Back to School 2020
From students to leaders: How today's youth are preparing for the future.

For many of today's young people, the health of the local environment, the importance of agriculture is boundless. But, for agricultural organizations, to continue to advance, it’s essential to educate and inspire young minds, invest in the next generation, and turn today’s youth into tomorrow’s agricultural leaders.

That’s why youth agricultural organizations come into play. According to Phil Reiter, vice president of marketing at Tractor Supply Company, the nation’s largest rural lifestyle retailer and a long-time supporter of NC-centric programs like 4-H and FFA, “These programs were designed to be a fun and effective way for students to explore a critically important industry,” said Reiter.

Aside from learning about responsibility and leadership, members also have the ability to form strong, long-lasting relationships with peers that share similar interests and passions.

Through involvement in youth agricultural programs, students can look forward to the following:

**Agricultural organizations give students the opportunity to be actively engaged in projects and events that involve socializing with friends and meeting new people from across the country.**

**From attending local fairs to competing in contests and career development events, members have the opportunity to travel and work alongside classmates that have similar interests and passions.**

**Growing Confidence**

Group meetings provide a fun setting for members to interact with both peers and adults. Throughout the year and during fair season, members are often required to address large crowds. It’s a great opportunity to develop presentations and public speaking skills. Your role is crucial; these student leaders must be comfortable when speaking in front of large groups.

**Leadership Opportunities**

Both 4-H and FFA focus on empowering young people to take on leadership roles within their respective organizations. While in FFA, members are electing their officers and are responsible for planning and conducting activities throughout the year.

**Civic Responsibility**

While it’s fun to be an active member of 4-H and FFA, and throughout the year members spend ample time coordinating various fundraising events to benefit their communities.

**Recognition**

Participating in youth agricultural organizations means being named as a county or state officer. These organizations offer students recognition for their hard work.

**Tractor Supply frequently recognizes its 4-H and FFA partners who have displayed exemplary service and commitment to their community.**

**From June 8 to October 22, the company will offer Mobile Fair Tour to 19 fairs across the country where they will recognize their youth members of both organizations.**

This year, honorees have been selected as nominees of Tractor Supply’s first “Great Next Generation” Future Farm Contest, which encouraged 4-H and FFA youth to submit proposals on how their participation in these organizations has empowered them and their neighbors.

**Tractor Supply’s Mobile Fair Tour,** which will offer visitors the “Out Here” experience, will provide the opportunity to have the lasso a “runaway pig,” test their bell-ringing game, and attend the special recognition ceremony.

To stay up to date on the tour or learn more about the interactive experience, follow Tractor Supply Company on Facebook and visit TractorSupply.com/FairTour.
By Ben Harris

Within months of graduat- ing from a Jewish high school near Boston in 2017, Asher Dale had an internship that he “absolutely loved” at Forter, an Israeli technology company. He was working on two major projects: helping to build a technology solution that would predict and prevent attacks on banks, and working on a network of retailers, hospitals, and volunteer organizations around the world as a technology company.

The company, which provides large network of providers in transactions annually for a global network of retailers, was growing explosively. “It was so exciting to magnify the quality of Jewish education for the children of all ages,” said Rabbi Tamir, Big Idea’s founder and CEO. Masa’s years of cooperation and creative thinking have prepared it for the unique technological challenges of the 2020-2021 school year. At times such as these, their stable partnership and provider of gap year experi- ences in Israel. Since its founding, Masa has brought more than 100,000 Jews to Israel from over 60 countries. The organization helps match young Jews with an array of programs run by a large network of providers and provides $40 million in scholarships each year to help subsidize the costs.

Gap years in Israel have long been a rite of passage among Orthodox Jews, with some religious high schools sending upward of 90 percent of their gradu- ates to study in Israel for a year, typically at religious seminaries. But the trend is also catching fire beyond the Orthodox world.

“It’s a growing phenom- enon in America,” said Shalom Ettic, Masa’s North American CEO. “More and more parents are realizing that our children today, they’re graduating college, they’re getting degrees and they’re not exactly sure where to go. Or they’re finishing high school, and they have the pressure of applying to colleges, but they’re not really sure about where they want to study or exactly what their path is.”

In fact, academic burn- out is the principal reason cited for taking a gap year. According to Ethan Knight, the founder of the American Gap Year Association, an Oregon-based nonprofit that promotes gap years, about 40,000 Americans take gap years annually, and the average yearly growth rate in 15 percent over the past 10 years, according to the association.

