

We are

# Associated

DEDICATING THE  
KEHILLAT KADIMA  
WALL OF HONOUR

**OUR NEW  
STRATEGIC PLAN**

**AHS ALUMNI IN THE IDF**



A Great SCHOOL



# Our NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

— FROM THE  
ASSOCIATED BOARD  
OF DIRECTORS

In early 2013, Associated began a process leading to the adoption of a new **Strategic Plan** in May 2014. The process began with the creation of our new Mission, Vision & Value Statements. The purpose of the **Strategic Plan** is to set priorities for the school, which in turn guide the decisions on how to allocate resources. At its highest level, our **Strategic Plan** details the measures necessary to ensure strong prospects for Associated and to enable the school to maintain its leadership position in Toronto and North America. The goal of the **Strategic Plan** is not only to articulate plans for the school's direction, but also to define the actions needed to get there. | **Associated's Strategic Plan has five areas of focus:**

## EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

A hallmark of the Associated experience must be excellent academic programs. As detailed in the **Strategic Plan**, the school is committed to continued enhancements and improvements in order to be a world-class centre of Jewish education.

Initiatives that support this commitment include the School Improvement Plan and the Elementary Enhancement Plan.

The areas of focus for the School Improvement Plan in the 2014/2015 academic year include assessment techniques that engage students in their learning goals, enhancing feedback to students and providing assignments with a greater focus on mirroring real-life situations.

The Elementary Enhancement Plan focuses on incorporating best practices to further improve the school's literacy and math programs. This program is generously supported by the Parent Teacher Council (PTC). It includes the appointment of literacy and math department heads at the elementary branches who work with teachers to improve classroom methods and provide professional development for teachers.

## FACILITIES

Throughout its long history, Associated has continued to adapt its programs and facilities to the changing needs of the Jewish community – and current times are no different. The **Strategic Plan** is focused on being responsive to the distinct realities in both the north and south communities. In particular, plans are being implemented to review the program and market needs of the community in Vaughan with a focus on retention and recruitment initiatives. In the south, Associated's enrollment growth necessitates a focus on solutions for addressing the school's space limitations.

## FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

One of Associated's core values is to make Jewish education financially accessible to the largest number of children possible. The school is in a solid financial position and the **Strategic Plan** is focused on measures designed to enhance this position. In particular, a future focus will be on increasing Associated's endowment to ensure the school's continued viability.

## ADVANCEMENT

Enhancing Associated's fundraising capacity is a key initiative of the **Strategic Plan**, with the goal of ensuring the long-term sustainability of the school. This is currently underway through various fundraising campaigns and initiatives including:

- Kadima, the school's annual campaign, supporting excellence and innovation at Associated, and
- Kehillat Kadima, a new initiative, encouraging support of our annual Kadima campaign with a pledge commitment of three years to ensure stable funding.

The school is fortunate to already have many long-standing scholarship and endowment funds established by members of our community. The interest income generated from these funds is a financial resource for Associated. Growing these funds and establishing new ones will enable the school to extend its financial assistance.

## GOVERNANCE & PLANNING

The **Strategic Plan** lays out measures to increase the effectiveness of Associated's board and its decision making abilities. One element is to review the board committee structure and make necessary enhancements to maximize its efficacy. This includes updating bylaws to reflect the enhancements. Another element is committing to the Strategic Planning process and perpetually reviewing and completing a new strategic plan every three to five years.



**If you have questions or comments about the Strategic Plan at Associated, please contact Mayeer Pearl, [president@ahschools.com](mailto:president@ahschools.com)**

*We are Associated* is published by Associated Hebrew Schools of Toronto and is distributed to over 8,000 members of the community including parents, grandparents, alumni and supporters.

ASSOCIATED HEBREW SCHOOLS OF TORONTO  
ADVANCEMENT OFFICE  
252 FINCH AVENUE WEST  
TORONTO ON M2R 1M9  
905-889-3998, EXT 544

EDITORS: CHUCK ENGLISH, ELYSA GREISMAN '82  
CONTRIBUTORS: RABBI RAFI CASHMAN, SHAUNA KIPPER '98,  
SIDURA LUDWIG, NOAH SHELSON, ELANA SHAPIRO '87, KAREN SITNIK  
DESIGN: LYNN STANLEY, GRAPHIC DIRECTIONS  
PHOTOGRAPHY: ORNA DANJOUX WOLFE

[associatedhebrewschools.com](http://associatedhebrewschools.com)



DR. MARK SMILEY '72

## Pesach and Our Strategic Plan

Perhaps it's not coincidental that we introduce our new Strategic Plan in the Pesach issue of *We Are Associated*. More than a celebration of our freedom, Pesach marks the birth of a nation – *Am Yisrael*. Having attained a national identity, the Jewish People eventually travel to Har Sinai to receive the Torah – the laws and principles that guided them and that remain the foundation of Jewish life and values today. In modern terms, Torah may represent our constitution, our bylaws, but where is the plan?

Dr. Seymour Epstein '60, acclaimed educator and former director of Toronto's Board of Jewish Education, has often said that Jewish education is the strategic plan of the Jewish People. It is the means by which we perpetuate our Jewish tradition and it provides direction to our children as they navigate a morally complex world. In the introduction to the school's strategic plan, our Board leaders explain that the plan details "the measures necessary to ensure strong prospects for Associated." There can be little doubt that Jewish education – and Jewish day school in particular – is the only means to likewise ensure strong prospects for our Jewish community.

Underlying these beliefs is our unwavering commitment to keeping Jewish education financially accessible. It is why Associated annually commits hundreds of thousands of dollars to financial assistance beyond what is provided by UJA Federation and generous funders like Julia and Henry Koschitzky. And it is why we are now harnessing additional funds to stabilize the future of Jewish education.

The Passover seder was designed to bring history to life. It is as much about the present and the future as it is the past. The seder challenges us to consider how we will keep the Jewish People strong – as individuals and as a community. Our plan for doing that must include our commitment to Jewish education.



I wish all of our families and the entire Associated community a happy and very meaningful Passover.



## L'DOR V'DOR: THE NEW GRANDPARENT INITIATIVE FROM ASSOCIATED HEBREW SCHOOLS

**CHAGIGAT KESHER** – Grandparents celebrated and learned alongside their grandchildren at the new Bar/Bat Mitzvah program from the Danilack Middle School.



