



#WeAre Associated



ASSOCIATED
HEBREW SCHOOLS
בית ספר קהילתי

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Associated is the only Ministry-inspected Jewish Day School in the GTA, offering high school credits to Grade 8 students

WE ARE ASSOCIATED is distributed to members of the AHS community, including parents, grandparents, alumni, friends, and supporters of the school.

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THE ALUMNI CONNECTION: LEAVING A MARK THAT LASTS



Associated Hebrew Schools has always been more than just a place of learning - it's where lifelong friendships are forged, Jewish identity is strengthened, and memories are made that continue to shape our alumni decades later.

One alum, **Mark Dunec '90**, now living in New York, recently shared how Associated remains close to his heart:

*"Even though I live in New York and graduated decades ago, Associated is still near and dear to me. I hear stories occasionally from my brother **Sean '93** or his kids (one graduate and two still at the school), but the spirit and memories of my time there stay with me always."*

When Mark heard about the Blocks Campaign, it sparked an idea - to make a gift that both honoured his own experience and supported today's students.

"When I heard about the Blocks Campaign, I decided to leave my mark on Associated and invest in the success of future students with my donation. I urge other alumni to consider supporting the Blocks Campaign to demonstrate to today's families the importance of paying it forward."

Mark's generosity reflects something we know to be true: the Associated experience stays with you for life. Whether you graduated five years ago or fifty, you carry forward the values, friendships, and spirit that shaped you during your school years.

The Blocks Campaign is a unique opportunity for alumni to give back in a tangible way. By supporting their alma mater, our alumni can help Associated continue to thrive. As this alum's story reminds us, the impact of an Associated education endures - and through the Blocks Campaign, alumni have the chance to leave a lasting legacy for future generations.

Paying it forward, one block at a time.

Add your name to the growing community of alumni who are giving back through the Blocks Campaign. Each block is a symbol of your connection to Associated - past, present, and future. Visit our website to place your block today.



A Message From the President



A Message From the Head of School

DR. LEE-RON KAYE

Our theme for this year of “Finding our Paths, Forging our Futures” has guided all of our decision-making for the 2025-26 school year. We hit the ground running in August, with the Danilack Summer Hub as an opportunity for students to learn more about themselves and identify what they want to focus on in the year ahead, and we took inspiration from the yearly theme to frame the professional development we provide to teachers throughout the year, asking each teacher to choose a professional learning pathway to explore.

And in truth, this theme closely reflects the role of an educator: we must learn who our learners are, find ways to personalize their learning journey, and empower them to show their knowledge in multiple ways, setting them up with the skills to find their own path and forge something new and incredible ahead.

The advent of new technologies has continued to provide us with tools that will help us in that regard – and yet, we know, that the most important thing we can learn from AI is what it teaches us about being human, as we discover what can only come from us. Our goal is for our students to know themselves better than any AI ever can.

This year, we have been blessed to be engaging in finding our path and forging our future on an organizational level as well, working with RKT, a group providing strategic guidance to Jewish Day Schools, to refine our understanding of who we are and build actionable goals that will lay out our roadmap for the years ahead. More of this exciting work will be shared with our community in the months to come.

Within these pages, you will see a vibrant snapshot of the path we are currently on at AHS – from the Teacher Learning Hub, providing growth and advancement opportunities to our Judaic Studies staff free of charge; and the growth of our learning spaces with three new classroom makeovers; to highlights of our learning in Literacy and Math; building connections across grades and across generations; and our fierce pride in those of our alumni who choose to continue their learning journeys in Israel, whether for a semester or a year.

I can't wait to take the next steps on this path toward the future we are forging together.



ELLIOT MARER '92

Associated continues to be grounded with tradition in terms of Jewish values, while propelling itself to adapt to current academic trends that are considered best practice. Each time I am taught something new within Judaism, I am always amazed at how our heritage thousands of years later is full of guidance to continue our shaping of the next generation of Jewish leaders.

With the speed of change that impacts our world today, I express my deepest appreciation to the Head of School, Principals, administrators, teachers, and parents for the work that goes into raising Jewish children in Toronto. I remember learning Talmud at AHS and understanding that the world stands upon three things for us: Torah, service, and acts of loving-kindness. The community continues to give us the confidence that our school is continuing on the right track with a record-breaking year of enrollment - all of our classrooms are full!

I never imagined a world that would justify holding our brothers and sisters in captivity two years after that horrible attack on October 7, 2023 – thankfully, we have been able to bring them all home! Listening to survivors tell their stories of trauma they lived during their captivity has been heartbreaking, but one common theme was they all found strength and courage in their darkest time from their Judaism and prayer. In the face of these horrible events, the increase of hate towards the Jewish community in the diaspora is incomprehensible. The response to the troubling situation has been to deepen our connection to Judaism and strengthen and prioritize our Jewish community bond. We continue to see enrollment demands across all our grades, with opportunities to expand for the younger children in our community. The Board continues to be relentless in its search for long-term sustainable solutions to increase capacity in a responsible manner. We value your continued partnership in providing Jewish education to your children. A core principle in Judaism is Ve'ahavta l'Reiacha Kamocho – Love your neighbour as yourself. In a world that is portraying so much hate, being a beacon of love has the potential to be the difference in shaping our future, and I know the loving environment of AHS will teach this important lesson to our children.

Our community is not isolated from the change in the economic environment. We have many families that make significant sacrifices to send their children to Jewish Day School, a commitment the Board takes very seriously. The administrators and teachers are owed a huge amount of gratitude for accepting the challenges presented. With the increases in the cost to educate our children, the development efforts of the school have become instrumental in supporting its ability to provide quality education and ensure long-term viability. A BIG thank you to the efforts of our Development Office and the Development Committee that have done a tremendous job!

I also want to recognize **Dr. Lee-Ron Kaye** as she completed her second year as Head of School and for completing the Wexner Institute Fellowship, where she was given the distinguished honour to represent her cohort at their concluding ceremony. We are lucky and blessed as a school to have such a recognized and committed Head of School that has a passion for enriching the lives of our precious children. As a parent of two AHS graduates, I know the lasting impact on their Jewish identity has been remarkable!

Am Israel Chai,

"Banking" On AHS: Meet the Bank Family



Leora and Shawn Bank bring energy, warmth, and a deep commitment to community wherever they go, and their path to Associated is filled with full-circle moments. Though their family's history with the school stretches back to its earliest days, their story is just as much about building a life rooted in Jewish values, creativity, and connection.

That story begins in 1944, when five-year-old **Emile Aufgang '51**, Leora's great-uncle, arrived in Toronto from Portugal and entered Associated's very first school year at the Brunswick Avenue campus. Emile spoke only Portuguese, but the school welcomed him and nurtured him. He became part of Associated's second graduating class, taught by brilliant scholars and immersed in Hebrew to the point of fluency. His memories of teachers and classmates remain vivid to this day. Years later, Leora's mother also attended Associated, graduating from the Neptune campus and returning last year to share her artistic talents with students.

