Religious school education at COS

Having fun getting ready for Purim.

The first group of Hillel students.

Congregation Ohev Shalom Religious School is committed to providing a Jewish education within a warm, respectful, safe environment and in a manner that recognizes the principles of Conservative Judaism as well as the needs of the child.

The premise of the religious school education is that people are created in the image of God and that we were created to be partners with God in his work.

Jewish behavior is valued.

Respect, speaking kindly, being patient, not embarrassing others, helping others, being welcoming are all Jewish ways of behaving.

Sixth-grade Shabbaton.

Teachers seek to help students form a positive Jewish identity that will make Judaism a meaningful force in the life of the student. It is the responsibility of the teachers to ensure that every child, Madrichim, and parent feels valued and safe while at COS.

This will lay the foundation for a lifelong commitment and devotion to God, to Jewish learning, to the Jewish community, and to the Land of Israel.

The Jewish family no longer lives on the same block as their neighbors, nor is the Jewish family the only model for Jewish families anymore.

The story of Lech Lecha.

Come learn more about how your family can become part of our circle!

Lech Lecha — the new Stetson Hillel greets students leaving home for college

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In Genesis 12, we learn the story of Lech Lecha. Essentially, Abram (not yet Abraham) was approached by G-d who tells him that he and his entire family are to move to a yet undisclosed location (Canaan), and if they do this,

G-d promises Abram that G-d will make him into a great nation and that everyone will know their name. In addition to inspiring one of Debbie Friedman’s 21 best songs, Lech Lecha is incredibly poetic when placed in the context of this time of year.

In just a few weeks, roughly 100,000 Jewish college students will be leaving home for the first time. Like Abram, they are journeying beyond the safety and security of what they have always known on a quest to better themselves and their future. These incoming freshmen will quickly find themselves experiencing the benefits and burdens of autonomy: living on their own and charting their own course, all while navigating and balancing the complexities of schoolwork and campus life.

It is as exciting as it is intimidating, and at Stetson University, it’s just getting started.

Stetson University is experiencing the kind of dramatic growth in Jewish life that can only come with the full support of the Stetson administration, community funders, and soil rich with opportunity. For the first time in its 135-year history, Stetson has a full-time Hillel director, and I am honored to fill that role.

We also have a student board with an appropriate sized, donor-funded budget to create opportunities for the Jewish students to connect with each other, as well as the greater Jewish community. We have a house—a beautiful one—that was built in 1928 with original hardwood floors and red brick. But, that, renovated, will see Shabbat dinners, study sessions, speakers, seders, and lots and lots of Kosher food from around the world.

We have passion, excitement, and momentum propelling us to a future where Judaism is thriving at Stetson, and Stetson is thriving because of our Jewish community.

We are building the destination school for students seeking smaller class sizes and world-class education all in one.

As President, the Elder asks us, “if not now, when?” and Stetson is answering. Now is the time, and Stetson is the place.

Right now, the Jewish population at Stetson University sits between 100-150 students. Not big, but this story has been told before. In 1951, there was one Jewish family in Boca Raton. By 2005, the Jewish population had swelled to 130,000... and it is still growing. Tel Aviv was a sand dune until 56 families saw what it could be and now it is one of the largest metropolis cities in the world.

So join us. The first Shabbat dinner is Aug. 24. Come see the house. Take a campus tour.

Meet with the students or me. At Stetson, we are building a great community, and like Abram, soon everyone will know our name.

For more information on Jewish life at Stetson University contact Sam Friedman, Hillel Director at SCfriedman@stetson.edu or 386-822-8843.

The First Day of Hebrew school is August 19 at 9 a.m.—2 p.m. with a Meet and Greet for students in Pre-K and kindergartners, grades 1-3, 4-6, and 7-12. Prospective families are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Ohev Shalom is located at 613 Conecurso Pkwy S. Mainland. For more information about Ohev Shalom contact Amy Gebhart, Director of Youth and Family Education, edator@ohevshalom.org or check out the website at www.ohevshalom.org or like us on our Facebook page Ohev Shalom Youth and Family.
Wednesday is teen night at COS

COSUSY wins subregional schmooze lips award.

