Campus Fellows Report: Fall 2017

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Rabbi Hayyim Angel

To our members and friends,

It is a exciting new chapter in my role as National Scholar of the Institute, as I now manage the University Network and Campus Fellowship as well. We currently have 23 Campus Fellows at 20 schools across the United States and Canada, and look forward to growing that number.

Campus Fellows run at least two programs per semester on their campuses, with the goal of promoting our Institute's vision and enlisting participants in their programs in our University Network.

As you will see below, our Fellows have initiated a wide range of programs and events on their campuses, and we will report on their work as it progresses. To see the Fellows' photos and bios, please go to https://www.jewishideas.org/current-campus-fellows.

Thank you for your support,

Rabbi Hayyim Angel

National Scholar

SUNY Binghamton: Sarah Pincus and Marc Generowicz

Last year I ran this program called "Machloket with Marc". It was always a great turnout, with around 15-20 attendees. We generally read an article from your website or from Rabbi Nathan Lopes Cardozo's and discussed it.

For this year's programming, I plan on continuing the "Machloket with Marc", as well as creating a larger program dealing with Mental Disorders in Judaism. It will be a joint effort with my partner/ ambassador Sarah Pincus. We plan on signing students up for the network (especially freshmen).

Brandeis University: Yael Jaffe

BOO Senior Mishmar: Each Thursday night in the Brandeis Beit Midrash, we have Senior Mishmar! "Mishmar" is traditionally a late-night study session/class, often done on Thursday nights in preparation for Shabbat. At BOO's (Brandeis Orthodox Organization) Mishmar, a different senior student speaks to the community each week. This platform offers seniors the opportunity to share words of Torah as well as some reflection on their time here at Brandeis and in BOO, and allows all students to learn from their peers' knowledge, insight, and experiences. I have been committed to increasing the turnout, broadening the accessibility, and maximizing the quality of Mishmar, and so far I've seen really great results! I have been pushing seniors to incorporate more concrete text study into their Mishmars, and pushing diverse students to take the opportunity who may not have considered it otherwise.

The Joy of Text LIVE: On January 21, 2018, The Joy of Text will be doing a live recording at Brandeis! The Joy of Text is a monthly podcast about Judaism, sexuality, and the intersection of the two. Co-hosted by Rabbi Dov Linzer and Dr. Bat Sheva Marcus and moderated by Ramie Smith, this podcast features in-depth conversations by rabbinic and medical experts about subjects that you'll almost never hear discussed anywhere else. This event is a collaboration between BOO (Brandeis Orthodox Organization) and JFAB (Jewish Feminist Association of Brandeis).

University of Chicago: Raina Weinstein

First, we will hold a screening of the Israeli film, *The Women's Balcony* on a Saturday night in November, followed by a discussion of gender separation and roles in Judaism -- and how they are currently changing in the Modern Orthodox world. Our JLIC couple will then hold a shiur on halakhic perspectives on feminism later in the week.

Second, we will have a panel discussion between a local Modern Orthodox rabbi and our Israeli JLIC about religious Zionism in the Diaspora and the relationship between the American Modern Orthodox community and the Israeli Religious Zionist community.

Harvard: Corey Gold

For the first event, we hosted a lunch and learn last Sunday with Rabbi Aryeh Klapper. The class topic was "Does Physical Disability Mean Anything? A Model Discussion About Halakhah & Values." Rabbi Klapper was greeted by a strong crowd of about 25 people - both Harvard undergraduates and community members. We ordered pizza for everyone in attendance.

The second event will be over Simchat Torah. We will be hosting Tzipporah Klapper as a female educator in residence. She will also help with ruach on the women's side of the mechitza. A rising star in Torah learning, Tzipporah will give a 20 minute shiur during the drasha slot on Shabbat, a shiur for those not getting aliyot on Simchat Torah day, and a shiur at seuda shlishit.

Harvard Law School: Ezra Newman

I'm running bi-weekly learning programs at Harvard Law School with lunch. So far we've had 2, one on Eruv Tavshilin and one on Halakhot surrounding Transactional Law. We had 13 people at each of the first two.

Johns Hopkins University: Raymond Braha

For this semester I've been coordinating a nightly Bet Midrash program, putting out some snacks while people learn on their own. This follows the shiurim that are run by Hillel and OU/JLIC during the evenings.

I also organize a pretty much bi-weekly student-led shiur on Shabbat afternoons. Due to the holidays we've only had two thus far this semester, but they've been excellent.

I'm also considering bringing in a guest speaker or organizing a big Mishmar type event to provide a better forum for getting people to sign up for the University Network.