Today, Emile's great-great-nephew **Edyn** carries that legacy forward in SK at Associated. The symmetry is striking: another five-year-old child of the family walking into the same school more than eighty years later. His older brother **Liam**, now in Grade 2, is already thriving and proud to continue the tradition.

Shawn also has roots at Associated, having attended AHS for Grades Five and Six. He remembers a bustling school and teachers who were deeply dedicated to his success. Although his path later shifted, he still recalls Associated as the place where he felt most comfortable in his early Jewish journey. Looking back, he says he wishes he had stayed through Grade Eight.

Leora grew up in Israel after her family moved there from Washington, D.C. She met Shawn while he was studying at IDC Herzliya, and together they built a life in Zichron Yaakov, where their two boys were born. Their return to Toronto was swift and emotional, but they quickly found their footing in a community that felt both new and deeply familiar.

Choosing Associated felt natural. It was where Shawn had felt at home, where Leora's mother had graduated, and where their community ties pointed them. From the very first call with the school, they felt aligned with its values.

They were especially drawn to Associated's balance of strong academics and creativity. Leora, an artist, treasures the way the school values imagination and out-of-the-box thinking alongside rigorous learning. She has watched her boys flourish not only in knowledge but also in confidence, kindness, and joy. Liam's growth shone during his Grade 1 Tekes Aliyah and later at the Siddur Ceremony, when he stepped proudly onto the stage. Edyn's seamless transition into JK reflected both his spirit and the nurturing environment.

Shawn was struck by the joyful Jewish spirit that infuses every day. Having attended several Jewish schools himself, he expected strong academics, but he did not anticipate the excitement and passion that radiate through holidays, programs, and school life. "The energy feels brand new every time," he says.

Both Leora and Shawn also highlight the leadership that shapes the school's culture. They speak with admiration about Head of School **Dr. Lee-Ron Kaye**, whose presence is felt in every corner of the school. "She is a true culture-setter," Shawn explains. "It's not easy to build a school where joy and belonging are so real, but she's done it. She knows every child and her impact is everywhere. In addition to her clear pedigree as an educator, I think she's a really one-of-a-kind type of person and we're very lucky to have her." Leora agrees, adding that it is rare for someone in such a role to be so hands-on and integrated in daily life. They also feel the same about **Ora Shulman**, whose dedication and warmth embody the togetherness they see everywhere at Associated.

And then there are the teachers, whose presence defines so much of the experience. "It's the way they carry themselves," Shawn says. "They're always smiling, and half the time there's music blasting in the parking lot at pick-up and drop-off. They're passionate and spirited, and what does that represent? That they love their job. Which means they're giving that love to our kids. That's really all I could ask for—love and care for my kids the way I would want it done." He adds, "Whenever I volunteer in the school, I see it, too—their walk has a bounce. Nobody is dragging their feet through the day. There's a pep in their step, and it's contagious." Even in passing, the message comes through. "Every single one of them says the same thing: 'I love your kids.' That's how we know this is a special place."

Above all, the Banks cherish the sense of community. Teachers know their children by name, specialists stop to share kind words, and parents naturally become friends. Pick-up and drop-off are filled with smiles, music, and laughter. Birthday parties become family gatherings, and the friendships their boys form ripple outward into lasting bonds for the whole family. "You attract good families," Shawn says simply, noting how naturally connections and support have grown. For Leora, this togetherness is what makes the school feel like home: "Our kids spend more time here than anywhere else. Knowing they are surrounded by people who love them and want the best for them—that's everything."

From Emile Aufgang's first day in 1944 to Liam and Edyn today, the Bank family's story reflects the strength of belonging that Associated has nurtured for generations. For Leora and Shawn, the school is more than a place of learning. It is a second home, where their children are loved, challenged, and inspired to grow into good, kind people. As Leora puts it, "It is exactly the home we hoped to find."

Celebrating Our "First Fruits": Tekes Havaat Bikurim



At Associated Hebrew Schools, tradition and community came together once again in our annual Tekes Havaat Bikurim, held in commemoration of Shavuot, a festival rooted in gratitude and offering, the time when our people brought their first and best fruits to the Beit HaMikdash. At AHS, we welcome something even more precious: the newest children born into our community over the past year. Each baby was blessed under a chuppah, surrounded by their family and encircled by the wider AHS community, in a moment that reflected the heart of Jewish life, connection, and community.

The tekes unfolded with a tapestry of voices and gestures. Our Grade 5 leaders guided the program as MCs, younger students presented baskets of fruits, and each grade uplifted the atmosphere with song. Together we prayed, celebrated, and gave thanks, marking the day as a shared milestone. The baskets and music drew our community into a shared moment of gratitude.

For parents, it was a chance to connect with others walking through similar stages of life. Faculty supported the program with warmth and steadiness, allowing students' voices to shine. Children stood side by side, from our youngest in Bet Hayered to those preparing to leave for Middle School, all recognizing themselves as part of something bigger. This experience was made even more special as it is the only assembly that brings together every student at the Posluns Elementary branch from Nursery to Grade 5, reminding us that in Jewish life, new beginnings are sacred and to be celebrated together.

On Shavuot, we do not only harvest fruits of the field; we harvest the moments, growth, and relationships that endure. In welcoming our newest babies, we celebrated both their arrival and the bonds of love and care that shape our community. Year after year, Tekes Havaat Bikurim remains one of our AHS community's most cherished traditions, a gentle reminder that Jewish life is lived most fully when we stand together and nurture the seeds that will grow for years to come.

The Write Way: learning self-expression and communication skills

From Nursery to Middle School, our dedicated teachers at AHS place a high priority on developing foundational writing skills that will buoy our young learners to success in whatever future they find themselves in. Even in our digital world, teachers know that nothing replaces the simple yet powerful act of putting pen to paper. Handwriting isn't just a skill; it's the backbone of thinking, reflecting, and creating in real time.

In an ever-changing world, AHS students learn to organize their thoughts, structure their sentences appropriately and effectively, maintain a strong voice, reflect on constructive feedback, and ultimately spread their voices. Learning is scaffolded to equip students with tools for clarity and structure, from grammar support and sentence fluency to growth in vocabulary. Emphasis is placed on communication skills that transfer across subjects with writing seen as a process, rather than just a final product.



Ms. Morry, a Grade 1 teacher at Posluns, describes, "The same thrill a parent feels when their child writes their name for the first time is the same exuberant feeling a teacher has for a student who writes their first three-letter word on their own. Nothing can replace the pride you see in a student's eyes and the confidence that grows in that moment."

