



Vol. 4 Winter 2008

ORT AMERICA TIMES

## Mayors Speak of Science Journey as a Miracle Come True

Two Israeli mayors and a principal from World ORT's new Science Journey program – a major project supported by ORT America – made a heartfelt presentation to ORT America's elite 1880 Society members at a special reception in the home of **Murray and Ellen Koppelman** (New York, NY) as well as at a breakfast for donors. The gentlemen spoke of the hope that Science Journey gave students, offering them new opportunities and a future.

Mayor **Shmuel Sisso** (Kiryat Yam), Mayor **Rehad Kheredin** (Horfeish Village) and Principal **Aharon Rothstein** (Sha'ar HaNegev) also spoke at events in Atlanta, Cleveland and Detroit.

**Science Journey**, a \$7.4 million program designed to increase the level of science and technology education in Israel, is a project that more than doubles the entire annual Ministry of Education budget for science and technology education.

Former Ambassador **Shmuel Sisso**, now Mayor of the northern city of Kiryat Yam, spoke of the determination and speed with which World ORT moved to install new computer labs



(L-R) Joan Betty Schwarz (Englewood & Cliffs), Herbert W. Ackerman, ORT America Executive Committee Chair Shelley Fagel, Sha'ar HaNegev Principal Aharon Rothstein, Kiryat Yam Mayor Shmuel Sisso, Ann Gold (Monmouth), ORT America National President Doreen Hermelin, Horfeish Village Mayor Rehad Kheredin, and 1880 Society Member Marilyn Thypin.

in the Rodman School. The 1200-student school serves immigrants from the former Soviet Union, Ethiopia and North Africa. Forty percent of the children live below the poverty line and have become recipients of ORT America's Students at Risk Program.

"You are working in places that didn't get help before from any other Jewish organization," said Mayor Sisso. "It's a focused effort to look at each child and to give each child an opportunity he wouldn't otherwise have. ORT is advancing the future of the State of Israel by taking the torch so that we can become better."

The Rodman School also received a Teacher Empowerment Center (copying machines, laptop computers and other equipment necessary for teachers to use the new labs). In addition, the school will receive a new Science Center, courtesy of **D. Dan Kahn** of Michigan. The Science Center will serve the entire community of Kiryat Yam and will include classes for gifted children, as well as classes for the broader community.

"For you this is day to day equipment, for us it's not," said Mayor Sisso.

**Rehad Kheredin**, Mayor of Horfeish, a Druze Village of 5,400 people less than a mile from the Lebanese border in the north, said that the

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### Living Near Gaza

For most of last year, my school didn't have reinforced buildings so we had shorter school days, from 11 am – 4 pm (usually it is from 7 am – 4 pm) because of the dangers from the Qassam rockets. I felt like I didn't learn anything at all, like we were on holidays. They also postponed the bagrut (matriculation examinations). Because of all the rocket attacks we had no time to prepare.

After the security reinforcements were built things returned a little bit more to normal. But even now there are still rocket attacks in the middle of classes or exams. It's really scary.

One day I was walking to school and my dog followed me so I had to take her back to the house. Just then there was an alarm and the rocket fell exactly where I had been standing a minute before. If my dog hadn't followed me that morning, G-d only knows what would have happened. A rocket also fell on one of the school's classrooms before it had been reinforced. Out of sheer luck it happened to be on a day that the class was on a field trip, so no one was hurt.

Gefen Liberman  
Student, Sha'ar HaNegev High School

Save the Date! **ORT** ANNUAL MEETING  
AMERICA See Page 3  
Boca Raton, FL • March 9 –10, 2008 • Boca Raton Marriott  
For registration and information, visit [www.ortamerica.org/annualmeeting](http://www.ortamerica.org/annualmeeting)

# President's Message

During the past few months, I have been delighted to meet with ORT students, visit ORT programs and tour schools in many places around the world. From Chile (Latin American Campaign) to Israel (Science Journey), the dynamic quality education ORT provides is unparalleled. Each time I meet the students, and speak to the school principals or the mayors in the towns where ORT has a presence, I am awed by the tremendous impact ORT has on the communities and the students.