It is not uncommon for participation is synagogue lips drop off after Bar or Bat Mitzvah. At Congregation Ohev Shalom this is not the case as teens are a vital part of synagogue life! Whether it be the 60 Madrichim in the school, actors in the play, youth group members in Kadima for 6th-8th grade and USY for 9th-12th graders or learning in DD youth groups are everywhere.

Once the school year begins, there will be something happening every Wednesday evening for our teens. COSUSY for 9th-12th graders, which is open to the community, offers programs on Wednesdays as well as Friday evenings, Saturday and Sundays. COSUSY is one of the largest chapter of USY in our region. Activities take place on the chapter, subregional and regional level. This year’s international convention will take place in Orlando in December. If CO- SUUSY doesn’t have a program, 8th-12th graders may attend DDD Dinner, DvarB/Torah, Dabichadarab/ discussion is a Jewish educational program for all Jewish 8th-12th graders regardless of USY membership. DDD is underwritten in part by a grant from JF EN of the Jewish Federation of Greater Orlando, Dinner/Lunch included. This year DDD has 3 parts.

• Monthly Interfaith dialogue with teens from the Atlantic Area which is a Turkish-Muslim group in Cas- selbury. This group will meet one Wednesday month from 6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m. and switch between COSUSY and the Institute. Session Dates: Wednesdays 6:30-8 p.m. Aug. 22, Sept. 26, Oct. 24, Nov. 29, Dec. 19, Jan. 16, Feb. 20, March 27, and April 17.

• Torah Through Art: based on the Teacher Institute for the Arts Cohort #3. Materials designed by David Mass. The program teaches the Torah through art that art that students will create. Each les- son will be based on a portion from the Tanach. Class will meet on selected Wednesdays at COS From 6:30-8 p.m.

• Session dates: Wednesdays 6:30-8 p.m. Aug. 22, Oct. 10, Dec. 12, Feb. 6, and April 3

• Intergenerational Dialog with residents of Village on the Green, A really amazing experi- ence to learn that seniors and teens have more in common than difference. The group engages in discussions, activi- ties, games and more around Jewish themes. Class will meet on selected Sundays at 1 p.m.

When there isn’t DDD or USY, teens are invited to come together with each other! Kadima is the middle school youth group that is part of United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. COS Kadima meets once a month. In addition to local chapter events, Kadimans come together for a conven- tion with fellow Kadimans from central and northern Florida and 8th graders par- ticipate in an 8th grade only convention with Kadimans from North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida. In January, 8th graders may participate In USY events.

The COS Youth Players comprised of 4th-12th grad- ers present an annual Jewish musical in the spring. All COS youth who audition are in.

The ultimate goal of all of the programs of the COS Youth department is to create a Youth community where all ages feel welcomed, accepted and valued.

For more information on our youth programs please call 407-298-4650 or email educator@ohevshalom.org.

New year brings innovation for Beth Am Religious School

The coming year for the religious school at Congrega- tion Beth Am in Longwood will be marked with innova- tion and new technologies to enhance the quality of the education for every student and provide a creative indi- vidualized approach to Jewish learning.

Cantor Nina Fine, the director of the religious school, and her staff will get things started at the Open House on Sunday, Aug. 19, at 9:30 a.m. in the social hall at 3369 Sand Lake Road, Longwood.

Fine stated, “We are excited to add interactive technology to our program this year by offering children the opportunity to learn at home during the week through a virtual school.” Students in grades 1 through 7 will have online classes during the week and attend regular classes on Sunday mornings. Participation in Shabbat services will be encouraged and a terrific learning experience will result.

Skills-based Hebrew learning continues this year to help each student improve his or her reading skills leading to independence in Hebrew. This proved very successful last year and enhanced each student’s level of competency. Additional studies in Jewish culture, history, holidays, and customs will take each grade’s curriculum.