### GRADE 1 SIDDIR CEREMONY

Grandparents were personally invited to watch as their grandchildren reached an important milestone and received their first siddur.



### BET HAYELED CHANUKAH CELEBRATION

Grandparents joined their grandchildren for singing, dancing and candle lighting.

**DON'T MISS OUT** on future exciting Grandparent events and programs.

**SIGN UP** for the NEW L'Dor V'Dor Grandparent Newsletter at [associatedhebrewschools.com/grandparents/contact](http://associatedhebrewschools.com/grandparents/contact)

# Lessons Learned

By Sidura Ludwig

One of Edward Prutschi's ('88) strongest memories of his time at Associated was a saying his Grade 5 English teacher, Mrs. Wynne, had up on the wall at the front of the class:

**“WRONG IS WRONG,  
EVEN IF EVERYBODY'S  
DOING IT. RIGHT IS RIGHT  
EVEN IF NOBODY  
IS DOING IT.”**

“You were responsible for your own conduct. Whether that was good conduct or bad. She lived by that constantly,” he recalls.



(left to right)  
Dana Prutschi, Zimri, Leora  
and Edward Prutschi

**Flash forward 30 years**, and as one of Toronto's most recognizable criminal lawyers, Prutschi says that's a lesson he still lives by today.

“What it says at its core is that there are things we know to be right, know to be wrong. And even though there are complexities, and certainly my clients have pushed many of those shades of grey, I try to maintain that moral core. It is a lesson that I use all the time.”

In fact, many of the lessons Prutschi learned from his time at Associated are lessons he integrates into his very busy life. He is a partner in his law firm, Adler, Bytensky, Prutschi, Shikhman; a regular television and radio law commentator; the chair of the board of Hillel of Greater

Toronto; an active dad to two daughters and an avid travel writer.

“A kid who has grown up managing twice the curriculum in a compressed school day learns by necessity to juggle a lot of life's balls at all times,” he says, and then adds, “Occasionally I drop one but I've learned if you're quick enough to grab it on the first bounce, people hardly notice.”

Central to that juggle is the integration of Jewish values in everything he does, which also links back to his years as an AHS student. “It wasn't like going to *Tanakh* class was the only place where you were exercising the Jewish part of your brain,” he says. “The constant intermingling of Jewish values with everything we did is something I really value today. It's not something you can accomplish in any environment other than a full-day Jewish day school program.”

When it came time for him and his wife Dana to choose the school that would provide the best lessons for their two daughters, Zimri and Leora, Prutschi says the choice was obvious. They are both students at the Kamin Education Centre.

**“For me, this was about being able to be a passionate, successful secularist, and a spiritual, engaged, fulfilled Jew. There are not many places where I think that can happen. Associated is one of those magical places.”**

Allan's parents: Jack z"l and Anne Weinbaum



ALLAN WEINBAUM '71  
REFLECTS ON  
ASSOCIATED  
AND ITS  
CENTRE  
FOR DIVERSE  
LEARNING

IT'S ALL ABOUT

community

By Chuck English

**"The sense of community that came from that school is astonishing."**

Those are among the first words out of **Allan Weinbaum's** mouth when asked to reflect on his time as a student at Associated. It's no coincidence then that Allan is truly a man of the community – completely comfortable at the widest range of synagogues and involved in fundraising efforts that span the breadth of organizations. It's an outlook that is becoming increasingly rare and Allan explicitly attributes his community mindedness to the lessons he learned while at Associated.

That same sense of community was a major driver behind the Weinbaum family's foundational support of Associated's Centre for Diverse Learning (CDL). As Allan puts it, "the beauty of the CDL is its ability to integrate students into the system and make them part of the community of learners."

In 2007, it was the Weinbaums' very generous gift that facilitated the inauguration of the CDL and has sustained it on an annual basis. The CDL focuses on students with a broad range of learning needs by providing broad-based and integrative support. Staffed by experts in special

education, the CDL extends beyond its groundbreaking work with students by training teachers and providing resources to parents – all with the goal of ensuring that all students are members of the school community.

Allan is empathetic toward the students and parents that are served by the CDL. "It's easy to fall behind," he says recalling his own experience at Associated. He is quick to acknowledge the tremendous support that he received from his mother who was a Hebrew teacher. "At some point most students struggle. Not all of us are academic all-stars, but it's so important that we all have personal expectations of success."

As Allan sees it, the CDL goes beyond just supporting individual students and their families. "It is raising the level of Jewish education," he says "and enhancing the whole experience." The broad impact of the program makes his support very satisfying. "We can see the process of Jewish education being improved while seeing individual families benefitting." He also sees the CDL as the

way of the future – not just at Associated but throughout the community. "Hopefully ten years from now we'll be able to speak about the CDL at other schools and in other cities."

A discussion of Allan's philanthropic spirit quickly turns to his parents. Talking about his father Jack, who was a Holocaust survivor and passed away recently, he says, "After the War, he never hated. He always looked forward." Reflecting on his father's legendary philanthropy in the community, Allan recalls, "He was never concerned about being separated from his money. He liked to give it away and he never worried about recognition."

Allan says that the main reason that his father established a charitable foundation was that he wanted the family to be involved in philanthropy forever.

••• Through his support of Associated's CDL and other projects, Allan is well on his way to fulfilling his father's wishes.



DANILACK STUDENTS LEARNED TORAH TEXTS WITH THEIR GRANDPARENTS

# Families

## ...Bringing Jewish Learning to Life

by **Rabbi Rafi Cashman**,  
Principal, Danilack Middle School  
and **Karen Sitnik**, Principal,  
Kamin Education Centre

**ONE THURSDAY MORNING**, at the Danilack Middle School, we were joined by a family celebrating their son's bar mitzvah. This was not simply the day that he turned 13 and had his first *aliyah* to the Torah – the family was celebrating its entire synagogue experience with our Grade 7 *minyan*. After the bar mitzvah boy read from the Torah (quite beautifully!) and we danced a celebratory *horah*, one of his aunts turned away from the group and began to cry. After a time she turned and walked back to the *bima* and said, "It's so beautiful to see our traditions passed down to the next generation. Did you know that that the bar mitzvah boy wore his grandfather's tallis?"

