



# highlights

June 2012/Tammuz 5772

## YHSA COMPLETES SECOND YEAR

### MENAHIEL'S MESSAGE

**A** Yeshiva education provides students with opportunities to be successful in using all of their unique abilities. The first Mishna in Pirkei Avos says, "Ha' amidu talmidim harbei," meaning to educate many students. The literal translation of "Ha' amidu talmidim harbei" means to "stand up many students." The usage of the word "Ha' amidu" teaches us that, as educators, our role is to empower each student with the ability to stand on his own. By giving students opportunities to be successful they will find a deep sense of satisfaction enabling them to stand independently.

Through our wide range of educational opportunities, we at YHSA encourage each student to succeed according to his own unique talents and abilities.

Wishing you a great summer,  
**Rabbi Gavriel Goetz**

### Torah Studies

Mazel Tov! After a year of diligent study, the students at Yeshiva High School of Arizona have finished the entire *Masechta Berachos*! The students covered the wide variety of topics within this fascinating *Masechta*, ranging from the laws of *Shema*, *Tefilla* and *Berachos* to the mysterious nature of dream interpretation. They have amassed a large *Gemara* vocabulary and continue to perfect their reading skills with the weekly tests. The last two weeks of Yeshiva have been dedicated to a review followed by a test of the entire *masechta*!

**Rabbi Yossie Semel** comments on this milestone: "Last year the students had amazing success at completing *Maseches Megilla*, yet I was apprehensive about the task of their finishing the largest *Masechta* (in words) in all of *Shas*. They have once again become true masters and have acquired another *masechta*, on the life-long road to finishing all of *Shas*, G-d willing!"

Rabbi Semel's Navi class also finished *Sefer Yehoshua* with many of the commentaries.

In *Gemara Iyun* with **Rabbi Shraga Yankelwitz** the students have completed one of the most difficult sections in *Masechta Bava Metzia* – known as "Takfo Kohen" – regarding a case of a questionable firstborn animal and a *Kohen* who seizes the animal in an attempt to claim it. On Thursday evenings, many students stayed overtime to share original in-depth presentations in various subjects in *Bava Metzia*. At the end of the year, students began to build

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I HAVE NO DOUBT IN MY MIND THAT THESE STUDENTS WILL BECOME SUCCESSFUL IN LIFE AND A POSITIVE EXAMPLE TO THE STUDENTS THAT FOLLOW IN THEIR FOOTSTEPS AT THE YESHIVA HIGH SCHOOL OF ARIZONA."

-Mr. Carlos Robinson  
American History Teacher

## General Studies

In English Literature with **Mr. Lee Silver**, General Studies Principal, students learned to read short stories, plays and poems in depth. They developed their personal literary skills while discovering the great writings of many English authors.

AIMS test preparations were offered with **Mr. Ron Woldoff** of National Test Prep. The students said they enjoyed the review and the helpful techniques.

We have received the individual student scores for the AIMS (Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standard) Reading and Writing tests. All of our students scored in the Meets or Exceeds categories! Mr. Silver stated, "I am very proud of the efforts of all our students."

In American History with **Mr. Carlos Robinson**, the students took a detailed and informative journey through our country's past. They gained knowledge using technology such as Power Point presentations. The class wrote essays and learned college-level note-taking techniques.

Mr. Robinson comments: "The students show a great deal of maturity and leadership, which surely comes from their parents, teachers, and rabbis whom they have modeled."

In Chemistry with **Dr. Ari Meerson**, the students were introduced to such terms as energy, entropy and enthalpy, and explored different types of chemical reactions. They learned about acids and bases, oxidation and reduction, and how a chemical reaction can power a flashlight - or blast through rock. The real-life impact of chemistry was observed - in the several experiments that the class conducted, on a trip to a nuclear power plant, and in the many questions that sprung from the boys' keen curiosity.

In Honors Geometry with **Mr. Merville Nicholls**, the students covered topics such as ratios, proportions, means, translations, transformations, dilations, images and preimages.



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on the new skill of preparing gemara independently.