*Doreen N. Hermelin*

Many exciting changes are in the air. Our first ORT America Annual Meeting in Boca Raton, FL, on March 9 and 10, 2008 will be a very exciting and fulfilling event. Economist, award-winning actor and author Ben Stein is our dinner keynote speaker, where the Tikkun Olam and ORT Alumni Achievement Awards will also be presented. We encourage everyone to

come and enjoy Ben Stein, as well as attend the stimulating breakout sessions planned. The upcoming World ORT General Assembly, held every three years, is being held in Warsaw, Poland. ORT America delegates will join fellow ORT groups from over 30 countries for a Commemorative Ceremony at the Warsaw Ghetto. ORT supporters and students from around the world will march together from Birkenau to

Auschwitz. The trip then moves to Israel, where we will have a whirlwind tour of Science Journey schools, meet students and see how ORT's work is helping students in border areas of the country. Please join us in Warsaw and Israel for this tremendously exciting experience!

ORT America is committed to supporting Science Journey in Israel, the Latin American Campaign, which is helping Jewish communities throughout Central and South America, as well as Mexico.

The Science Journey program includes existing ORT America programs, such as Students at Risk, where over 4,000 needy students have been identified in Israel alone as needing our help. Our Students at Risk program has also been expanded to Rome and Latin America, where thousands of students are suffering the long-term effects of the economic crisis that began in Argentina five years ago.

I am also excited about our new iMitzvah program, designed for bar/bat mitzvah teens to take on ORT as their mitzvah project by raising money to support a Student at Risk or to Adopt a Computer for a needy student.

On behalf of the students our programs help, I thank each of you for your ongoing commitment and support of ORT's mission. Together, we are educating individuals, impacting communities and improving the world.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Doreen N. Hermelin".

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## Mayors Speak of Science Journey as a Miracle Come True

computer labs supplied by ORT were the first computers his students had ever had. In addition, the Teacher Empowerment Centers gave teachers copying machines, laptops, DVD players and other equipment they never had. Since unemployment is high in Horfeish, the Mayor said the labs help increase the level of education and break the cycle of poverty. The village was hit by 61 missiles during the war with Hezbollah.

As a mechanical engineer, the Mayor said that increasing math and science skills improved overall education because it increased logical thinking skills.

**Aharon Rothstein**, principal of Sha'ar HaNegev School just 2,000 meters from Gaza, spoke of the struggle to exist in a place that is not safe for children. "Imagine a place that is supposed to allow children to run and play and have space and they study in bomb shelters?" Rothstein said his students run for safety to bomb shelters four to five times a day. As part of Science



*One of many students in Israel benefiting from Science Journey*

Journey, Sha'ar HaNegev School received a computer lab from World ORT. "We didn't know of ORT until one day, I got a call that they want to give us a physics lab. And they didn't want anything in return. It never happened before," said Mr. Rothstein.

In May 2007, the computer lab was destroyed by a Qassam missile – luckily, no children were in the classroom at the time. Since the rooms were no longer safe, the students needed to study in bomb shelters. The day after the missile attack, World ORT delivered laptop computers so the students could continue studying, albeit in the bomb shelters, in a safe place.

"The only thing that can guarantee our success is that we give the students a good education," said Mr. Rothstein. "For me this is ORT. It's about solidarity."

"Science Journey has given students optimism and they are more positive about their chances in life. They see they can reach their goals. This is the most important thing that ORT is doing with the Science Journey program. I speak on behalf of 30 mayors in Israel," said Mayor Sisso.



*1880 Society Members Ellen and Murray Koppelman*

## 2008 ORT America Annual Meeting Update – ORT Wins Ben Stein!

All ORTists have a reason to head south this winter . . . ORT America's Annual Meeting, March 9-10 in Boca Raton, FL. And this year there is a speaker that's really hot . . . **Ben Stein!**

**Ben Stein** has a career extraordinaire . . . lawyer for Richard Nixon, award winning actor (*Ferris Bueller's Day Off*), economist, teacher, game show host (*Win Ben Stein's Money*), journalist and author. Mr. Stein will serve as keynote speaker at our Annual Meeting dinner on Sunday evening. There is an exceptional program lined up for this year's meeting . . . from breakfast to breakout sessions.

Join us and . . .

- Attend breakout sessions on Fundraising, Marketing, Planned Giving and Leadership Development.