The goal of writing in the primary years is to make student thinking visible. Our youngest learners in Bet Hageled begin to generate ideas for writing through oral interactions with their families, teachers, and peers. Following the Science of Reading, students learn how to read and spell simultaneously. Classroom Read-Alouds and Mentor Texts support writing development by giving students the opportunity to respond to texts, generate ideas, and experiment with different organizational genres. When students write by hand, the end product is authentic and infused with personal motivation.

In Grades 3-5, students have multiple opportunities to master writing skills through the writing process, including drafting, editing, and revising. Handwriting allows students to think more critically about the writing traits of word choice, organization and voice. It allows for a slower process, and gives students the opportunity to put their individual stamp on each story. It is an individual creation made from scratch, like our very own signature. There is a personal sense of accomplishment attached to each handwritten story, knowing it can only be traced back to one writer.

At Danilack, Grade 6 students interview each other and share their work in a blog or newspaper form. Grade 7 and 8 students write persuasive essays based on their reading and understanding of complex texts. Each year, all three grades write a speech on a topic they feel passionate about, to inform, persuade, or entertain. "The quality of the results at the Public Speaking Finals is spectacular," reflects **Ms. Shapiro**, Danilack Teacher-Librarian and Literacy & Social Studies Department Head. The newly created **Irene Arkin Poetry Contest** (for students at all three campuses) allows students choice as they vie for the top prize.

Handwriting isn't just academic, it's emotional. Some students use handwritten journals to process feelings with a mindfulness that typing can't provide. Students can see thinking unfold on the page. Teachers who watch students put pen to paper are witnessing learning in action.

With the stakes so high, AHS remains committed to our Literacy philosophy - that writing builds confidence, creativity, and critical thinking skills that our students will carry with them far beyond the classroom.



Teacher Highlight: Ms. Karyn Morry



WAA: Can you tell us your secret for teaching Grade 1 so impactfully?

KM: My teaching practice has evolved so much over the years. Through trial and error, I have learned what connects with my students, and how to build strong relationships with them. Our classroom feels like a community - one that uplifts each other through adversity and milestones. My secret sauce for teaching grade 1 is to communicate the message to my students to treat themselves with kindness and to exude empathy toward others. We always celebrate each other's accomplishments - be it stopping the class to clap for someone or giving each other compliments. It is moving from that ME to WE stage in Grade One that is so powerful to see unfold. Having high expectations and humour, while building independence, resilience and stamina to conquer and overcome obstacles is an essential part of our classroom. To see my students becoming internally motivated for each challenge that comes their way is so monumental. It is that growing confidence in each of my students, which comes from the courage to be brave and vulnerable at the same time.

Learning at AHS is an eight- to eleven-year journey for our students, and it is essential to start that journey out on the right foot. We had the pleasure of sitting down with one of our veteran Grade 1 teachers, **Karyn Morry**, to learn more about her "secret sauce" for setting our youngest learners out on their paths.

WAA: How do you build connections for your young students?

KM: Teaching through connection is at the heart of our classroom community. Ensuring that each of my students is seen, heard, valued, and understood leads to a secure social emotional well being. I take the time to share my own vulnerabilities and childhood experiences while listening to my students' own stories and addressing head on any struggles. It is through this authenticity and security that they are able to move along in their educational journey and reach for the stars. I let my students see my passion every day for learning and my goal is for this passion to be passed on and to resonate within each of them.

WAA: What drew you to teaching, and to teaching Grade 1 in particular?

KM: What inspired me to become a teacher is that longing to be the kind of teacher that I never had throughout my educational journey. I have taught Kindergarten and Grade 2, but I have taught Grade 1 for 25 years. Grade 1 is that pivotal year that begins a child's primary educational journey. It is that year where a child's social, emotional, literacy, and math foundation is really built upon to prepare them for their future. It's the year where students begin to take responsibility for their choices and so many "Aha!" moments echo through the classroom daily.

WAA: How long have you been at AHS?

KM: I have been at AHS for 23 years. AHS is like a home away from home. My students are so special to me and we have that beautiful bond of our Jewish roots, which brings us even closer together. Jewish life and values come alive at AHS every day and this feeling is so palpable throughout everything we do.

WAA: What is your teaching philosophy?

KM: My teaching philosophy is to build that grit in each one of my students to take on challenges and celebrate these achievements each step along the way. It's helping my students to help themselves with different strategies - be it socially or academically. There is so much power in accomplishing something on our own!

WAA: What advice would you share to someone interested in becoming a teacher?

KM: My advice to new or aspiring teachers would be to create routines, have high expectations and connect with each one of your students. Observe every day, celebrate each achievement and communicate with parents on their children's goals. The most meaningful feedback you can receive in a Parent Teacher Conference comes from a parent saying, "Ms. Morry knows my child." Learn and grow together with your students.

WAA: What is something that your students would be surprised to know about you?

KM: My students would definitely be surprised to know that during my years spent in Israel, I worked in the army fixing tanks!

The Fourth Revolution Is Here



Three major technological revolutions have redefined the world we live in. The first was the "revolution" of written language that any person can master and use. This is how the walls separating ignorance from knowledge began to fall down, taking us from a world in which knowledge belonged only to the elite to a world where anyone can lay the foundations for learning science and philosophy.

The next took place in the 1550s, with the invention of the printing press. Less than 50 years after this invention, more than 15,000,000 copies of 35,000 texts had already been printed! The printing press launched the Industrial Age.

The third revolution was that of the internet. The digital revolution gave us email, the web, social media - it was the revolution of immediate, global communication.

We are now living through the Fourth Revolution, in which Artificial Intelligence (AI) is rapidly reshaping every aspect of our lives. As educators, we are not only preparing students for this future - we are preparing them to lead it. In a digital era dominated by AI, the most essential skills are not what machines can do - but what only humans can.

While AI excels at processing data and performing repetitive tasks, it cannot replicate human qualities like empathy, emotional awareness, ethical judgment, and creative thinking. That's why at AHS, we have always prioritized social-emotional learning alongside academic excellence.

Skills such as adaptability, problem-solving, critical thinking, and collaboration are core to our curriculum - because they are the very skills that will help your children to navigate complex situations and become thoughtful, responsible contributors to society.