Associated often occupies a privileged space between our students, their families, and the community we share and build together. This is reflected not just in the kind of moments described above, when families come to share their most important life-cycle experiences with us, but when we come together to celebrate the Jewish learning and life the Associated community strives for.

As a pointed example, on the Motzai Shabbat of

Shabbat Shira the **Posluns** community gathered to experience the marvelous integration of Torah, Midrash, nature and mitzvot – with the entire family. In keeping with the tradition of singing more songs than usual on this special Shabbat, we had a musical Havdalah led by our Grade 3 students. Usually when we get together, parents come to watch the kids – but on that night we shook things up and everyone participated! After a beautiful Havdalah, our talented parents and students performed and enjoyed a *melaveh malka* together. After the event, one grandparent wrote to us and said, "This was a beautiful and meaningful moment in time that captured the true heart of Associated's Jewish life and values. The children shone, as did the teachers, parents and grandparents. We are a community and not just a school!!! You really felt that emanating from this special celebration."

At **Danilack**, becoming a bar or bat mitzvah is a communal celebration which we refer to as our Chagigat Keshet. Chagigat Keshet is designed as a family experience,



STUDENTS AND PARENTS WERE ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS IN

TAMAR SWERLING (BOTH A PARENT AND TEACHER AT KAMIN), HER SON GAVIN SHAPIRO AND HIS GRANDMOTHER ZIPIORA SHAPIRO AT A MIDOR L'DOR BET HAYELED CELEBRATION



with an opportunity for parent/grandparent-child learning, a joining of the generations, as part of our celebration. *Kesher* means 'connection', and so we take it as an opportunity to honour our students, celebrate with their families, and support each of our *b'nai mitzvah* as they learn about the connections they can make to their family, school, community, and the Jewish future they are creating. One of the highlights of this program is the opportunity for students to learn Torah in *chavruta* pairs with their parents and grandparents. A grandfather and his granddaughter had a particularly intense discussion, and he noted afterward, "Rabbi, I didn't agree with my granddaughter in how she read the text we were learning – but what a thrill to learn and debate together!" This moment is the beginning of our students' Jewish journey, and we use this quarterly celebration to help them and their families on their way.

At **Kamin** this year, our school-wide theme has been MiDor L'Dor (From Generation to Generation) – Connecting Our Past with Our Future. Our students learned about their family history through stories, photographs, and the traditions that have been passed on from generation to generation. In Grade 2, students performed a dynamic and interactive Shabbat program for families to make this connection come alive. As part of the preparation for their Shabbat program the students baked challahs with their grandparents. They learned and preformed the mitzvah of "*hafrashat challah*" (separation of the challah) together, hearing stories and making connections new and old. There's nothing like bonding over delicious smelling challah!

Our sages and sacred texts have taught us throughout Jewish history that the family is the central vehicle for the transmission of our Jewish heritage and values. By meaningfully involving our Associated families in the Jewish experiences of their children and grandchildren, **we are bringing Jewish learning to life and inspiring the next generation.**



THE GRADE 3 HAVDALAH PROGRAM

## WHY WE CHOSE Associated

*Associated welcomes hundreds of new families each year. Here is one family's story.*

**Simone and Benjamin Reitzes** may originally have chosen Associated Cedarvale because it was in the right place at the right time, but they have now become committed Associated parents. Last year, their son, Aaron, was attending a preschool program and driving logistics became difficult. Cedarvale, which is located at Beth Sholom Synagogue, was closer and Simone's first meeting with branch coordinator Leah Levy was very positive – so, Aaron became a nursery student at the school.

In thinking about where Aaron would attend JK, Simone and Benjamin considered their own mirror-image educational experiences. Simone attended elementary school at USDS and then public high school. Benjamin did the opposite, attending public elementary school and then (Tanenbaum) CHAT. Based on that, they decided that Jewish day school was essential to Aaron's formative years. After looking at a number of schools, they chose Associated Posluns. "The more traditional religious philosophy and the community feel at the school is what attracted us," explains Simone.