The focus on individualized learning continues this year with dedicated classes for students with special needs as well as those seeking an accelerated enrichment program leading to Bar and Bat Mitzvah. According to Fine, “Each and every student at Beth Am will last a lifetime. We don’t want Hebrew school at Beth Am to be looked at as chore or for an inconvenience for the student who would rather be doing something else. We want it to be a place where learning and making new friends is a pleasure.”

The weekly Sunday morning youth service and to orga- nize a Junior Congregation for the younger students. In addition, monthly Family Shabbat Dinners will offer yet another opportunity for the students and their families to experience the joy of being Jewish.

For more information on the Open House on April 19 and upcoming events and activities at Congrega- tion Beth Am consult the synagogue’s site at www. CongBethAm.org or call the synagogue office at 407-862-3565.

Variety of programs for families with young children at Congregation Ohev Shalom

The following is a list of all of our programs are to provide opportunities for families and children to explore, learn, play and play together so they can establish their own Jewish values.

Shirei Shabbat
Welcome Shabbat with Rabbi Kay through song, prayer and movement. Held on the following Fridays starting at 5:30 p.m. with a nosh! Aug. 17, Oct. 12, Dec. 7, Feb. 8, and April 12.

No charge but please RSVP at https://www.ohevshalom.org/ event/shireishabbat

Eighth-grade Shabbaton.

COSUSY wins subregional schmooze lips award.

Mishpacha Sheli singing with Rabbi Kay.

Kibutz Ohev Family Edition
For families with toddlers through 2nd grade.
Join Sharon Weil and Vicky Countess one Wednesday a month to learn to love our- selves, each other, the earth and Israel through craft, story, cooking and gardening.

Meets on the following Wednesdays at 5 p.m. and includes dinner.
RSVP and pay online at https://www.ohevshalom.org/ event/kofe2018

Mishpacha Sheli
With Nina Fine moves to Thursday starting Aug. 16 at 9:30 a.m. Circle time, story, song, art and snack.
Will meet every Thursday except when there is Challaballoo. RSVP to join us.

Join Lisa Sholk and Eli- en Zollman, challah bakers extraordinaire one Thursday a month to bake Challah for Shabbat.
Meets on the following Thursdays at 10 a.m.: Sept. 6, Oct. 11, Nov. 15, Dec. 13, Jan. 17, Feb. 21, March 14, and April 11.
RSVP and pay at https://www. ohevshalom.org/event/ challaballoo

Shabbatlettes
Join Amy Geboh on the following Saturdays at 10 a.m. to celebrate Shabbat featuring song, prayer, dance and Torah stories. Stick around for Kiddush lunch!
Meets on the following Sunday mornings at 11 a.m.: Sept. 29, Nov. 10, Jan. 12, March 2 and May 11.
No charge but please RSVP at https://www.ohevshalom.org/event/shabbatlettes

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Programs for Young Fami- lies is underwritten in part by Nancy and Dean Farrachio in memory of Nancy’s father Bart Hecht.

For more information on young youth programs please call 407-298-4650 or email educator@ohevshalom.org.
I realized early in my adult life that there is a big difference between the career I envisioned in a classroom and the job I actually had. I dreamed of being a teacher since I was a child. By the time I was six, I would set up my own classroom and teach the alphabet. By the time I was in high school, I had determined that I would go to college for a teaching degree. In my senior year, I had decided that I would go to college for a teaching degree. My love of reading, my interest in creative writing, and some pressure from my parents to choose a practical major made English education the right choice. Every spring, Reeseseville Central held Student Teacher’s Day. Those of us who were interested and considered responsible were allowed to take charge of the classes of the teachers. In both my junior and senior years, I had the opportunity to “student teach” for two of my English teachers. I spent hours preparing lessons on Greek and Roman mythology, “The Outsiders” by S. J. Hinton, and vocabulary. I loved my role as “teacher for a day,” and it confirmed my career path.