Ben Stein

- Have "Breakfast with Champions!" ORT students and teachers from Latin America, Israel and the USA will share their personal ORT stories.

- Enjoy a festive dinner featuring keynote speaker Ben Stein and special presentations of the Tikkun Olam Award and the ORT Alumni Achievement Award.
- Hear from **Doreen Hermelin**, ORT America President, who will give an update on ORT America's recent accomplishments and future goals.

A special reception will be hosted by the 1880 Society, DeGunzbourg Society, Heritage Club, Diamond Ladder/Major Gift, and Golden Circle.

Outside the hotel – Boca has it all, whether your interests are golfing, fishing, shopping, museum hopping or sampling some of the finest restaurants in Florida. Visit [www.ortamerica.org](http://www.ortamerica.org) for more details and to register.

## Mission 2008 – World ORT General Assembly June 1–4 in Warsaw, Poland and June 4–6 in Israel

World ORT's 2008 General Assembly begins in historic Warsaw, a city that resonates in Jewish history and in the history of ORT. Explore both the old and the new in Warsaw. Come join us on this memorable journey as we step back in time to examine that history as well as the present day, modern European city that greets visitors today.

To commemorate the persecution of Jews in WWII, World ORT has organized a Commemorative Ceremony at the Warsaw Ghetto and a Memorial March where ORT supporters and students from around the world will march together from Birkenau to Auschwitz.

At the General Assembly itself, you will meet and mingle with the leading members of the World ORT family. These movers and shakers, representing 30 countries in the ORT network, have come to participate in high-level briefings and sessions. The festive Gala Dinner will include special performances by the ORT Vilnius School Choir. A special delegation from the Israeli Defense Force will also be present. Participants will also be the first to celebrate the re-release and updated edition of *The History of ORT*, chronicling ORT's impressive and moving history.

At the conclusion of the Warsaw portion of the trip, you will travel via chartered flight directly to Israel to celebrate Israel's 60th Anniversary



and see ORT's esteemed Science Journey Program.

Science Journey is ORT's \$7.4 million campaign that provides computer and science labs, equipment, technology education, curriculum development, and teacher training for 25 underserved schools and 30,000 students throughout the State of Israel. You will visit the schools and meet students, teachers and parents that represent the many cultures of Israel: Jewish,

Druze, Bedouin, Arab, Christians.

See how ORT is changing the lives of these students and their communities. Enjoy the celebrations, meet IDF soldiers, hear from top officials; learn how World ORT is improving science and technology education in Israel. And then, come home and spread the word!

We hope to see you there!

For further details, schedules and registration forms, please visit [www.ortamerica.org](http://www.ortamerica.org) and click on the World ORT GA link from the home page. For scheduling information, email **Niamh Codeiro** at [niamh.cordeiro@ort.org](mailto:niamh.cordeiro@ort.org) at World ORT or **Sheila Kavanagh** at [skavanagh@ortamerica.org](mailto:skavanagh@ortamerica.org) at ORT America.

# A Visit to ORT-Tech South Africa

By Lois Dermer

In September, I was privileged to visit ORT-Tech in Capetown, South Africa. Along with its mission of Educating for Life, ORT-Tech operates as a well-established Jewish-led, non-profit, public benefit organization. It is committed to providing education, skills and training to meet the ever-increasing development and employment needs of impoverished children in South Africa.

According to Directors **Alta Greef** and **Vagriuah Kariem**, the major emphasis of ORT in Capetown is the training of over 1,000 educators. This is 18% of the total teacher-training in the country. All teachers who complete the training automatically move up one step on the salary schedule.

ORT-Tech also visits over 50 schools in the Western Cape Region, supporting the work of physics and chemistry teachers. With the support of its loyal founders, its community volunteers and professional staff, the school is eagerly looking forward to expanding science, mathematics and technology education to its communities.

The ORT-Tech staff warmly welcomed my husband Arthur and I, providing us with an in-depth presentation and tour of their facilities in Capetown. It was a unique experience. The program is housed in a children's science and discovery museum called the MTN Sciencentre, which provides students with hands-on experiments and has banks of computers available. This is very important because most schools do not have the number of computers needed to give children hands-on opportunities.

The Center's staff also trains teachers in this facility. The staff spoke about their pressing need for funding a new kindergarten program—at the present time all students start their education in first grade. They also need funding to provide continued training of teachers in early childhood education.