“In our country, the running joke is that most people laugh when they hear that, but the reality is there’s a path of people who are looking for new opportunities in this world of people doing, you find yourself doing, you find yourself doing,” said Ethan Knight, the founder of the American Gap Year Association, an Oregon-based nonprofit that promotes gap years. About 40,000 Americans take gap years annually, and the average yearly growth rate is 15 percent over the past 10 years, according to the association.

“At the end of the day, people want to do what they love, and give them the opportunity to do that is what makes gap years so special. It’s a time for students to explore their passions and interests, to reflect on their dreams and aspirations, and to gain valuable experiences that will prepare them for the future.”

By Ben Harris

Tech whiz Asher Dale, second from right, hikes with friends in the Israeli Desert during his gap year in Israel.

Want your kid to excel in college? After high school, try a break in Israel

Some 1,200 young Jews per year enroll in gap-year programs affiliated with Masa Israel Journey.

Canttor Kim Singer and Rabbi Joshua Neely put them in a solid position to overcome any obstacles. Considering current scientific information, and Semic- noble and Orange county students will begin 2020 with a hybrid model, and transition to “in- person” class when it is safe to do so. The school year will begin with a special ‘drive-in’ at the beginning of each day and kind of more living away from home, with no real vision of what can they do with this kind of knowledge or tools, and you see at the end of the program how they become confident,” said Dutt Tamir, Big Idea’s founder and CEO. "They stand on the stage presenting their app that they developed and speak with so much confidence on things that they had no clue about just five months ago."

As a self-described “ambitious kid,” Dale as a high school student planned to become a company and become a billionaire “like Steve Jobs.” He even released a mobile app on Apple’s store while still a high school student.

By the end of his time in Israel, Dale had come to realize that while his high school experience didn’t turn out the way he had expected, the lessons he learned in Israel have made a significant impact on his life. "I want to start a company that would actually do good for the world," he said. “I’m much more focused on relationships, my family, and the kind of meaningful and enriching experience in college, and kind of more living away from home. I am not alone and always being stuck in the future.”

This article was produced by JTA’s native content team.
In this time of COVID, Congregation Ohev Shalom staff and leadership have been working diligently to be able to offer the same quality Jewish education, programs and services virtually. We are not changing what we do only how we do it.

Hebrew school will be virtual for the start of the year and will be evaluated regularly. “We know that face-to-face learning is ideal not just for skill mastery but equally important for social connection to build community. We need to ensure that our families, teachers and Madrichim are safe and that is why we are beginning the year virtually,” said Amy Geboff, director of Youth and Family Education.

While school is virtual, classes for grades 1 and 2 are Sunday beginning at 9:30 and 3rd-7th Sunday and Wednesday beginning at 4:30. Second grade has an option to attend Wednesdays as well. The Pk and K classes will be offered at an enriching class called “Shalom Chaverim” twice a month rather than the weekly classes. This age group is not as proficient at being on screens. Each class session will stand on its own. Participants can register for each class as fits their schedule.

There will be circle time, art, movement, story, Hebrew letters and words of the day.

The Hebrew school program will be on Zoom. Teachers are planning for small group learning opportuni ties in break out rooms so that students can receive focused attention, have opportunities for collaborating and “chevuruta” study as well as connecting with friends. Madrichim are being trained to be able to facilitate some of the small groups with adult staff checking in on them.

COS will continue to offer programs for young families including Mishpacha Sheli, Shabbatlettes and Shirei Shabbat. Kabbalat Shabbat.

For many of our families, it is critical to have a safe, in-person school experience for their children,” said Head of School Alan Rusonik. “I am grateful to offer the safety precautions we have in place to minimize risk.”

In order to ensure the safest possible learning environment, the school has put in place a multi-layer approach to mitigating risk. These strategies will include, but are not limited to, screening, monitoring and testing students and faculty, using a unique and state of the art ultraviolet disinfection technology, hand washing, smaller class sizes, social distancing, wearing face masks, frequent disinfecting and limiting interactions of students.

The in-person experience will consist of small class sizes with desks spaced apart and reduced interaction outside of homeroom classes. Students will continue to receive their specials such as art, PE, social-emotional learning and music with those teachers rotating among the classrooms. Recess will be outside with one classroom playing together at a time. The playground will be cleaned between sessions. Several classes will be held outside.

The numbers of students enrolling in the school has increased as many parents are looking for the safety option for their children. While the school is still enrolling students, because the class sizes must be limited, only a few spots remain.

