending time learning in yeshiva. After completing two degrees in Toronto, marrying Sylvie, and welcoming their first child, they finally took the plunge. What was supposed to be three months at Shapell's and MRC became two years.

Max studied full-time at Shapell's, working his way up through the levels and ultimately spending a full year in the Yeshiva's highest-level class with Rabbi Schoonmaker, while Sylvie learned part-time at MRC. Through the Married Couples Program, they also had dedicated opportunities to learn and explore Jewish life together as a couple. In-Shabbats gave them time to learn, daven, and share meals with rabbis and other couples. These experiences helped shape the kind of Torah home and community they wanted to create for their own family.



After Shapell's and MRC, Max has continued his Torah studies, including rabbinic training at the Mirrer Yeshiva while he and Sylvie serve as co-directors of the OU-JLIC Jerusalem Nachlaot Hub.

Today, Max and Sylvie are treasured alumni and remain an integral part of the Shapell's and MRC community. They mentor and tutor current students, host students and alumni for Shabbat, return for Shabbatonim, and maintain close relationships with their rabbis and teachers. They call their time here "the best two years of our lives," and continue to give back to the community that gave them so much.

YOU MADE ALL THIS POSSIBLE!



They're Investing in the Jewish Future
Let's invest in them!

\$1 MILLION in 36 HOURS

MORE THAN A PROGRAM
A Foundation for Life

SHAPPELL'S - DARCHE NOAM
MIDRESHET RACHEL V'CHAYA

This summer, at a time of significant financial challenges, you helped us surpass our \$1 million campaign goal and raise more than ever before. Because of YOU, we are able to:

- Provide intensive, skills-based Torah learning that gives students the ability to learn Torah independently.
- Invest in each student through small classes, chavrutot, tutoring, and close relationships with rebbeim and teachers.
- Give married couples the opportunity to grow in Torah together as they build their homes and families.
- Deepen students' connection to the Land and people of Israel and to the Jewish people.
- Continue providing Torah learning, guidance, mentorship, and community for our alumni long after they leave our Batei Midrash.

To every donor, matcher, ambassador, and friend who made this extraordinary campaign a success, thank you. Your generosity makes all of this possible, one student, one family, and one community at a time.

ALUMNI COMMUNITY

Beyond the Beit Midrash

Shapell's and MRC: Community for life.

Throughout this report, you have seen what our students take with them: Torah knowledge and learning skills, relationships with teachers and mentors, and a stronger sense of the Jewish lives they want to build. But they take something else with them too: a community that remains theirs long after they leave.

Being an alumnus of Shapell's or MRC means belonging to an extraordinary worldwide network of people who continue to learn together, celebrate one another's milestones, and show up during difficult times. When students need a chavruta, a mentor, help with employment, or a place for Shabbat, our alumni are the first to step up.

And once a student, always a student. Through ongoing guidance, digital Torah, online and in-person programs, and staff visits around the world, Shapell's and MRC continue to serve our alumni and the families they build.



Our alumni also give back. They are our most dedicated supporters and our greatest source of new student referrals, helping make the Shapell's and MRC experience possible for those who come after them. They bring the distinctive Shapell's and MRC approach to Torah and Jewish life into communities around the world. ***The impact of investing in a Shapell's or MRC student multiplies for generations.***

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our podcast feeds

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in Rambam, Gemara,
Hashkafah, and Navi

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with Rabbi Yitzchak Shurin
addressing the questions
alumni are asking

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reaching alumni in the UK,
Germany, North and South America,
South Africa, and Israel

ALUMNI MAKE OUR COMMUNITY STRONG

YOU are our **greatest source of student referrals**,
YOU are our **largest source of financial support**.

YOU help us sustain a lifelong community that learns
together, gives back, takes care of one another, and
stays connected.

More than a Program - A Foundation for Life!

As you plan your tzedakah for the new year, remember the students of Shapell's & MRC.
They're investing in the Jewish future. Let's invest in them!

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