I was very impressed by the opportunities that their program provides to teachers and students alike. The dedication and high motivation of the staff at the Center



*Lois Dermer (L) visits ORT South Africa school in Capetown and meets with Alta Greef, Director of Education for ORT South Africa.*



*ORT SA students at the MTN Sciencentre*

was apparent. They are working very diligently to deliver 21st Century science, math and technology to the youth of South Africa.

Our visit provided us with a fantastic opportunity to see firsthand this outstanding program, the exceptional individuals who have devoted their lives to the ORT program and the students who are benefiting from its work. Without the wonderful cooperation of ORT America and World ORT staff, this visit would not have been possible. It was an experience we will never forget.

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*Lois Dermer is a long time supporter and member of NAN Alliance B in South Palm Beach, FL*

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75 Maiden Lane, 10th Floor  
New York, NY 10038-4607  
800.519.2678

[www.ORTAmerica.org](http://www.ORTAmerica.org)

Sarina Roffé  
National Communications Director

Jeremy Chernikoff  
Assistant Director

Bonnie Hirsch  
Communications Assistant

**ORT America** provides cutting-edge training and strategic educational initiatives that empower 270,000 people annually in 56 countries to become productive citizens and lead their families and communities forward. This is a responsibility ORT America welcomes as part of its commitment to supporting Jewish values, strengthening Jewish identity and providing the educational opportunities that help people help themselves. For more information, please visit [www.ortamerica.org](http://www.ortamerica.org).



*(L-R) Vagriuah Kariem, Director of ORT Tech in Capetown, Lois Dermer, Alta Greeff, Director of Education for ORT South Africa.*

# Doreen Hermelin Visits ORT School in Chile

**Doreen Hermelin**, President of ORT America, visited ORT Chile in Santiago, while in the country for a family wedding. At ORT Chile she attended a vocational training class for the blind and heard about plans to open a new, affordable Jewish school. Currently, Santiago has two Jewish schools serving a total of 1,700 students.

"There are 2,000 Jewish children of school age who do not have the option of a Jewish education," Mrs. Hermelin said. "If ORT can build its own school it could reach these children. In principle I support this project as long as the local community supports it"

Mrs. Hermelin was blindfolded and participated in a class with 20 blind students. ORT Chile trains 400 blind people annually in special laboratories it has installed across the country with the financial support of Telefonica and the Maurice Hatter Foundation.

"ORT Chile is training blind and disabled people for employment, there's nothing else like it available in the country. I'm very impressed by the way they do it – it's exactly what ORT is all about," Mrs. Hermelin said. "I will be telling everyone at ORT America about what I've seen."

The proposed ORT school in Santiago is part of the Latin American Campaign, supported by ORT America. The campaign is designed to boost the continent's smaller, struggling Jewish communities and expand the success of ORT's major operations. Each of the major beneficiary countries – Argentina, Mexico, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay – will match international donations with local fundraising. The campaign includes a new high school for Buenos Aires, a digital media center for ORT in Mexico City, scholarships for students at ORT Uruguay University and help for smaller Jewish communities throughout Latin America.

"In Chile, Jewish parents would prefer to send their children to Jewish schools. Some

parents seek an alternative to the religious positioning offered by the existing schools or they are looking for an education that will lay the foundations for future job opportunities for their children. However, they encounter a range of obstacles: too few available places, unaffordable tuition fees, and too great a distance to commute for around half the community living in Santiago's lower-middle class area in the Lower Town.

The new ORT school will be for Jewish children who do not attend one of the existing Jewish schools. It will be affordable for Jewish families who cannot afford the tuition fees at the existing schools and it will be located in an area accessible to Jewish families throughout Santiago, not just those who live in the Upper Town. The school will help combat the rapidly growing assimilation problem among young Chilean Jews and provide access to a Jewish education for those especially at risk.

"Our school will appeal to parents seeking an alternative to the existing options," said ORT Chile National Director **Marcelo Lewkow**. "The new school will offer World ORT's internationally acclaimed curriculum that combines state-of-the-art science and technology education and vocational training with an excellent Jewish education using the most modern pedagogical methods available."

