

# Inside AMIT

BUILDING THE  
FUTURE IN  
JERUSALEM

NEW  
CAMPUS IS  
COMING!

# ON THE ROAD



LEGACY,  
LOVE, AND  
LEADERSHIP

AMIT  
IN THE  
NORTH

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**AMIT provides an innovative, Jewish, values-based education for over 42,000 children in Israel each year. AMIT welcomes every child and levels the playing field for the children of Israel through education.**

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## Editor's Note

*As this magazine was going to print, missiles began falling on Israel, marking the outbreak of a second war with Iran. In the first days of the conflict, we received the devastating news that among those killed in the attack in Beit Shemesh were members of the AMIT family. Our hearts break for their loved ones, and for all of Israel.*

*After years of ongoing conflict, the people of Israel are understandably weary – yet their resilience continues to inspire. Across the country, individuals and communities mobilized to support one another through another challenging time.*

*With schools closed and Purim festivities suspended, AMIT reactivated its all-too familiar special programming and distance-learning protocols to ensure students remained connected, supported, and on track.*

*We pray for the safety of Israel, for strength for her people, and for a swift and lasting end to this conflict.*

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# President's Message

SHARI SAFRA

It seems that each time I begin writing a message for AMIT's magazine, I am on the verge of departing for a meaningful trip to Israel. And almost every time, I find myself wondering whether that trip will actually happen.

It is a familiar Jewish feeling. Throughout our history, moments of hope have often been paired with uncertainty. Our enemies rise, threaten, and try to derail us. And yet, the story is always the same. We endure, we adapt, and we move forward together.

I began my term as President of AMIT in September 2023, just weeks before October 7. My first official trip in this new role was scheduled for October 8, 2023. Unfortunately, instead of packing bags, we watched in horror, prayed desperately, and entered a period that reshaped all of us.

When I wrote for the Spring 2024 magazine, it was with a heavy heart. We were praying for missing hostages, grieving unimaginable loss, and planning countless trips to Israel that felt both essential and uncertain.

Now, as I write this message, I find myself constantly refreshing the news to see whether there will be another war with Iran. We planned an extraordinary mission to Israel, and once again I am unsure whether circumstances will allow it to proceed. The uncertainty feels all too familiar.

My thoughts keep returning to the powerful trip I took this past fall with a small group of AMIT supporters who were experiencing our schools and our impact in person for the first time. Seeing AMIT through their eyes was both humbling and energizing.

We began in Sderot, visiting students and staff whose resilience defies description. As they shared their experiences of October 7 and the support AMIT provided in the months that followed, there was not a dry eye in the room. What stood out was not only that this community survived, but how intentionally AMIT focused on each individual's recovery. Emotional safety, academic continuity, and human dignity were priorities, not luxuries. From the very first day, we saw how AMIT lives its mission of building Israel "one child at a time."

That philosophy followed us throughout the trip. At an IDF Disabled Veterans Center, we met AMIT students who had used their school's makerspace to design technological solutions for wounded veterans. These were practical innovations rooted in the understanding that a strong nation cares for those who have sacrificed for it. Our AMIT students were rebuilding Israel in their own way, one soldier at a time.

As I write these words today, not on the day you are reading them, I know the landscape will look different by the time this magazine reaches your hands. The headlines will change. The uncertainty will shift. But the arc of our story will not. With Pesach approaching, I can't help but think about how we relied on our faith in God and national resilience to endure and ultimately escape slavery in Egypt. We will find that same faith and resilience to carry us through today's challenges.

The future of AMIT is being built each day, both physically and conceptually, in our new Kfar Batya campus. The innovation at work there is preparing students to think critically, act ethically, and lead responsibly. AMIT innovates to ensure that Israel's long-term strength rests in educated and values-driven young people.

This fall, AMIT will mark an extraordinary milestone: one hundred years of educating, nurturing, and building the future of the Jewish people. To honor that legacy and to look toward what comes next, we will be planning an inspiring mission to Israel. I hope you will join us. There is no substitute for seeing AMIT's work up close, or for meeting the students and educators whose courage and daily commitment define what national strength truly means.

This Passover, when we say, "Next Year in Jerusalem," we say it as our ancestors did. With hope. With determination. And with the quiet confidence that we are already doing the work that will get us there.

I hope you will come with me to see it for yourself.





Ohad Cohen doesn't consider himself a hero.

His story isn't unique. He is one of the 300,000 reservists who were called up at the start of the war and served multiple tours of duty. He is also one of the more than 10,000 wounded — and among the third whose injuries involved limb loss. In Ohad's case, the injuries were catastrophic. An IED detonated beside his armored vehicle. He lost consciousness. He woke much later surrounded by family, having survived a coma — and learned that both his legs had not.

The Cohen family is a vital part of the AMIT family. Amiram and Liat Cohen have lived at the Kfar Blatt Youth Village for decades. Amiram, the longtime director of the village, is a sabra personified, straight out of central casting: fair, strong-willed, no-nonsense, a practitioner of tough love. He sees clearly the challenges his students carry, but he refuses to let hardship become identity or excuse.

Walking the 800-student Ellen and Stanley Wasserman campus with him is its own master class in leadership. He'll call across the quad in his booming voice, "Shani, *kol hakavod* on your 93 in chemistry! We are proud of you!" And moments later, without breaking stride: "Kobe, you were 30 minutes late for curfew. My office. Four o'clock." All while quietly clocking the new arrival lingering at the edge of the courtyard, sadness written across her face.

There's even a legend: A small group of teenage boys once broke into the kitchen at 3 a.m. one Thursday. They were greeted by Amiram: "So, boys, I see you like waking up early and have lots of energy. I'll see you all at 5 a.m. for the next week."

That is the Cohen household: Accountability. Warmth. Steel wrapped in embrace.

So when Ohad was wounded, the family trembled — and waited. They waited at his bedside not knowing if he would ever wake, knowing what news awaited him if he did. And all the while, their other sons continued serving in elite combat units. The AMIT family waited with them — offering support, honoring privacy. This was one of our own.

It's hard to define who the hero is. Ohad? The parents who stood vigil? The brothers who returned to the front?

If you dare use the word "hero" within earshot of the family — as I have — they reject it outright. It took me time to understand why.

The story of our national birth, retold each year at the Seder table, offers an answer.

In the Exodus narrative, liberation is not the triumph of a larger-than-life man chasing glory. Moses confronts Pharaoh, leads the people, splits the sea — and yet the Torah strips away the trappings of personal grandeur. When called, Moses protests: "Who am I?" He doubts his speech, his worthiness, his capacity. The Torah calls him "very humble, more than any person on the face of the earth."

This is not Achilles chasing immortal fame. Not Odysseus dazzling with cunning. Not Aeneas building empire. Moses is an *eved Hashem* — a servant of God. His greatness lies not in self-assertion but in self-effacement. The Haggadah itself minimizes his name, insisting that redemption came not through an angel, nor a seraph, nor a messenger, but through the Holy One Himself.

The Exodus reframes heroism. It is not conquest. It is not spectacle. It is faithfulness. It is stepping forward when the sea stands in front of you and fear presses in from behind. It is partnership with something larger than yourself.

"In every generation, one must see oneself as if they left Egypt."

And that is the Cohen ethos.

## Impressions

ANDY GOLDSMITH  
Executive Vice President

When Ohad awoke from his coma, he did not ask, "Why me?" He asked, "What now?" He treated loss not as a tragedy that defined him but as a challenge placed before him. No self-pity. No indulgence in what was taken. Only gratitude for what remains, and determination for what will yet be.

Call him a hero and he will shake his head.

Call his parents heroes and they will wave you off.

But perhaps that is precisely the point.

In our tradition, the truest heroes are the ones who never claim the title — who simply shoulder their burden, take the next step forward, and refuse to let the sea remain closed.

So forgive me.

He may not consider himself a hero.

But I do.

*Chag kasher v'sameach.*



# AMIT

## Honoring the Past Shaping the Future

As AMIT marks the milestone of 100 years, its growth can be charted from its foundation of immigrant absorption to the modern-day leading Israeli educational network with over 42,000 students.

Through changing times, the mission has endured. In those early days, AMIT empowered Israeli youth in villages and vocational schools to contribute to the development of the country. Today, the organization innovates and collaborates across 91 schools and educational platforms to propel students to their full potential, maximizing their achievements for the benefit of Israeli society.

The timeline in the pages ahead outlines significant moments in AMIT's century of dedication to the people of Israel.





1925-1934

The First Decade

Women Realizing Their Zionist Dream

In 1925, Bessie Gotsfeld and her colleagues founded the Mizrahi Women's Organization of America, which later became AMIT.

In 1933, the organization opened the first vocational high school for girls in Israel, Beit Tzeirot Mizrahi in Jerusalem, welcoming immigrant girls who were in the country alone.

Toward the end of the decade, the Tehran Children— orphans who escaped the Holocaust— were also taken in.



1935-1944

The Second Decade

Empowering Girls for the Emerging State

In 1938, a second Beit Tzeirot Mizrahi was founded in Tel Aviv, for immigrant girls and religious women to learn a trade.

Later on, the vocational school also served as an absorption center for youth aliyah from Germany.





1945-1954

The Third Decade

Providing a Home for Holocaust Orphans

In 1947, Kfar Batya opened in Ra'anana, a children's village named after Bessie Gotsfeld.

In 1951, Kfar Blatt was established in Petach Tikvah, a youth village that absorbed Holocaust survivors, immigrants from Arab countries and North Africa, and later immigrants from Ethiopia as well.



1955-1964

The Fourth Decade

The Years of Mass Immigration

A third Beit Tzeirot Mizrachi was founded in Beersheva to take in the children of new immigrants and prepare them for life in Israel. This later became a large and successful vocational high school.

In 1962, Bessie Gotsfeld passed away at age 74 and was buried at Nachalat Yitzchak cemetery in Tel Aviv. She left no children, and to this day, AMIT youth from Petach Tikvah hold a memorial at her grave.





1965-1974

The Fifth Decade

Difficult Days

In 1974, tragedy struck: Terrorists attacked AMIT Safed high school students on a school trip in Ma'alot. 22 students, 3 teachers, and 1 IDF soldier were murdered.

In another tragedy, seven junior high school students from AMIT schools in Beit Shemesh and AMIT Shachar were murdered during a school trip at "Peace Island" in Naharayim, on the Jordan border.



1975-1984

The Sixth Decade

Small Beginnings to a Leading Network

In 1977, Dr. Ami Ze'evi was appointed director general of the organization.

In partnership with Bar-Ilan University in 1978, AMIT Gush Dan High School was established as an elite school for outstanding students.

1983 saw the introduction of the "Mishpachtonim" model — boarding school education in a family framework. That same year, Mizrahi Women officially became AMIT.





1985-1994

The Seventh Decade

Expansion Across Central and Northern Israel



AMIT doubled the number of its schools, reaching the milestone of educating 15,000 students a year.

New high schools were established in Rehovot, Ra'anana, Haifa, Acre, Afula, and Karmiel.

AMIT was officially recognized by the Ministry of Education as a technological education network.



1995-2005

The Eighth Decade

Facing the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

AMIT made a values-based decision: 70% of its students would come from Israel's social and geographic periphery, and only 30% from the center of the country.

In 2002, Dr. Amnon Eldar was chosen as director general. He led an organizational transformation to empower education in the periphery—most notably through a unique program to raise matriculation eligibility rates.

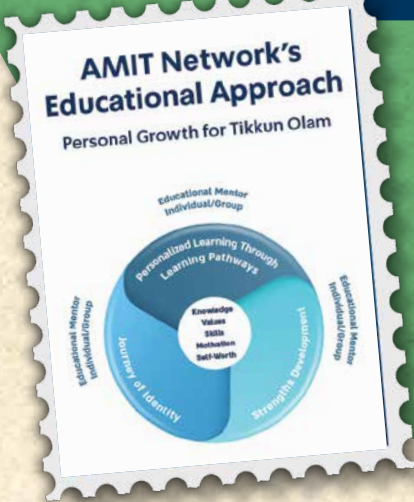




2006-2015

The Ninth Decade

From Schools to Full Educational Homes



AMIT classrooms became centers of student life, incorporating social and values-based education.

In 2012, the Gogya Center opened in Ra'anana sparking an educational journey, shaping a shared language of enabling leadership, experiential learning, community building, collaboration, and networking.

This journey aimed to connect grassroots practice with cutting-edge educational knowledge, creating the "AMIT Compass."



2016-2025

The Tenth Decade

The New Learning Approach

Seeing the need for societal connection, AMIT accepted non-religious schools into its educational system, becoming a network for all of Israel.

AMIT launched its new learning approach focused on individualized learning pathways and personal growth through mentorship.

In 2023, AMIT broke ground on the Gabel & Straus Family Campus at AMIT Kfar Batya in Ra'anana.

AMIT launched citywide programming in Sderot and Kiryat Shmona to promote resilience post-October 7.

As of 2025, AMIT has been ranked by the Ministry of Education as the leading educational network in Israel for 7 consecutive years.



# A ONCE-IN-A-CENTURY MISSION

*Join Us in Shaping the Future*



## IN NOVEMBER 2026, HISTORY AND HOPE WILL MEET IN ISRAEL.

**A**s AMIT celebrates 100 years of transforming Jewish lives through education, we invite our committed leaders, supporters, and families to take part in a truly unique experience: an extraordinary mission to Israel beginning November 8, 2026, marking not only where AMIT has been, but where we are going next.

Hosted on the groundbreaking new Kfar Batya campus, the mission will bring together visionaries, philanthropists, educators, and innovators from around the world. Together, we will honor a century of impact and boldly launch AMIT as a driving force shaping the next generation of Jewish education.

Over the course of this meaningful gathering, participants will reflect on AMIT's remarkable legacy — built by educators, donors, and leaders who believed that education could change the Jewish future.

At the same time, we will unveil a compelling vision for the decades ahead, showcasing how AMIT's creativity and innovation is not only uplifting students but preparing them with the tools to navigate their futures and the values to lead responsibly, setting Israel on the path to become Education Nation.

Participants will experience AMIT's vision firsthand through the three anchoring pillars of the new Kfar Batya campus:

- **INNOVATION & ENTREPRENEURSHIP:** Cutting-edge models that transform the educational landscape
- **EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP:** Investing in teachers, cultivating their growth and success
- **IDENTITY & VALUES FORMATION:** Uniting students in a framework of Jewish values and purpose

This mission will also be a celebration of partnership and gratitude. We will proudly honor the donors whose generosity and vision have made the new campus and capital campaign possible, recognizing their lasting impact on generations of students to come. We hope you will join us to see your contributions come to life.

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

The week will begin with a festive ribbon-cutting ceremony to unveil the completed campus and celebrate the tremendous planning and effort that have gone into this project. AMIT will offer round-the-clock tours

so everyone has a chance to explore the state-of-the-art spaces. An exciting, packed itinerary is planned for participants to connect with AMIT students and the new campus they call home.

While celebrating AMIT at 100, we are looking ahead to Israel at 100. What will Israel, and the world, look like in 2048? What are the challenges and opportunities? What fields of industry are in demand? As a leading educational network, these questions are essential to ensuring that AMIT can prepare its students to be productive and succeed in the future.

To that end, AMIT will convene an International Education Conference focusing on this agenda at the Evan and Layla Green Family Foundation Gogya Building. The gathering will draw world renowned leaders in innovation — global thinkers whose ideas are influencing the future and whose voices will challenge and energize our collective imagination.

Later, participants will be treated to an incredible Make-a-Thon: Fighting for Warriors at the Chella & Moise Safra Athletic Complex. Students will pack the sports hall, presenting their yearlong projects in which each team was matched with an injured soldier and challenged to create a technological solution in the Makerspace to improve that veteran’s quality of life. Mission participants will rate the projects, and honors will be bestowed on the winners.

The next day, 12th graders from across AMIT schools will meet and run a marathon in Park Ra’anana, next door to the new campus. Each student will run in memory of the fallen from their school community, remembering their sacrifice. Donors and mission participants will be there to cheer them on, meet their families, and hear their stories.

In a meaningful follow-up to the morning, we will dedicate the Memorial Gardens on the campus, honoring all those in our AMIT family whose strength we rely on as we continue to build and grow.

Participants will then join in a *Hachnasat Sefer Torah*, welcoming a new Torah scroll with joy and dancing to the Kolatch Beit Midrash, sanctifying the space for prayer and Torah learning.

Later that evening, AMIT will present Alumni TED Talks, showcasing outstanding alumni who trace their success back to the education and foundation they received from their teachers at AMIT.

The third day will begin with a tribute to Bessie Gotsfeld, without whom none of this would have been possible. AMIT will gather prominent women from across Israel for a celebration of female leadership, honoring one of the organization’s enduring pillars.

Then AMIT students will showcase their incredible talents in a fair celebrating their achievements in art, music, dance, technology, medicine, and more. As mission participants interact with students and view their presentations, they will see the lasting impact their support has made.

To close this incredible week, AMIT will host a grand gala evening commemorating a century of AMIT’s work on behalf of the children of Israel — celebrating inclusion, innovation, and achievement.