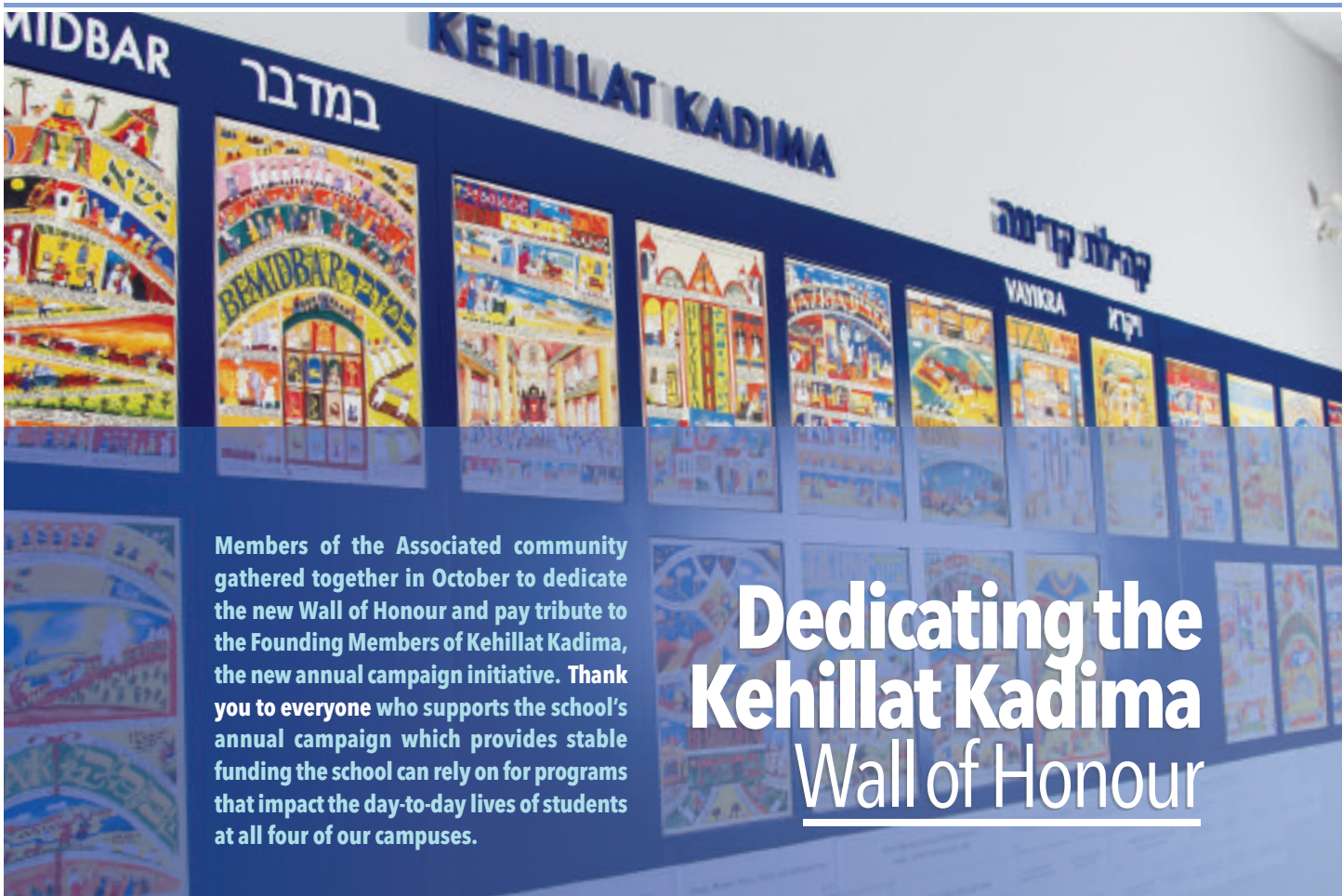


*The Reitzes family:  
(l to r) Benjamin, Noah,  
Aaron and Simone*

Today, they are "super happy" with their Posluns experience. "You can tell that Aaron is learning a lot," says Simone. "He is spelling and sounding out words and on top of that his Hebrew is almost better than mine. He corrects me if I pronounce a word incorrectly." Both parents are impressed that having come from the very small family feel of Cedarvale, they feel just as much at home at Posluns.

This year, their younger son, Noah, is in the Mini Mensch & Beyond program at Cedarvale and according to Simone, "his progress has been pretty amazing for a two-and-a-half year-old. He is speaking in sentences and came home singing Purim songs – in Hebrew." She says that Leah and the staff at Cedarvale are incredibly warm and very talented. The plan is for Noah to stay at Cedarvale for Nursery and then join his brother Aaron at Posluns for JK.

**FOR THE REITZES FAMILY WHAT BEGAN AS A MATTER OF CONVENIENCE HAS BECOME A VERY IMPORTANT PART OF THEIR LIVES.**



Members of the Associated community gathered together in October to dedicate the new Wall of Honour and pay tribute to the Founding Members of Kehillat Kadima, the new annual campaign initiative. Thank you to everyone who supports the school's annual campaign which provides stable funding the school can rely on for programs that impact the day-to-day lives of students at all four of our campuses.

# Dedicating the Kehillat Kadima Wall of Honour



Left (l-r):  
 Gilad Abrahami (parent),  
 Gabi Weisfeld (grandparent  
 and generous supporter),  
 Henry Koschitzky (Past  
 President and major donor)  
 Right: Guests were treated  
 to a performance by The  
 Danilack Glee Club



"We pride ourselves in being the 'community' school and put great value in the support we receive from donors at all levels, from all parts of the community... donors who share our vision that every Jewish child deserves a Jewish education regardless of their family's ability to pay... and to ensure that the education provided is of the highest calibre possible. Our donors are the backbone of our Associated community... our own very special Kehilla."

**Mayeer Pearl '88, President, Board of Directors**  
 (pictured above with wife, Stacey Shein)

"As an Associated grandparent, I feel it is vitally important for us to support the school to ensure the children of this community receive a Jewish education and learn about their heritage, tradition and culture for generations to come."

**Frank Wilson, Associated grandparent**

"As a teacher at Associated, I feel it is important to strengthen this community; a community that is so warm, inclusive, welcoming, that teaches arachim (values), love for Israel, and Ivrit. This is why my family and I feel so strongly about making this donation to support Kadima. Supporting such a remarkable cause is extremely gratifying and rewarding to the point where giving is truly receiving."

**Nelly Levy, Kamin Education Centre Teacher**  
 (pictured with husband, Shay Levy)





Above: Board Presidents (Current and Past) (l-r) – Louis Greenbaum, Henry Koschitzky, Sheldon Goodman '67, Sally Zigler, Mayeer Pearl '88, David Wm. Brown '70  
Absent: Sheldon Carr, Harry Krakowsky and Les Scheininger

*Kehillat Kadima is a program, established in 2014/5774, that encourages support of our annual Kadima campaign at any level for three years. The campaign provides stable funding for the school in support of programs that impact the day-to-day lives of students at all of our campuses. Associated Hebrew Schools is grateful to all the sponsors listed on this beautiful Wall of Honour. The wall is decorated with an "Illustrated Torah", created by Israeli artist Michal Meron and will inspire students for generations.*



**Join our growing list of supporters**

[associatedhebrewschools.com/kehillat](http://associatedhebrewschools.com/kehillat)  
or call 905-889-3998 ext. 544

קהילת קדימה  
**Kehillat Kadima**



## Associated Welcomes



*Brucha Haba'ah*

# Shirley Granovsky

Above: Julia Koschitzky (left) welcomes Shirley Granovsky

**Shirley Granovsky** was formally welcomed to the Associated Family as part of the Kehillat Kadima Community Celebration. Shirley's generous gift in support of tuition assistance will continue to help the school fulfill its mission of ensuring that this excellent Jewish day school experience remains financially accessible to the greatest possible number of families.

Julia Koschitzky, long-time supporter of the school and good friend of Shirley and her late husband, Phil, z"l, extended a warm "*brucha haba'ah*". She spoke of the Granovskys' long-time support of the Jewish community and expressed how proud she and her husband, Henry, are to formally welcome Shirley to our community.

"Shirley never forgets her past and will forever be grateful to Associated for the financial assistance given to them in the early years. This compassion enabled three of their children to benefit from a strong Jewish education... the same kind of education that her husband, Phil, received as a youngster when he attended the Brunswick Talmud Torah. And as an expression of her deep sense of *hakarat hatov* (gratitude) she in turn is now reaching out to Associated as the Torah says: 'With an outstretched arm and an open hand.' Her extraordinary, generous gift will ensure a bright promising future for other youngsters so that they too will have the privilege to learn about their strong Jewish heritage, traditions and culture."