University of Maryland: Tova Rosenthal and Eitan Zecher

Our first event for this semester was Partner Up which happened last night. A sheet was distributed with various sources and discussion questions about Sukkot and repentance from a place of love, and students formed smaller discussion groups to learn and talk with. It went really well and the students enjoyed it!

McGill: Zac Tankel

The main program I will be focusing on initially is our 'Thursday Night Torah' program, abbreviated 'TNT'. This is a program which some other students and I started last year with OU-JLIC. Every Thursday evening, a different student prepares a discussion on a topic relevant to modern Orthodoxy, with textual sources. Our conversations have included questions about topics such as the theory of evolution, secular education, or homosexuality, and how we approach these questions in the Jewish community. In addition, JLIC sponsors subsidized kosher takeout for the program (since obtaining kosher food is a challenge in our community). We'll be holding our first TNT of the year on October 19, then every Thursday thereafter until our exam period in December begins, after which we will resume in January, and continue until the subsequent exam period in April.

Princeton University: Ricki Heicklen

Mental Health and Judaism: A Shabbat devoted to discussions of mental health, halacha, and the Jewish community. This will include a shiur Friday night and a

panel of students Shabbat afternoon discussing their personal experiences, and we are looking into bringing in a professional educator as well.

Pride Shabbat: A Shabbat devoted to discussions of LGBTQ issues and activism and Judaism. This will be during one of the Shabbatot in December, and we are still figuring out who our speaker will be. This will definitely include a student panel as we had one last year and it was very successful.

Rutgers: Raffi Levi and Benjamin Nechmad

At Rutgers, we have already initiated our first event, the Hillel Open Beit Midrash. We hope to have this event twice a month. For the first session, the focus topic was a Pirkei Avot Shiur with commentary by Rabbi Marc Angel. We had about ten people and we definitely can do better once the holidays pass.

University of Toronto: Ari Barbalat

"Was Habakkuk a Hero?: Interpretations of Habakkuk's Protest"

Is it more righteous to resist evil or to suffer it? In brief, this lecture-discussion would offer a reading of the Book of Habakkuk in the Bible in light of Midrashic, commentarial and literary perspectives on the book and its teachings.

"Judith and Hosea: A Dialogue of Perspectives"

There is an intriguing medieval text known as *Maaseh Yehudit*. It tells the story of Judith and Holofernes from "Rabbinic" perspective, with some differences from the Book of Judith narrative found in the Apocrypha. In this lecture-discussion, we will compare and contrast the messages of the Book of Hosea and the Book of Judith. In what ways are they in dialogue with one another? How do they challenge one another? How do they complement one another?

Queens College: Devora Chait

The first program that I am planning this semester is a talk regarding Temple Mount. The talk is scheduled to be given by Rabbi Chaim Ozer Chait, Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivat Migdal HaTorah in Modiin, Israel. The talk would discuss what current obligations concern Temple Mount for Orthodox Judaism, the theoretical Halachic ideal for Temple Mount and the Jewish people, its feasibility today, and what action one could take towards this ideal in the modern political climate.

The second program that I am planning is a student-run mishmar, with the Divrei Torah given exclusively by students to their peers. The structure would be a mixture of prepared speaking and discussion. Two students would be asked to prepare words of Torah, and in addition, there would be time set aside for students to read and discuss an article regarding a current topic in Judaism. This focus on the students in leading mishmar would encourage students to become more actively involved in their Torah learning, and would allow students to learn in a manner that most excites them.

UCLA: Asher Naghi

On Shmini Atzeret, the Institute for Jewish Ideas and Ideals brought UCLA's Jewish community Rabbi Menachem Leibtag, one of the world's foremost Tanakh experts. He spoke multiple times, mainly addressing the meaning behind the holiday. In a small in-depth Chabura after dinner, he delved into broader questions on Parshat Bereshit and on the mission of the Jewish nation.

UMass: Kalila Courban

For my first event I am bringing a woman I met over the summer while interning at the Shalom Hartman Institute to speak. Her name is Rabbi Lilah Kageden and she is the first Modern Orthodox Jewish American woman to assume the title of rabbi. She will be talking about her journey towards assuming this position and the obstacles she faced. My next event will be later in the semester will be a more informal chevruta style discussion. Topic to be determined.

UPenn: Sigal Spitzer

We are having our first program over Simchat Torah. It is about happiness on chag and the meta-theme of simcha in our daily lives. A student is leading the conversation and it will be hosted in a community sukka on campus. I am very excited and have a list of about 15 students attending.

The next program is still up for debate. Students on campus are interested in Jewish medical ethics and halachic organ donation so I am in touch with someone about that topic and waiting to hear back if the final logistics are going to work out.