Rusonik added, “We look forward to starting another year of learning and growing with our children. The school is still enrolling students, because the class sizes must be limited, only a few spots remain.”

For more information, visit www.thevisioncouncil.org/consumers/sunglasses. A public service message from The Vision Council.

For more information about Congregation Ohev Shalom, Hebrew school, Youth programs and all programs and services, go to the website www.ohevshalom.org, Congregation Ohev Shalom and Ohev Shalom Youth and Florida Council on Independent Schools.

To learn more about Jewish Academy of Orlando, please visit jewishacademyoforlando.org or follow the school on Facebook https://facebook.com/JewishAcademyofOrlando.

To learn more about COED-19 Precautions at Jewish Academy of Orlando, please visit https://www.jewishacademyoforlando.org/covid19.
Upcoming Strategies for Action events at the Holocaust Center

The Holocaust Memorial Resource and Education Center of Florida has virtual programs under the umbrella of Springboard Innovation, and these programs can help people understand many different aspects of hatred, racism, police and prejudice, and ways to overcome. All of the events are free and are held virtually from noon to 1 p.m.

Aug. 7 — Color-Coded: Language as a Survival Tool
This live, online virtual event features Shannon Green and Revel Lubin who will discuss code-switching, which is the skill one adapts through language, demeanor and the way one interacts. Often times, it can be especially difficult when a relative or good friend rounds on us from within our families. Jenny will help us identify how our fears play into our actions and reactions and how we can rewire some of these thoughts.

Aug. 14 — Building Emotional Bravery
Join us for this live, online virtual event featuring Jenny Susser. Many of us are unsure about how to approach difficult conversations and this can be especially difficult when a relative or good friend rounds on us from within our families. Jenny will help us identify how our fears play into our actions and reactions and how we can rewire some of these thoughts.

Aug. 28 — Emotional Bravery and Social Distancing
In this learning event, participants are encouraged to take a “hard look” within themselves, examining both bias and internalized oppression. Rachel Luce-Hitt will guide participants through this inner work.

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For more information on the Strategies for Action events, contact the Holocaust Center at 407-629-6555 or visit holocaustedu.org.
How school enriches both teacher and student

By Marilyn Shapiro

As Florida and the rest of the country navigates the upcoming school year, I am sharing an article reflecting on the impact of schools on both students and teachers. The pandemic has reshaped the educational landscape, and schools have played a crucial role in navigating this unprecedented time. Teachers have had to adapt to new digital platforms and maintain a balance between in-person and online instruction. Students, on the other hand, have had to adjust to a new normal, often facing challenges such as isolation and limited access to resources.

During and after the coronavirus pandemic, teachers have faced numerous challenges. They have had to navigate the transition to remote learning, adjust to new teaching methods, and manage the emotional needs of their students. At the same time, students have had to adapt to a new learning environment, manage their time effectively, and deal with the stress of the pandemic.

Despite these challenges, schools have continued to provide a sense of normalcy and support for both students and teachers. Teachers have continued to innovate and find creative ways to engage their students, while students have had the opportunity to learn and grow in a structured setting. The pandemic has highlighted the importance of schools in providing a safe and stable environment for learning and development.

Conclusion

In conclusion, schools play a crucial role in enriching the lives of both teachers and students. Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, schools have continued to provide a sense of normalcy and support. Teachers have had to adapt to new teaching methods, while students have had to adjust to the new learning environment. However, both teachers and students have shown resilience and determination in navigating this unprecedented time. As we look forward to the upcoming school year, we can continue to build on the strengths of our schools and work towards creating a more equitable and supportive educational environment for all.

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407-221-5482
Switch blades, snakes, Second Hand Rose,” All part of my life as an adult education teacher

By Marilyn Shapiro

Despite outstanding grades for my student teachers, crashed and burned in the real classroom. My age (22), idealism, and poor disciplinary skills resulted in my leaving my first teaching position. A year later, I graduated with a completed master’s degree in reading. I accepted a position as a program consultant at the Capital District Education Opportunity Center, a division of Hudson Valley Community College.

In contrast to the pre-dominantly white suburban high school I had left, the CDEOC was located in New York’s inner city. Housed in a group of modular buildings in the shadow of Clement Latham Concrete, the classrooms were by joined by a wooden passageway that was covered with snow and ice in winter.

The mission of the CDEOC was to provide academic and vocational training to dis-enrolled students.