# Mazel Tov



## BIRTHS

**Emmy Lyla Weber** (left), daughter of **Ashley (Levinson) Weber '97** and Jeffrey Weber

**Ezra Hillel Shalom Cutler**, son of **Adam '96** and Debra Cutler

**Asriel Moshe Tzvi (Clark Grayson)** (right), son of **Jessica (Kadoche) Davis** and **Jaron Davis '95**



## Engagements & Weddings

**Simone Buslovich '04** engaged to Michael Cadesky (above, left)

**Robyn Goldmacher '03** engaged to Andrew Wayne (above, center)

**Robbie Just '00** married **Allysa Moses '04** (above, right)

## YASHER KOACH

**Gav Martel '93** (left) was a contestant on season 2 of MasterChef Canada



# Alumni

...we want to hear from **YOU!**

Your Nachas is our Nachas!  
Let us know about your special milestones and achievements.  
Send us an email at [alumni@ahschools.com](mailto:alumni@ahschools.com)

Make sure your information is up to date:  
[associatedhebrewschools.com/alumni/form](http://associatedhebrewschools.com/alumni/form)

# Then & Now

**ELANA SHAPIRO '87, PRINCIPAL  
POSLENS EDUCATION CENTRE**



Associated was and is one of the only places I call home outside of my family home. Throughout my life, Associated has been a place of learning, inspiration and growth. I am most grateful to my dear parents who valued a Jewish education and worked hard to ensure that my brothers and I received one. Every day, I feel at home in the Associated community, privileged to have learned there, send my children here and to lead the Posluns campus.

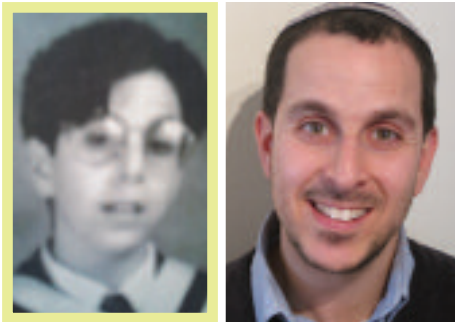
**HYLA (KOCHBERG) POLLAK '82**



The core five of us became a "group" in grade 4 and have been friends every since. Back in the day, pyramids were just what you did at parties, from birthday parties, to bar mitzvahs. We made it a point of making a pyramid at each of our weddings and continued the tradition at our own kids' simchas (much to our kids' chagrin!). So, as long as we're capable of completing the pyramid (we always need a 6th add-on – and without actually killing ourselves!) we'll continue the tradition.

*Left photo: Bottom 1 to r: Sari Bell '82, Veronica (Berkovits) Ungerman '82, Yvette Erdos-Levine '82; Middle row 1 to r: Hyla (Kochberg) Pollak '82, Cari (Kozierok) Bahar, '82; Top: Moya Flancman '82  
Right photo: Bottom 1 to r: Cari (Kozierok) Bahar, Yvette Erdos-Levine, Cindy (Kozierok) Joseph; Middle row 1 to r: Moya Flancman, Veronica (Berkovits) Ungerman; Top: Hyla (Kochberg) Pollak*

**RABBI SHAANAN SCHERER '92  
JEWISH STUDIES TEACHER, DANILACK MIDDLE SCHOOL**



It is very special to me to be part of the Associated faculty. Being at Associated is very much like being at home. My family has been with AHS since the 1940s, when my immigrant grandparents sent my mother and uncle to AHS on Brunswick Avenue. Not only did my mother learn at AHS, but she taught phys ed for over 30 years here. I have memories of being a kindergarten student in the Hurwich building and now I am teaching here. It is a real privilege.

**NEAL WOLK '87**



My greatest memory of Associated is my Grade 4 teacher, Mrs. Elaine Blattman encouraging me to join the media club and learn about loading movies onto a projector and adjusting sound levels. That stuck with me. I fell in love with media from that day forward and it led me to a career that I have been enjoying now for well over 15 years.

**ELYSE (ADAMS) TYTEL '82**



My husband Mark Tytel and I were in the same nursery class at Associated. Mark left AHS after Grade 3 and we didn't meet again until we were in our mid twenties. I came across the photo above at his mother's when I was pregnant with our first child. I asked her why she had my nursery school photo and she told me it was Mark's class picture! Coincidentally we were introduced by an Associated alumna – my best friend, Marlene Baranek '82.

# Chayalim: Associated Alumni in the IDF



THROUGHOUT ASSOCIATED'S HISTORY, WE HAVE ACTIVELY DEDICATED OURSELVES TO THE STATE OF ISRAEL AND ATTACHED OURSELVES TO OUR ISRAELI BROTHERS AND SISTERS. NOTHING SPEAKS MORE STRONGLY TO THAT COMMITMENT THAN THE EXTRAORDINARY NUMBER OF OUR ALUMNI WHO HAVE SERVED IN THE IDF. IN THIS ISSUE OF *WE ARE ASSOCIATED* WE PRESENT REFLECTIONS FROM FOUR RECENT ALUMNI WHO ARE NOW SERVING "THEIR COUNTRY."



**IN THE ARMY I SERVED AS A COMMANDER IN THE EDUCATION UNIT.** I taught classes about Judaism in a program for soldiers who wish to convert to Judaism. Throughout my service and life in Israel, I always think back to my Grade 7 *Ivrit* class when Giveret Zorer taught us Hebrew grammar to such finite detail as we all rolled our eyes. I am so thankful for those lessons – for each and every *mapik*, *dagesh*, and *chataf patach*. Because knowing how to speak the Hebrew language made it possible for me to live in Israel, my home.

*Nava Rosen*'06

**I'M CURRENTLY IN THE PARATROOPERS BRIGADE.** I joined the army because I don't believe there is any difference between 18 and 19 year olds living in Israel (besides the Canadian manners, that I'm trying to bring over) protecting our land and myself living in Toronto.

Associated provided me with the building blocks and foundations of being a proud Zionist and doing whatever it takes to be a part of the Jewish people in the Land of the Jewish people.

*Dani Zarek*'06



**I AM A MEDICAL ADMINISTRATOR IN THE INFIRMARY OF THE IRON DOME UNIT.** My motivation for joining the army was Zionism – plain and simple. I wanted to serve my country in a concrete way. I felt it would help me better understand Israeli culture and give me a chance to explore and test my Zionist values like never before.