World ORT Director General **Robert Singer** added: "I am very happy that Doreen, as one of ORT's major leaders, has taken such a strong position on this issue. As is always the case, when World ORT, ORT America and the national operational organizations



*ORT America National President Doreen Hermelin experiences a vocational training class for the blind at ORT Chile.*

work closely together it's a win-win situation that brings outstanding results. I am confident that, thanks to the highly professional team in ORT Chile, this will be proven once again with the addition of another formal ORT school in Latin America before the 130th anniversary of our organization."

ORT Chile is recognized nationally as having had a great social impact through educational and training projects for the Ministry of Education and various municipalities, with the backing of businesses and institutions such as Chile's largest telecommunications company, Telefonica, and the Coca Cola Foundation. ORT Chile is also renowned for its excellent performance in raising educational standards in public schools. The Ministry of Education gave it, together with several other NGOs, 10 schools to improve.

"The results of our schools were the best so we're now considered the standard in improving teaching in vulnerable schools, and are currently halfway through a second four-year program with 10 more schools," Mr. Lewkow said.

# Elite 1880 Society Welcomes Lee and Jane Seidman

Thanks to the global vision of American philanthropists and entrepreneurs **Lee G.** and **Jane Seidman** (Cleveland, OH), ORT America has received a groundbreaking \$500,000 gift, placing the Seidmans at the highest level of World ORT's elite international 1880 Society, named for the year of ORT's birth in St. Petersburg, Russia.

The Seidmans were presented with the 22-karat gold 1880 Society medal during the ORT America Cleveland Region's Annual Tribute Brunch. Designed by **Igal Gabay**, the medals (bronze, silver or gold depending on the level of commitment) were specially minted for World ORT by the Israeli Government Coins and Medals Corporation, and feature portraits of ORT's founding fathers on one side and the name of the Israeli capital, Jerusalem, in 12 languages on the other.

The 1880 Society was created to honor those who support one of the most noble of causes – educating and training people to lead independent, fulfilled lives. Its members continue the glorious tradition of generosity and compassion for others that led to the establishment of ORT 128 years ago.

**Lee Seidman**, an ORT supporter for over 50 years, has a great deal of respect for education and believes in leading by example. "This gift exemplifies philanthropy at its best," said **Doreen Hermelin**, President of ORT America. "**Jane and Lee Seidman's**

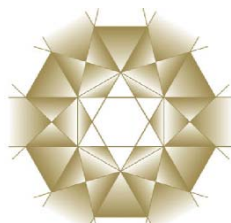


(L–R) **Larry Kadis**, Cleveland Region President; **Doreen Hermelin**, ORT America National President; **Lee and Jane Seidman**, new 1880 Society Members; **Bob Sill**, World ORT Chair of Executive Committee; and **Janice Stolar**, ORT America Chief Advancement Officer.

leadership mirrors the very spirit of ORT, an organization dedicated to the idea that young able minds can achieve world-altering wonders when allowed direct access to the intellectual and physical resources of a major educational organization."

## Diamond Ladder Surpasses Goals

In tribute to ORT's 125th Anniversary, Women's American ORT, now ORT America, began the Diamond Ladder campaign with a goal of recruiting 125 supporters who would make a commitment to ORT of \$5,000 or more for each of three years.



The first 125 Diamond Ladders were to be considered Founders. We are delighted to announce that ORT America has achieved and surpassed this goal!

The first 135 ORT supporters have committed to become Diamond Ladders. These visionaries understand that by making a major gift commitment for each of three years, ORT is better able to plan for the future and increase its funding of ORT

schools and programs.

ORT America extends its gratitude to **Dee Bass** and **Ronna Heftman** who co-chaired the Diamond Ladder initiative through the ORT America Inaugural Convention in April, and to **Robert Colburn** and **Gail Lanznar**, the current co-chairs.

The Diamond Ladder has eight levels, in recognition of Maimonides' eight levels of tzedekah. According to Maimonides, the highest level of charity is to give people the skills to become self-sufficient, the gift of no longer needing charity at all. ORT America based the Diamond Ladder Campaign on this time-honored Jewish perspective since this is exactly what ORT has been doing for



*Robert Colburn*



*Gail Lanznar*

over 125 years.

For more information on this major gift recognition society, please contact **Janice Stolar**, Chief Advancement Officer at (212) 547-9124.