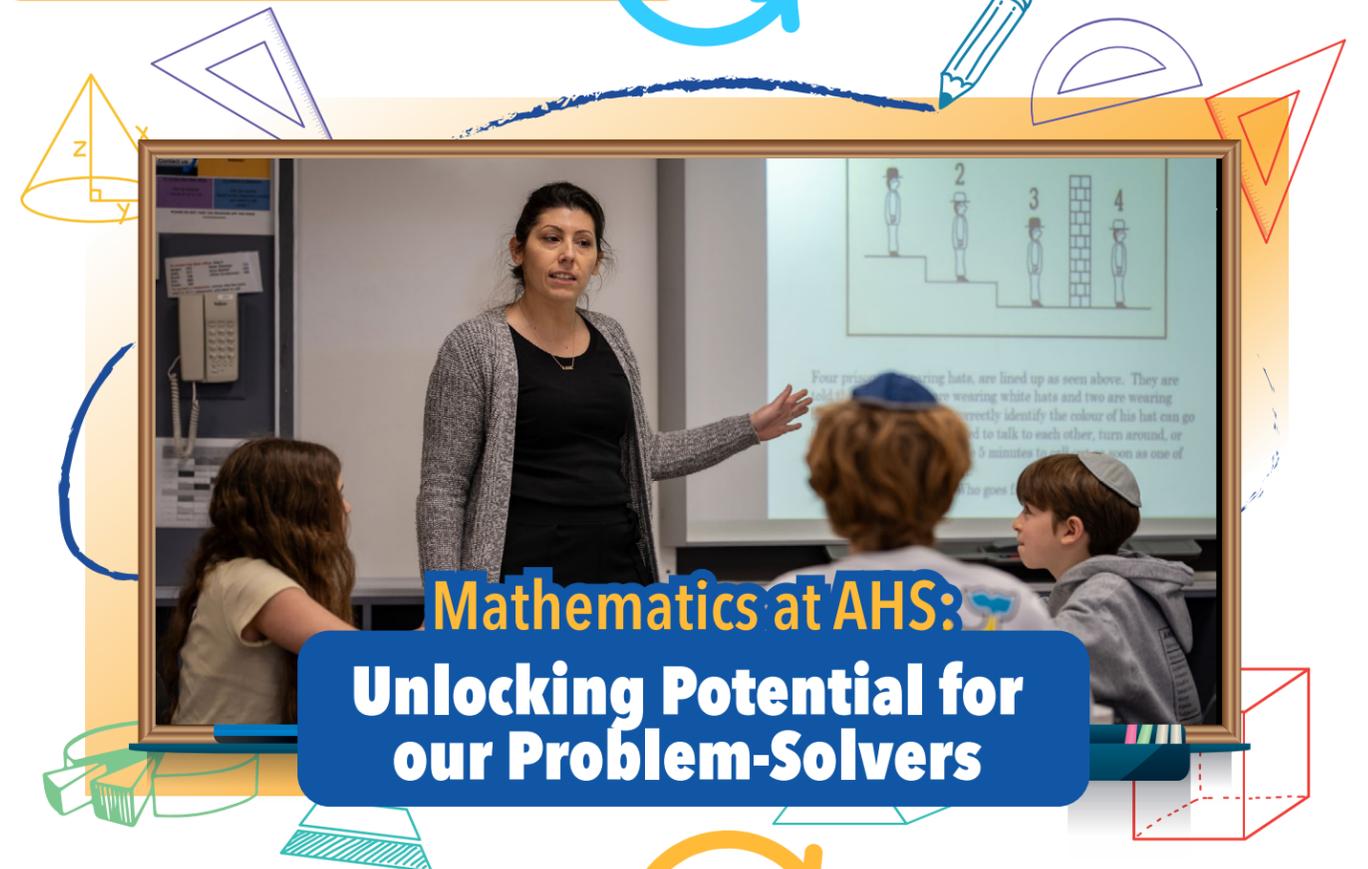
Our classrooms are designed to foster independent thought and creativity, and to provide real-world contexts in which students make decisions, analyze outcomes, and reflect on their impact. When students face varied scenarios that require them to apply their knowledge critically, they develop not only skills, but a mindset of lifelong learning. This shift, from memorizing content to learning how to learn, is essential in the AI age.

We also create space for students to resolve conflicts, manage emotions, and work as effective team members. These human-centred capabilities are what will truly set them apart in a world increasingly populated by machines. As AI becomes integral to nearly every field, our goal is not just to teach students about AI, but to help them become informed users and ethical innovators. By exploring the ethical implications of AI, including privacy, fairness, intellectual property, and bias, students learn to think critically about the technologies shaping our world.

We believe in the great potential of ALL students, and placing learners at the centre is the most human response we can offer. As educators, our mission is to guide students to use this powerful tool responsibly and ethically, while never losing sight of what matters most: caring for our community.

Mathematics at AHS is more than just numbers; it is an engaging program that offers opportunities beyond the confines of the classroom - promoting curiosity, challenging students, and honouring achievement. Through numerous enrichment opportunities, partnerships with university-level students, and participation in contests, our students gain insight into the beauty and power of mathematics.

AHS prides itself on our enrichment opportunities. Through in-class activities, collaborative projects, and fast-paced programming, students learn to be problem solvers and critical thinkers as they apply both elementary and advanced mathematical concepts to real-world situations. A current Grade 8 enrichment student shared, "Being in this program has been a great experience for me. It has allowed me to explore math in more depth, challenge myself, and grow as a student." Our students are not only building confidence in their abilities, but also deepening their passion for mathematics.



Mathematics at AHS: Unlocking Potential for our Problem-Solvers

A key highlight of our program is the involvement of a University of Waterloo mathematics co-op student in our mathematics and robotics classes. Seen as a mentor, the Waterloo student provides our students with enrichment challenges, support in tackling complex problems, and a deeper understanding of coding that holds significant relevance in today's technological landscape. Through this partnership, our students are provided a lens into post-secondary opportunities, opening doors to bright futures in mathematics.

Throughout the year, our students also take part in a number of mathematics contests, including Gauss, Math League, and Caribou. These contests allow our students to develop a deeper skillset in perseverance, logical reasoning, creativity, and resilience. With the number of participants growing each year, we continue to honour not only the high scores and distinctions earned, but the grit and dedication to these contests that each of our students exemplify.

Through enrichment tasks and contests, students are demonstrating growth in their problem-solving skills and fostering a deeper understanding of challenging material, translating into stronger performance and achievement in class. Students are determined to reach new heights in math and feel confident in their strong foundation laid for high school.

The mathematics program at AHS sparks passion, fuels curiosity, and nurtures the talents of all our students. Our program builds persistent critical thinkers and problem solvers who are prepared to meet any challenge, both in the classroom and beyond. We are grateful to the generous anonymous donors who continue to meaningfully support our mathematics program at AHS over the years, and we look forward to seeing our students continue to push their limits and grow as mathematicians.

Leading with Play: The Recess Counsellor Program



At the start of last school year, we introduced the **Recess Counsellor Program** as a way to give our Grade 5 students meaningful leadership opportunities while supporting younger children in building positive social skills.

Participating Grade 5 students were paired with younger classes, where they helped to plan inclusive games, model prosocial behavior, and guide positive play during lunch recess.

The initiative quickly took root. Many of our Grade Fives embraced their role as mentors, learning to listen, include, and encourage. Younger students looked forward to the familiar faces of their "counsellors," who helped them navigate friendships and discover new ways to play together. What began as structured leadership turned into genuine connection, with older and younger students alike finding joy in the bonds they built.