(BPT) — For today’s students, learning how to code is becoming as common as learning how to read. The Bureau of Labor Statistics recently reported that computer science is the fastest growing profession within the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) field. They also predict that, by 2020, there will be 1.4 million computer science-related jobs available and only 490,000 computer science graduates with the skills to apply for those jobs.

Scientifically, access to computer science education and skills training has been lacking especially for many underrepresented and underserved communities. Despite research showing that exposure to these subjects at a younger age makes students more likely to pursue computer science in college. The new challenge for educators and Amazon Future Engineer, is working to change that with a four-step process to ensure access for all students. K-12.

First, the program has after-school computer science workshops, coding camps hosted at schools and various incursions, and online computer science courses like Coding with Kids and Code.org’s Hour of Code: December 12, 2021. All are free and encourage students to explore computer science.

Without Amazon Future Engineer funding this coding, my son would not have had such a wonderful opportunity because I simply could not afford private classes. Kelly Garcia, whose son Pierce attended a Coding with Kids camp and is now attending Pace University.

High school: The majority of public elementary and high schools, particularly in low-income communities, do not offer computer science classes. Each year, Amazon Future Engineer provides 2,000 schools across the country (totaling about 100,000 students) with Intro to Computer Science and AP Computer Science classes through trusted curriculum providers. All students participating in this program also receive a free membership to AWS Educate, which provides them with free tools and access to the AWS Cloud for their coding projects, and content to learn about cloud computing.

Jennifer Tulipano, a teacher who is using course in her classroom at Monisconv SCAN High School in the Capital Region (N.Y.) Jewish Heritage FLORIDA JEWISH NEWS. She is the author of two compilations of her stories, “There Goes Florida Jewish News.”

I get a life.) The time I had to foramen, for a new product or into reality. As a way of life, science, Amazon’s commitment to diversity and early computer science education is, especially meaningful to me.”

Students, teachers, school administrators, and parents can learn more and apply at www.amazonfutureengineer.com.

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We are not changing what we do, just how we do it.

COS Hebrew School will be virtual for the beginning of the school year. The school opened Aug. 1, the first day of school, with a parking lot, pick up books, say hi to teachers, and Madrichim and then park for a parking lot welcoming to the year and to Rosh Chodesh Elul.

Hebrew school is for grades 1-7. While we are virtual Sundays at 9:30 and Wednesdays at 4:30.

NEW for PK and K: “Shalom Chaverim” while we are virtual. Families with young children Mishpacha Sheli on selected Tuesday mornings, Shabbatlettes on selected Shabbat mornings and Shirei for all Jewish 8th-12th graders. This year’s theme is World Jewry.

Kibbutz Ohav Family Edition One Wednesday a month at 10 p.m. geared toward families with children in preschool through grade 2. Vibrant and Active Youth Groups, Olim 3rd-5th grade, Kadima 6th-8th grade, USY 9th-12th grade.

DDD: Dinner, Daber and Dvar - Formal Jewish educational program for all Jewish 8th-12th graders. This year’s theme is World Jewry.

First class is August 26.

Get gear up for the High School with a High Holidays of series and programs! Begins Thursday, 1st week of Elul throughout the month. The Heritage FLORIDA JEWISH NEWS
By Rabbi Avraham Wachsmann
Orlando Torah Academy Dean

Orlando Torah Academy is excited to begin its 11th year with double-digit growth and over 100 students. After spending the last few months of the last school year distance learning, the children are eager to get back to school, be with their friends and begin another year of learning and growth. OTA is also thrilled to welcome all the new families joining the school locally from Dr. Phillips and Winter Park and families that have relocated from Israel, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania.

It’s been a busy summer on the OTA campus. For this year, OTA is offering its dual-curriculum program as both an in-person and an online digital distance-learning experience called Virtual/In Person. To prepare for both options, OTA has invested in added technology, expanded classrooms, purchased new furniture, hired new staff and so much more. Protocols and procedures have been crafted to help ensure that all staff and students, from our preschool toddlers up to our eighth graders feel safe and have a positive learning environment.

Beginning with just 12 children in 2010, OTA’s growth over the past decade has truly been remarkable. It is a testament to the warm and talented staff of OTA and the positive learning experience for our students. To find out if OTA is the right choice for your family please email office@orlandotorah.com and come take a tour.

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Students and staff of Orlando Torah Academy 2019-2020 school year.

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By Rabbi Avraham Wachsmann
Orlando Torah Academy Dean

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