## CONNECT WITH US

At its core, this Israel Mission is about people and legacy. We ask devoted donors, emerging leaders, and multigenerational families to come together at this historic moment to celebrate the ribbon cutting of the new Kfar Batya campus, strengthen bonds across generations, and recommit to AMIT’s mission for the next 100 years.

AMIT at 100 is not simply a celebration of the past. It is an invitation — to lead, to inspire, and to shape the future of Jewish education.

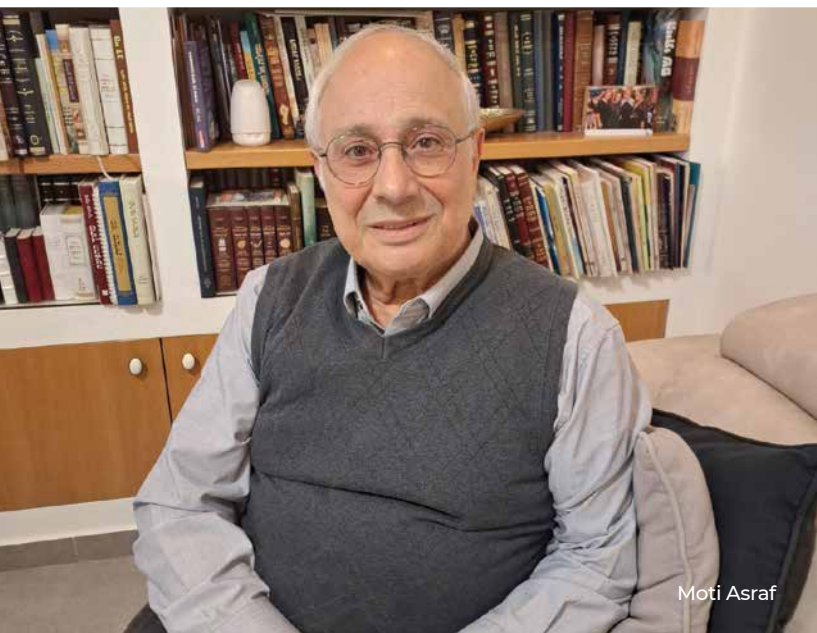


**JOIN US.**

**BRING OTHERS WITH YOU.**

**BE PART OF THE MOMENT THAT LAUNCHES AMIT’S NEXT CENTURY.**

# A LEGACY *of LOVE and* LEADERSHIP AT FRISCH BEIT HAYELED



*Two former directors reflect on one of AMIT's founding programs*

AMIT Frisch  
Beit Hayered



Welcome to Frisch Beit Hayered

**A**s AMIT marks its 100th year, the network celebrates decades of educational and social leadership across Israel and looks back at its foundations. One of AMIT's most iconic programs, Frisch Beit Hayered, was established in 1983 in the Jerusalem neighborhood of Gilo as a residential home for children.

Beit Hayered pioneered the framework of *mishpachtonim*, small family residential units, for children who could not safely remain living at home. Educators understood that nothing could truly replace a child's biological family, yet by creating the experience of a stable family environment, they could offer children that vital sense of security, warmth, and a healthy home life. That model, though evolved over the years, continues to this day.

Two of Beit Hayered's most dedicated directors, Nitzchiya Eldar and Moti Asraf, reflected on their time at its helm, the lives they touched, and what this demanding and deeply human framework meant for them and for the children it served.

## A CALLING OF CONVICTION

For Nitzchiya Eldar, 91, education was never simply a profession. From a young age, she felt drawn to teaching and educational leadership. A seventh-generation Israeli, she recalls being encouraged to pursue law, which at the time was considered more prestigious than a career in education. But she was firm in her choice. "I had to follow my heart and my inner conviction," she said.

That conviction shaped a long career in formal education. Nitzchiya served as a high school principal for 20 years, leading students through academic and emotional challenges. Her professional path took a decisive turn when she was approached by former AMIT Director General Dr. Ami Ze'evi and asked to lead Frisch Beit Hayered. He told her that this role would be the "pedagogical poem" of her life. In retrospect, she wholeheartedly agrees.

Nitzchiya, mother of the current director general of AMIT, Dr. Amnon Eldar, explains that managing Beit Hayered was fundamentally different from running a school. This was not about exams or curricula. It was "*hatzalat nefashot*, rescuing lives," she said. The children who arrived there had often grown up in homes shadowed by addiction, severe mental illness, violence, criminality, and sexual abuse. Remaining at home was simply not safe.

Alongside Nitzchiya's leadership, Beit Hayered relied on young educators who committed their own family lives to the *mishpachton* model. Among them was Moti Asraf.

## FROM IMMIGRANT TO EDUCATOR

Moti's journey was shaped by his own early experiences. He was born in Casablanca, Morocco, and immigrated to Israel in 1962 at the age of 10. He vividly remembers arriving at a transit camp (*ma'abara*) in Pardes Hanna with an electric refrigerator that could not be used because there was no electricity.

In 1970, while a student in Jerusalem, Moti began working with AMIT as a counselor at Meshek Yeladim Motza. He then enlisted in the IDF, and after his military

service began working as a teacher. During these years, he married and became a father to two children. In 1983, he returned to AMIT, marking the beginning of his long-term leadership role at Beit Hayered.

Until 1983, AMIT operated two residential settings in Jerusalem: Meshek Yeladim Motza, located in the Talbieh neighborhood, and Tel Ra'anana, located in the Baka neighborhood. In 1983, both moved into a new facility in Gilo, where Beit Hayered took its current form and adopted the pioneering therapeutic-educational approach of the mishpachton model.

The mishpachton model houses children in small family units. Instead of large dormitories with rotating staff, each unit is led by a married couple who live there day in and day out and function as parents in every sense. Care, education, and therapy are embedded in ordinary routines: meals, homework, holidays, conflict, and comfort. This structure creates stability and continuity for children who had never experienced either.

Moti and his wife were already married with children of their own when they became surrogate parents within a mishpachton. They raised their own children alongside the children of Beit Hayered, sharing daily life under one roof. Recognizing Moti's dedication and deep commitment to the children, Nitzchiya asked him to serve as her deputy director, and the two worked side by side at Beit Hayered for many years. Following Nitzchiya's retirement, Moti went on to serve as director of Beit Hayered.

## THE DAILY RHYTHM

Nitzchiya described Beit Hayered as a *hamama*, a greenhouse — a carefully protected environment designed to allow children who had been deeply hurt to grow gradually and safely. Each family unit was supported by professionals, including a social



Bedroom in the mishpachton

worker and psychologist, ensuring close and sustained attention to every child. For all the educators involved — counselors, surrogate parents, social workers, and leadership — the commitment and personal responsibility extended to all hours, day and night, throughout the year, including Shabbatot and holidays.

Beit Hayered never operated a school on campus, which remains true today. Each child living in the home attended a school in the city appropriate to their individual academic, emotional, and therapeutic needs. Children were transported daily to different schools across Jerusalem and returned in the afternoons to Beit Hayered for homework, enrichment, activities, and the rhythms of family life. Birthdays and bar and bat mitzvahs have always been marked individually, with care and intention — moments of recognition, dignity, and joy for children who had rarely experienced either.

Alongside its residential model, Beit Hayered also operated an external program for children whose homes were deemed safe enough for them to remain. These children attended school during the day, spent their afternoons and evenings at Beit Hayered eating meals, studying, and participating in activities, and returned home to sleep at night, preserving family connections whenever possible.

Midreshet AMIT, a gap-year seminary for girls, opened in Beit Hayered 19 years ago. The girls from the seminary spend time volunteering at the residential school a few times a week, creating special relationships with the children who live there. The bonds formed during these visits have a huge impact on both the seminary girls and the Beit Hayered students.



Beit Hayered students enjoying the playground

## SHIFT TO THERAPEUTIC CARE

During the 1990s, changes in national welfare policy reshaped the population arriving at Beit Hayered. Children with less complex needs were increasingly placed in community-based frameworks, leaving residential homes to care for those with more severe needs.

Moti recalled the moment clearly: Beit Hayered stood at a crossroads, faced with a choice between closing its doors or fundamentally reshaping its model. The decision was to adapt, a sign of AMIT's long-standing ability to respond to the shifting needs of Israeli society.

The number of children in each family unit was reduced. Professional staffing was expanded, with social workers and psychological support significantly increased. Over time, Beit Hayered evolved into a fully therapeutic residential framework in response to the depth of trauma carried by the children who arrived.

## IMPACT ON EDUCATORS' FAMILIES

The immersive nature of life at Beit Hayered shaped not only the children who needed to live there, but also the families of those who chose to work there. Moti explained that his own children shared the experience of growing up inside the family unit, sharing daily life, meals, and responsibilities with the children of the home. As his kids grew older, they naturally became mentors and role models.

Moti shared that for years he had concerns about whether raising his children in such an intense environment had been fair to them: "Only years later did I receive the answer that calmed me. It did them only good." His children described their years at Beit Hayered as formative and meaningful. He connected their professional paths to the values and experiences they absorbed growing up in Beit Hayered. Today, his children work in security and therapeutic fields, reflecting the impact of those formative years.

## THE MEANING OF SUCCESS

For both directors, success was never measured by prestige or titles. It was measured by whether a child of Beit Hayered could build a stable and healthy life.

Moti recalled a boy born with a cleft lip whose mother could not bear to look at him. Beit Hayered secured funding for surgeries that restored both his appearance and his sense of self. The staff refused to give up on him, choosing instead to see his future. Years later, he stood under the wedding canopy as a husband and later became a father of five, asking Moti to stand beside him in place of his parents. He went on to build a full

and responsible life. Another graduate later returned to share a memory from his bar mitzvah. His father, struggling and broken, could offer only borrowed tefillin and a cup of coffee to his son. At Beit Hayered, the staff made sure he experienced a proper and meaningful bar mitzvah celebration. They purchased a new set of tefillin and held a celebration in the dining hall. That moment stayed with him for life. Years later, he insisted on donating his first paycheck to Beit Hayered to pay back some of what had been done for him. He has since gone on to establish a high-tech company.



## LOOKING AHEAD

Nitzchiya sees AMIT's defining strength as its ability to attend to the individual child, to adapt without losing core values, and to constantly reflect and evaluate. She views Beit Hayered as part of a broader national responsibility to care deeply, act professionally, and never shy away from complexity.

Together, these two leaders who guided Beit Hayered, both side by side and individually, shaped its professional and moral foundations. Under their leadership, hundreds of children passed through the home and dozens of couples served as surrogate parents. The standards they set continue to guide Beit Hayered and the 60 children living there today, reminding us of the simple truth that every child needs at least one adult who believes in them.

Beit Hayered reflects the AMIT Network's enduring commitment to the students it serves, the educators it supports, and the nation it helps build. In classrooms across the country — in fields and farms, on stages and in science labs — AMIT sees every child and continually strives for better in a changing world.

Because the mission matters. Building the next generation to succeed and lead with Jewish values has guided AMIT educators for the past 100 years and will continue to inspire them for the next century.



- 1 AMIT has \_\_\_\_\_ schools across Israel  
A. 88  
B. 100  
C. 91  
D. 86
- 2 How many years in a row has AMIT been named Israel's #1 network by Israel's Ministry of Education?  
A. 3  
B. 7  
C. 5  
D. 2
- 3 AMIT has \_\_\_\_\_ students in its network  
A. 42,900  
B. 42,000  
C. 40,000  
D. Nobody knows
- 4 What percentage of AMIT students enlist in the army or national service?  
A. 75%  
B. 98%  
C. 50%  
D. 82%
- 5 When and where did AMIT open its first school?  
A. 1933 in Jerusalem  
B. 1948 in Kfar Batya  
C. 1925 in Ra'anana  
D. 1950 in Kfar Blatt
- 6 70% of AMIT students come from  
A. Ra'anana  
B. The periphery  
C. The South  
D. Jerusalem
- 7 Gogya is  
A. Hebrew for classroom  
B. A restaurant in Ra'anana  
C. AMIT's holistic educational platform  
D. AMIT's director general
- 8 What is AMIT building in Kfar Batya?  
A. A state-of-the-art campus  
B. Headquarters  
C. Gogya Building  
D. All of the above
- 9 Bessie Gotsfeld is AMIT's  
A. Current president  
B. Founder  
C. Secretary  
D. First principal of Kfar Batya
- 10 AMIT's educational approach is  
A. Holistic  
B. Values-based  
C. Personalized  
D. All of the above
- 11 AMIT originally began as  
A. Women's Zionist Alliance  
B. Mizrahi Women of America  
C. Zionist Organization of America  
D. Women's International Zionist Organization
- 12 Kfar Batya  
A. Began as a youth village for new immigrants  
B. Was named after Bessie Gotsfeld  
C. Opened in 1947 in Ra'anana  
D. All of the above

Answer key is on page 18

# COVER TO COVER

*A visual journey of AMIT through the years*

These magazine covers invite us back to the beginnings of AMIT. Starting out as Mizrahi Women, the group was dedicated to building the land and people of Israel, using a simple newsletter to keep supporters connected to their mission and milestones.



1933



1943



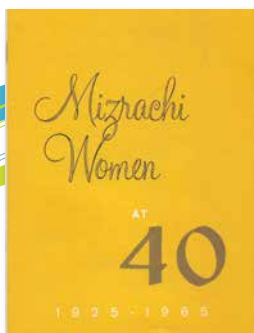
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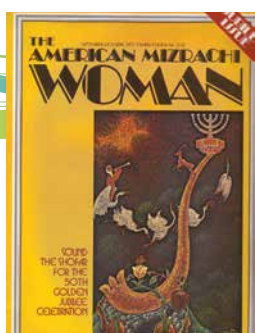
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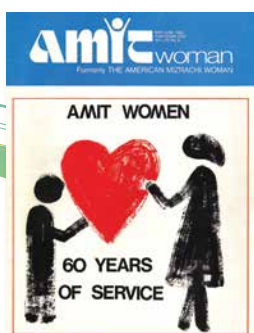
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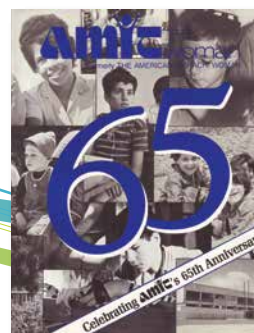
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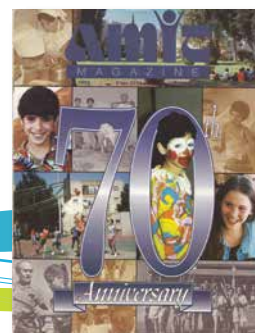
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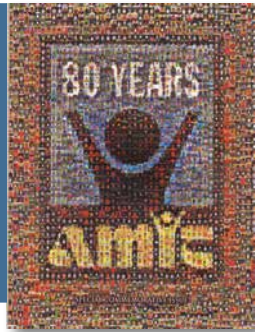
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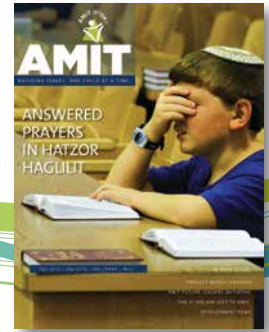
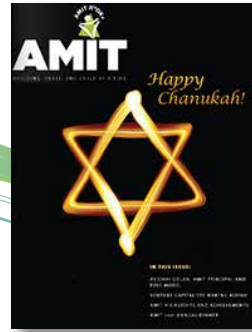
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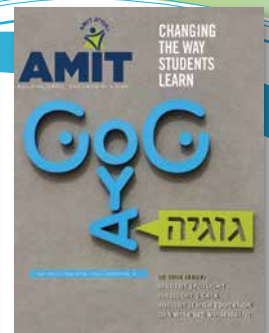
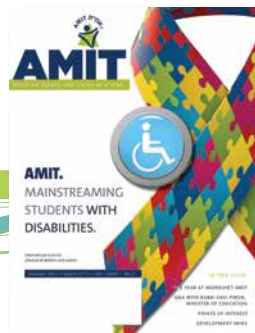
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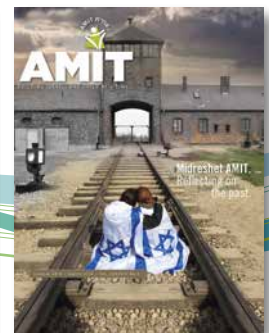
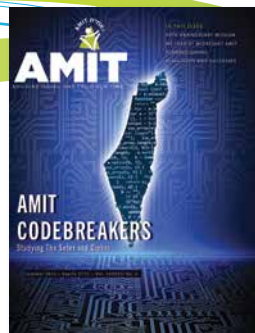
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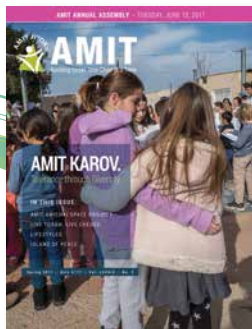
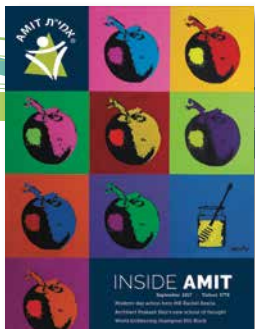
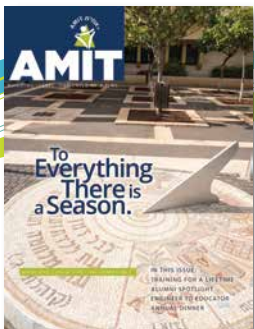


