



The CHABAD at Dartmouth

Update

September 2015, Edition 20 Elul 5775

A Term In Review...

This past year I was off-campus for two terms. I spent my time abroad in Jordan and Washington, DC in a study abroad and internship, respectively. It had been quite the whirlwind of a year, with many different experiences, meeting a variety of people, and moving halfway around the world. When I returned to campus, I was excited to have some sort of a base. I was returning to something I knew, something I was familiar with, something I consider home.



Sinai Scholars Class the Core

Within the first few weeks of school, the **Pass-over holiday** was upon us. Now, for me when I think about Passover, I think about my big family gathering together, the Seder Plate in the wrong order, as per my Aunt Diane, singing songs from the Haggadah, eating cardboard bread for a week, as my Dad calls it, and the occasional overly drunken Seder with my grandma knocking down shots of vodka on the side of every cup of wine. Although I hadn't

been home for Passover for two years since coming to school, for some reason, this year I was missing it. I even talked to my uncles about possibly coming down to NYC to spend the time with them, as my parents couldn't bring me back to Colorado.

Anyways, I decided to stay on campus. I was a little unsure about going to the Seder, maybe it was the angst of being off for so long, the feeling of not knowing anyone anymore, or being a bit homesick. Either way, I mustered up the courage to go. And what I realized was that Chabad at Dartmouth is something special. I met up with a good friend of mine to walk together to Seder. She and I, on our way, happened to pass another mutual Jewish friend who was on his way to the Seder.



Seder tent set up for 120 Students

Upon arrival at the Seder, all 12 of the tables were full except for one in the corner. All three of us went there, sat down with people we didn't know, and by the end of the Seder had learned just about everything about each others' lives. **What I realized then is that although life can throw you feelings of loneliness and uncertainty, in the end with some faith, and a bit of good humor, " every little thing is gonna be alright."**

With the High Holidays around the corner, I can't help but think that we must remember that as the Passover Seder demonstrated, we are a powerful Jewish commu-

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Upcoming Events

Rosh Hashanah, Sept 14-15th

Paganucci lounge 53 Commons
Sept 13th, Rosh Hashanah Dinner at Chabad 7:15

Yom Kippur Sept 22nd 23rd

Hanover Inn, Ford Sayre Room
Full Schedule on our Website

Soul Maps

6 week course looking at understanding our spiritual DNA and how to better balance our animal drive with our spiritual yearnings

10th Annual Winter Birthright Trip Dec 2-13

Chabad on Campus National Shabbaton Oct 23-25 Brooklyn, NY

Career Conversations

Welcoming back two young alums to talk about their post Dartmouth careers, lessons they have learnt and how Judaism has played a role.

These are just some of the things going on this term at Dartmouth. For more information or to be informed about other events please sign up to for our list by e-mailing Chabad@Dartmouth.edu Or visit our Website at www.dartmouthchabad.com

Please Visit our website at

www.DartmouthChabad.com

Stay informed and up to date is easier then ever with the goings on at Chabad at Dartmouth.

Please Donate online at our website, save a stamp.

Fostering Jewish Life at Dartmouth

From the Directors

Dear Friends,

Today my children started school after a fun filled summer. As many of you know they attend the Chabad online school, a cutting edge educational program that is at the forefront of online education. One of the benefits is it of course allows us to keep our kids at home for many more years than otherwise. As we approach Rosh Hashanah and we make New Year resolutions let's be %adical+and %anovative+in our service of God. Today is an age where there are multiple mediums in which to have influence and to do good. Let us utilize all of these for good, Facebook, Instagram etc. The internet, computers and satellites were created for the spreading of goodness and kindness. Just as the Online school was a bold move 9 years ago let's make 5776 a year of %adical, bold and innovative+in our Jewish education and observance.

Wishing you all a Shana Tova Umetuka

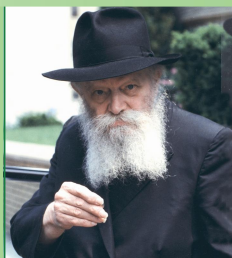
- Rabbi Moshe and Chani Gray



The Rebbe...