I truly credit Associated for my level and understanding of Hebrew. The language skills I learned and developed in elementary and middle school have been an important and fundamental contributor to my success in Israel and the IDF. I believe my early childhood memories from school, such as *Yom Ha'atzmaut* celebrations or *Yom Hazikaron* and *Yom Hashoah* ceremonies provided me with a sense of pride and connection to the Jewish state and people that has followed me into adulthood.

*Elysa Keshen*'05

Photo: Elysa Keshen with her parents Bryan and Belinda and brother Elan



**I AM A COMBAT SOLDIER IN FIELD INTELLIGENCE.** I guard the Egyptian and Jordanian border. I decided to join the army to contribute to Israel in a meaningful way and help defend the Jewish homeland. My Zionist knowledge and beliefs as well as my love for the State of Israel can all be attributed to my time at Associated.

*Pnina Brown*'06

Photo: Pnina Brown with her grandfather Al G. Brown



The Sonshines  
(l to r): Brady,  
Jonathan, Carter,  
Alison and Payton

# Passing On a LEGACY

For Alison Fields-Sonshine '93 and her husband Jonathan Sonshine, choosing Jewish day school was about continuing the legacy of their eight grandparents who all came to Canada as Holocaust survivors.

By Sidura Ludwig

"These people fought so hard to get through the war as Jewish people, with their Jewish identity," she says. "It was so important to them to raise Jewish homes and Jewish education was vital. Without education it's too easy to assimilate and to forget who we are."

When it came time to decide which school to send their three young children to, Fields-Sonshine wanted her children's educational experience to mirror her own.

"I had such a wonderful experience at Associated and Jonathan also went to Associated. I couldn't imagine sending them anywhere else," she recalls. "It gave [me] a very good basis for understanding who we are as a Jewish people

and what it means to be Jewish. There are a lot of different levels of Judaism, but at Associated you get to see all of that in the community. It was very important to us for our children to be around that."

Fields-Sonshine is an endodontist at Thornhill Endodontics. She says she was attracted to dentistry because of her love of math and science, which started at Associated.

After doing her undergraduate degree at York, and then her dental and endodontics specialty in New York, Fields-Sonshine returned to Toronto with her husband in 2007 to start her career and raise her family. Her oldest child, Carter, is in senior kindergarten at Posluns. Middle son, Brady, is in nursery, and daughter, Payton, is 16 month old. Fields-Sonshine says she's thrilled to see her young children inspired by what they are learning.

"They come home and you hear how excited they are,"

she says. "They're talking about the holidays and the Judaism they're learning about, using Hebrew words. So far we've been ecstatic with the experience they've been having."

Fields-Sonshine is also a graduate of (Tanenbaum) CHAT. Her grandparents lived around the corner from the school and she remembers going to visit them for lunch and listening to their stories from the war and starting over in Canada. She knows her children are too young now to understand this part of their family history. But the love of Jewish learning they are developing is all part of her grandparents' legacy.

"So many people couldn't have dealt with what these people went through," she says. "And these eight individuals started new lives in Canada and continued what their families taught them. They didn't let it go and they fought for it. I feel like we have an obligation to them to continue on our Jewish identity."

The love of Jewish learning they are developing is all part of her grandparents' legacy.

# I Wonder..

By Elana Shapiro '87, Principal,  
Posluns Education Centre



*Preschool students examine the progress of their plants*

## Developing students' curiosity about the world around them

**At Associated**, we encourage students to wonder about the world around them and ask questions. Most would think "I wonder" statements are fairly simple. All of us who have lived with a two-year old are very familiar with question after question... Why is the sky blue? Why does ice melt? Why aren't there dinosaurs any more?

Young children ask hundreds of questions a day, yet as children mature we have seen that they develop some apprehension to wonder aloud about the world around them.

Five years ago, with the establishment of the Naiberg Science Enhancement Project, faculty members from each branch came together to form the Science & Technology PLC (professional learning community) and examine student achievement in the area of science and technology. Data collected demonstrated that our students from as early as the Bet Hayaed all the way up to Grade 8 exhibited excellent communication and

application skills in their understanding and knowledge of learned science content.

The PLC team members did however identify a need for improvement in the area of students' critical and creative thinking and problem solving skills. Simply put, we wanted our students to "wonder" every day. We wanted them to be inspired by provoking events – hands-on science experiments that are set up by the teacher and cause students to question and wonder how it happened. In that way they can connect their content knowledge and understanding beyond the walls of the school and into the world.

Teachers demonstrated to students how to ask higher level questions and how to wonder about the world around them. We discovered that students began wondering more and posting their "wonder statements" for others to read. Wonder statements can emerge from a natural occurrence like the incredible ice storm of 2014 or from a

provoking event created in school by a teacher. Before any science unit is taught, we ask students to post all questions they have about the topic.

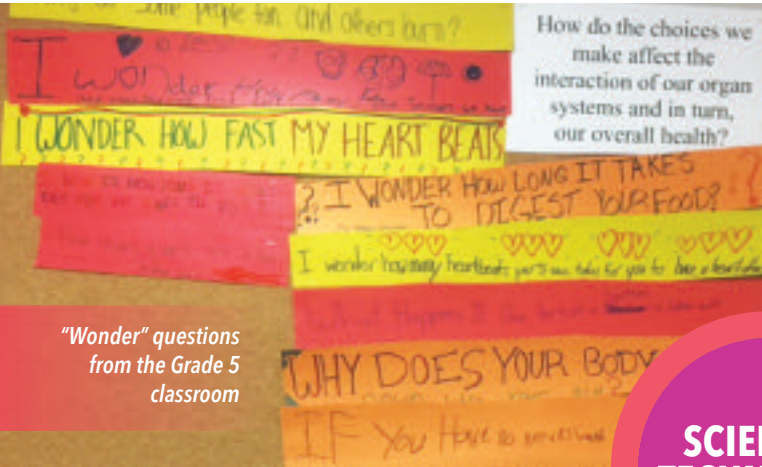
In Grade 5, students learn about human organ systems. Teachers introduced the unit by displaying a Jenga tower with a cup of water sitting on top. Students were asked to remove blocks until the tower became unstable.