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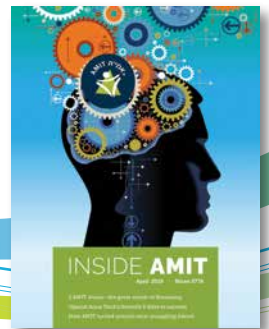
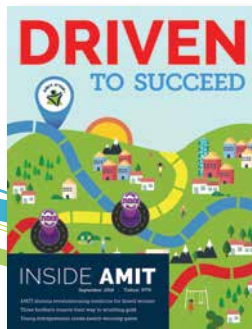


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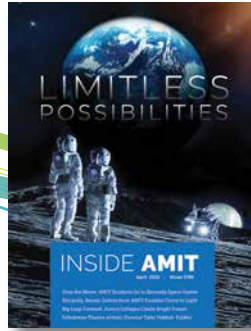
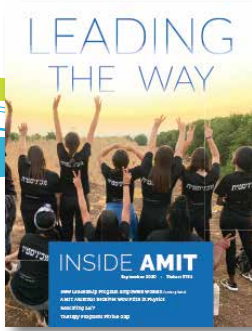
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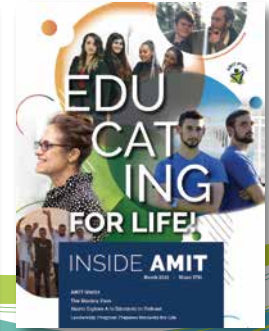
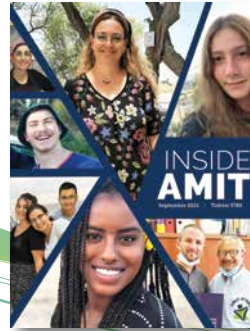
▶▶▶ 2019



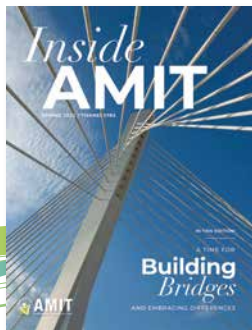
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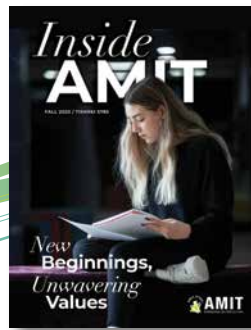
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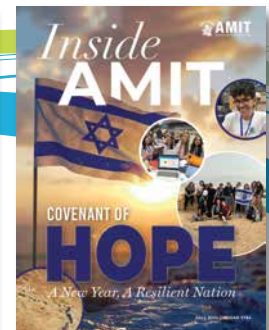
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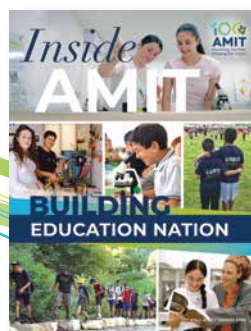
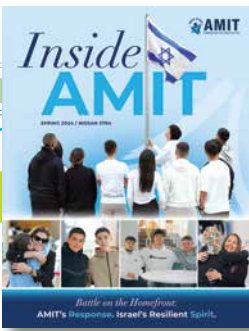
2023



2024



▶▶▶ 2025



Spanning decades of design and development, this collection of AMIT magazine covers reflects the organization's growth and evolution—changing with the times, embracing new chapters, and remaining guided by the same timeless mission at its core.





Kiryat Shmona students

# COMING HOME

## *to the* NORTH

### AMIT'S ROLE IN KIRYAT SHMONA'S RENEWAL

BY ARNIE DRAIMAN

In the months following October 7, one of Israel's quietest emergencies unfolded far from the headlines. Along the northern border, entire communities were emptied almost overnight. Kiryat Shmona on the Lebanese border was long a symbol of resilience on Israel's frontier, and it was suddenly without its residents, its teachers, and its students. Homes stood silent. Schools closed. Families dispersed.

Now, slowly and purposefully, Kiryat Shmona is coming back to life.

But as city leaders quickly understood, repopulation is not only about physical security or employment. It is about confidence. About whether young families believe they can build a future. And above all, it is about schools.

"People don't come back just because they can," said Moriah Daphne, an

AMIT coordinator working closely with Kiryat Shmona's education leadership. "They come back because they believe their children will thrive here."

As residents began returning after months — many after nearly two years — of displacement, the municipality faced an urgent question: how to reopen schools in a way that would stabilize the city and restore trust. Many principals and teachers had

been displaced themselves. Students returned carrying trauma, disruption, and uncertainty. This is where AMIT, Israel's largest educational network, entered — not to take over local schools, but to strengthen them from within.

## LEVERAGING ECO24

AMIT brought to Kiryat Shmona its ECO24 educational framework, a model already proven in other frontline communities, like Sderot. Rather than focusing only on academic recovery, ECO24 approaches education as a full ecosystem by connecting schools to families, community services, local institutions, and future employment pathways.

“The city asked us: How do we bring students back, and how do we make sure they stay?” Daphne explained. “The answer was not one program. It had to be everything working together.”



AMIT works closely with Kiryat Shmona's municipality, education department, social psychology services, and community centers to ensure alignment. The goal: not just reopening schools, but rebuilding a sense of continuity and possibility.

Early signs are already visible. Enrollment is rising. School violence has declined. New excellence tracks have been introduced, particularly in high tech, medicine, and elite IDF pathways. Teachers have returned — not only as educators, but as mentors guiding students through a redefined sense of purpose, helping them gain the skills and confidence to pursue their future.

Students are exposed to real-world fields and professional role models, gaining practical skills and a sense of direction that connects the geographic periphery directly to Israel's most advanced sectors: high tech, medicine, research, and elite military service. For many students, these encounters are their first sustained interaction with industries that often feel distant or inaccessible.

In a town rebuilding its population, this exposure is critical. It shapes whether young people envision a future for themselves in Kiryat Shmona or see success as something that only exists elsewhere. By opening opportunities while keeping students rooted in their community, the schools help families believe they do not need to choose between living in the north and giving their children a strong future.

“Families look at schools as a signal,” said Yitzhaki Friedman, director of ECO24. “Strong schools project that this place has a future.”

The data supports this. Research consistently shows that education — alongside employment — is the strongest predictor of community resilience and long-term growth. Young families choose where to live based on schools. Investment in education accelerates return.



*People don't come back just because they can. They come back because they believe their children will thrive here.*

## REBUILDING COMMUNITY

Beyond academics and career pathways, ECO24 places strong emphasis on belonging and contribution. Volunteerism, leadership, and community engagement are not add-ons, but core to students' development. This has taken on particular meaning in Kiryat Shmona, where rebuilding is both physical and emotional.

One example is students' involvement in new community initiatives, including guided tours and heritage projects that reconnect them to their home. Park *HaZahav* (Park of Gold) is a green corridor threading through the city. Once farmland, later an urban park, the space tells the story of settlement, growth, and renewal. Students explore the park's trails, rare trees, and local ecology while learning how communities are built over time. The more they learn about the history of Kiryat Shmona, the greater the bond they feel with their city.

Armed with knowledge, students will then become guides for tourists and residents. It is education rooted in place, linking identity, environment, and responsibility. “When students see themselves as part of the story of the city,” Daphne noted, “they stop feeling like temporary guests. They become stakeholders.”



Team sports

But no one pretends the work is finished. “This is a long road,” Daphne added. “It’s not just students who were gone. Principals and teachers were gone, too. We are rebuilding systems, trust, and confidence at the same time.”

## A SOLID FOUNDATION

ECO24 was already strong before October 7 — then it became a lifeline. In Sderot, a city hit hard by terror for many years and worsened by the recent war in which most residents were displaced, AMIT

schools became hubs of learning as well as emotional and psychological recovery. “After the October 7 attacks, ECO24 became a critical structure for communities forced to rebuild their lives,” Friedman recalled. “We didn’t wait for help. We already had the tools, so we went to work.”

The model’s success in keeping families hopeful and helping them return home caught national attention. The HaBayta Foundation (Hebrew for “toward home”) was founded to help immigrants in Israel. After October 7, HaBayta refocused its efforts on strengthening communities and the educational system in areas

of Israel that were affected by the war. It began improving local educational infrastructure and fostering a sense of belonging to help displaced residents return to their homes. And when HaBayta focused its core mission on the city of Kiryat Shmona, they turned to AMIT.

“The north has suffered in silence,” Friedman said. “Students were away from home for 18 months, and many families haven’t returned. The challenge is huge. We are empowering local schools to become strong again.” Early signs are promising: increasing enrollment, new partnerships with businesses and companies investing in northern workforce development, and renewed energy among teachers and students alike.

While ECO24 is filled with heart, it is equally grounded in data. “We conduct and review full research before, during, and after. Short-term KPIs and long-term ones,” said Friedman. KPIs, or key performance indicators, are a measurable value that demonstrates how effectively an organization is achieving essential business objectives. KPIs are used to evaluate success in a particular activity or to monitor progress toward goals, providing insights for better decision-making across all departments.

ECO24 measures include academic progress and matriculation success,



*The answer was not one program. It had to be everything working together.*



Music class

Graphic design



leadership development, post-graduation pathways into the IDF, higher education, careers, levels of active community involvement, and student well-being and motivation. The data tell a compelling story: Young families choose to live in communities where strong schools exist. Investment in education, along with employment opportunities, is the top indicator of a city's resilience and growth. "We see it clearly," Friedman said. "Education brings people home. It gives them hope."

## EMPOWERING STUDENTS

He recalled one student who found himself through competitive cycling, discovering his identity, purpose, and direction. "He struggled academically, but on a bicycle, he was unstoppable. He became a leader, and that strength carried into everything else, including the classroom," Friedman remembered. Today, that same student is an officer in the Paratrooper Corps in the IDF. "I met him after leaving reserve duty in Gaza," Friedman said. "He thanked us for believing in him. But truly, we should thank them. We hope we are worthy of this amazing generation."

Though every student is included in ECO24, participation in the deeper tracks is voluntary. "About two-thirds jump in right away. The others watch. And then they see what's happening and usually decide they want in," Friedman said.

Teachers, too, take on new roles as mentors and connectors. Many come from professional fields aligned with student majors. A science teacher might also be a medical technician. A debate instructor might be a civic activist. Their expertise extends the meaning of "teacher" into coach, guide, and role model. "To change a child's life," Friedman said, "you must see them fully. Not the grade on the paper but the person they can become."

There is momentum. Kiryat Shmona is regaining its vibrancy. Businesses are returning. Jobs are

being created. And schools, silent for the past two years, are again filled with movement, ambition, and noise. "As is said and well-known in Israel, there is no Galilee without Kiryat Shmona," Daphne said. "And there is no Israel without the Galilee."

What is happening in Kiryat Shmona reflects a broader truth emerging across Israel's border regions: Education is not only about preparing students for the future, but also about anchoring communities in the present. By strengthening schools, expanding opportunity, and surrounding young people with purpose and possibility, AMIT and its partners are helping families make a critical decision: to come home, and to stay.

"When students rise, communities rise with them," Friedman said. In Kiryat Shmona, that progress is already underway.



# A FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE

## Building AMIT's New High School in Jerusalem

BY ARNIE DRAIMAN



AMIT Masa High School

**W**hat does it take to build a school from scratch? A true community center for students and families, designed to support learning, connection, and belonging.

AMIT Masa High School, a brand-new school for boys in south Jerusalem, brings this vision to life. The school opened its doors in the 2025-2026 academic year in conjunction with the Jerusalem municipality. At the end of November, the AMIT Network officially won the tender to manage the school and took steps to cement its operations. The school fills a gap among boys' Torani schools in the area and is mostly geared toward the *dati leumi* (Religious Zionist) community.



This school isn't merely a set of classrooms, but a bold new model for Jewish education that sees every student, not just the mainstream. AMIT Masa pushes boundaries and expectations in a city where the past is ever-present and the future is fiercely important. For AMIT, Israel's leading educational network, building a new high school in Jerusalem is more than a project. It's a mission — a chance to expand opportunity and ensure that every child has a place to thrive.

"There is a growing community in Jerusalem looking for a school aligned with their values and aspirations, and there's simply no more room in the existing schools," said Dani Rahat, AMIT's deputy director of strategy and municipal relations.

New housing developments in Jerusalem's southern neighborhoods are attracting young families who believe in a vibrant, modern approach to Jewish life. But while neighborhoods like Givat HaMatos, Har Homa, Talpiot, Arnona, and Gilo are blossoming, educational options have not caught up.

This shortage isn't abstract. It affects real families, including many *olim* who arrived in Israel with hope and determination but limited resources. These are working parents who believe in Torah values and academic achievement. They want more for their children — more than traditional options, more than a one-size-fits-all religious school. The current schools are full, and the city took notice.

"The municipality recognized the same need," Rahat shared. "We want to be stronger in Jerusalem, and this was the opportunity." It was the opportunity not to just add another building, but to build the future of AMIT pedagogy from scratch.

Usually, AMIT enters established schools and transforms them —



guiding educators and principals, redesigning curriculum, and igniting a culture shift. "Here we have the extraordinary chance to shape a school from day one," Rahat said. It's the kind of opportunity educational leaders dream about: There is no legacy structure to dismantle. You have a principal aligned with AMIT's mission, a community hungry for innovation, and a municipality ready to partner. It truly is a perfect alignment — the right moment, the right people, and the right place.

## A FOUNDING PRINCIPAL

The principal of the new school is David Simchon, who lives in a community just south of Jerusalem, but his heart — and much of his career — has been in the soul of Israeli youth life. He spent years as a professional in the Bnei Akiva youth movement, building leadership and identity through informal education. That experience shaped

his understanding of what young people need most: to be seen, to be valued, and to be involved. "Informal education is where students become leaders — where they discover what they care about and take responsibility," he explained. "I wanted to bring that into the school system."

After completing a leadership training program for senior educators, Simchon joined AMIT — a network that already believes deeply in weaving social-emotional learning and student voice into everyday schooling. But he wanted more: "I wanted students to be active participants in their own education, not just recipients."

Two years ago, he attended a meeting with Jerusalem officials about a new school that needed a founding principal. He recognized the moment instantly. "I saw that I could build something new — not inherit a system, but create one," said Simchon. "Build a school exactly as we know it needs to be for today's teens."

The October 7 war delayed the opening by a year, but for Simchon, the extra time was a gift. “It let us fully develop the curriculum and the full AMIT experience, incorporating ECO24, Tatzam, mentoring, enrichment, Torah, identity, everything. We had the chance to create this from nothing, which is exactly as perfect as we could make it,” he said.

He paused, his voice lifting with pride: “It was the dream of AMIT to build this type of school, and I am proud to be part of it.”

## ADAPTING TO EVERY STUDENT

The school began with two seventh grade classes and will expand yearly until it becomes a full high school, with three classes per grade level. Each class of 30 is divided into two small groups of 15, each with a dedicated mentor. Mentorship has always been central to AMIT’s approach, and here it is not a supplement; it is the foundation.

“Each day begins with Tatzam, the AMIT program focused on the emotional well-being and personal connection with each student,” Simchon explained. “Not in a full classroom, but in small groups and one-on-one.” These sessions focus on personal development, strengthening group belonging, and reinforcing key emotional skills such as self-awareness, emotional regulation, and interpersonal communication.

He has already seen the difference: “If a student says he’s tired or that the electricity went off at home that morning, we know how to respond. We don’t ignore real life. We guide them through it.”

At AMIT Masa, feelings do not get left at the door. While strong academics remain central, including high expectations for *bagrut* (Israeli matriculation exams) success, the school believes true learning expands through passion. “We have built in many hours each week to strengthen students’ interests in their passions — for example, chess, cooking, economics and finance, sports, politics, coding, whatever they love,” Simchon said. “School needs to teach what is meaningful to the student.”



Bar mitzvah program  
at the Kotel



Students  
working together





Journey of growth

## LIVING OUT OUR VALUES

Behind every innovation is a set of values AMIT staff, teachers, and students live by every day:

- Empowering students as leaders of their learning
- Personalizing education through mentors who know each child
- Investing in enrichment and identity as much as academics
- Building community through Jewish values and belonging
- Never giving up on any student

Once a week, the school day goes late into the evening. Those hours look more like a vibrant youth movement than a typical school day, with student-led activities, leadership challenges, values-driven social engagement, and more. “We’re not just checking a box called ‘informal education,’” said Simchon with a smile. “The kids design the programs. They run them. School is a partnership, and they are creating their own community.”

That community extends beyond the students to include and strengthen their families. And Simchon already sees early signs of a dream taking root, including laughter in the hallways and pride in parents’ eyes.