The second point which I emphasize also in conversations with communal workers in other countries, but which is especially important in the U.S.A. because of its largest Jewish community in the world, has to do with education. There is an urgent need for a radical change in the approach to the educational needs of the Jewish community. The problem of *Jewish education* is so vital and urgent in the present day, that conventional methods cannot be applied. If there was a time when programs and projects were determined by available funds, the method must now be reversed: to ascertain, first, the necessary program, and then seek the funding. Even if this would entail a deficit in the first year or two, it is certain that it would eventually be covered. Experience on the American scene has amply borne this out, namely, that where a project was considered vitally important, the financial means for it were not lacking. Indeed, there is a simple answer to the budgetary argument: a deficit can be covered sooner or later without ill effects; but failure to meet educational needs today cannot be rectified tomorrow. Those children who, for lack of facilities, fall prey to the alienating forces of the environment are irretrievably lost. One cannot ignore the fact, if in olden days it was possible to fall back upon the good influence of the home, or even grandparents, etc. - these influences are unfortunately minimal or nonexistent in the present day and age in the U.S.A., where the young generation receives most of its influence and inspiration outside the home or synagogue.

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nity, with bonds, and care that extend beyond our immediate family and social group. Thus, when we are asking for redemption, we must indeed remember our full Jewish community, and pray for our full redemption, since we are stronger together than alone.

Spring term marked the installation of a **new speaker-series, Career Conversations at Chabad**. The first speaker for this series was Daniel Mark, the commissioner of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom and current visiting professor of Political Science at Princeton University. Professor Mark's visit first included a lecture open to the public titled "Why We Can't Defeat ISIS: Civilization vs. Barbarism in an Age of Democratic Peace." In it, he discussed how factors of the United States' current social composition and moral imperatives affect policy decisions for combating extremism abroad. The lecture was well received and saw Professor Mark stay afterward to continue an informal dialogue with interested students. The following evening, Professor Mark led a dinner discussion at the Chabad House on Torah and Politics, in which he argued that Abraham was the first politician during the Sacrifice of Isaac. Again, Professor Mark led an engaging discussion, which captivated students and fostered insightful and original dialogue, accomplishing an explicit goal of this new series.

Dartmouth has taken an important step to accommodate religious Jewish students by providing manual keys to Shomer Shabbat (or Sabbath Observant) students. When applying for housing new and current students will have the option to submit a form requesting special considerations for Shabbat Observance. This advancement allows students who are unable to use their key cards on electric locks to access their dormitory buildings. Chabad at Dartmouth applauds The College's decision to improve opportunity Jewish observance and hopes to see Dartmouth continue in this path of accommodation.

I cannot speak highly enough of **Sinai Scholars**. Much like every other Dartmouth student, I have a thousand commitments every week that seem to weigh me down: homework, clubs, Greek life, the list never seems to end. So when Rabbi Gray asked me to sign up for Sinai Scholars, I thought I would be adding just another item to check off the list at the end of the day. By the end of the first lesson, however, it was clear that this was not the case.

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Sinai Scholars Reflection: Leah Alpern '18



I took the Spring 2015 Sinai Scholars class at Dartmouth College by the narrowest of margins. In fact, I think I may have signed up *after* the deadline, but by some act (perhaps of God!) I was able to sign up. The course was *interesting*, in many ways, and I use that word purposely for its almost humorously frustrating ambiguity. I was raised attending a Conservative synagogue in Portland, Oregon, but I think that conservative in Portland, while it may be religiously so, is fully reform in its social values. My congregation was the kind of liberal and supportive community that, based on stories from my friends from other parts of the country, is more characteristic of reform synagogues elsewhere. My lesbian parents were accepted members. My Jewish camp in Washington was the same way, extremely open to all types of people and interpretations of Judaism, despite its Conservative label and tradition. I give this information to make my relationship with my Jewish community clear so that my experience with Sinai Scholars is in context. While I enjoyed the course and found it thought-provoking, I did at times find it a bit too strict in interpretation of the *ōrightō* kind of Jewish life, and not open enough to other interpretations and ways of living the faith.

Though I found Sinai Scholars too one-sided for my taste, I do think that the Chabad rabbi at Dartmouth is a wonderful spiritual teacher and

teacher of the class. Rabbi Gray is young, and I did feel like with Sinai Scholars students were able to freely speak their mindō though the Sinai Scholars books pushed one opinion, the classroom setting was not one in which other opinions were taboo even to speak of. The diversity of Jewish backgrounds of the kids in the class and the rabbis' openness to and enjoyment of discussion made that clear. I did sometimes feel like the most liberal kid in the class sometimes, which led to feelings of stress and unwelcomness. This dampened my experience. Socially, I recommend that the course be even more open, so that people of all labels in secular society may be able to forge a deeper spiritual understanding together, but perhaps an orthodox class is not the best place to expect this. However, my favorite, and I think the most powerful part of Sinai Scholars, was the class where we discussed the existence of God, and the ramifications of such belief or non-belief, on that nature of God and humanity, and a Jewish and spiritual way of life. These philosophical discussions made me aware that the *ōis there or isn't thereō* debate about God is much deeper and nuanced than I had realized before, it's more than a showdown between science and religion, and there are far more answers than the two that are black and white. This conversation allowed me to question my own *ōspiritualityō*. I call it this rather than faith because I think it allows for more conceptions of the divine than the traditional monotheistic *ōold man in the skyō* conception of God. Past this conception is what Sinai Scholars helped lead me into beginning to develop, but I am thankful that the class touches on a part of humanityō religionō which is so often misunderstood, and touches on it in an open way that allows for introspection and respect to be given to religion.