For my first two years at the University at Albany, I completed required coursework through the English department, along with necessary classes in science, French, history, and music. By my junior year, I was taking education courses that prepared me for teaching. In my English methods class, I put together a multi-week unit plan on the theme of War and Youth. My project not only received top grades but also was used as a model for several years in the English education department. In my senior year, I finally had a chance to student teach at Mont Pleasant High School. I thrived in front of the classes. I loved putting together the lesson plans, the quizzes, the tests. I spent hours planning and producing the necessary paperwork, but it was worth every minute to implement it. I was rewarded in the end with a five-plus out of five score. My supervisor wrote in his evaluation that I was a “born teacher” who was “natural in front of the classroom.” As the graduation date grew near, I started applying for a teaching position. It was a tough time to get a job as there were not many openings. Despite my excellent evaluation and decent grades, I couldn’t even get an interview. In late June, however, a month after graduation, I was offered the job I had set my heart on. A high school English teacher in a small town near Albany, New York, had handed in his resignation the last day of school, but he had decided to enroll in a master’s program. The principal wanted to fill the position before he left for his summer vacation. I interviewed for the job and was hired on the spot.

There was only one difficulty: the teacher who was replacing taught unusual classes. Along with a standard tenth grade English class, he taught numerous electives on creative topics including supernatural fiction, science fiction, the American cinema. The high school students had already signed up on their courses before they realized that he had left no specific lesson plans. Over that summer, I read the novels and began developing the curriculums as best as I could.

The tenth grade students I greeted that first day took the change in teachers in stride. The juniors and seniors who had signed up for the electives, however, were disappointed to find that the teacher they expected was gone. Instead they had a new teacher with high ideals and higher expectations. This challenge was made more difficult by what I learned from the students. My predecessor had held several classes after school to which I decided to go. The students were interested in literature and history. The books ordered for the class included classics like “Brave New World” and “1984.” Unfortunately, some of the students were below grade level, certainly reading two or three years below grade level, certainly way below the level of the materials I used. The result was an absolute disaster. Despite a supportive principal and supportive faculty, I was in over my head, teaching every minute out of class, including weekends, working on lesson plans, projects, and quizzes. The techniques that had served me so well in methods classes and student teaching fell flat. In addition to my difficulty with the implementation, I was challenged by maintaining discipline. I was 22 years old. Highly idealistic, and totally out of tune with students who were tired of being literature majors of the students were well-behaved; a small group made a real interest in what I was trying to teach. The majority of the students were well-behaved; a small group made a real interest in what I was trying to teach. They talked, they threw spitballs, they refused to participate. It was a horrible experience. After spending years dreaming about being a teacher, I realized that nothing I had done in college had ever prepared me to handle a real class, a real job.

By June, I was exhausted, stressed, and seriously wondering if I could learn enough from my first year to want to do it again? After three weeks before graduation, yearbooks came in. Students were passing around their own copies for signatures from classmates and from teachers. Two seniors, the children of highly motivated and focused families, were on the verge of not signing their yearbooks. When they handed them to me, I asked in a soft voice if it seemed to them that they had both drawn swastikas around my picture. One claimed it was a mistake, a shut, refusing to sign and making some comment about how someday they would look back on their yearbooks with shame. I told the principal, who called them in. I don’t remember the outcome of that discussion.

I did return in September. I was more confident, more organized. However, I found teaching high school an uphill battle. A completely different experience than what I had dreamed. I left in January, eighteen months after I started and one month after I got my master’s degree. I decided to try a job teaching adult education at the Capital District Education Center, a community college. It was that scenario that I found my niche. Classes were small and individualized, and I found it easy to relate to adult students. Many of them were highly motivated and focused, and they were willing to improve their writing and reading skills and obtain their General Equivalency Diploma. I was more confident, more organized. I found it easy to relate to adult students. Many of them were highly motivated and focused. I was in that scenario that I found my niche. Classes were small and individualized, and I found it easy to relate to adult students. Many of them were highly motivated and focused. I was in that scenario that I found my niche. Classes were small and individualized, and I found it easy to relate to adult students. Many of them were highly motivated and focused.

By Marilyn Shapiro

Teaching kids: A great idea?