This approach is especially important for new immigrant students, who may arrive with fear, insecurity, or the painful sense of starting from behind. “When a child’s interest becomes the starting point, confidence grows,” he explained. “A student who feels competent becomes a student who can succeed.” This is AMIT’s ECO24 model in action, ensuring that learning continues far beyond the bell.

AMIT’s Learning Management System adapts the classroom experience to each child, meeting learners at their level and preferred method. Throughout the school day, students choose how they learn: independent research, small groups, hands-on labs, or guided workshops. This groundbreaking tool is one of AMIT’s recent innovations, part of its commitment to personalized learning and pedagogic excellence.

“It’s the school’s job to adapt itself to each and every student,” Simchon said firmly. “Not the other way around.” And this new approach is already attracting attention. “Many others want to copy what we are doing!” he laughs. “That means we’re onto something.”

“We are so happy with the staff and the students,” he said. “The culture is alive. There is joy.”

AMIT Masa is serving students who may not have the same resources as others, Rahat explained: “Some are *olim*. Some are living on a more fragile economic base. But that has nothing to do with their potential.” By placing the school in a new, affordable neighborhood, AMIT isn’t just solving an educational challenge; it is helping stabilize an expanding community. Schools build roots and create belonging.

Over the next five years, enrollment will expand, additional grades and classes will open, and the building will grow. What is now a bright beginning will become a thriving centerpiece of community life. In a city where the world’s eyes often turn toward conflict, this school tells a different story — one of hope, of possibility, of the next generation finding its voice.

Future soldiers, scientists, engineers, and leaders in every field will look back with pride at the school where they learned the values that shaped them. Rahat expressed it more simply: “We are building more than a school: We are building a future.”



Campfire kumzitz

# FROM High School TO High Tech



## AMIT ASHKENAZI'S STORY

BY LINDA GRADSTEIN

**A** graduate of AMIT Bar Ilan, Amit Ashkenazi jokes that AMIT is so important to him it's even his name. The VP of Global Sales at Tastewise, a company that predicts food and beverage trends worldwide, Amit connects the start of his success to his years at AMIT.

"My first name and my school were always a bit of a joke accompanying me in my life," Amit said with a smile. "It's one of those things that are funny at first and then after a while, you're like, 'Oh, that's the first time I heard that,'" he added sarcastically.

In all seriousness, he credits his time at AMIT Bar Ilan High School for Boys in Petach Tikvah for leading him to perform his army service in the elite Egoz unit, which specializes in guerilla warfare against Hezbollah. To be accepted into Egoz, candidates must pass a series of physical tests as well as interviews. The competition is tough, and anyone accepted must also commit to up to an extra year of army service.

Amit recalls his interviewer asking about a challenge he had faced and overcome. At age 18, he wasn't sure how to answer the question — until he remembered having to choose a subject for his major in high school. In Israel, most students choose one or two subjects to focus on and study intensively; then they take a *bagrut*, or matriculation, exam in those subjects for college.

Amit had already chosen chemistry, biotechnology, and physics, and wanted to add Arabic to his course load. However, he and his teachers realized he would not be

able to do all four subjects well, so he decided to drop Arabic.

"I knew I wanted to excel at what I do, so after consulting with my teachers, I decided to focus my efforts on the things that mattered most," he said. "I told the interviewer I wanted to excel and be the best soldier I could be, and I was accepted to the unit." It was his army service in Egoz, he said, that eventually led him to the path he is on today.

### AMIT Connections Make a Difference

Amit grew up in Petach Tikvah, a working-class city about a half hour east of Tel Aviv. He is the third child in his family, born 12 years after his sister and 11 years after his brother.

"It was clear to me that I would go to AMIT Bar Ilan," he said. "My brother went there and all my cousins went there. It was almost like a legacy — we are an AMIT family. Today I have nephews who go there, and I hope to send my children there as well."

But when he started at AMIT, almost all his neighborhood friends chose a different school — not an easy situation for a sixth grader. In the end, though, he sees it as a blessing.

"I think it allowed me to open up and see friends from different backgrounds, not only from the same city," he

## AMIT

said. "I'm still close with some of those friends today."

For the first time, he was challenged academically, and his teachers provided both personal and educational guidance. Amit remembers his time at school as essential in forming his identity as a student and a person.

"The teenage years are not easy, especially these days," he said. "You're going through a lot of developments both personally and professionally. You start to learn, to study more seriously, to take your tests and exams. AMIT gave me everything I needed to succeed."

"Everything" included the push to take the higher levels of math and science that would help him get accepted to university. The atmosphere at school was one of caring, camaraderie, and achievement. His teachers were role models who not only pushed him and his fellow students to excel, but somehow even managed to make studying seem cool. "It was cool to be that good student and to push each other to do better," he said.

The classroom wasn't the only area where Amit trusted his teachers. When they encouraged him to pursue activities outside of academics, he joined the basketball team, enjoying the outlet it gave him. He even consulted with them about his then-girlfriend Hadar,

who later became his wife.

After the army, Amit studied psychology and business at Tel Aviv University, graduating first in his class. He and Hadar married, and Amit went on to earn a master's degree in organizational consulting and begin working in the field of high tech.

Six years ago, the startup he was working for moved him and his family to New York. They went with one child, and two more were born while they were living in the U.S.

While he was in New York, a friend from AMIT put him in contact with the owners of Tastewise, and Amit came on board as VP of Global Sales, forming relationships with Fortune 500 companies. "I enjoy the fast-moving, challenging environment, penetrating an old-school traditional industry and showing them ways to create better products for the world," he shared. Tastewise supports 80% of the world's top food and beverage companies, including Mars, Campbell's, PepsiCo, and Kraft Heinz.

Despite these global commitments, Amit and Hadar moved their family back to Petach Tikvah a few months ago. "Although I fly back and forth a lot, we wanted to come back and raise our kids here," he said. "Basically, we wanted to come home."





# Celebrating Sigd

## HONORING HERITAGE AT AMIT SCHOOLS

BY ALISA BODNER-BRYANT

**F**or centuries, the Jews of Ethiopia would trek miles from their villages to the highest mountain in Northern Ethiopia, where they would lift up their eyes toward Zion in hope and prayer. The Sigd holiday was observed each year on the 29th day of the month of Cheshvan, 50 days following Yom Kippur. It was marked by fasting, a renewal of commitment to God, and a communal prayer for the return to Jerusalem. In 2008, Israel's parliament legislated the Sigd Law, declaring the 29th of Cheshvan a national holiday on the calendar. Each year on that day, Israelis of Ethiopian descent travel to Jerusalem where they gather in the Armon Hanatziv neighborhood, while kessim (Ethiopian religious leaders) read sacred texts and recite prayers before the community.

Though Sigd is an official Israeli holiday, it is not widely observed outside the Ethiopian-Israeli community, which numbers approximately 180,000 people. In recent years, there have been increased efforts to mark the Sigd holiday as an opportunity to educate broader Israeli society about the history of Ethiopian Jewry,

with the goal of opening a window into its rich culture and traditions. AMIT has played an integral role in these efforts by marking the holiday in its network of schools and providing educational materials to integrate into classroom learning.

### Marking the Day

This year, in honor of Sigd, the Dina & Moses Dyckman Ulpanat AMIT in Beersheva hosted speaker Dr. Yaffa Melda Edelstein, head of health and education at the Resilience and Health Hub in Sderot and an alum of the ulpana. Dr. Edelstein spoke about her experiences as a young immigrant, her time at the school, and how encouragement from her teachers helped her achieve her goals. She challenged students to chase their dreams, even offering to serve as a mentor for the girls, paying forward the guidance she benefited from in her life.

"The visit brought me back to magical moments and to a time when my teachers played such a meaningful role in shaping who I am," said Dr. Edelstein. "I would

be honored to return for a more personal conversation with the girls about excellence, perseverance, and the values I gained here.”

AMIT Dyckman Principal Nurit Davidi added, “Our vision at AMIT is to cultivate excellence with love and faith. We set ambitious goals for all our students, and with encouragement, belief, and genuine care, we see them rise and flourish.”

Students at Ulpanat AMIT Anna Teich in Haifa enjoyed an Ethiopian cultural day in honor of Sigd, complete with a buna coffee ceremony, an exhibit of Ethiopian crafts, traditional dress, and hair braiding.

AMIT Kiryat Malachi, based in the southern city, serves many Ethiopian-Israeli families and prides itself on its diverse student body. Its annual Sigd celebration honors the heritage of so many of its students, strengthening their connection to their roots, while giving them the confidence to chart their own way. Leah Genie Avuno, a graduate of AMIT Kiryat Malachi, remembers Sigd as one of the highlights of the year.



Sigd at Ulpanat AMIT Anna Teich

## A Personal Story of Belonging

One of 15 children, Avuno immigrated to Israel in 1999 at the age of 2. Like many other immigrants from Ethiopia, her family was separated while awaiting aliyah, and only reunited years later once in Israel. They moved to Kiryat Malachi to be near family and Avuno started at the AMIT school in seventh grade. She deeply appreciated that her new school in a new country honored her family’s traditions.

Each year, the school invests in educational programming leading up to Sigd. Teachers dedicate classroom time to the history of Ethiopian Jewry, and



Dr. Yaffa Melda Edelstein (second from left) spoke at the Sigd celebration at AMIT Dyckman.

students of Ethiopian descent bring in traditional foods and share stories of the customs they grew up with. Avuno’s mother would join her in school and distribute home-cooked injera, a traditional Ethiopian flatbread made with teff grain and spices unique to the Ethiopian kitchen.

The attention shown by the entire school body — principal, teachers, and students — in marking the annual holiday made a deep impression on Avuno during her formative years as an Ethiopian-Israeli teenager. “It felt just like home. I never had to hide anything,” she explained. She added that watching her principal and teachers learn to speak Amharic and eat traditional Ethiopian food that her mother prepared has had an impact on her to this day.

From an early age, Avuno navigated questions around her identity. In high school, thanks to the supportive environment of AMIT, she learned how to represent herself as both Israeli and Ethiopian, and to embrace all parts of her identity.

During a 10-day educational hiking trip in 11th grade, Avuno visited Jerusalem with her entire grade. On Jerusalem Day, which is also a day of observance for the approximately 4,000 Ethiopian Jews who perished on their way to Israel, the students toured Mount Herzl. Avuno was selected to speak about the significance of the day at the monument dedicated to the memory of the Ethiopian Jews who died en route to Israel. She spent time learning about the memorial in preparation. It was not lost on her that her school dedicated the same amount of time in the schedule to the memorial for Ethiopian Jews as it did to the graves of politicians and fallen soldiers. “I felt so seen, so appreciated,” she said.



Leah Genie Avuno

Since a large percentage of students at AMIT Kiryat Malachi are immigrants, the school has dedicated resources to providing additional support to ensure their full integration. In many Ethiopian-Israeli households, the children are involved in household tasks that would typically be overseen by parents. Due to language gaps, the children take over these responsibilities, and as a result often struggle to balance family life with school. Not only does AMIT Kiryat Malachi provide additional tutors for immigrant families, but the school also has many teachers and administrators of Ethiopian descent who serve as role models, easing cultural differences.

## A Foundation for Success

Avuno fondly remembers studying for exams in her teachers' homes when her own home was not conducive to a quiet study environment. "There were no limits. If you wanted to succeed, they did everything to help you succeed," she explained.

After her army service, Avuno became a mentor for immigrants in AMIT Kiryat Malachi, like those who helped her succeed as a high school student. She worked as a social coordinator arranging tutors, providing emotional support, administering home visits, and simply being present.

In addition to academic rigor, AMIT Kiryat Malachi also gives students a strong foundation of volunteerism and social responsibility. Avuno volunteered in her



Sigd celebration at Kiryat Malachi with traditional Ethiopian foods brought by Avuno and her mother

community from a young age, attended Yeshiva University's Counterpoint Israel program for a few summers, and did a year of community service in Tucson, Arizona, bringing Israeli culture to Jewish day schools and institutions in the city.

Today, Avuno works for AMIT as an international relations coordinator, organizing events for overseas donors and helping strengthen the connection between supporters of AMIT abroad and the projects they impact in Israel.



AMIT Kiryat Malachi 11th grade trip to Jerusalem

## Beyond the Classroom

AMIT leadership is sensitive to increasing cultural awareness around the needs of students from immigrant homes. Hosting traditional celebrations and highlighting Ethiopian-Israeli alumni who are successful and respected demonstrates to students that they are fully part of the fabric of not just AMIT schools, but Israeli society.

True integration, according to Avuno, feels like belonging. "That is what AMIT excels at," she added. "And it changed my life for the better."



The Shields family  
Credit: Ellie Fried Photography

# CHANA HOLZER SHIELDS

## *Turns Vision Into Impact*

BY TOVA COHEN

**C**hana Holzer Shields, AMIT’s chair of the Board of Directors, may reside in Bergen County, New Jersey, but her heart lives in Israel. That truth is reflected in her unwavering dedication to AMIT, the time and resources she invests in its mission, and, more recently, her eldest child making aliyah. Together, she and her husband, Dan, steadfastly support AMIT and all it represents.

It’s a commitment that was shaped when Chana was a young girl. Among her earliest childhood memories are her grandmother, Shirley Halpern, z”l, hosting *shuirim* in her Brooklyn home, running a thrift shop, and toting around a tzedakah box, all in service of Mizrahi Women. Chana’s mother, Marcia Holzer, z”l, was a chapter president for AMIT in Rockland County and a national board member for many years. Chana’s aunt, Norma Holzer, was the AMIT national president from 1991-1995 and is still active in the organization; she was honored at the 2025 national event.

“I remember distinctly from my childhood how important it was to take care of children in Israel,” said Chana. “I’ve been a Mother-in-Israel [one of AMIT’s enduring campaigns] probably since before I could speak.”

When Chana married Dan and moved to Philadelphia, it was only natural for her to find ways to incorporate AMIT into their new life. From being the only one to show up to an early community meeting to building a thriving young leadership chapter with that meeting’s hostess, Chana successfully grew AMIT’s Philadelphia presence. When she moved her young family to Teaneck, New Jersey, she was approached to work her magic in her new hometown. Today, AMIT’s Bergen County chapter is thriving.

“We really build up children, and, in that way, we build their futures and the collective future of Israel,” explained Chana. “We do it through empowering these kids from disadvantaged backgrounds with a cutting-edge education, and through the nurturing and care that go along with it. With AMIT, it’s always been about the whole child.”

Chana shared a powerful example from her time in Israel in October 2023. She was in awe that on October 8, the AMIT Network, headed by Dr. Amnon Eldar, had already established a war room to discuss how to properly care for the thousands of AMIT students from Sderot and other communities. It was urgent to safeguard their well-being in this unprecedented time of upheaval and displacement.

“Watching our administrators and teachers step up in such a profound way to ensure that every child was truly OK — even while their own family members were called up to serve and they were navigating personal challenges in their own lives — was incredibly powerful,” said Chana.

Of course, that kind of response didn’t emerge in a vacuum. Well before October 7, Chana saw AMIT’s impact in a more subtle, yet incredibly impactful way: AMIT students consistently produce outstanding *bagrut* test scores — the entryway to future opportunities in Israel. And 98% of AMIT graduates go on to serve in the IDF or Sherut Leumi (National Service), a statistic she is hard-pressed to credit to any other Israeli organization.

“You can give someone who starts out with very little a sandwich for a day, but when you give them an education, you give them the foundation for a job, a future, and the ability to give back to their society,” said Chana. “That level of impact is transformative.”

## Making Every Moment Count

Chana and Dan see a natural symmetry with AMIT’s values and those they strive to instill in their own children. “We’ve tried to model for them to give back to community, be active participants in society, and be passionately Zionist,” said Chana. “I’m proud that my eldest daughter, Sarina, made aliyah in 2024, and I’m grateful to my husband, Dan, for being a genuine team player who’s all in.”

Chana continued, “I give a lot of my time, and Dan definitely picks up any of my slack. We view marriage as a partnership, and I would not be able to do any of this without him.”

In addition to serving as board chair, Chana is a member of the Executive Committee and AMIT’s representative to the American Zionist Movement as part of the Mizrachi Coalition. And somehow, alongside her deep commitment to AMIT, she continues to say yes to her community in countless other ways: serving as treasurer of a local food pantry, leading an annual clothing drive, and founding and managing a local Jewish political action group in Bergen County. All of this is in addition to her professional role as vice president and chief operating officer of a boutique real estate private equity firm.

“I try to make every moment count in life, and I try to do good, meaningful things with those moments,” said Chana. “They say if you want something done, give it to a busy

person. I guess I’m one of those people. At the end of the day, however, AMIT is closest to my heart. I believe Israel is where we’re all supposed to be, and working to build the country is something we should all participate in.”

That’s especially true now, when Israel is navigating a complex post-October 7 landscape that brings new challenges and opportunities, and when an investment in Israel’s future has perhaps never been more important.

“Chana has the leadership characteristic of our very best lay leaders. She is always willing to roll up her sleeves and do whatever it takes to get the job done,” said Andy Goldsmith, AMIT’s executive vice president. “No task is beneath or above her and I have seen her demonstrate this quality time and time again.”