# Next Generation

## New York

Manhattan's Next Generation Group enjoyed the Other Israel Film Festival, sponsored in part by ORT America. The festival included a week-long series of award winning film presentations, musical performances, and panel discussions about the lives and culture of the 20 percent of non-Jewish Israeli citizens, such as Arabs, Muslims, Christian, Druze, Bedouins and Carassians.



## Florida

Sarasota's Next Generation Group (L-R) Rachel Stark Cappelli, Debbie Furman, Ruth Sklar, Shayna Zion, Carl Ruben, Gina Calamito gathers at the home of Debbie Furman for a Hanukkah Party, which included latke eating, a gift wrapping extravaganza and screening of the



Science Journey DVD. Two couples, Elyse & Mark Gordon and Rachel & Neil Marcus, both of Bradenton, Florida, will be spearheading Next Gen outreach efforts.

## Chicago

The Chicago Next Generation group enjoyed brunch, da Bears and ORT. (L-R) Steven Fisher, Nicole Dunn, Brian Price, Jodi Schechter.



## US ORT Operations Outreach to Jewish Communities

In an agreement with Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch, the educational arm of the Chabad-Lubavitch movement, Bramson ORT College will create the Yeshiva Technical Institute to train at-risk teenagers and young adults. The Institute will serve not only the Chabad community, but will reach out to the Orthodox Jewish community as a whole.

Bramson ORT College (New York) is one of three schools under the auspices of U.S. ORT Operations, Inc., and supported by ORT America. There are also two technical institutes - Zarem/Golde Technical Institute (Chicago, IL) and the Los Angeles ORT Technical Institute (LAOTI) (Los Angeles, CA), as well as resource centers in Detroit, Cleveland, Miami and Atlanta.

All three schools make extensive efforts at outreach to local Jewish communities, including providing after school programs to yeshiva students, classes at community centers and other programs. For example, Bramson ORT College is building partnerships with Jewish community centers by offering tutoring for immigrants in English and teaching senior citizens computer skills.

The ORT E-learning Center at its Brooklyn campus has become an integral part of Bramson's Jewish Community Outreach, and thus, a part of its future. Each year, more than 100 Orthodox Jewish yeshiva students in grades 6 – 12 attend an after school program



*Rabbi Nochem Kaplan, Director of Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch (L) and Dr. Ephraim Buhks, Director of US ORT Operations*

to get help in math, science, English, Hebrew and Jewish subjects.

Most of the students are from low-income families, and many are on public assistance and do not have access to computers at home. Their ability to use the on-campus electronic tutorial service helps them succeed both educationally and financially. The E-Learning Center also offers educational links to teachers in Israel so that students can increase their Hebrew language ability.

One parent said, "I was thrilled to discover the ORT E-Learning Center and I now bring my children to the school at every free opportunity. They have excellent teachers, different from the schools where there are big classes and not enough individualized attention. Here the teachers have more patience and the children come away from the lessons truly knowing their stuff. The school even discovered that one of my children had dyslexia."

Zarem/Golde ORT Technical Institute's recent outreach to the local Jewish community has

drawn many Orthodox and other American Jewish families into vocational education classes for economic survival. The school provides enriching social and intellectual activities including Sunday and Hebrew school, cultural studies, Jewish holiday celebrations, folk dancing and programs especially designed for Jewish children.

Los Angeles ORT Technical Institute offers continuing education courses to teachers from the Board of Jewish Education to integrate the Internet and other technology into their lesson plans at Jewish day schools and after school programs. Working closely with Jewish Vocational Services, Los Angeles ORT Technical Institute is assisting new immigrants with language programs and with information on enrolling in county and federally-funded high tech training programs free of charge. Complementary vocational and technological training is also provided for Ateret Israel Jewish High School students. The school also offers vocational skills training for Chabad Worldwide Yeshiva students.

US ORT Operations schools have earned a superior reputation through their contemporary curriculum. Successful student job placement rates are well known and one of the reasons the schools are embraced by the various local populations. Constantly upgrading and adding innovative programs in response to students' needs and job market requests, ORT Operations is exploring fresh approaches to reach out to a diverse community, and its schools are quickly becoming the social and cultural centers in the neighborhoods where they are located.