While all of our Grade Fives contributed in meaningful ways, two students brought a unique vision to their role. **Levi B.** and **Ben S.** launched a soccer skills clinic for our SK students, transforming recess into a place of learning and growth. They approached this endeavour with entrepreneurial spirit - creating lesson plans, thinking carefully about each child's strengths, and tailoring activities to build both skills and confidence.

They communicated with staff about the resources they needed, from nets to balls, and took responsibility for storing and setting them up each session. They even organized an awards ceremony, complete with certificates and medals, to celebrate the progress of their younger buddies.

The impact of their leadership was felt not only by the children but also by their families. One SK parent shared how meaningful the experience was for her son: *"I love that these boys modelled leadership, organization, commitment and caring. True leaders and captains... I know that my son will forever remember the SK recess soccer club, tournament, and awards, and I hope that when he is older, he will be able to pay it forward in the same way."*

The Recess Counsellor Program shows how leadership can grow in many forms: through structured opportunities, quiet role modeling, or ambitious student-led projects. In every case, the message was clear: community builds education, and education builds community.

Introducing the Teacher Learning Hub

חממה למורים



A New Chapter in Professional Growth at AHS

At Associated Hebrew Schools, we are deeply committed to nurturing not only our students' learning but also the professional growth of our educators. This year, we are thrilled to launch the Teacher Learning Hub – חממה למורים, an innovative new initiative designed to provide our teachers with rich opportunities for ongoing professional development and collaboration.

The vision for the Teacher Learning Hub came from **Mrs. Ora Shulman**, Director of Advancement. Her passion for professional growth, together with the unwavering commitment, dedication, and visionary leadership of our Head of School, **Dr. Lee-Ron Kaye**, inspired this initiative. Together, their shared belief in empowering our teachers has ensured that the Hub will be a space for collaboration, innovation, and excellence in Jewish education.

As there are limited opportunities for Professional Development growth in Jewish education, the Teacher Learning Hub represents a truly rare and wonderful opportunity for our Judaic Studies educators. In a field where structured, high-level professional development is often limited, the Teacher Learning Hub stands out as a one-of-a-kind framework that brings together world-class mentors, innovative pedagogy, and a supportive community of practice. It is a unique chapter in professional growth that our educators - and, by extension, our students - will benefit from for years to come.

The Teacher Learning Hub will run throughout the school year, taking place during PD Days as well as in shorter monthly sessions on Sundays. Teachers choose from 3 dynamic areas of study taught by expert mentors in the field:

- **Iurit** - with **Ms. Margalit Kavenstock**, an expert in Jewish education and Hebrew language instruction in the Diaspora, with rich experience working with schools and Jewish communities worldwide. Ms. Kavenstock trains teachers, develops curricula, and creates learning materials.

- **Mikra and Chagim** - with **Dr. Ziva Hassenfeld**, the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Assistant Professor of Jewish Education at Brandeis University and Assistant Director of Research at the Mandel Center. Dr. Hassenfeld researches reading comprehension from a sociocultural perspective, focusing on how children interpret the Hebrew Bible and how classroom dynamics shape meaning-making.

- **Understanding Our Learners** - with **Ms. Emma Nichols**. With over 30 years in education, including 14 as a Principal with the Toronto District School Board, Ms. Nichols brings extensive experience teaching Grades 1–8 and leading schools with a focus on inquiry-based, 21st-century learning.



Each learning session is tailored to the developmental stages of our students, with age-specific sessions for SK–Grade 2, Grades 3–5, and Grades 6–8. Educators can select a single area of focus, a specific age division, or immerse themselves fully by participating across all three courses.

While some sessions will be offered in person, most will take place virtually, ensuring accessibility and flexibility for our staff. Each course requires a commitment of 12 hours per term over three terms, with time divided between PD Day workshops and monthly Sunday sessions.

Beyond the immediate benefits of deepened learning and collaboration, participation in the Hub offers Jewish educators a tangible pathway for advancement. Upon completing two years of professional learning, educators will be recognized with a certificate in language learning, a unique and valuable opportunity in the field of Judaic Studies.

This program is not only a gift to our current staff but also an investment in the future of our school. By equipping teachers with enhanced skills, knowledge, and leadership potential, we are strengthening the foundation of academic excellence, Jewish identity, and community that define AHS.

We are proud to provide our educators with this phenomenal opportunity for growth, and we are excited to see the ways in which the Teacher Learning Hub will enrich both their professional journeys and the learning experiences of our students.





Associated With Israel

In the 2024-25 academic year, five AHS alumni - **Adin Bendat-Appell '22, Theodore Grad '23, Noa Heller '23, Naomi Kipper '23, and Harley Pearl '23** - elected to spend a semester of their high school career in Israel, soaking up the experiences and atmosphere of our homeland. We had the privilege of hearing from two of these incredible alumni about this special opportunity.



Theodore Grad '23

AHS has always made me feel connected to Jewish history and community. At AHS, we're encouraged to ask questions and think critically, and that helped me go to Israel with an open mind.

I had learned about Israel in school and at home, but I felt like actually living there for a semester would give me an entirely different perspective. High school was the perfect time. I'm old enough to appreciate the history and complexity of Israel, but still young enough to let the experience really shape how I see myself and my future.

I had been to Israel before, but only on shorter trips. It's one thing to tour sites, but another to go to school, make friends, and feel like part of the community. Some of my favourite memories were Shabbats in Jerusalem. Being surrounded by so many people celebrating in their own ways, but all together, gave me a real sense of belonging and connection.

At AHS, we talk a lot about responsibility, both personal responsibility and responsibility to the larger Jewish community. That idea stuck with me while I was in Israel. It made me think about what it means to be part of something bigger than yourself, and how I can carry that forward.

To our current AHS students, take advantage of every opportunity. High school goes by quickly, and the things you say yes to are the things you'll remember. Don't be afraid to step outside your comfort zone. That's usually when the best experiences happen.



Noa Heller '23

I've always known that Israel is the homeland for the Jewish people, but I never really felt that deep connection from my short trips visiting. I decided that if I really wanted to feel that impact, I had to spend a

longer period of time there.

I had been to Israel before this trip. This trip felt much different, though, because I was with people my own age and getting to experience everything with them, together.

My time at AHS prepared me for this experience because it taught me a lot about Israeli culture and really gave me an in-depth view on Judaism that I was later able to expand on through first-hand experiences in Israel. I don't believe I would feel as connected to Israel as I do without my experiences at AHS. It's where I first started to learn Jewish History and where I first started to understand why it's so important that Israel exists.

To our current AHS students: If you have the possibility to go on a trip like this, you should go. I promise you will not regret it. For me, when I was considering going, the one thing in my mind was that I knew there was no chance I could regret going, but there was a pretty high chance I would regret not going.