Chana & Dan Shields

Returning to the theme of AMIT’s focus on the whole child, Chana highlighted some of the ways AMIT is helping children process their trauma and the emotional and mental toll of more than two years of war and loss.

“AMIT has put real support in place for students and staff alike, assigning a mentor to work with small groups — one mentor for every 15 children — and ensuring there is always someone to turn to and talk to so no one feels alone,” explained Chana.

This kind of programming gives kids a way to process what they’re feeling, face their fears, work through their anxieties, and begin to heal from the trauma they’ve experienced.

She and Dan recently made a transformative gift to AMIT’s new Kfar Batya campus, which will serve as a hub for continual innovation to create, test, refine, and expand educational models that will increase AMIT’s impact exponentially.

“We felt compelled to be part of this effort in a meaningful way, and making a dedication to the Kfar Batya campus in memory of my parents, Marcia and Philip Holzer, z”l, is especially significant,” shared Chana. “They were deeply committed to AMIT, and their love for Israel was profound. Supporting an organization that meant so much to them feels like a powerful way to honor their legacy and carry forward their values.”

It’s that strong sense of continuity that fuels Chana’s work on behalf of AMIT and the greater Jewish community — a living bridge between her grandmother and the next generation, rooted in an enduring commitment to Israel and its children.

# CARRYING ON A LEGACY

## *A Mother–Daughter Gift to AMIT*

BY MICHAL ROSENBERG



(l-r) Rita Lowi with her daughter Phyllis Miller

A longtime friend of AMIT, Rita Lowi, together with her daughter Phyllis Miller, is creating a meaningful legacy with the dedication of a new Classroom Wing at the Gwen Straus High School on AMIT's Kfar Batya campus. AMIT has always been close to Rita's heart, as it combines her passion for education and her love of Israel.

Both Polish Holocaust survivors, Rita and Sal Lowi met and married in a Displaced Persons camp in Austria. They immigrated to the United States after the war, arriving in Ohio in 1949, and settled in California a year later to be near Rita's uncle.

Rita received her education under Russian occupation, worked as a bookkeeper, then trained to be a nurse during the war. She valued academic achievement and was committed to her business and philanthropic partnership with Sal while raising their three children in Los Angeles.

The Lowis were very active in their community, volunteering with Jewish organizations, including their shul, Beth Jacob Congregation, various religious schools, hospitals, and AMIT, whose mission resonated with their values. Rita was a dedicated supporter and valuable partner of the organization, invested in the growth of Israel's children through AMIT.

In the mid-1990s, Rita and Sal were honored by AMIT Los Angeles for their "generosity and concern for the well-being of our children." They traveled to Israel and visited the Kfar Batya campus, where they could see their contributions come to life.

Rita and Phyllis are proud to be part of the new age of education being built at AMIT's new campus in Ra'anana. "Kfar Batya is a campus that impressed her from her first visit, and she is excited about its expansion," said Phyllis. The new Classroom Wing will cement the family's lasting impact on AMIT and its students for generations to come.

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# INSPIRING CREATIVITY AND CONNECTION

## *A Family's Fitting Tribute*

BY MICHAL ROSENBERG

In recognition of his mother Jacqui's love of art, Jeff and Shari Fishman of Los Angeles have dedicated a new art therapy program and studio at Sderot's Ulpanat AMIT Beeri in her memory.

A creative soul, Jacqui honed her skills in college art classes and pursued a variety of artistic media. She was a painter, comic book artist, and photographer throughout her career. "She loved to make people smile. It was exhilarating for her," said Jeff. She routinely won acclaim for her work and proudly had pieces on display at Hadassah Hospital and Bank Hapoalim, even once presenting some of her work to then Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir.

A native of Los Angeles, Jacqui raised Jeff, her only child, there as a single mother. She then lived in Israel for 16 years before going back to Los Angeles to be near her grandchildren.

Jacqui's parents, Anne and William Bernstein, were longtime dedicated supporters of AMIT in Los Angeles. "I remember they were very involved in Beit Hayered when it first opened," Jeff recalled. "They really helped spearhead much of what AMIT, Mizrahi Women at the time, did on the West Coast. My grandmother was very mission-aligned and would host events at her house all the time." The Bernsteins were honored multiple times by AMIT Los Angeles over the years.

Growing up in this environment, supporting AMIT was natural for Jacqui. "AMIT always had a place in her heart, and she valued the impact the organization has made throughout Israel. She connected with AMIT's mission of helping kids from disadvantaged backgrounds and providing enrichment to so many," said Jeff.

When Jacqui passed, the Fishman family wanted to honor her in a way that reflected her values and interests: love of the arts, Zionism, commitment to those less fortunate, and making people smile. They turned to AMIT given their family's long history with the network. "The creation of the art program in Sderot captures her essence and all the priorities we have as a family," said Jeff.

Through the art therapy program, students can find solace and inspiration to help them heal after the trauma of the



last few years. Students dive into the creative process, expressing themselves through various techniques while learning flexibility and problem-solving. Their self-confidence soars when they master a new skill or complete a project.

"We saw the tremendous need for this kind of program in Sderot post-October 7," said Jeff. "This really resonated with our entire family, tying back to my mother's legacy and the impact these programs would have on children in this area."

Jeff and Shari visited Israel last summer with various family members to see the space in person. It was their first time in the Gaza envelope since the war broke out and they were deeply moved by their experience. "No matter what you read or hear, nothing is more impactful than seeing it firsthand," Jeff shared.

On their visit to the school, they received a tremendous message of courage and resilience from the vice principal. "It is incredibly gratifying that we are dedicating this in my mom's memory," Jeff said. "We hope we can make a difference in these students' lives."

# CAMPUS UPDATES

Construction continues steadily at the **Gabel & Straus Family Campus at AMIT Kfar Batya** as excitement builds for its official opening.

The 7,400-square-meter **Gwen Straus High School** will accommodate 900 students in grades seven through 12 and is preparing to open its doors in September.

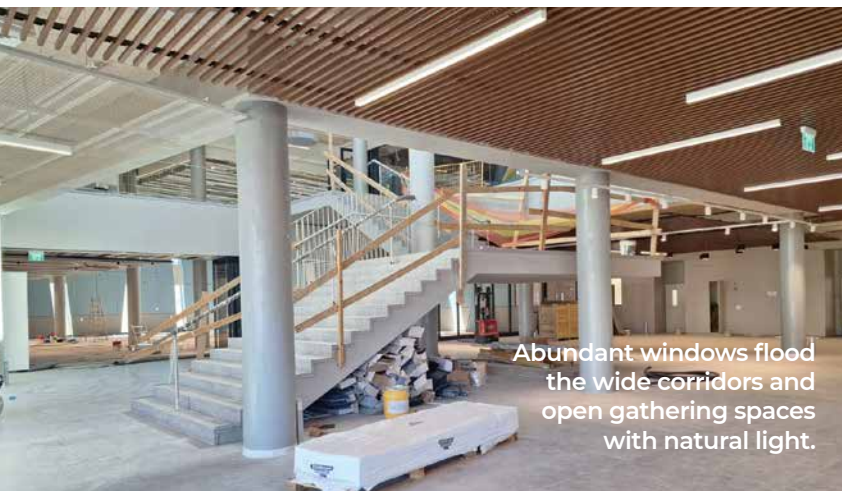
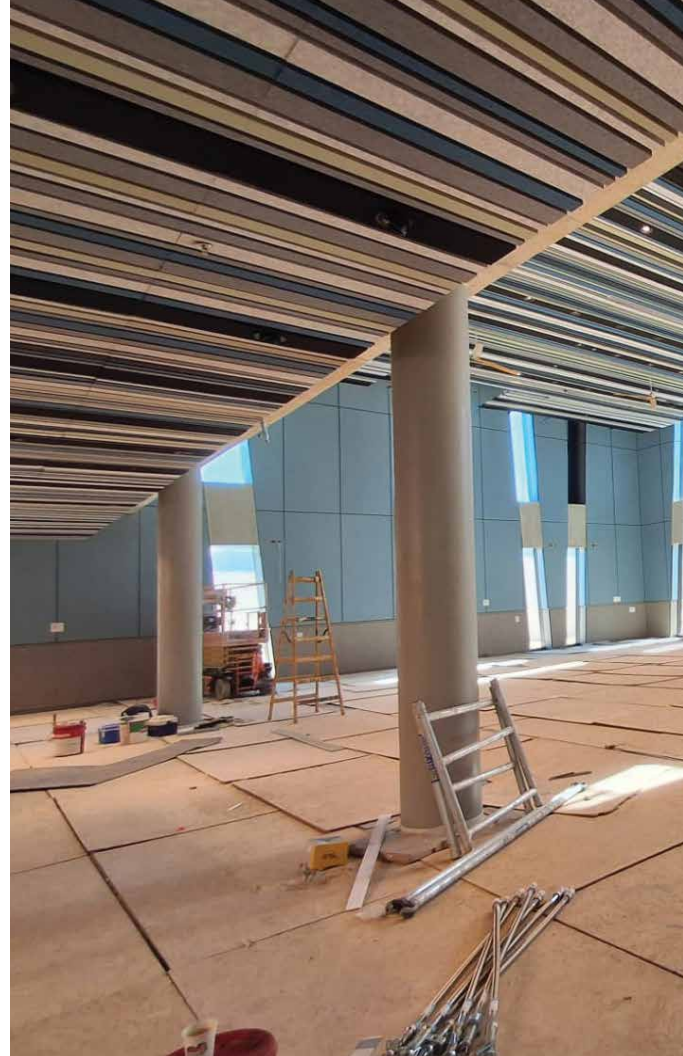


The modern exterior  
is nearly complete.

# GWEN STRAUS HIGH SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS



Pavers are being installed in the entrance plaza.



Abundant windows flood the wide corridors and open gathering spaces with natural light.



Multipurpose Support Rooms will be used for remedial teaching as well as advisor and grade coordinator meetings.



Movable glass walls allow the beit midrash to open completely into the main entrance of the building.



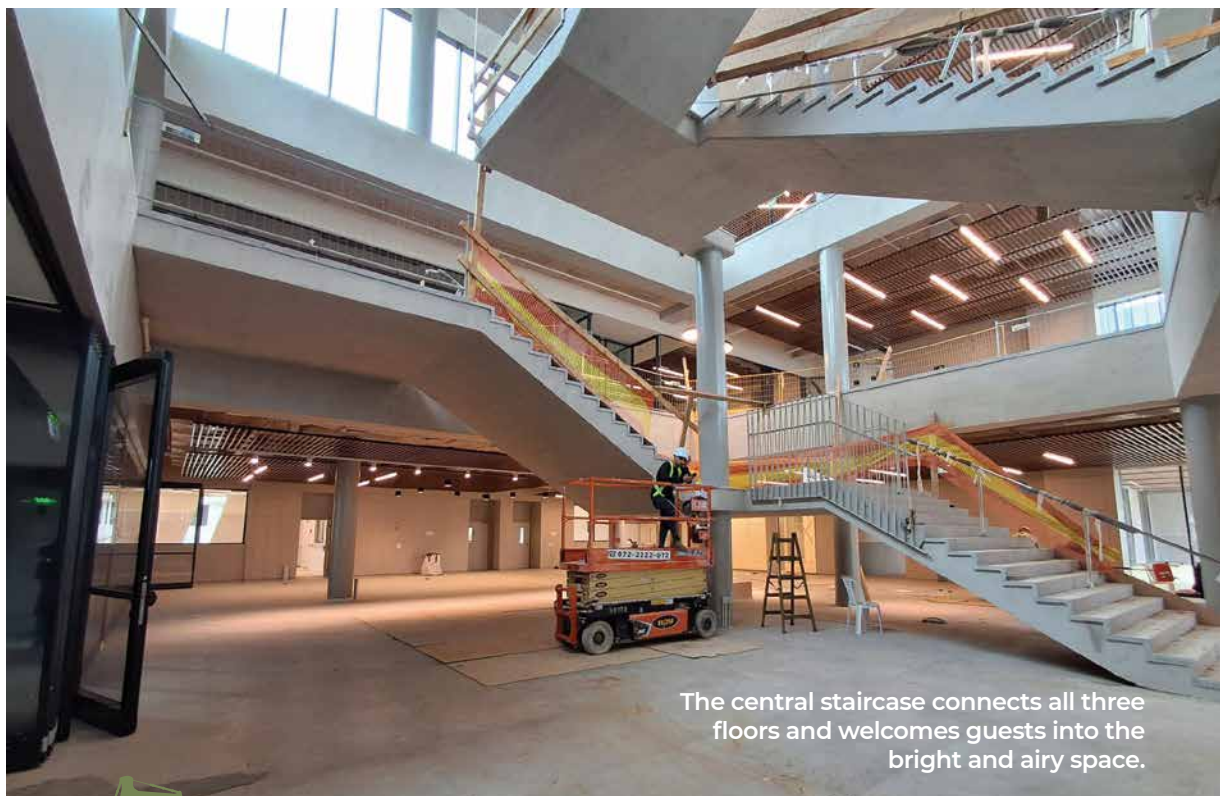
Soaring windows let light pour into the **Kolatch Beit Midrash**, the central place of Torah learning within the building.



The two-room teachers' suite includes a lounge for break time and a workspace inviting collaboration.



Classrooms will be outfitted over the next few months.



The central staircase connects all three floors and welcomes guests into the bright and airy space.



# THE EVAN & LAYLA GREEN FAMILY FOUNDATION GOGYA BUILDING HIGHLIGHTS

AMIT’s new Gogya Building is a flurry of construction activity as the spaces inside take shape. It will be home to the Audrey Lookstein Educators’ Innovation Center, Gogya Conference Center, Student Innovation Hub, Gogya Experience & Visitors’ Center, and AMIT Headquarters.

## The Audrey Lookstein Educators’ Innovation Center

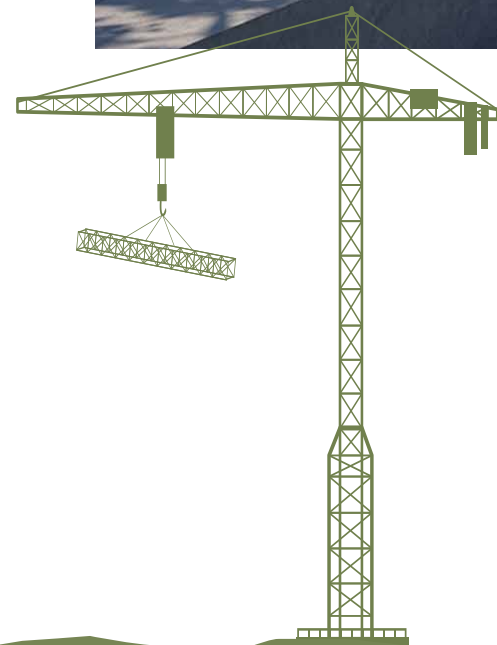
This revolutionary academic hub brings learning to life through simulation spaces inspired by real-world challenges. Participants focus on seven essential 21st-century skills, putting them into practice to navigate complex scenarios.

### CORE SKILLS

- Decision-making
- Communication
- Teamwork
- Critical and creative thinking
- Resilience
- Adaptability
- Interpersonal awareness

### FOCUS ON EDUCATORS

The Center will be a national training and certification hub for educators, prioritizing this skill set. AMIT will provide lesson plans, activity guides, digital resources, and a strong professional community to support teachers.





The Gogya Building

## SIMULATIONS

In each skill simulation, participants face urgent, high-stakes situations that challenge them to make decisions under pressure. Guided feedback allows them to reflect, adapt, and grow.

This approach strengthens AMIT's skills curriculum across its schools, bridging classroom learning with real-world experience.

Through innovation at the Lookstein Center, AMIT is reshaping learning for both educators and students — and advancing Israeli society's educational outlook.

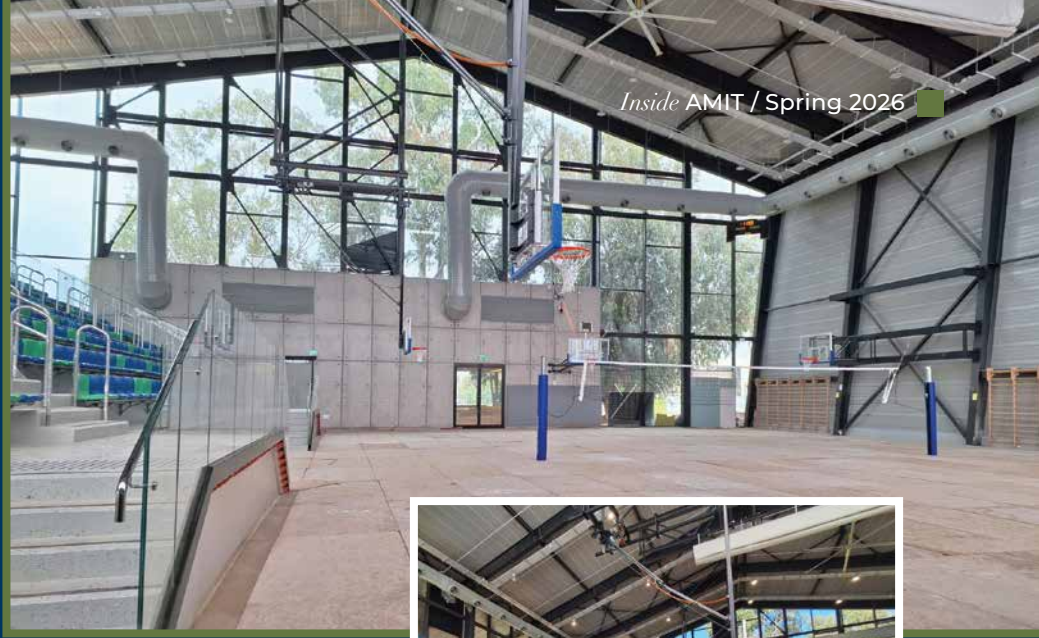
# THE CHELLA & MOISE SAFRA ATHLETIC COMPLEX HIGHLIGHTS



The Athletic Complex demonstrates AMIT's holistic model of education. The state-of-the-art facility for recreation, sports, and movement supports students' physical, emotional, and social development.