By Abigail Klein Leichman

12 tribal paintings link land, history and hopeful

By Michael Amar
Core Values at the heart of Jewish Academy of Orlando

By Alan Rusonik, head of school

Last year, as part of Jewish Academy of Orlando’s 40th anniversary, the school created a task force consisting of administrators, teachers, board members and parents, to engage in a meaningful process of self-examination and self-reflection. The number 40 has great significance in the Torah and throughout rabbinic literature. It usually designates a time of radical transition or transformation. The school leadership felt this was an appropriate time to revisit their core values and remind themselves and the community who they are, what they believe in and the values that are important to them as a school community.

As a result, Jewish Academy of Orlando determined five foundational beliefs that drive the school. These core values are a part of the educational mission and guide the school as it begins the next 40 years.

• The first core value is Jewish Values. We integrate Jewish tradition and values into every area of our curriculum and school life. From the classroom to the hallways and to the words we use with our friends, we are reminded daily that we are a values based institution which sets us apart and is fundamental to the educational experience.

• Our second core value is Academic Excellence. We kindle a love of learning, passion for the arts, the pursuit of academic excellence and high achievement through innovative, differentiated curriculum based on students’ individual needs.

• Our third core value is Leadership. We empower students to become leaders and challenge them to change the world through the concept of Tikkun Olam (repairing the world).

• Our fourth core value is a Caring Community. We foster the values of kindness, self-awareness, and character within our students, nurturing them to be mindful critical thinkers.

• Our fifth and final core value is Focus on the Whole Child. We engage as a united family, providing a safe environment to celebrate our shared heritage and Jewish identity through Mitzvot (good deeds), Tzedakah (acts of righteousness), and Gemilut Chasidim (acts of loving kindness), as well as instill a love for and commitment to Israel and Klal Yisrael (Jewish people everywhere). We recognize the students’ social, emotional, physical and spiritual growth, along with their intellectual growth, are all equal parts of the educational experience at our school.

To celebrate the core values and Jewish Academy of Orlando’s 40th anniversary, the school came together last April to create a beautiful art installation made out of colored and cut glass. The art installation depicts the five core values established during our 40th anniversary celebration. The project was the inspiration of Holly Odess, an artist from South Florida and grandmother in the school, Odess designed the layout and students, teachers and parents participated in its creation. Odess was ably assisted by the school’s own amazing art teacher, Penny Goldstein. The art installation not only beautifies the front entrance to the school, but stands as a daily reminder of the core values and what the school believes in. Our hope and our prayer is that Jewish Academy of Orlando, with these core values as a guide, will continue to grow from strength to greater strength.

Exploring Jewish identity at Rollins College Hillel

By Emily Block, assistant director of Jewish Student Life

This past year, the oldest accredited college in Florida, gained one of the newest Hillels in the state. Rollins College officially welcomed its first full-time Jewish student life employee in its history. Under the direction of Associate Director of Jewish Student Life Emily Block students are encouraged to explore and remind themselves and the community who they are, what they believe in and the values that are important to them as a school community.

Hillel staff and students make a community.

This year, students can look forward to warm family-style Shabbats, Tuesday Shmooze-day, an opportunity for students to gather and develop meaningful connections; and Torah on Tap, where students can explore Jewish education in a relaxed environment. Rollins Hillel allows Jewish students to explore what Judaism means for them and how they want to incorporate it into their lives.

For more information on Rollins Hillel and Jewish life at Rollins visit https://www.rollins.edu/religious-spiritual-life/hillel/index.html.

By Harleen Anderson, M.D.

Artwork designed by Holly Odess for Jewish Academy of Orlando’s 40th anniversary.

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Agoura Hills
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Woodland Hills
487-376-7765

Viera
407-778-4040

Winter Park
487-678-4040

Alabaster: Spring
407-678-4040

Altamonte Springs
407-678-4040
The UCF Judaic Studies Program is a non-degree program in the History Department, and is thriving. The program offers a quarter full of compelling courses that are open to auditing senior citizens, free of charge, as well as the traditional student body. These include: the History of the Holocaust, the History of the Jewish People in Antiquity, Modern Israeli Culture, the Bible as Literature, and Introduction to Modern Judaism. All of these are taught online, so it’s never even a matter of physically sitting in a classroom. Online learning is the wave of the future, and Judaic Studies is doing it right.