We're very proud of the AHS graduates who have chosen to spend the 2025-26 year in Israel. In a time when standing with Israel carries deep meaning, your decision to learn, grow, and contribute there reflects commitment and a strong sense of identity.

Adin Begun '21
Yeshivat HaKotel

Ava Granovsky '21
Bar Ilan XP

Hannah Mansell '21
Tiferet seminary

Ella Epstein '21
Mechina Galil Elyon

Sadie Granovsky '21
Bar Ilan XP

Austin Marer '21
Aardvark Israel

Eitan Frisch '17
Yeshivat Har Etzion

Avi Green '21
Aish Geshet

Zev Rotenberg '21
Mechinah

Orli Frisch '20
Midreshet Torah V'Avodah

Daniella Greenwald '21
Midreshet Torah V'Avodah

Inbar Vicus '21
Maccabi XP

Harry Heller '21
EFG Aish

Mori Katchan '21
Bar Ilan XP

Nathan Wolle '21
Aardvark Israel



AHS Grads of 2026

Mazal tou to our upcoming Class of 2026, who will graduate on June 22, 2026!

We know you will continue to find your paths to excellence and forge a brilliant future as you enter high school!



The Danilack Summer Hub: A Week of Creativity, Community, and Learning



The halls of Hurwich were buzzing with energy at the Danilack Summer Hub, just before the new school year kicked off. This four-day pilot program was designed to prepare students for success in Middle School, mixing essential academic skills with high-energy spirit days and fun Jewish cultural celebration.

Each morning, students opened the day with meaningful Tefillah, followed by interactive skill-building sessions on time management, organization, growth mindset, and study skills.

Each day had its own theme: starting with Yom Yisrael, a vibrant celebration of Israeli culture that brought the spirit of the shuk to AHS. Tuesday shifted the

focus to Math & Science. The afternoon brought engineering challenges - students cheered as **Mr. Rewega** tested their egg contraptions from the roof of the school. Wednesday was all about school spirit and friendly competition. Students wore their jerseys and participated in a wide variety of sports - from classic three-on-three basketball, to high-energy Gaga matches. A special 007 Locker Challenge tied back to the skill-building focus on organization. The week culminated with Getting Ready for Shabbat, including a hands-on Challah Bake.

From mastering the science of safe landing to mixing dough for challah, the Danilack Summer Hub truly lived up to its name as a hub of activity and learning.



Lessons Beyond the Classroom, Learning Across Generations



Residents can bring forward their own passions and skills to share, while students lead with their natural curiosity and creativity. What emerges is authentic, hands-on learning that stretches far beyond the classroom walls.

This pilot is also deeply rooted in Jewish values. In Jewish tradition, honouring our elders is considered a sacred responsibility. The Mishnah teaches us that just as even the broken tablets of the Commandments were still infinitely holy alongside the unbroken set, so, too, our elders, even when their health or cognition deteriorate, are infinitely valuable to our society and infinitely worthy of respect. By engaging with seniors in meaningful ways, our children are living that value, building bonds of respect and empathy that will stay with them.

The program has only just begun, but already we see the beauty of what it makes possible: laughter across generations, confidence blooming in young voices, and the weaving of stories that remind us we are part of something greater than ourselves. We look forward to watching this partnership grow, and to seeing how it continues to enrich both our students and the residents of Reuben Cipin in the months ahead.

This year, a new pilot program blossomed just beyond our school walls. Our SK students have been paired with residents from the **Reuben Cipin Healthy Living Community**, creating opportunities for intergenerational learning that are as natural as they are profound.

The heart of this initiative lies in simple human connection. As children grow up in a world increasingly defined by rapid development of technology, the explicit teaching of social skills is more important than ever. Through this program, our students are practicing how to introduce themselves, how to start and carry a conversation, and how to notice similarities and differences across generations. They are discovering the power of listening to stories, and the joy that comes from sharing their own. These moments build social skills and self-esteem, helping our students to see themselves as contributing members of society with something meaningful to offer. At the same time, our seniors gain a new sense of purpose and delight in passing on wisdom, interests, and experiences to eager young learners. Underpinning it all is our belief that children are not only receivers of knowledge but human beings with wisdom, creativity, and insights to share. In this way, the program reminds us that learning flows in both directions and that every generation has something to teach the other.

The program is designed to be dynamic and responsive. While our faculty put together a framework for these interactions, the agenda and activities are being shaped by the ideas of both the children and the seniors.



From Space to *Place*

Transforming physical environments into

Nurturing Learning Landscapes



Enhance students' learning experience by naming a classroom at AHS!

Interested in making a lasting impact? To learn more about this opportunity, connect with Ora Shulman

✉ oshulman@ahschools.com

☎ 416.494.7666 x 613



Together, we are shaping the future of Jewish Education.

A Room Of One's Own

Returning to school for a new year of learning after the summer vacation is always a thrill – students reunite with friends old and new, ready for a fresh start in familiar environments all set up for learning.

This year, that return was made even more exciting for some of our classes thanks to three new classroom dedications this summer, allowing for improvements and enhancements to our Nursery and Grade 1 Learning environments.



AHS has long been proud to bear the name of the **Posluns family** on one of our Elementary branches, and now the Posluns Education Centre also sports the **Posluns Grade 1 Classroom**, rededicated and refurbished to best support students' learning as they enter their first years of formal schooling. This room is joined by its sister classroom, the **Nisker Grade 1 Classroom**, dedicated by our dear friends the **Shuval family** to honour their grandparents' commitment to Jewish education in such a meaningful way. And downstairs – just across the hall from the **Grossman Design Studio** – our littlest learners were welcomed to the **Grossman Nursery Classroom**, sporting all-new decor and furnishings designed to ignite curiosity and inspire young minds.



We are deeply grateful to the families who have generously joined hands with us in making these enhancements possible, and we look forward to continue enhancing spaces to create warm and invigorating learning environments for our students.

Quilt for Australia

Each year, our Grade 2 students create beautiful quilted Challah covers, in a milestone project supported by the **Esther's Friends** committee of volunteers in memory of past parents' association president **Esther Zeppieri ז"ל**.

This year, the quilting went a step – and several thousand kilometres – further. When we heard about the terrible attack at the Chanukah celebration on Bondi Beach in Australia, we wanted to send some love from our community to theirs. Our students felt a need to reach out across the vast distance, to show that we feel deeply connected with our fellow Jews, and that we are with our Australian brothers and sisters at this difficult time.