Overall, I don't think that Sinai Scholars made me *ōmore Jewishō*, and I still have millions of questions about Judaism. The course opened me to the truism that even Judaism is not just one thing, it's defined differently by the different traditions. The relative social orthodoxy of Sinai Scholars showed me that my synagogue and Chabad see the Jewish family structure as something very different. However, the class made me realize also that these differences can be understood as surface, as differences of label. They're only cosmetic. While my family may look different than the typical Chabad family, the Chabad orthodox tradition still provided me with a class and an opportunity to explore Judaism philosophically and religiously, personally and publicly with my peers, in a way that keeps the tradition and faith alive in my mind, and keeps Judaism still a large, if forever partially-understood, part of me.



A Return to Hanover: The 10s 5-Year Reunion

Time flies doesn't it? Five years ago us 10s said goodbye to Hanover and headed out

into the world. I have moved to Colorado to pursue a Ph.D. in environmental philosophy. Being out West has been great for me, but one of the biggest things that came from leaving Hanover was a realization of how special the Dartmouth community is. Heading back to Hanover this past June to celebrate to Class of 2010 five-year reunion was a wonderful celebration of this fact.

Dartmouth creates a supportive environment and imbues us students with a sense of place and of community, **for those of us who found our way to Chabad, the Rabbi and Chani were a huge part of this Dartmouth home.**

On Friday night, just as reunion was kicking off, we gathered at Chabad, catching up, remembering, and rejoicing in that place that is so special to us. One thing that a fellow 10 said felt particularly poignant to me. He said that even though all us Chabad 10s don't necessarily stay in the best of touch, and even though we weren't all the most active of friends outside of 22 School St, he felt just as close to us as to anyone at Dartmouth. I think this feeling is true for all of us who pass through the Chabad dinner table. We share a home away from home and a vital experience that gave us the strength, wisdom, and where-with-all to succeed in the world.

Cheers to the 10-year-reunion, I know where I'll be on Friday night

Term in Pictures



Sinai Scholars is anything but another obligation to check off the list. On the first day, Rabbi Gray asked us to go around the room and speak about our Jewish education. While every other student described their bar and bat mitzvahs or Jewish day school experience, I admitted I had no formal Jewish education despite my weekly conversations over coffee with Rabbi Gray. I thought this would put me at a huge disadvantage, but I didn't realize that the course isn't a test of Jewish knowledge, **but instead a challenge to grow in your Judaism regardless of prior exposure.**

The class that intrigued me most focused on purpose. Like most students who are approaching the end of their college career, I have been struggling with how to live purposefully. Will I find meaning in life if I accept a job on Wall Street, or should I sign up for the Peace Corps? This class taught me how to differentiate between purpose and meaning while reconciling my daily actions with my desire to affect others positively. **At the end of this class, however, I decided a two hour class wasn't sufficient time to discuss a topic of this importance. Rabbi Gray agreed and came up with a solution: JLI Soul Maps. In the Fall, Rabbi Gray will lead a new class that continues our discussion on purpose and identity.**

On Friday night before Dartmouth commencement, graduating seniors and their families gathered at Chabad to share a delicious Shabbat dinner together, celebrate their accomplishments, and give thanks to the Gray's, for all of their care and guidance over the years. During dinner, students shared personal experiences from their time spent at Chabad. **Several of them reflected on the delightful community that they found at Shabbat dinners, which kept them coming back week after week.** Many also shared stories from traveling to Israel with Rabbi Gray—including anecdotes of navigating a snowy Jerusalem during the 2014 winter Birthright trip. Other highlights included taking Sinai Scholars, doing Crossfit workouts, and grabbing coffee with Rabbi Gray or Chani during the week. Several Chabad board members attended the event with their families including the **president of the board, Talia Shoshany, who was named Valedictorian of the class of 2015.** On a campus with a very small Jewish population (400 students), Chabad has united Jewish students, creating a community of people who all know each other and are proud and supportive of one another. I feel lucky to have been part of such a group and I look forward to visiting often in the years to come. Chabad at Dartmouth will always be a home away from home.