Rabbi Yankelewitz's *Halacha* class dealt with the laws of *Muktza* on *Shabbos* and laws of the proper times for *Shema*.

The students finished many *mishnayos* in memory of loved ones who had passed away. They completed *Mishnayos Megilla*, *Chaggiga*, *Moed Katan* and *Taanis*. A delicious siyum breakfast was prepared in honor of the completion of these *Mishnayos*.

In Ethics with **Rabbi Gavriel Goetz** the students have covered topics such as greeting people and being friendly, dealing with social media, using our time wisely, seeking advice, being honest with ourselves and the concept that Hashem loves us more than we can comprehend. In Hebrew Language class, students gained the skills to read Hebrew stories independently.

In Jewish History with **Rabbi Laibel Blotner** students learned about the contribution of poetry and liturgy to the prayers and lifecycle of Jewry in the Middle Ages.



DR. MEERSON AND HIS CLASS VISIT THE PALO VERDE NUCLEAR GENERATING STATION



# SPECIAL activities

## Sedona Retreat

The second annual Sedona Retreat celebrated the accomplishments of this year, and was hosted by Dr. Michael and Carol Dean. The students had a sizzling barbeque and a heartwarming kumzitz bonfire with singing and stories. They went on a magnificent hike to Cathedral Rock. One highlight was the winding tour of Oak Creek Canyon with a tour guide from Pink Jeep Tours, Mr. Joe Berger of Sedona. Thank you to the Deans for their wonderful hospitality!

Other trips this year included:

- > **Tempe Town Lake**
- > **Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station**
- > **Canyon Lake, Arizona**
- > **Los Angeles Shabbaton**



RABBI SEMEL AND STUDENTS LEARNING AT THE DEANS' HOME

## in the community



As one of their final projects in English, the students collaborated on writing and performing an original play based on an original story written by one of the students. The students, as part of their community service, also performed the play for a group of senior citizens at the JFCS Senior Center.

A "Chavrusa with the Community" Program, which ran for five weeks preceding Shavuot, involved community members learning one on one with YHSA students at the Phoenix Community Kollel on Shabbos afternoon. On Shavuot afternoon, YHSA students ran a program for K - 8th grade boys teaching Torah topics.

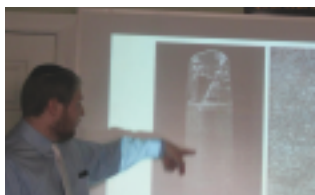
Partnering with the **Friendship Circle**, a group of the students joined the Sunday Afternoon Home Visits Program where they volunteered weekly to assist a family with special needs children.

The **Pre-Pesach Community Car Wash** was a splashing success as the students ran a fundraiser to raise money for a summer trip to the Siyum Hashas.

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In **Mr. Darren Schwartz's** Geometry class, students displayed hard work, cooperation, group work and the use of logical reasoning. The students have come away with a better understanding of the underlying concepts and rules of geometry.

This semester in Art History class with **Mr. Joshua Schimel**, the students covered a broad range of topics including Prehistoric art, Monolithic sculpture, Near Eastern art, Aegean art, Etruscan art, and Roman art (including early Jewish and Christian artworks). By focusing on such a broad range of styles, the students learned to effectively use art to enhance their understanding of both the history and culture of different societies.



## COLLEGE WORKSHOP

Students and parents

of YHSA were offered a College Workshop led by **Adrienne and Eden Feuer** which opened the door to a greater understanding of how to prepare the best college applications and how to identify the competitive colleges most suited to each individual.

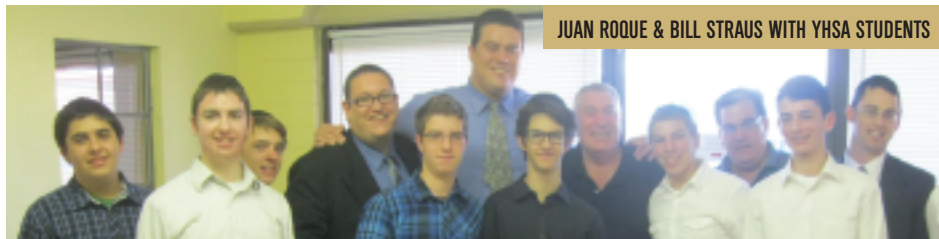
## ENGRADE

In order to enhance our communication with parents, YHSA

has set up Engrade, a web-based grading program that allows parents to check on projects, assignments and tests. This program is being launched in the coming school year.