Through small group discussions, teachers recorded that students related the Jenga tower to the human body, which generated conversation about how the body has many systems that need to work together. Collaboratively, teachers and students co-created an overall question as a class: "How do the choices we make affect the interaction of our organ systems and in turn our overall health." By the end of the lesson, "I wonder" questions covered the bulletin board.

After each lesson, with greater content knowledge gained, students inevitably had more



I wonder why snowflakes are different... I wonder why we bruise... I wonder how airplanes stay in the air...



"Wonder" questions from the Grade 5 classroom



## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY



Above: The new Posluns portable is lowered into place



Top, right: Students research gears and pulleys online | Above: Plants growing on the preschool discovery table

"I wonder" questions about the human body. Students raised questions about how smoking, exposure to the sun and environmental pollutants can have a detrimental impact on the body.

Our Grade 4 students began their year with a real-life example of structures and mechanisms with the new Grade 5 portable at Posluns. What better way to inspire nine and ten-year-old kids to wonder about how pulleys and gears impact our society?

Students learned to use technological problem-solving skills to design, build and test a pulley and gear system that performs a specific task. The unit began with exploring and manipulating gears. Students questioned and problem solved as to why their mechanism did or did not work. Students played online gear games, attempting to move up in increasingly challenging problem solving logic levels.

Students were given the task of using the scientific inquiry approach to investigate distance,

speed and direction by designing and building their own pulley and gear system.

In the Hebrew month of Shevat, our Bet Hayaed students wondered about trees and plants as teachers displayed pots of grass and different plants for the holiday of Tu B'Shevat. In the SK classes, the teachers set up a discovery table where students could explore, touch and manipulate seeds, soil and water. Children took a trip to the library to find related books on trees and plants, adding them to the discovery centre. Paper, pencils, markers and clipboards were used to record hypotheses and "I wonder" questions using words and pictures. Children shared their theories about what may affect the plants' growth, including the amount of water, sunlight, soil, and depth of the seed. Soon after these theories began surfacing, the children were eager to plant more seeds and test out their "I wonder" questions. Students grew peas, carrots, parsley, and cucumber plants in the classrooms, observing their growth

and discussing how different conditions affected their plants. Children analyzed and evaluated their theories and made changes to their plant's environment to promote growth.

We have documented a significant increase and improvement in students asking questions and wondering about the world around them. With these questions, we have also noted an improvement in students' ability to approach a scientific topic with a critical eye.

**When children wonder about the world around them, they become naturally curious and interested in exploring, researching and solving a problem. We want students to understand the connection between technology advancement and its connection to our natural world. At Associated, we want to graduate students with a strong understanding of scientific knowledge and skills coupled with a deep curiosity and drive to make informed choices about issues that cause them to wonder.**

Through their contribution, they are helping fulfill Associated's commitment to academic excellence and we thank them.

**Ora Shulman (below, right) and Lee-Ron Kaye (below, left) share a mantra about education: students deserve the very best from their teachers and their schools. It's not surprising that they have common philosophies about education. After all, they are mother and daughter.**



*Like mother,  
like daughter*

By Chuck English

**Ora** is a principal at the Posluns Education Centre and **Lee-Ron** is a branch coordinator at Posluns. "I don't look at her as my daughter," Ora says. "She may have to do a little more to prove herself but I see her as a member of the team and I expect her to contribute, challenge and value questions over answers." They work well together and Ora says that "often the ideas just seem to flow because we share a common vision based on respect for the kids." But at the same time she admits that she won't do Lee-Ron's evaluations and she sometimes even downplays her successes. In the end however, she believes that, "Lee-Ron's achievements will speak for themselves."

On the other hand, outside of the school environment, Ora's pride in Lee-Ron overflows. "As a parent, I take great satisfaction in what she is doing. Lee-Ron brings incredible energy and optimism to her work and I hope she never

loses those child-like qualities. Ultimately, I want her to be better than me." Ora doesn't just admire Lee-Ron as an educator. "I like the fact that Lee-Ron is comfortable in both the religious and secular worlds. And I like the mom that she is; the way she interacts with her children and the talk around her Shabbat table."

Working together has added a new dimension – a certain maturity – to their relationship. "We are close enough to reflect on things without inhibition," explains Lee-Ron. "We can have great conversations on the way home."

Lee-Ron admits she was a little uncomfortable about what to call her mom when they were at school together. "Ima wasn't a professional option but calling your mother by her first name was awkward." In the end, she decided that if everyone else can call her 'Ora,'

so could she.

Like any good mother, Ora has advice for Lee-Ron. "I tell her to take risks. I want her to always ask, 'why' and to continuously learn. She has to make what she does hers. I tell her to find meaning for herself in what she does, not in what other people do."

From Lee-Ron's perspective, the greatest lesson her mother taught her was to always strive to do her best and make a difference. "It was never about particular skills but about the values with which you approach your work," she says. Ora is clearly Lee-Ron's role model. "I hope I can make that same difference, have that same satisfaction and always see the world from the child's perspective." In fact, Ora and Lee-Ron have been working together for many, many years. When Ora was a Grade 1 teacher at Beit Rayim, Lee-Ron did volunteer work in her classroom.

*"...often the ideas just seem to flow because we share a common vision based on respect for the kids."*



# Our Student Heroes

At Associated, we recognize the obligation to actively demonstrate our concern for other people – Jew and non-Jew – and to make the world a better place. We asked parents to tell us about the volunteer efforts of their children and we received a number of submissions. Here are some examples of the wonderful ways in which Associated students are making a difference in the community and in the lives of others.



Clockwise from top: Mikayla and Jordan Wolfe with a stuffed bear they gave to ill children | Jared Subel at Out of the Cold | Ashley Hauer in front of the defibrillator provided in her honour

**Daniel (G4-Kamin) & Sarina (G1-Kamin) Benaich** through Thank Israeli Soldiers, Daniel and Sarina showed appreciation and thanks to the Israeli soldiers by writing letters, preparing care packages, and hearing Israeli soldiers speak about their experience in the army.

**Aaron Colomby (G4-Kamin)** raised over \$200 for the charity Chasdei Kaduri. Chasdei Kaduri collects, packages and delivers kosher non-perishable food to needy families in Thornhill for Shabbat. Aaron researched and presented about Chasdei Kaduri for his Project Give Back this year. He decided to take his project to the next level by selling devil sticks to raise money.