Many of the courses are supplemented by state-of-the-art video lectures, winning the university’s prestigious award for excellence in online teaching. The Judaic Studies program is now in the process of integrating the first two Judaic Studies video games into its courses, which will teach Indiana Jones-style biblical archaeology as never before. These have been developed in cooperation with UCF’s new downtown campus (the Florida Interactive Entertainment Academy), and more are being planned.

Judaic Studies is currently seeking outside investment to develop a truly dynamic video game centered around Chamsah and the Victory of the Maccabees.

Finally, there is a new face-to-face Hebrew language course, taught entirely in Hebrew, slpah style. The results are truly impressive. As students are able to engage in conversation and understand basic lectures on Jewish history in a Hebrew-only class environment, all within the first year of study.

Members of the community may take the courses as non-degree students or may audit the courses. Persons 60 years of age or older who meet Florida residency requirements may register for classes without payment. Registration is required of non-degree students; call the Registrar’s office at 407-823-3100 for details.

The Upstanders Program is a bullying prevention initiative of the Holocaust Memorial Resource and Education Center. Rooted in Holocaust Education, the Upstanders Program challenges students to study one of the world’s paramount examples of prejudice in order to understand the role each of us plays in shaping the future.

The Upstanders program demonstrates the importance of standing up and speaking out when students witness bullying through stories of Holocaust Rescuers. A “rescuer” is an individual who did everything in their power to save the lives of those being persecuted during the Holocaust. The Upstanders Program teaches students how to safely and effectively support their peers who are being mistreated. Once students understand the importance of being Upstanders rather than bystanders, they have the knowledge they need to make their school a safe and respectful place.

The Upstanders Program is professionally evaluated every school year using climate survey and focus groups. Program lessons align with Florida Standards in 6th grade social studies and language arts as well as 7th grade civics and language arts. Since its inception in 2010, the Upstanders Program has been provided to more than 25,000 students in 68 schools located in Orange, Seminole, Osceola, and Broward counties.

What is bullying?

Bullying involves an unwanted, aggressive behavior that is repeated over time and suggests an imbalance of power. The imbalance of power means that the person being bullied is unable to defend him or herself. Bullying behavior can be physical, social, or emotional. Cyber bullying takes place online or with the use of technology. Common examples of bullying behavior include: physical intimidation, spreading rumors, cruel text messages, and negative images posted online.

Bullying prevention for parents

Parents can help prevent bullying by talking to your children about bullying. Research shows that children look to parents and caregivers for advice and help on tough decisions. Start conversations about daily life and feelings with questions such as these:

What was one good thing that happened today?

What is lunch time like at your school?

Who do you sit with?

What do you talk about?

Is there a bully in your school bus?

What are you good at?

What would you do if someone bullied you?

What do you do if bullying directly is an important step in understanding how the issue might be affecting kids. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions, but it is important to encourage them honestly. Ask kids that they are not alone in addressing any problems that arise. Start conversations about bullying with questions like these:

What does “bullying” mean to you?

Describe what kids who bully are like. Why do you think people bully?

Who are the adults you trust most when it comes to things like bullying?

Have you or your friends left other kids out on purpose? Do you think that was bullying?

Why or why not?

What do you usually do when you see bullying going on?

Do you ever see kids at your school being bullied by other kids? How does it make you feel?

Have you ever tried to help someone who is being bullied?

What would encourage you to help?

Encourage kids to tell

Help kids take part in activities, interests, and hobbies. What do you do if it happens again?

Encourage children to be able to develop skills. What do you do if it happens again?

Help kids take part in activities, interests, and hobbies. When do you do it if it happens again?

Encourage children to be able to develop skills. What do you do if it happens again?

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Encourage children to be able to develop skills. What do you do if it happens again?
Four tips for packing healthy, cheap school lunches

It won’t be long before kids will be heading back to school for parents to begin packing their lunches again. Organic food is expensive and peanut butter and jelly sandwiches only work for so long.

But Chef Zipora Einav (www.chefzipora.com), a chef for so long.

— chefzipora@gmail.com.