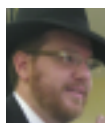
# LEADERSHIP forum

The Leadership program has brought many renowned and inspiring leaders to speak at YHSA. Earlier this year, students were privileged to hear from Rabbi Zvi Holland, Rabbi Ariel Shoshan, Rabbi Zvi Block, Rabbi Reuven Mann, Rabbi Isaac Entin, Rabbi Shimon Green, Rabbi Harris Cooperman, Rabbi Raphael Landesman and Rabbi Moshe Wolin.



JUAN ROQUE & BILL STRAUS WITH YHSA STUDENTS

**Rabbi Moshe Efros** from Ner LeElef visited the Yeshiva and spoke about the importance of each student and what they are accomplishing.



**Rabbi Yechiel Kalish**, Agudath Israel's National Director of Government Affairs told the students that a large part of what contributed to his ability to be a Jewish leader was the fact that he grew up in a small Jewish community.



**Rabbi Binyomin Kaminetsky**, one of the main founders and builders of the Torah community in the Five Towns, NY, spoke about the merit of being pioneers in Phoenix and building a Yeshiva. He also spent personal time with each student.



**Rabbi Zev Leff**, Rav of Moshav Matityahu, shared with the students the importance of viewing Torah as a gift, not a liability! He prepared the students for Shavuot by explaining to them that even if it is difficult at times to learn Torah, it is always worth it!



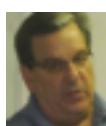
**Mr. Larry Zier** shared with the students the value of being committed to do the right thing even when it is difficult. He also taught about the importance of making a Kiddush Hashem in the work place.



**Dr. Mel Bottner** shared lessons about balancing life and prioritizing what is truly important. The students enjoyed learning about what is involved in being a doctor.



**Mr. Juan Roque**, former NFL player, Detroit Lions, spoke about how he believed that once he got to the NFL he had "made it" and life was going to be good. When he got injured, he got involved with drugs and alcohol and blamed his failures on everyone else. Then he joined a neo-Nazi group and spread negative ideas about the Jews and America. After an unfortunate tragedy in his life, Juan began to appreciate life again. He is now on a mission to spread positive messages.



**Mr. Bill Straus**, Regional Director of the Arizona Anti-Defamation League, talked about the ADL and what they do for the Jewish community and for any group that is the victim of racism.



**Mr. Farley Weiss** explained the background of Jonathan Pollard's case and spoke about the mitzvah of freeing him.



My favorite part of YHSA is the Leadership Forum." -Student

## Extra-Curricular Activities

In Karate with **Dr. Paul Block** and **Sensei Scott**, the students, along with a group of middle school boys invited from the community, continue to move ahead in levels of training. Once again, they have been tested by Dr. Block's sensei, Mr. Robert Hunt and moved up to the next rank. Parents and relatives came to watch as the final test transformed the classroom into a martial arts arena with standing room only!

Basketball practice and coaching has begun with **Mr. David Lobell**. The students train and warm up for the first 20 minutes and then play ball with Coach Lobell as referee. Thank you to Dr. Warren and Susan Heller for giving us the use of their basketball court!

This semester, PE class with **Mr. Avigdor Horowitz** focused on developing safe and effective workouts in a gym. As the semester progressed, the boys became more self-sufficient in choosing their workouts and in managing their time in the gym.

In Guitar Class taught by **Rabbi Yudi Moskowitz**, the students have been focusing on building a solid skill base in both chords and scales including the blues pentatonic scale and the major scale. They have become much more proficient and confident in their musical abilities and all their hard work and practice is bearing fruit!