**Sophie Factor (G7-Danilack)** helps on Shabbat mornings in the preschool programs at BAYT. She will play, feed and even do bathroom runs with the children.

**Annika Gasee (G4-Kamin)** volunteered at a charity walk for Down Syndrome Association of Toronto. She also raised money for the Heart & Stroke Foundation by selling snacks at a food stand, and then biking 25 km on the DVP. This year for her Project Give Back, she is researching a charity called 'About Face,' that runs programs for people with facial differences. She is learning that everyone is different in their own way.

**Ashley Hauer (G5-Kamin)** Last year, the Mikey Network donated a portable defibrillator to Kamin in honour of Ashley, who chose the Mikey Network as her charity for her Grade 4 Project Give Back. The Mikey Network is a non-profit organization that aims to

provide MIKEY defibrillators (or MIKEYS) in as many public and high-risk locations as possible, such as schools and community centres.

**Jonah (G2-Posluns) & Olivia (G5-Posluns) Horlick; Ashley (G5-Posluns) & Evan (G3-Posluns) Krakower** The kids made a lemonade stand with cookies and toys and little's chatchkachs to sell and they raised \$280 in just 4 days. They were enthusiastic, tenacious and out-going and did a great job.

**Aaron Maresky (G8-Danilack)** is the co-founder of a children's charity called "Aaron's Apple" that has raised over \$500,000 through many successful fundraising events. Aaron was diagnosed with a chronic illness at the age of 7, and he decided to turn a negative situation into something positive by helping and supporting other children and families who aren't as lucky as him. Aaron's Apple has helped many uninsured families with chronically ill children who are in need of expensive medication and treatments.

**Aden (G3-Polsuns) & Shawn (G1-Posluns) Pivovitsch** help at Shaarei Tefillah's monthly chesed programs.

**Boaz Shron (G4-Kamin)** regularly leads the end of davening at Zichron Yisroel Congregation of Associated Hebrew Schools on a Shabbat morning.

**Yuval Smith (G8-Danilack)** Volunteers once a week at MakerKids. He also volunteered at its summer camp for two weeks last summer as well as its winter camp, the first week of January, 2015. Yuval primarily

teaches kids Minecraft, 3D design and printing, and laser cutting. MakerKids provides build maker learning activities for children.

**Jared Subel (G8-Danilack)** volunteers every Monday night for Out of the Cold and helps out with whatever is needed from dishing up food, cleaning tables and chairs, sweeping the floor, taking out the garbage, putting out mattresses and helping with the entertainment. Out of the Cold operates a temporary shelter held at Beth Emeth once a week for homeless people.

**Zachary (G8-Danilack) & Maya (G5-Kamin) Winkler** held their 8th annual "Do Something Sweet" event in support of the Hospital for Sick Children. They made and handed out cotton candy on their driveway and asked everyone to donate what they could in support of the hospital. The event included a silent auction, face painting, balloon animals, inflatable games, Magen Boys entertainment, and special guests. The total raised was just under \$13,000.

**Mikayla (G6-Danilack) & Jordan (G4-Kamin) Wolfe** made a home visit to ill siblings and brought gift card and stuffed bears to the children. Had an opportunity to spend time with the girls and her mom and learn about what they have been going through.

**Sam Zaldin (G4-Kamin)** Over the winter break, Sam made 72 sandwiches for the homeless at Ve'ahavta. Last year, out of concern for the homeless, Sam met with Avrum Rosensweig, CEO of Ve'ahavta, learned about the organization and donated \$50 of his own money that he had saved.

# Our Year Unfolds...



Rosh Hashana at Posluns Bet Haya'eled



Sukkot at Cedarvale



Grade 6 Spirit Day at Danilack



Buddy Benches at Kamin

Kamin students enjoy one of four new Buddy Benches – a place for students to go when they're looking for someone to play with at recess.



Anti-Bullying Week at Danilack



Posluns Student Council



Kamin Kickers



Lechvod Shabbat Cooking at Danilack



Chanukah Math Fun at Posluns



Sonshine and Broccoli Concert at Kamin



Celebrating Rosh Chodesh Adar at Danilack



Lego Club at Posluns



French Day at Kamin



Chanukah Party at Cedarvale



Storylicious at Cedarvale  
Parents volunteered to read a story and lead a baking activity during Storylicious at Cedarvale.



100th Day of School at Kamin

# See Associated **in Action!**

agreatschool.com   
**Associated Hebrew Schools of Toronto**  
 בית הלימוד היהודי של תל אביב  
 מרכז החינוך היהודי של תל אביב  
 אגראט שול 

## Enjoy a personally guided tour

To schedule your visit,  
 please contact Pearl Greenspan  
 admissions@ahschools.com  
 or 905-889-3998, ext. 337  
[agreatschool.com](http://agreatschool.com)

**JK/SK Financial Assistance Now Available!**  
 For students registering at the  
 Kamin Education Centre for 2015-16

**VIEW** our e-brochure at [www.ThisIsAssociated.com](http://www.ThisIsAssociated.com)



**Associated Cedarvale** at Beth Sholom Synagogue (Pre-Nursery to JK)  
**Kamin Education Centre** (Pre-Nursery to Grade 5)  
**Posluns Education Centre** (Nursery to Grade 5)  
**Danilack Middle School** at the Hurwich Education Centre (Grade 6 to 8)

**Kadima** donors provide valuable funds that help Associated ensure the very best day-to-day experience for students at all of our campuses.

By making your **Kadima** gift today you will be part of our **growing family of Ambassadors** and you can share your support and pride for Associated by wearing an "I am a proud AHS..." t-shirt.

Right (l-r): Lou Greenbaum,  
 Ora Shulman,  
 Naomi Rifkind Mansell '89,  
 Philip Ladovsky '64,  
 Esther Zeppieri



## Supporting Associated's Kadima Campaign has never been more important...or more fun!

Become an AHS Ambassador today,  
[associatedhebrewschools.com/associatedproud](http://associatedhebrewschools.com/associatedproud)

קהילת קדימה  
**Kehillat Kadima** 

252 Finch Avenue West, Toronto, Ontario M2R 1M9

CANADA		POSTES
POST		CANADA
Postage paid		Port payé
Publications Mail		Poste-publications
<b>40026867</b>		