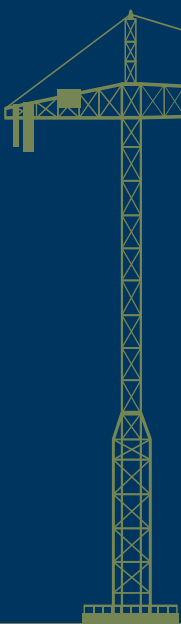
The state-of-the-art multifunctional sports hall and spacious bleachers will bring students and families together from across the network in camaraderie and competition.

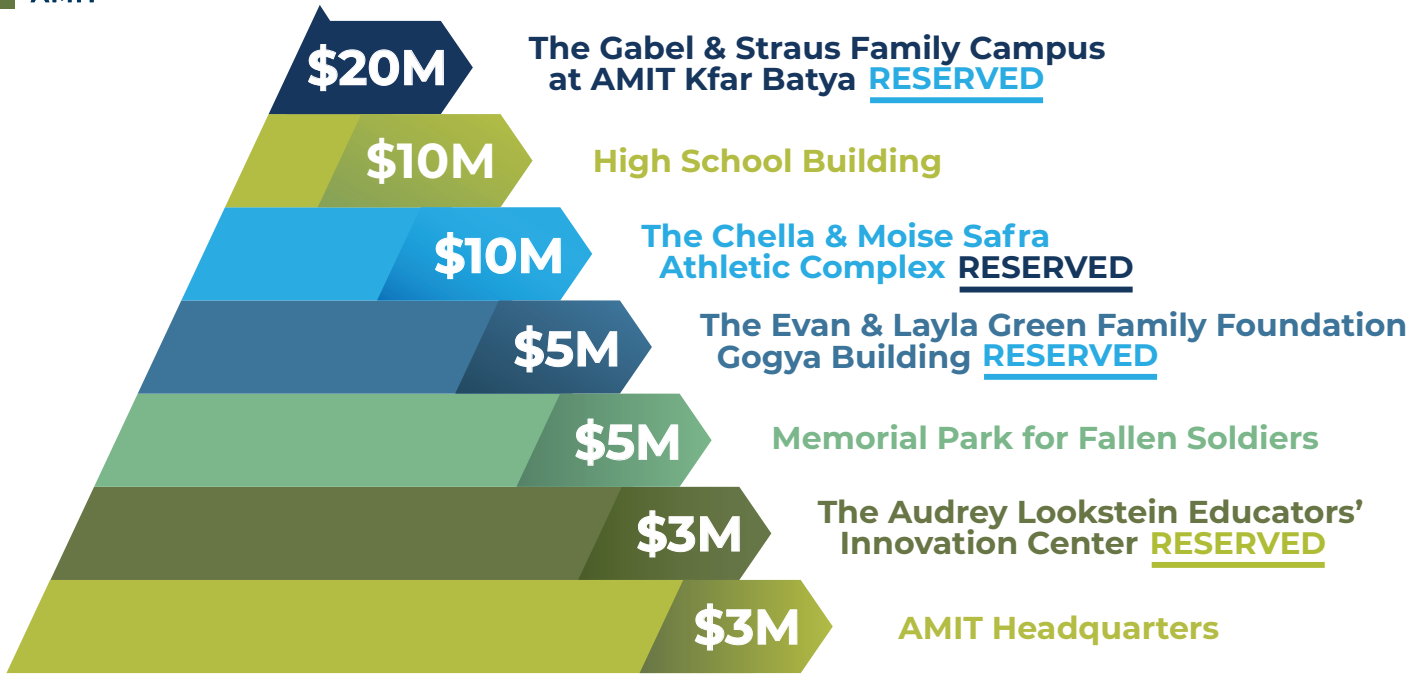


Studio rooms run the length of the building, accommodating individual and small group activities.



The Amphitheater connects all three buildings and is a central gathering spot on campus.

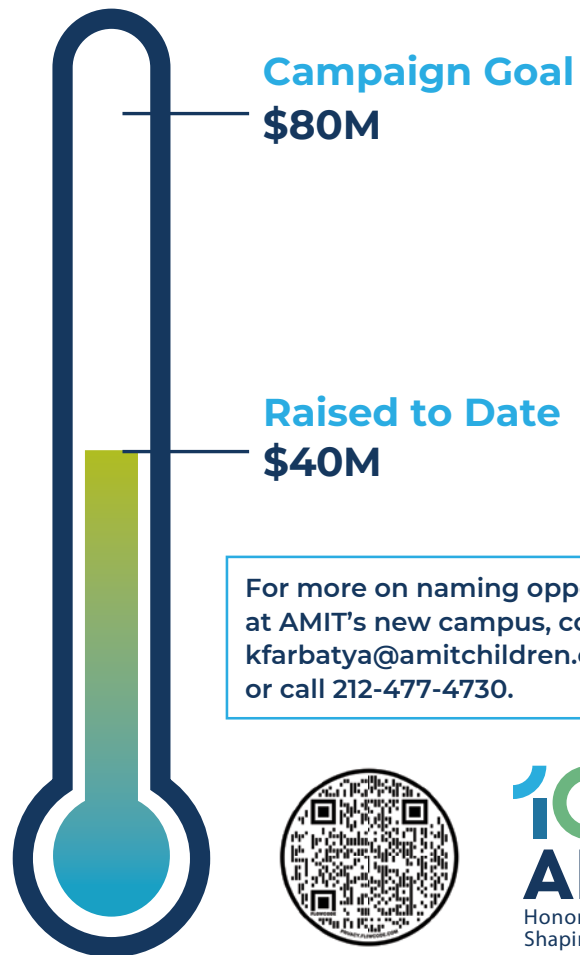




# A Campus for the Future

We have raised \$40M toward this bold educational vision and need your help to reach the finish line.

OPPORTUNITIES	
\$1M	Gogya Rooftop Main Entrance Gate Gogya Multipurpose Auditorium
\$500K	High School Lobby Athletic Center Lobby Gogya Dining Hall
\$250K	High School Wing Athletic Center Gym
\$100K	High School Open Learning Space
\$50K	High School Classroom Multipurpose Learning Studio



<http://amitchildren.org/kfarbatya/>

# CAMPUS VISITS



Frances & Stuart Miller, with AMIT Principal Yoni Berlin, were inspired to learn more about AMIT's new campus by their children Elana & Daniel Miller, a board member.



AMIT Past President Debbie & David Isaac with AMIT's Senior Deputy Director Lior Omesi and Director of Strategic Overseas Relations Limor Friedman



Debbie & Sam Moed and their son touring Kfar Batya



Yaela Baine from Philadelphia checking out the Kfar Batya campus



(l-r) Joyce Straus and Mindy Kolatch & Jonathan Kolatch visiting the campus at Kfar Batya

# Sondra Sokal

## *Honored as Virilist*

### AT THE WORLD ZIONIST CONGRESS



**A** MIT proudly congratulates past president Sondra Sokal on being named a Virilist at the 2025 World Zionist Congress (WZC) in Israel—an honor reserved for a select few. A Virilist is an honorary fellow who may participate in meetings and committees, contributing insight and perspective without standing for election as an official delegate.

This unique role allows the Congress to draw on deep institutional knowledge while preserving coveted delegate seats for emerging leaders. Much like an emeritus position, the Virilist designation enables seasoned leaders to remain actively involved—just in a different capacity. “It’s a very good way to ensure participation from people with experience and institutional memory, while also making room for younger representatives to rise and assume leadership roles,” Sondra explained.

Currently, there are only two Virilists from the Religious Zionist movement in the United States—and both are past presidents of AMIT: Norma Holzer and Sondra Sokal. A third Virilist, also a past president of AMIT, Evelyn Blachor, z”l, recently passed away. “I think that says a lot about AMIT’s involvement in the Zionist world,” Sondra noted.

That involvement stretches back to the earliest days of the World Zionist Congress. AMIT, through the Mizrahi

movement, participated in the second Congress (Religious Zionists were not part of the first). At a later Congress, AMIT founder Bessie Gotsfeld successfully advanced a motion to include Religious Zionist education in the curriculum for refugees arriving in Israel after World War II—a motion that was adopted and remains reflected today in Israel’s religious education department. It is a lasting testament to AMIT’s influence on the Zionist movement.

“The strength of AMIT,” Sondra said, “is that we maintain a rotating presence of officers and presidents. This allows us to retain experienced leadership while creating opportunities for younger people to step into meaningful roles. That’s how leadership grows.”



(l-r) Francine Stein, Jan Schechter, Chana Shields, and Sondra Sokal at the 2019 WZC

With two Virilists among its ranks, AMIT continues to leverage experience to drive meaningful growth. In her new role, Sondra may attend select meetings without formal invitation. “I don’t have to be a committee chair to have a voice,” she shared—an arrangement that ensures continuity while welcoming fresh perspectives.

Virilists are selected through a nomination process, with the designation taking effect at the subsequent Congress. In addition to her WZC involvement, Sondra currently serves as co-chair of the Budget and Finance Committee of The Jewish Agency for Israel, a role she will continue through the conclusion of her term in June.

AMIT extends heartfelt thanks to Sondra for her many years of leadership and dedication. Consistently a force for positive change, may this new distinction enable her to further increase her impact on behalf of AMIT and the people of Israel.



Sondra (second from left) with other AMIT supporters at the new campus groundbreaking in Ra'anana



# A Meaningful Mitzvah Project

## WITH AMIT

BY MICHAL ROSENBERG

**W**hen it was time for Nora Gontownik's bat mitzvah, she knew she was going to do something to benefit AMIT Children.

Her mother, Daniela Spector Gontownik, grew up in Atlanta where her mother, Marsha Spector, has run the popular and proven Mishloach Manot fundraiser for AMIT "for as long as I can remember," said Daniela. In a funny coincidence, when Daniela moved her family to Englewood, she was approached to run the AMIT Mishloach Manot fundraiser there — and has done so successfully for the past 16 years.

Nora's two older sisters also raised funds for AMIT for their bat mitzvahs. One sold personalized masks in the COVID era, and the other made personalized cosmetic bags.

In preparing for her bat mitzvah, Nora focused on the meaning of her name — light — and its relevance in the Torah. One of the mitzvot she learned about was Havdalah. Inspired by the connection to her own name, she decided to make homemade Havdalah candles to raise money for AMIT. "Knowing that I was able to do something to raise money for children in Israel made this project so special to me," Nora said.

"Nora really took ownership of this project and created each candle with care all by herself," said Daniela. Nora learned how to make the candles from a family friend, and

her parents helped publicize the project. Customers were given a link to a special page on AMIT's website to donate to Nora's fundraiser.

But the Gontowniks didn't stop there. At the bat mitzvah party, they set up a station for Nora and her friends to fill cosmetic bags with self-care beauty products to be given to students at AMIT's Chevel Yavneh school, located in Kibbutz Yavneh. Students at the small, religious all-girls elementary school were displaced for many months after October 7. When Nora was in Israel with her father recently, they dropped off the bags for distribution.

In planning this project, Nora and Daniela worked together with AMIT's Stephanie Friedman on creative ideas that were meaningful and memorable for them and aligned with the needs of AMIT's students.

Mazel tov to Nora and the Gontownik family on her bat mitzvah! May you continue to be a source of kindness and generosity, bringing light and joy into the world.

For more information on how AMIT can help plan a personal and individualized bat or bar mitzvah project, contact [stephanief@amitchildren.org](mailto:stephanief@amitchildren.org) or 954.922.5100, or visit [amitchildren.org/mitzvah-fundraising/](http://amitchildren.org/mitzvah-fundraising/).



# TEAM AMIT

## *Is Headed Back to New York*



**THIS SPRING, THE AMIT BOYS' BASKETBALL TEAM IS RETURNING TO NEW YORK FOR ANOTHER UNFORGETTABLE RUN AT THE ICONIC YESHIVA UNIVERSITY RED SARACHEK TOURNAMENT, AND THE EXCITEMENT IS ALREADY BUILDING.**

**A**rriving in mid-March, Team AMIT will experience a packed week of high-level basketball, sightseeing, and meaningful connections with Jewish teens from across the U.S.

The 14-player squad represents the very best of AMIT, drawing athletes from schools in Yavneh, Ashdod, Mateh Yehuda, Kfar Ganim, Rehovot, Netanya, Bruchin, and Modiin. Leading the team once again is veteran coach Dadi Bargad, whose experience and passion continue to shape Team AMIT on and off the court.

The team will again be hosted by Rae Kushner Yeshiva High School in Livingston, NJ, where they'll practice and prepare for competition. They'll stay in Parsippany alongside other visiting Sarachek teams, enjoying an atmosphere filled

with camaraderie, late-night bonding, and an authentic shabbaton experience over Shabbat.

Riding high on last year's undefeated record, Team AMIT is gearing up for additional exhibition games against top tristate area teams as the boys eagerly anticipate a week of competition, connection, and unforgettable memories. For these players, representing Israel on this stage — especially as they emerge from the shadow of war — is a profound source of pride and a powerful statement of resilience, unity, and hope.

New York, get ready. Team AMIT is coming back stronger than ever.



## *In Memory of* **Evelyn Blachor, z”l**

**T**he AMIT family mourns Evelyn Blachor, z”l, a lifelong supporter and active leader of AMIT’s work for Israel. Evelyn was a member of AMIT’s Board of Directors and a past president from 1995-1999, overseeing the establishment of the President’s Circle Giving Society under her tenure. Evelyn traveled all over the country on behalf of AMIT, getting to know donors and inspiring them with her passion.

Evelyn was active in World Mizrahi and Religious Zionists of America, as well as the Conference of Presidents. She worked tirelessly on behalf of Israel, sharing her insight and the wisdom of her experience. Friend and fellow AMIT past president Sondra Sokal recalled working with Evelyn as a Virilist for the World Zionist Congress, a cause close to Evelyn’s heart. “We had a lot of fun going on trips together,” remembered Sondra.

It was under Evelyn’s leadership that AMIT integrated technical schools into its network. This significant development increased AMIT’s footprint and its involvement with a difficult population in Israel, taking on the task of reforming teenagers who have lost their way.

Evelyn’s sensitivity to Israel’s more vulnerable populations was revealed in her work overseeing Ethiopian aliyah during her presidency, as well as in her deep connection with AMIT’s first youth village, Kfar Blatt, which was dedicated in honor of her parents.

“Evelyn’s heart lay with the social welfare component of AMIT’s work, which her tenure really strengthened,” said Sondra.

Francine Stein, AMIT president after Evelyn, shared, “She had a unique leadership style and was extremely capable and dynamic. When I was president she advised me with the same qualities.”

Current AMIT President Shari Safra said, “Evelyn Blachor was a one-of-a-kind leader. Her devotion to AMIT and its work on behalf of children in Israel spoke to her generous heart. She will be remembered for the profound difference she made in the lives of so many.”

Thank you, Evelyn, for your extraordinary efforts on behalf of AMIT, Israel, and the Jewish people.

# EVENT *Highlights*



AMIT student Noa Pinchas



(l-r) Event co-chairs Chana Shields and Joyce Straus with honorees Daniel and Elana Miller



Retired General Michael Kurilla



(l-r) AMIT presidents Francine Stein, Norma Holzer, Shari Safra, Audrey Trachtman, Debbie Isaac, and Debbie Moed



(l-r) AMIT President Shari Safra with her mother-in-law and honoree Chella Safra

## AMIT's 'Extraordinary' 2025 National Event

AMIT's sold-out national event on Sunday, November 9, drew a capacity crowd of over 350 to Lower Manhattan's Museum of Jewish Heritage. Attendees enjoyed a stellar program, hosted by Israeli actor Shira Haas, that paid tribute to extraordinary honorees whose leadership has been essential to AMIT's growth. Two moving films remembered fallen heroes from the AMIT family and guest speaker General Michael Kurilla, retired director of U.S. Central Command, wowed the crowd.