Exciting additions at Orlando Torah Academy

There are so many new changes coming this year to Orlando Torah Academy. OTA has grown into a full Jewish preschool and K-8th elementary and middle school, the only school of its kind in Orlando. Known for its strong, dual-curriculum, educational program and its warm environment, OTA has established itself as the premier destination for Jewish education. Always looking to make its program even better, Orlando Torah Academy welcomes Shari Widlas to its administrative team. Well-known in Orlando, and with extensive experience in the field of education, Widlas will be working closely with the staff, teachers, parents and students on innovative and forward-thinking programming including curriculum development, staff development and using advanced technology integration to differentiate for the needs of every student.

Another addition to the team, Rabbi Gavriel Wittlin, will be joining the administration as assistant principal. Wittlin will help bring an even greater focus on the individual needs of each child’s educational, social and emotional needs both in and out of the classroom.

Orlando Torah Academy is home to families from all different Jewish backgrounds and affiliations. Please visit www.orlando-torah.com for more information. If you think OTA may be the right choice for your family contact the office today for a tour at 407-270-4936 or email orlandotorah@gmail.com.

Join in the Fun at CRJ’s Steinmetz Family School of Chai!

There will be a spirited kick off to the school year at the Steinmetz Family School of Chai on Sunday, August 19 at 9:30 a.m. CRJ welcomes all new and returning families and invites unaffiliated members of the community who are seeking a diverse Reform synagogue to come and have their children join the school.

How wonderful it is that in our dynamic Orlando community, CRJ offers an opportunity to build enduring friendships in a setting that inspires strong family and synagogue partnerships as Children of Israel. CRJ’s Family School of Chai seeks to inspire each student with a comprehensive Jewish education in a caring, innovative, and vibrant community. In all that they do, they take great pride in their inclusive and accommodating school. Through engaging learning for students in grades Pre-K through 6th grade, they combine compelling and interactive Hebrew and Judaic studies with fun Camp Chai specials, which include art, music, cooking, sports and drama. They seek to inspire students and their families to connect to their Jewish heritage while building a sense of Jewish identity that is relevant and meaningful in today’s world. Within the classrooms, through family programs, and in the community, CRJ hopes to guide its students in understanding the richness and tradition of the Jewish religion along with the ability to make informed life decisions.

Back to school special for new members—email or call as a new student in the religious school and receive a complimentary CRJ membership from August 2018 through December 2019.

For more information on the Steinmetz Family School of Chai, please contact Director of Education Dr. Sheryl Sacharoff at (407) 645-0444 or email at sachar- off@crjrandla.org.

Paintings

From page 4A

Italian museum association and the Israel Embassy in Rome brought in Italy to mark modern Israel’s 70th anniversary.

“They gave me a free hand to do whatever I wanted,” Barkat, LCSR 2012 says. “When they showed me the exhibition space in Rome, I decided to bring the different landscapes of Israel into that room.”

Those landscapes project a history much longer than 70 years.

“I went back 3,000 years and started investigating about the tribes, finding old maps, working out exactly where each tribe lived and where they did their physically to sustain themselves,” she explains.

The tribes were descended from the 12 sons of biblical patriarch Jacob: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph and Benjamin.

Most of the tribes received duties in Jerusalem, which straddled the territories of Judah and Benjamin.

“When the tribes came to Jerusalem for the festivals they all came together as one, so there was a dynamic of being one and being independent and finding their own voice,” says Barkat.

And so, for example, the painting representing Asher features aquatic marine matching the light green of Asher’s breastplate gem and darker shades of green symbolizing the olive trees this tribe tended in the Western Galilee.

The tribe of Joseph, later divided into the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, is represented by a crisscross of soils from across Israel, creating likeness of his legendary ”technicolor dreamcoat” and hinting at his central role among Jacob’s children.

Children arguing

These children of Israel became the children of Barak, 52, who emigrated at age 30 from South Africa with her artist parents and in recent years developed an original style of painting based on the dynamic movements of horses and humans.