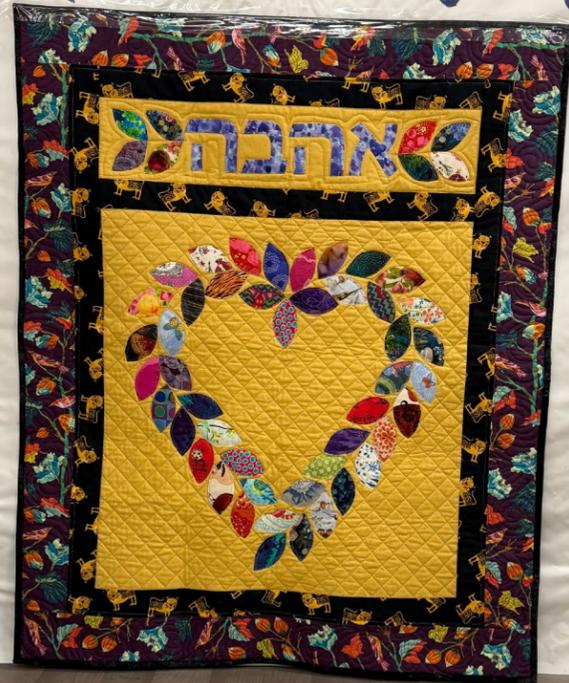
We educate our children every day that what they do for others matters, and that they bring more light to the world through acts of kindness that banish the darkness. Especially in this light, we – and our students – were deeply impressed by the courage of 14-year-old **Chaya Dadon**, who risked herself and was injured in the process of defending others during the Bondi Beach attack.

Out of 54 pieces of cloth that came directly from the Grade 2 Challah Cover Project, **Stephanie Kepecs**, the inspired leader of the Esther's Friends Committee, lovingly crafted a quilt with the word "Ahava" – "Love" – at its centre, and with a message of love, solidarity, and encouragement from our community inscribed on the back.

We wrote to Chaya's father to tell him to expect this gift to the recovering Chaya from our AHS community, and **Mendel Taxopulos**, a Toronto yeshiva scholar from Or Temimim heading on Shlichut to Sydney, took on the additional "shlichut" of delivering Chaya's quilt to her.

This is a story that is still unfolding as the quilt makes its way across the globe to its destination. It reminds us that even when people bring terrible darkness to bear against us, we draw strength from one another as we face it down by adding light to the world – and that light reverberates back, increasing with every repetition, connecting us with unity, courage, and love.

#WeAre
Associated



Nursery to Now: Welcoming Our Grade 12 Grads Back



There is nothing more meaningful for an educator than seeing former students return to the place that still holds their earliest stories.

At our recent Grade 12 Alumni BBQ, we had the privilege of welcoming back a group of remarkable young adults, many of whom began at AHS when they were just three years old. We were fortunate to accompany them on their 11-year journey at AHS, from their earliest steps in nursery school to the culmination of Grade 8.

Four years later, they returned - many of them now towering over their former teachers and administrators - and with a presence that filled our hearts. These were no longer our students, but poised and thoughtful young adults, ready to explore the world, to keep learning, and to contribute meaningfully to the society around them.

What made this gathering especially powerful was that it took place amidst turbulent and painful days for Israel and the Jewish people. And yet, as we spoke with each

of them, we could see how deeply grounded they are in their identities, as individuals and as Jews. Their clarity of purpose was evident in every conversation.

Many are beginning their next chapter at universities across Canada and beyond, while others have headed to Israel for a gap year - choosing to deepen their learning and connection before continuing their academic paths.

What was perhaps most moving was the way they interacted with one another - with warmth and care. Watching them reconnect with old classmates, former teachers and admin, and the building that shaped so much of their foundational years reminded us of the lasting impact of a strong beginning.

To see them again, not as children but as confident young people, was an incredible gift. And while we may have only had them for part of their story, that chapter remains full of pride, promise, and potential.

Leading the Way: Our Development Committee Chairs



With close to fifty percent of our students on some sort of subsidy, and the cost to educate a student exceeding even full tuition, the work of AHS's Development Committee is crucial to the continued operations of the school. It was a privilege to hear from this year's Development Co-Chairs, **Kyle Lichtman** and **Adi Seitelbach '98**, about this important work.

Adi is returning to AHS as a proud alumna, as well as a proud parent, with fond memories of her own time at AHS. "I made lasting memories and lasting friendships," she shared, and added that her husband was quickly won over by the AHS experience. "I have never once doubted that I am leaving my children in the best hands. They are truly loved and nurtured not only by their teachers but also by the administration team. Getting involved to give back to a school that has given me, and now my children, so much is a great privilege." Her first volunteering role at AHS was as a member of the Development Committee, and through that role, she saw the significance of the work that the committee is tasked with, and the real improvements for students, teachers, and the entire community brought about by the commitment and efforts of the committee members. It was the pride in these results that motivated her to step up to the role of Development Co-Chair.

Kyle and his wife were similarly captivated by what AHS has to offer. "From the first meetings we had, it was clear AHS was the place for us," he told us. "I was taken by the focus on community, coupled with academics and Jewish pride and tradition." This isn't Kyle's first foray into leadership on a team focused on fundraising. He has held previous UJA campaign fundraising roles on the Young Leaders Executive and as Co-Chair of UJA's U40 Division, so when he first wanted to give back to AHS by getting involved, the Development Committee felt like an obvious place to start.

The Development Committee is made up of amazing parent volunteers who love AHS, and who take time from their very busy schedules to support the school and give the students the best experience they can have. AHS Development Committee meetings often begin on location at 8:00 a.m. It is immediately energizing to be in the room with the group. Being surrounded by smart, kind and engaged people makes volunteering and giving back so much more enjoyable.

AHS is fortunate to have leadership with great vision and bold plans for the school. It is the role of the Development Committee to support that vision and help bring these plans to fruition, constantly thinking about the needs of the school and helping to raise the funds necessary to make continuous improvements. In addition to securing funds, the Committee plays an equally important role in developing strong relationships with current or prospective donors. This year, the Committee is taking on the challenge of focusing on developing relationships and outreach with corporate partners.

Fundraising – the core purpose of this Committee – is never easy. Post October 7th, with so much support from the Toronto Community going to Israel, coupled with the current economic climate, it is even more of an uphill battle. It is especially difficult when the cost of school is already something many people struggle with. However, many don't understand **the immense cost of running the school** and that **even unsubsidized tuition does not cover that cost**. We are also **very proudly a school that offers a lot of financial support**; as a community school, AHS does everything it can to ensure every Jewish family that wants to can give their children an excellent Jewish education. **Community support through fundraising is vital** to filling that gap. **Every dollar that goes to support AHS is truly going back to our families** and supporting all those looking to give their children an AHS education.

As one of the largest and oldest Jewish Day schools in the country, AHS has always been recognized for its warm, close-knit community. It is a school dedicated to keeping Jewish tradition alive, to teaching the importance of Derech Eretz, to instilling love and advocacy for Israel, and to providing a first-class education. These are vital lessons to pass on to future generations. Nowhere else will take on this task better than AHS will, and our leadership, teachers, and administration all work to make the 11-year journey of AHS students the best it can possibly be. So many people give back to the school in whatever way they can. It is important, rewarding, and a great example for our children when we do the same. We need it. We appreciate it. And it makes all the difference.