A behind-the-scenes film interviewed AMIT alumni serving in the Israeli Air Force who flew in the attacks on Iran in the 12-Day War in June. Two of the pilots appeared in person to salute General Kurilla, who led U.S. Central Command during the war, and thank him for his steadfast support for Israel. General Kurilla's message of solidarity and strength showed him to be a true friend of Israel, with an unwavering commitment to its security.

Honorees Elana and Daniel Miller pioneered a Bitcoin gift to AMIT, introducing fresh energy and

demonstrating out-of-the-box thinking to make a difference.

Norma Holzer, AMIT's 17th president, was recognized for her tremendous impact on the organization. She is also the only president whose mother — Dina Dyckman, z"l— filled the same role. Six AMIT presidents gathered on stage to honor Holzer's decades of dedication.

Finally, Chella Safra, together with her husband Moise, z"l, dedicated the new Athletic Complex on AMIT's Kfar Batya campus. Israeli President Isaac Herzog appeared via video to applaud the couple's lifelong commitment to Israel's future through education.

Guests enjoyed a moving song and dance segment featuring talented AMIT students and for dessert, a scale model cake of AMIT's new Gabel & Straus Family Campus at Kfar Batya in Ra'anana, created by Strauss Bakery.

The event kicked off the gala season for AMIT chapters around the country, including a first-ever Thanksgiving Day event in Israel.

## ISRAEL



The Shmidman family



(l-r) Yaffi Shmidman with event co-chair Deanne Shapiro

## AMIT Celebrates Thanksgiving in Israel

For the first time, AMIT hosted a Thanksgiving Celebration in Israel on November 27, at Jerusalem's Inbal Hotel, proudly welcoming more than 170 supporters. Many attendees were *olim* who have maintained their strong connection to AMIT and its mission.

The uplifting event honored Yaffi Shmidman of Jerusalem, recognizing her family's extraordinary, multigenerational commitment to AMIT. Participants from across Israel gathered for a meaningful program and a festive, American-style Thanksgiving dinner with an Israeli flair.

AMIT Yoshevet Rosh Tamar Benovitz opened the evening. "As AMIT marks its 100th anniversary, we stand on the shoulders of all who came before us to reach this special milestone. We are grateful to all the AMIT families, many multigenerational, that are joining us today," she said.

The audience was energized by AMIT Executive Vice President Andy Goldsmith and inspired by AMIT Principal Einat Rubin who spoke of her decision to donate a kidney in memory of Matan Abergil, HY"D, her student who fell on October 7.

Introducing a message from AMIT President Shari Safra, Benovitz underscored how AMIT has always been a unique partnership between diaspora Jewry and the State of Israel, a bond that has strengthened under Safra's leadership.

The efforts of event chairs Tamar and Tani Benovitz, Anne and Shelly Golombeck, and Deanne and Lenny Shapiro made this a truly memorable celebration of AMIT's innovation, heart, and commitment to its students and staff.



(l-r) Event co-chairs Anne Golombeck and Tamar Benovitz with honoree Yaffi Shmidman (center)



(l-r) AMIT EVP Andy Goldsmith with Yaffi & Yoseph Shmidman



The Gann Academy  
ShenaniGanns



Dr. Bryan & Lindy  
Lieberman



(l-r) Lisa Lieberman, Amir  
Sabonni, Nicole & Goldie Della  
Volpe, Paul & Renée Shane



Valerie & Arnie Lowenstein



Cantor Elias Rosemberg

## New England Council/ Ra'anana Chapter Gala

AMIT's New England Council/Ra'anana Chapter hosted a meaningful Evening of Musical Inspiration on Sunday, November 16, at Temple Emanuel in Newton, MA. Over 100 AMIT supporters came out to honor Lindy & Dr. Bryan Lieberman for their volunteer work in the community. The talented event committee worked together to ensure the success of this special evening.

All enjoyed musical performances by the Gann Academy ShenaniGanns and Cantor Elias Rosemberg accompanied by pianist Jeremiah Klarman.

AMIT Executive Vice President Andy Goldsmith shared an emotionally charged presentation that resonated with the crowd.

Thank you to Ethlyne Brickman, Ra'anana Chapter president, for hosting this beautiful gala.



The Lehrhaus crowd



(l-r) MC Paula Ostroff and  
volunteer Shelley Morgenstern



Orlee Berlove, Tanya Fischer,  
Cheryl Levine

## NewGen Cocktail Hour

On Monday, December 8, just in time for Hanukkah, NewGen New England held a cocktail party at Lehrhaus tavern. A diverse crowd of over 75 people gathered to learn more about AMIT and hear from Eitan Hersh, Ph.D., on "Building Connections Across Political and Religious Differences."

The elegant atmosphere and interesting topic made for a wonderful evening for all attendees.

## Philadelphia Council/ Shira Chapter Gala

AMIT's Philadelphia Council/Shira Chapter hosted its annual gala on Sunday, November 9, at Lower Merion Synagogue in Bala Cynwyd, PA. Over 100 AMIT friends came out to honor Vera Moreen, a longtime AMIT supporter. Shira Chapter co-president Janet Gevaryahu hosted the heartfelt evening. Keynote speaker Dr. Jonathan Schanzer, executive director at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, presented a timely and impactful talk.

Vera's sons, Raphael and Gabriel, shared sentiments about their parents' devotion to Israel and the importance of AMIT's work.

Yaela Baine thanked all for coming out to generously support AMIT's more than 42,000 children.



3. Len Getz, Dr. Jonathan Schanzer



(l-r) Yaela Baine, Sarah Rosner, Ann Holstein



Sarah Rosner, Janet Gevaryahu



Linda Moreen, Raphael Moreen, Vera Moreen, Gabriel Moreen

## Philadelphia SweatHouz

Philadelphia's vibrant young community came together at SweatHouz for an evening centered on wellness, connection, and purpose — all in support of an incredible cause.



Straight out of the sauna

## Philadelphia Golf Clinic

Thirty participants attended this sold-out golf clinic and received expert tips from three golf pros, each manning their own stations. Everyone enjoyed delicious food and refreshing drinks at this fun-filled event.

The attendees left feeling inspired by AMIT's mission and the impact it has for more than 42,000 children across Israel.



Most of the event committee: Jason Goldstein, Ashley Goldstein, Andrew Garber, Julie Garber, Matt Ufberg, Dana Ufberg, Molly Weinberg

Attendees were energized by the sauna and cold plunges and inspired by AMIT's mission and the meaningful impact the evening made for more than 42,000 children across Israel.

Everyone enjoyed learning more about AMIT at this very special and successful event.

## NYC Guys' Night Out

Between the sizzling meats, top-shelf liquor, smooth cigars, and breathtaking views, the atmosphere at The Rooftop at Pier 17 was electric with camaraderie and connection at AMIT Tristate's Guys' Night Out.

The very special evening was enhanced by participants' spirit and generosity, fabulous raffle prizes, and the event committee's dedication. Every chip played and every hand dealt made a difference for AMIT students.



Event chairs Geoffrey Platt, Gavriel Kahane, Kevin Lifshitz, Avi Adelsberg, Sam Klein, Isaac Benishai



Attendees enjoying the tables and the beautiful rooftop atmosphere



Elianna Kaye and committee co-chairs Sarah Greenberg, Michi Pines, Mimi Vago

## NewGen Shvitz for Israel

AMIT supporters joined a Shvitz for Israel class in Englewood, NJ, where they moved their bodies and our mission forward. Participants took on the challenging workout while keeping in mind AMIT's mission of helping Israeli children thrive and grow into the leaders of tomorrow.

Thanks to the wonderful co-chairs for their hard work in making this evening possible.

## NewGen Flower Arranging

Young professionals in New York City gathered on the Upper East Side to learn about floral arrangements and raise money for AMIT's Back to School Campaign. Participants were taught a few tricks of the trade and went home with beautiful bouquets. Thanks to the co-chairs for making this night so enjoyable and successful.



Co-chairs Arielle Loffman, Michal Goldstein, and Melissa Kaplan with attendees



Co-chair Naomi Levinson



(l-r) Comedians Elon Altman and Mikey Greenblatt with AMIT Tri-State Regional Director Michelle Klahr

## Long Island Comedy Night

AMIT's Long Island chapter proudly presented its second annual Stand Up for Israel Comedy Night in support of the children of AMIT. Over 150 people turned out for an evening of laughter with sets by comedians Mikey Greenblatt and Elon Altman.

Thanks to the energy and generosity of the crowd — and the hard work of the co-chairs — the event was deeply meaningful and a resounding success.



## Teaneck Comedy Night

It was meaningful to gather as a community for a night of love and laughter in honor of Hillel Fuld, z”l, who was taken too soon.

The crowd was rolling from opening act Dovi Neuburger and headliner Eli Lebowicz while enjoying a delicious Chinese food buffet.

The event drew 200 generous supporters who raised over \$100,000 for AMIT students. The funds will help dedicate a sports studio room in memory of Hillel at the AMIT Gabel & Straus Family Campus.

Thank you to our gracious hosts, Chayah & Yoel Fuld, and outstanding event committee whose hard work made the evening such a success.

## MIDWEST

### Annual Dinner

On November 13, the Midwest Council of AMIT hosted its Annual Dinner at the DoubleTree in Skokie, IL, in honor of the Galila Chapter and its 60+ years of dedication.

The atmosphere was vibrant and delightful, enhanced by exquisite food stations and captivating entertainment. Keynote speaker AMIT Executive Vice President Andy Goldsmith inspired the audience with his compelling words and vision.

Comedian and Chicago native Eli Lebowicz brought the gift of laughter to the evening, which everyone appreciated after these trying last two years. The exceptional leadership of our wonderful co-chairs and committee made this event a true triumph.



(l-r) Vicki Ross, Ellyn Kramer, Joyce Sacks, Guest, Carol Silverman



(l-r) Marsha Warnick, Judy Milstein (committee chair), Melissa Buzin, Myrna Buckman, Maria Greenberg, Cheryl Karesh (committee chair), Beth Gottesman (director of AMIT Midwest)



(l-r) Debbi Geller, Ronni Robinson



(l-r) 2025 chair Rachelle Rosenfeld, Minna Berger, Sherry Mauer, Charlene Appleson, Robin Davis

### Theater Showcase

Throughout 2025, AMIT’s Midwest Council hosted several musicals at Music Theater Works in Skokie, IL. Performances included “Guys and Dolls,” “Fiddler on the Roof,” and “Annie.” The local off-Broadway venue captivated the audience with spectacular singing, acting, and choreography that made for three unforgettable evenings.

## Cleveland Brews & Schmooze

AMIT friends and supporters gathered for a fun and relaxed evening at the Midnight Owl Brewing Company, a newly certified kosher brewpub — a rare find and welcome addition to the local scene.

Guests enjoyed delicious food, craft beer & cocktails, and a behind-the-scenes look at the brewing process. With 35 people in attendance in a warm and lively atmosphere, the evening buzzed with good friends, good beer, and great conversation for a great cause.

The AMIT Moment was provided by Midreshet AMIT alum Tami Gordon. It was a wonderful night of connection, community, and purpose — proof that doing good can also be a lot of fun.



Relaxing with friends

## FLORIDA



(l-r) Honorees Sheryle Spar, Dorothy Raul, Sandra Rothenberg Lurie



(l-r) AMIT President Shari Safra, Karen Cole, Meryl Palgon, Hope Nathan Berger, Sandra Rothenberg Lurie, Dorothy Raul, Sheryle Spar, Beverly Elefant



(l-r) AMIT President Shari Safra, Phyllis Finkelstein, Board member Tami Wald, Sara Gottlieb, Deborah Goldenberg, Judith Alter Kallman

## Gala Tribute Luncheon

AMIT's Annual Florida Tribute Luncheon, held at the Westchester Country Club, was a deeply meaningful event honoring three remarkable women whose depth and connection to AMIT truly shines: Dorothy Raul, Sheryle Spar, and Sandra Rothenberg Lurie.

Surrounded by 250 dedicated supporters, the strength and impact of AMIT's mission resonated powerfully throughout the room. Inspiring speeches by AMIT EVP Andy Goldsmith and President Shari Safra reinforced the organization's vital work and lasting influence.

Hearing directly from each of the honorees was a true highlight, as they shared heartfelt reflections and personal connections to AMIT. The luncheon beautifully brought together South Florida communities in a powerful and memorable celebration of commitment, leadership, and shared purpose.

## Meet the Author: Rebecca Wolf

The Meet the Author event showcasing Rebecca Wolf's debut novel, "Alive and Beating," drew a sold-out crowd at Young Israel of Deerfield Beach. Attendees were deeply engaged as Wolf discussed the inspiration and themes behind her powerful story.

The conversation was moderated by AMIT Elef Society member Lauren Berley, who guided the discussion with insight and warmth. Berley also shared her own personal family experience with organ donation, adding emotional depth and authenticity to an already meaningful afternoon.



Author Rebecca Wolf, center, with event attendees



Book signing

## Guys' Night Out

AMIT Southeast's second annual Guys' Night Out was a resounding success, bringing together supporters for an evening of spirited poker, exceptional food, and even better company. From the first deal to the final hand, the evening was marked by lively competition, great conversation, and an electric atmosphere.

Beyond the cards and camaraderie, the evening reflected what makes the AMIT community so special — connection, generosity, and shared purpose. Thanks to the enthusiasm and participation of our donors, Guys' Night Out once again proved to be a memorable night that blended fun with meaningful impact. Already saving our luck for next year!



Attendees learning the art of resin



## Atlanta Resin Workshop

AMIT's Atlanta Pre-Hanukkah Resin Event, graciously hosted by Mindy Cinnamon, was a festive and hands-on evening that brought the community together ahead of the holiday. Guests created resin pieces for their Hanukkah tables while enjoying beautiful desserts by Crumbs and Yums, which added a sweet highlight to the night.

It was wonderful to gather with both new and longtime donors while celebrating the spirit of the season, and to honor those who work tirelessly each year on the Mishloach Manot Project. The evening reflected the depth of Atlanta's ongoing support for AMIT and the community's strong commitment to advancing its mission.

## MISSION TO ISRAEL

This past September, AMIT National President Shari Safra led a three-day mission to Israel for New York City-area leaders. The group visited AMIT Mekif Sderot, met with students and faculty, and paid tribute at the Nova Festival site and police station.

They also explored AMIT's surrogate family model at Beit Hayered and Kfar Blatt Youth Village.

The mission concluded with a visit to the new Gabel & Straus Family Campus at AMIT Kfar Batya and an intimate dinner with Israel's Minister of Education Yoav Kisch.



Participants with AMIT Director General Dr. Amnon Eldar and Minister of Education Yoav Kisch



Mission participants at Sderot's police station memorial

# MYRNA'S POT ROAST

By Susie Fishbein

*Myrna Fishbein was a longtime devoted friend of AMIT who inspired others with her commitment and passion for our work.*

When you exited the elevator in my mother-in-law Myrna's building, you were led by the nose to her doorway. The aroma of something great always wafted down her hallway. Her impromptu feasts didn't require a special occasion, just a butcher order and knowing friends or family might be stopping by.

This pot roast is one of my favorite dishes she prepared. It's so tender you can cut it with a fork. If unexpected guests arrive, you can always toss in a few extra carrots and potatoes to stretch the meal.

Pot roast involves browning beef and then braising it on the stove covered in liquid for several hours. This moist cooking process tenderizes the meat. Inexpensive cuts of meat work best. I am not sure why pot roast has dropped off the radar screen of younger cooks, but when you try this recipe, you'll rediscover why our mothers and grandmothers prepared it so often.

**YIELD: 8 servings**

## INGREDIENTS:

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- Flour
- 1 5-pound boneless pot roast  
(I like shell roast.)
- 1 large onion, sliced
- 1 ½ packages dry onion soup mix  
(from a 2 ¾-ounce box)
- 3 carrots, peeled and sliced  
(or 2 cups baby carrots)
- 3 Idaho potatoes, peeled and  
cut into chunks
- 2 parsnips, peeled and cut into chunks
- Prepared horseradish or store-bought  
barbecue sauce



## INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1.** In a large pot or Dutch oven, heat the olive oil. Sprinkle flour over the meat.
- 2.** When the oil is hot but not smoking, sear the roast on all sides until golden brown. Remove from pot; set aside.
- 3.** Add the sliced onion to the pot. Sauté about 5–6 minutes or until translucent, scraping up the brown bits from the pot as you sauté the onion.
- 4.** Return the roast to the pot. Add water to cover two-thirds of the way up the roast. Sprinkle with the dry onion soup mix. Bring to boil. Reduce to a simmer; cook, covered, for 2 hours.
- 5.** After 2 hours, turn the pot roast over. Add the carrots, potatoes, and parsnips. Re-cover and cook for another 1 – 1 ½ hours.
- 6.** Transfer meat to cutting board and let rest for 5 minutes. Slice meat.
- 7.** Place on platter with the vegetables. Serve with either jarred prepared horseradish or bottled barbecue sauce.

**SUSIE FISHBEIN** is a world-famous kosher cook and author.

## DVAR TORAH

# The Lessons of Ha Lachma Anya

BY RABBI HASKEL LOOKSTEIN



"*Ha Lachma Anya*, This is the bread of affliction that our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt..." Though there doesn't seem to be a good reason for this introductory Aramaic paragraph, perhaps it reveals two fundamental messages of Pesach.