Her critically acclaimed “Evocative Surfaces” exhibition permanently installed Musée de Palazzo Grimani during the 2017 Venice Art Biennale established her place on the contemporary arts scene.

“I started working on PVC because it gives me such a variety of brushstrokes and possibilities for putting it down as taking off as you do in drawing,” she tells the audience.

“Some at some point the painting says,” Okay, leave me alone. I am looking in at you and tells me to stop. And I’ve learned to listen to that voice. It’s exactly like raising children. You have to release them when the time is right.”

During the six months she researched, collected and ground together materials to create “After the Tribes,” she sensed the paintings arguing. His is much nicer than mine! How come his painting is more developed than mine?

“And then I would go back to the other painting and see what it needed to push it that step further. When I finished the last one, I found out it was as if the fighting had stopped and they had come together as one family. They fit together, the colors were perfectly balanced and they just calmed down and I was finished,” Barkat relates.

Working in harmony.

On July 6, she brought the 12 artworks to Blacksmith Ural Telsin in Blacksmith and secured them in the four-meter frame he fashioned from her instructions.

“Even though the exhibit stands alone I wanted to keep that dynamic of hanging, so I came up with the idea of using cables. Each painting is hung by three cables running with the cable that connects the individual paints.” Barkat says.

“The real essence of the piece is enabling each tribe to respect the other tribes as equals and that’s why we have to work together in harmony.”

The framed spheres were taken to picturesque locations—the caves of Beit Guvrin, a vineyard and Achziv Beach—to be photographed for the exhibition catalog before being shipped to Rome.

Also included in the show will be old tribal maps, a documentary of Barkat’s creative process, and a glass and black metal materials she collected throughout Israel with the help of her husband, Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat.

Curated by Giorgia Calb and supported by the Nomas Foundation and the Embassy of Italy, “After the Tribes” will be exhibited from October 10 to December 31, 2018 at Museo dei Papiri e Lapidari Lapidario Lapidarii, the 70th anniversary.

The show will go on the road and eventually head back to Israel for permanent display.

Apart from its specific backstory, “After the Tribes” is intended to portray a worldwide dialogue of acceptance, says Barkat.

“You have the right to be who you want to be and I have the right to be who I want to be, so why not be the other tribe and make it dimensions bigger.”

HERITAGE FLORIDA JEWISH NEWS, AUGUST 3, 2018 PAGE 7B
Hillel helps students create their own Jewish journey

By Dan Samuels
Director of Development
Central Florida Hillel

Walking on to a college campus is one of the most overwhelming and exciting times in a young adult’s life. For many of these students, this is the first time they have lived on their own and have had the opportunity to choose their own path. One of the first things students look for is a place where they can make meaningful connections and find a sense of belonging. They are looking for a community to call home. For the more than 6,000 Jewish students at the University of Central Florida, Rollins College, Valencia College, Seminole State College, and Beacon College, Central Florida Hillel provides them with a home away from home. Central Florida Hillel provides students of all backgrounds and religious beliefs with an opportunity to create their own Jewish journey. Each week students are able to connect with their peers through a Wednesday night social program called Hump Day Nosh and a student-led Shabbat celebration on Friday evening. As an organization focused on student empowerment, the student board organizes programs reflective of the needs of the Jewish community. These programs often focus on social experiences, Jewish holidays, and connecting to the state of Israel. This coming year Central Florida Hillel is thrilled to offer the Jewish Learning Fellowship, a cohort experience where students have the opportunity to learn through in-depth conversations with a Jewish educator as well as their peers. For students seeking a more immersive experience, Central Florida Hillel offers travel to Israel through Birthright, Masa, and Onward Israel, as well as scholarships to attend conferences across the nation including AIPAC, the Federation Global Assembly, and the Jewish National Fund Collegiate Summit. These experiences provide students with a hands-on opportunity to explore their connection to Israel and the Jewish community.

Today’s college students will be tomorrow’s synagogue leaders, organization board members, and active members of the Jewish community. The work that Hillel does on campus today enriches the lives of Jewish students so that they may enrich the Jewish people and the world.

For more information on Central Florida Hillel, visit www.CentralFloridaHillel.org.