DAY OF GIVING

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



Day of Giving is on
WED. MARCH 11

Last year, we raised \$1,179,368 with the help of 841 donors, surpassing our goal by 118%!

This year, we are once again aiming high, with our official goal of \$1,000,000 and hopes to exceed last year's record.

**WE ARE COUNTING ON YOU TO
HELP MAKE IT HAPPEN!**



An Evening of Appreciation

On Motzaei Shabbat of November 22, 2025, we held an evening of appreciation for AHS's major donors. This special evening was a very meaningful opportunity to express how much we value our partnership with those who make a difference at the school through multi-year commitments to subsidies, classroom makeovers, and spaces and programs that help our students learn and grow, as well as those who support AHS year to year in making some of our transformative projects possible, such as the Danilack Summer Hub which welcomed Middle School students in for experiential summer learning, the Teacher Learning Hub for providing continuous growth and qualification opportunities free of charge to our teachers, and more.

Naturally for a Saturday night, the program opened with a Havdalah service that nourished the soul, leading into a beautiful performance from the AHS student choir, under the direction of choirmaster **Irina Dubnitzky**. Along with words of welcome and Torah from our Head of School, **Dr. Lee-Ron Kaye**, guests were treated to a special video greeting from the President of Israel, **Isaac Herzog**, who again highlighted the role that Jewish education plays in connecting our communities worldwide and the importance of educating our students as proud Jews and strong advocates, as well as speaking to the rich history, cultural significance, and stalwart leadership that AHS in particular enjoys.

Our guests also heard from a sampling of our recent AHS graduates – representing the true diversity of our community, returning to us from three different high schools – who shared about how empowered they were by the education that they received at AHS, and how meaningful it is to be able to return to their alma mater.

We felt truly blessed to have each and every person in attendance – to have each and every one of you – as a part of our community.



Shirley Train z"l in 2013

A Legacy in Motion: The Train Family at AHS



(L-R), Abraham '09, Tova, Louis '07, Joseph '14, Marshall '75, Rebecca Dokhoian '05 pictured the day of Joseph's Bar Mitzvah.

Shirley and Louis Train z"l sent **Leslie '70** and **Marshall '75** to Associated because they wanted their sons to have a proper Jewish education and a close connection to Israel.

While Louis was busy with his auto glass business, Shirley spent her time raising their 4 children and volunteering. Leslie said that his parents believed in tzedakah and tikun olam: Shirley was active with her shul, Israeli organizations, hospitals and health charities. In addition to the community organizations, they supported Associated.

Louis passed away in 1989, before his 8 grandchildren attended and graduated from AHS. Shirley kept up her annual support of Associated and left a donation in her will for her sons' alma mater.

Shirley passed away in 2022. Marshall shared that although he hadn't been aware that his mother had arranged for a bequest in her will, he was not surprised: "Philanthropy and volunteering runs in our family."

Recently, Marshall and his wife **Tova** decided to follow in his mother's footsteps by creating their own legacy at Associated.

"Now that our granddaughter **Zoey** - in JK - is the first of the third generation of Trains at Associated, we realize the impact AHS has had and will continue to have on our family. Of course, Associated has changed so much since my time there, and again during our kids', but I see the most important priorities remain clear - the commitment to academics, Judaic Studies and Israel."

To ensure that Associated remains strong for generations to come, Marshall and Tova have chosen to make a special planned gift. They have made arrangements to donate the proceeds of a life insurance policy with Associated Hebrew Schools of Toronto as the owner and beneficiary. By paying modest monthly premiums, for which they receive charitable tax receipts, the Trains are able to make a truly meaningful future gift while continuing to support their family and community today.

In recognition of the legacy that they are establishing, Marshall and Tova Train are the newest members of Atid'Chai. Our planned giving society recognizes donors who are passionate about Associated and want to build for the future by making arrangements today that will benefit students for generations to come. Through their vision and commitment, Marshall and Tova join a growing circle of leaders whose generosity ensures that Associated Hebrew Schools remains strong, vibrant, and prepared for the future.

S'MACHOT V'CHADASHOT



Engagements
Samantha Lampert '12
and Shayne Friedman '11



Engagements
Shira Barth '16
and Ethan Lebowitz '16



Engagements
Raquel Moses '12
to Brandon Cooper



Weddings
Noa Pollak '11 to
Max Starkman



Weddings
Noah Einhorn '14
to Kyra Woolf



Weddings
Sydney Factor
to Jared Hyde '12



Weddings
Arielle Cohen '11
to Matthew Isakow

MAZAL TOV TO...

מזל טוב!



Achievements
Dr. Ari Greenwald '92
recognized by
the Knesset



Achievements
Elyssa '05 and Daniel '07
Seidman launched their
business, Tallow Studio



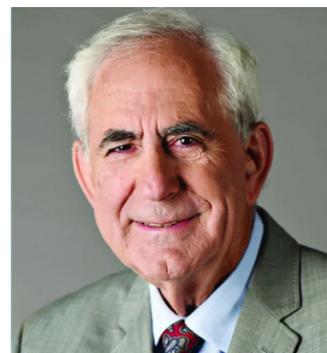
Achievements
Becky Friedman '07
graduated from Ohr Torah
Stone's International
Halakha Scholars Program



Achievements
Dr. David Eisen '76,
Ontario's 2025 Family
Physician of the Year



Achievements
Mathew Frieberg '02 won the
UJA Federation of Greater
Toronto Wendy Eisen Leadership
Development Award



Achievements
AHS grandparent Alfred
Kwinter, CM appointed to the
Order of Canada



Aaron Rosenwald
and Rachael Stone '02
on birth of
Isla



Hayley Lipworth '07
and David Cohen
on birth of
William Aui



Romy (Rewald) '06
and Kyle Dicker
on birth of
Harper Bria



Justin '02 and
Tamara Goldrich
on birth of
Sydney



Zack '09 and
Kayla Mincer
on birth of
Maya Sarah



Lauren Michaelou '02
and Michael Garber
on birth of
Leu



Snir '01 and
Allie Seitelbach
on birth of
Ori



Shimmy Bromberg
and Brigitte Katz '03
on birth of
Eden Anelle



Mitchell '09
and Rebecca Pichosky
on birth of
Grady



Jacklyn Pichosky '07
and Monty Bassin
on birth of
Avery

Sydney and
Jared Hyde '12
on birth of
Romi Lou

שמחות וחדשות

INSPIRING STUDENTS
WITH THE **STRENGTH OF**
TRADITION *AND THE*
POWER OF INNOVATION
התחדשות מתמדת בעידן
של מציאות משתנה



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