The first message is an ethical one. Why did God require that the Jews begin their national history as slaves? God said to Avram, "You shall surely know that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and they will be enslaved and afflicted for 400 years." (Genesis 15:13) Why was this beginning necessary?

The Torah tells us explicitly that we learned from our beginnings in slavery what it is to suffer so that we would become sensitive to the suffering of others. "And you shall not oppress the stranger, for you know the soul of the stranger because you were strangers in the Land of Egypt." (Exodus 23:9)

Therefore, we are expected to love the stranger, to give tzedakah, to live lives of *chesed*. The Talmud says, "There are three characteristics of the Jewish people: merciful, humble and doing acts of kindness." (Yevamot 79A) We internalized those traits in the crucible of Egyptian slavery.

This is why Israel took in 800,000 Jewish refugees from the Middle East between 1949 and 1951, most of them poor, doubling its population at a time when there wasn't sufficient food to feed the Israelis themselves.

This is why Israel is always among the first nations to send all kinds of assistance to victims of natural disasters. Such a response is an integral part of our genome.

"May all who are hungry come and eat; may all who are needy come and join our celebration of the Passover." This is the ethical lesson of Egyptian slavery.

The second message in *Ha Lachma Anya* is a message of hope. The last two lines of the paragraph state, "Today we are here; tomorrow we will be in the Land of Israel. Today we are slaves; tomorrow we will be free people." What is the purpose of those two sentences?

Rav Avraham Yitzchak HaCohen Kook, the first Chief Rabbi of Palestine in pre-state Israel, provides an answer. Jews in exile do not usually have things so good. Even

when the situation seems good, it is precarious. Nothing is permanent. This is the story of Jewish exile.

And this is the story of the Exodus from Egypt. Things were so terrible. What were the odds of a mass group of slaves gaining freedom from Egypt, the mightiest power of the day?

Yet, says Rav Kook, we were freed. We were redeemed. And the author of *Ha Lachma Anya* reminds us: Never lose hope! No matter how bad things are, believe in the future and work to bring about a better tomorrow.

The end of the Holocaust in 1945, can lead to 1948 and 78 miraculous years of Israeli statehood.

The closing of the Straits of Tiran in 1967 can result in the greatest deliverance of our time in the Six-Day War.

Natan Sharansky can languish in the Soviet *gulag* and be freed. He can serve as minister in two Israeli governments, and as chairman of The Jewish Agency.

Hezbollah's 150,000 missiles can seem overwhelming until thousands of beepers and walkie-talkies suddenly explode, and poof — the threat is gone.

Never lose hope. Today Israeli society seems to be, again, deeply divided. We must believe that, as difficult as it may be, there will be peace among Israelis. Today we may be frightened at the rise of antisemitism. We must believe that as suddenly as it rose it will, please God, recede.

These are the twin messages with which we begin the Seder. The ethical message of Egyptian servitude that compels us to live lives of *chesed* and compassion. And *l'shana ha-ba'a*, the message of hope and redemption that what seemed impossible has happened — and will happen again.

We must believe in *l'shana ha-ba'a*. Despite our personal challenges, we must believe in it as individuals, and despite our national crises, we must believe in it as a people.

*Chag Kasher v'Sameach!*

**RABBI HASKEL LOOKSTEIN** has been a rabbi of Congregation Kehilath Jeshurun since 1958.



AMIT's Ambassadors' Club members are an elite group of visionary leaders whose support of AMIT helps us build a stronger and more vibrant Israel.

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## President's Circle



AMIT's President's Circle members help sustain AMIT's programming to nurture Israel's children, instill strong values, and promote academic excellence, ensuring Israel's future.

### PLATINUM

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 Esther and Henry Swieca, NY  
 Tower Company, Israel

Sylvia and Morris Trachten, z"l, Family Foundation, Israel  
Zeldin Family, FL

## GOLD

**\$18,000 - \$24,999**

Anonymous, NY  
Trudy and Ted, z"l, Abramson, FL  
Nicole and Raanan Agus, Israel  
Grace, Shua & Jacob Ballas Charitable Trust  
CD Foundation, NY  
Michelle Chrein, NY  
Adena and Ezra Dyckman, NY  
Nancy and Asher Forst, NJ  
Chanee and Eli C. Fuld, NJ  
Chayah and Yoel Fuld, NY  
Marvin Glyder, z"l, MS  
Eli Haddad, FL  
Audrey and Haskel Lookstein, NY  
Matan Community Investors, Israel  
Judy and Albert Milstein, IL  
Mizrahi Car Dealership, Israel  
Debbie and Samuel Moed, NJ  
Esther and Donald Press, z"l, NY  
Yosef Haim Roth Holdings, Israel  
Jennie and Avi Rothner, IL  
Debbie and Daniel Schwartz, NY  
Seligsohn Foundation, PA  
Naomi and Robert Spira, NJ  
Ina and David Tropper, NY  
Rebecca and Daniel Wolf, NJ

## SILVER

**\$10,000 - \$17,999**

Anonymous, CA  
Renee and Steve Adelsberg, NY  
Tzahala Ben Asher, Israel  
Bader Philanthropies, Israel  
Brian Bank, CA  
Max & Anna Baran, Ben & Sarah Baran and Milton Baran Endowment Fund, CA  
Tamar and Ethan Benovitz, Israel  
Zelda and Solomon Berger, NY  
Debra Berman, NY  
Helen and Henry Bienenfeld Foundation, PA  
Ethlynn and Stephen, z"l, Brickman, MA  
Herman and Kate Caro Foundation, NY  
Vanessa and Raymond Chalme, NY  
Chance Israel Capital Network, Israel  
Trina and Paul, z"l, Cleeman, NY  
Diane and Howard Cole, NY  
Karen and David Cole, FL  
Jone and Allen Dalezman, MA

Audrey and Eliot Davidowitz, NY  
Selma and Jacob Dyckman, NY  
Joseph & Inez Eichenbaum Foundation, CA  
Rosalie Eisen, z"l, CA  
Phyllis and Joseph Eisenman, z"l, NJ  
Sheila and Kenneth Fields, NJ  
Lisa Rosenbaum and Ronald Fisher, MA  
Alisa Flatow Memorial Scholarship Fund, NJ  
Judith Flax, NY  
Deborah and Joseph Foster, PA  
Roselyn and Ira Friedman, NJ  
Eleanor and Jule Vaki Fung, Israel  
Marisa and Andrew Gadlin, NY  
Leah Garrick, CA  
Randi and Alan Gelman, Israel  
Robin and Marc Gelman, CA  
Ari and Abby Glass, NY  
Rachelle Gold, IL  
Anne and Sheldon Golombeck, NY  
Paula Yudenfriend and Arlin Green, PA  
Green Street Power Partners, CT  
Helen and James Haber, NY  
Haruach Halsraeli (The Israel Spirit), Israel  
Raquel and Steve Herz, NY  
Chanie and Barry Holzer, NY  
Ithaca Area United Jewish Community, NY  
Edith and Herman Itzkowitz, PA  
Suzanne and Norman Javitt, NY  
Connie and Alan Kadish, NJ  
Robin and Simon Kahn, Israel  
Ruth and Jerome Kamerman, z"l, NY  
Aharon Katz, NY  
Elissa and Michael Katz, NJ  
Hillary Katz, NY  
Michelle Katz and Jeff Rappoport, NY  
Keren Trachtman (Ruach Yisrael), Israel  
Toba Kippen, GA  
Jordana and Sam Klein, NY  
Ruth and Daniel Krasner, NY  
Rochelle and Seymour, z"l, Kraut, NJ  
Jason Kuflik, NY  
Arlene Kupietzky, CA  
Donna and Jeffrey Lawrence, MD  
Sharona and Michael Loeffler, FL  
Debra and David Magerman, PA  
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Mantanel Foundation, Israel  
Judith Mantel, Luxembourg  
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Etella and Haim Marcovici, NY  
Alicia Mayara and Lawrence Stern, MD  
Elana and Shami Minkove, NY  
Mischcon Family Charitable Trust, Israel  
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Daniella Moffson Foundation, NY  
Thea and Bernard Monderer, CA  
Evan Charles Neuman, Israel  
Jennifer Bernstein Platt and Geoffrey Platt, NY  
Vicki and Gerald Platt, NY  
Esther and Donald Press, z"l, NY  
Lauren and Mitchell Presser, NY

Judy and Jerry, z"l, Pressner, NY  
Shoshana Quint and Jonathan Melmed, NY  
Barbara and Joel, z"l, Rascoff, NY  
Norman and Bettina Roberts Foundation, NJ  
Yosef Haim Roth Holdings, Israel  
Leah and Arnold Rotter, Israel  
George Roudanez, CA  
Paul Rubenstein Charitable Foundation  
Shirley and Milton Sabin, FL  
Amnon Segal, Israel  
Avital and Yair Segal, Israel  
Jamie and Scott Seligsohn, PA  
Anat Ramaty Shashua, Israel  
Shemesh Foundation, Israel  
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Mahla and Hilton Soniker, NY  
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Naomi and Gary Stein, NY  
Adina Straus, NY  
Tishrei Transportation, Israel  
United Israel Appeal, Israel  
LLC Vision and Beyond, Israel  
Jennifer and Martin Wachs, PA  
Tami and Sam Wald, FL  
Elaine and Michael Weinberger, z"l, NY  
Judy and Morry Weiss/Sapirstein-Stone-Weiss Foundation, OH  
Susan and Mark Wiesen, NJ  
Woodhill Real Estate  
Robin Zelkowitz, NJ  
Tamar and Benjamin Zeltser, NY  
Helene and Gerald, z"l, Zisholtz, NY

## BRONZE

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Anonymous, MD  
Anonymous, TX  
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Jocelyn and David Adelsberg, NY  
S. Adelsberg & Co, NY  
Leah and Jonathan Adler, NJ  
Marilyn and Greg Adler, NY  
Sarah and Maurice Aghion, MA  
Emanuel Alice, Israel  
Allie Alperovich and Jeremy Simon, NY  
Apex, Israel  
Roberta and Alan Aronoff, NY  
Ziv Aviram, Israel  
Rachel, z"l, and Martin Balsam, NY  
Diane and Noah Berkowitz, NY  
Phyllis and Edward, z"l, Berkowitz, NY  
Andrea and Bryan Bier, NJ

- Sarah Black, z"l, TX  
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 Deborah Stern Blumenthal and Michael Blumenthal, NJ  
 B'nai Israel of Linden Heights, NJ  
 Freda and Elliot Braha, NJ  
 Sari and Stuart Braunstein, NY  
 Adrianne and Leon Brum, FL  
 Ruth Burian, NY  
 Emily Caslow, NY  
 Vivian and Daniel Chill, NY  
 Barbara and Melvyn Ciment, FL  
 Carolyn Cohen and Reuben Namdar, NY  
 Daniela and Ezra Cohen, NY  
 Florence Cohen, z"l, NY  
 Shevi and Milton Cohen, NY  
 Lisa and Ephraim Dardashti, Israel  
 Dexel Factory, Israel  
 Batsheva and Irah Donner, NY  
 Renee and Harvey Douglan, Israel  
 DSJ Management, NY  
 Elaine and Lewis Dubroff, NY  
 Hattie and Arthur Dubroff, NJ  
 Sheera and Kenneth Eckstein, NY  
 Linda and Barry Eichler, Israel  
 Sherry and Aaron Eidelman, NY  
 Ruth Eisen, CA  
 Fanny and Dov Elefant, NJ  
 Evelyn Ellenbogen, FL  
 Danielle and Ronald Ellis, Israel  
 Ruth and Gene Fax, MA  
 Elliot Feinerman, FL  
 Kay Fialkoff, NJ  
 Tanya and David Fischer, MA  
 Amy Fisher, Israel  
 Debra Jakubovitz Fletcher and Tim Fletcher, z"l, CA  
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 Robbie and Adam Fried, NJ  
 Sandy and Edward Fried, KS  
 Marsha and Tom Friedman, NJ  
 Renee and Avrohom Fruchthandler, NY  
 Karen and Dror Futter, NJ  
 Linda and Norman Garfield, PA  
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 Rita Geller, IL  
 Caron and Steven Gelles, NY  
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 Esther and Jack, z"l, Goldman, NY  
 Shira and Gadi Goldress, NY  
 Nathan and Louise Goldsmith Foundation, NY  
 The Gottesman Fund, NY  
 Sara and Ronald Gottlieb, FL  
 Jane and Joshua Grauer, NY  
 Robert and Cindy, z"l, Grosberg, NJ  
 Suzanne and Barry Gurvich, NY
- Myrna Haas, NJ  
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 Keset, Israel  
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 Victoria and Arnold Kisch, Israel  
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 Jane Klitsner, Israel  
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 Evelyn and Lawrence Kraut, NJ  
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 Marion and William Weiss, NJ

Tsipy and Menachem Weiss, NJ  
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 Michael Wolf, CA  
 Stella and Samy Ymar, MD  
 Benco Zad Inc., CA

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 Eva Zilz, NY  
 Adi Zirel, Israel  
 Mindy and Barry Zisholtz, GA

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**2025-26**

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 Anonymous, PA  
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 Julia and Norman Bobrow, NY  
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 Perl and Harry Brown, FL  
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 Adam Bush, CA

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 Libbe Englander, NY  
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 Felice and Michael Grunberger, MD  
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 Arie Halpern, z"l, NJ  
 Leila Hammer, NY  
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 Doug Hauer, MA  
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 Pamela Hirsch, NY  
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     Yehoshua Grossman, NJ  
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Naomi and Israel Max, NY  
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Arlene Moriber, NY  
Shahina and Ari Moses, NJ

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Sue and Brett Nadritch, NJ  
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Miron Nissim, NY  
Bernice Novick, IL  
Bobbie and Jerry Nussbaum, IL  
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Miriam and Howard Rosenblum, NJ  
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Naftali Schuss, NY  
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Jacques Semmelman, NJ  
Sharon Senderowicz, NJ  
Susan Shapiro, NY  
Yaffi and Yoseph Shmidman, Israel  
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Shorashim Yisrael Fund, Israel

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Judy Silberberg, NY  
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Joy and Barry Sklar, NJ  
Geula Solomon, GA  
Sydelle Spero, Israel  
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Michael Stern, NY  
Pia and Stuart Sussman Pollack, NJ  
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Charles Taub, FL  
Miriam and Jamshid Tehrani, PA  
Lilly Tempelsman, z"l, NY  
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Baila and Stanley Weiss, NY  
Barbara and Michael Weiss, NY  
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Elaine and Mark Weitzman, NY  
Jeanette and Neil Wermuth, NJ  
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Sondra Willner, MD  
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Shulamis Yurowitz, NJ  
Stefanie and Zvi Zauderer, NY  
Molly and Jack Zwanziger, IL

2025-26

## *Elef Society*

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Lauren and Joel Berley, FL  
Oobie and Brian Farbman, FL  
Dorith and Daniel Gittler, FL  
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Gabrielle and Josh Gold, FL  
Elana and Matthew Grauer, FL  
Lauren and Julian Hammond, FL  
Annie and Yossi Rabinowitz, FL  
Ilana and Raffi Rosenzweig, FL  
Sarah and Matt Taitelman, PA  
Dana and Matt Ufberg, PA  
Tirtza and Danny Vizel, FL

# This Passover, Do You Know What Your Legacy Will Look Like?

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The recounting of the Exodus at the Seder table reminds us of the Jewish people's shared legacy. Create your own legacy with a planned gift to AMIT. You'll strengthen AMIT's leading role in revolutionizing education and ensure the future of the next generation in Israel.

---

**Remember the past. Secure the future.**  
**Your AMIT legacy awaits.**

## AMIT'S GENEROUS LEGACY SUPPORTERS:

Marcia Eisenstein Berman z"l

Rosalie Eisen z"l

Mark Alvin Elyn z"l

Stanley Ganer z"l

Leah Garrick z"l

Ruth Genauer z"l

Marvin Glyder z"l

Carol Gore z"l

Newton Gore z"l

Bluma Gross z"l

Sylvia Gross z"l

Frances Hait z"l

Ruth Kamerman z"l

Ruth Kantrowitz z"l

Miriam Klausner z"l

Benita Lack z"l

Emma Leaf z"l

Marilyn Levi-Baumgarten z"l

Sylvia Levine z"l

Ruth Freeman Lewis z"l

Lotte Lowy z"l

Frances Miller z"l

Donald Press z"l

Vivian Rosen z"l

Herbert Rosenbaum z"l

Jacqueline Sams z"l

Abraham Shiff z"l

Lilly Tempelsman z"l

Utopia Jewish Center

Roslyn Waechter z"l

Charlotte Zimmerman z"l

Have you included AMIT in your will, trust, or other estate plans? Let us honor you with membership in AMIT's Legacy Society.

Contact **Gene Kaye** at **212.477.5465** or **genenek@amitchildren.org** to learn more.





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AMIT CENTENNIAL MISSION

# JOIN US IN ISRAEL

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8  
THROUGH  
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 11