# ORT Shorts

## ORT Opens Science Lab in Panama School

A new state-of-the-art science laboratory was installed by ORT at Panama City's Isaac Rabin School under the supervision of Professor **Rolando Diaz** of ORT Chile. Working with the local ORT Panama Committee, the needs of the Jewish community will be identified and links will be made to help the local community.



*(L-R) Connie Fidanque, Gay Fidanque, teachers Ariel Arauz and Arista Lopez, Professor Rolando Diaz and ORT Panama Committee member Norma Miller watch as student Franklin Morrison uses new laboratory equipment provided by World ORT.*

The laboratory follows the model of the TAVEC project through which ORT Chile has installed dozens of such facilities at public schools throughout Chile with the support of the Coca Cola Foundation. Teacher training and technical assistance are also part of the package.

## ORT Mexico to Host Groundbreaking Education Congress

More than 2,000 educational professionals from across Latin America will attend a three-day Congress on educational innovation and technology, hosted by ORT Mexico. Believed to be the first time a pan-Latin American education event will be held, the Congress will enable attendees to share experiences, learn new teaching techniques from around the world, participate in 20 workshops and 16 conferences, and view exhibits on the latest school supplies, books and teaching materials.



*Mexico's First Lady, Margarita Zavala de Calderón, who has promised to inaugurate the three-day Congress, poses with ORT Mexico staff.*

## Teachers Updated on Green Technologies

The ecological challenges impacting the lives of all people in the 21st Century may one day be solved by ORT graduates. Educators from ORT schools and programs in Russia, Ukraine, Latvia, Israel, Italy, France, the Czech Republic, South Africa and Mexico gathered in London to shed light on the search for alternatives to fossil fuels such as solar energy research.



Through a combination of lectures by expert speakers, participants' presentations and field trips, the World ORT Hatter Technology Seminar brought teachers up to date on environmental issues and developments in renewable energy sources and other green technologies. It is hoped that the seminar will also initiate a gradual 'greening' of ORT institutions around the world.

## Computer Lab in Tunis

After 35 years' absence from Tunis, a new ORT computer laboratory was opened at the Chabad School.



The new facility will not only help the school's 60 students, but also the 3,000 Jews in the community by making available informational

*Representatives of Tunisia's Education and Interior Ministries (front left) join the inauguration of the ORT ICT center in Tunis with Chief Rabbi Haim Bittan (R) and JDC Board Mission to Tunisia participant Martha Freedman (rear).*

education and training programs. An Internet connection and equipment for the ICT center allows ORT to provide ongoing teacher training and classes for senior students. For many of the people using this facility, it will be their first experience of using computers and the Internet in a professional and educational context.

## New Bergen-Belsen Exhibition Features ORT

ORT's critical work training and educating Holocaust survivors in post-war Europe is featured in a new, permanent exhibition at the former Bergen-Belsen concentration camp.

The Documentation Center (funded by the German government) houses the results of seven years' intensive international research and covers the history of the Bergen-Belsen camps (concentration, prisoner-of-war and displaced persons camps). It includes material illustrating Bergen-Belsen's previously neglected post-war role as the largest Jewish Displaced Persons (DP) camp on German soil.



*ORT trainees in the Bergen-Belsen Displaced Persons Camp, December 7, 1947.*

ORT operated numerous practical training, relief and educational programs for the 12,000 surviving Jews at Bergen-Belsen. ORT trained and educated some 80,000 Holocaust survivors in Austria, Germany and Italy between 1945 and 1951. In 1947, ORT was providing 597

courses in various trades and subjects in 78 centers and employing more than 900 instructors.

## Kishinev Career Center Brings Hope

With limited opportunities for decent pay and stable employment in Rybnitsa and Beltsy, small towns in Moldova, the nearly 3,000 Jews who live in one of the poorest countries in Europe now have hope.

The opening of the Lawson ORT-Career centers in these cities are now providing much needed ICT and business-related training and are linked by cutting-edge distance learning technology to ORT's Jack Lawson Vocational Training Center in Moscow. The centers offer career-oriented training to help members of the Jewish community improve their financial situation, raise their standard of living and secure a decent future.

The two new centers have already started their first courses in basic computer literacy. Future courses will include business and office skills, understanding business accounts, computer graphics, desktop publishing, marketing and publicity, Computer Aided Design (CAD) and computer programming and databases.

## Science City Project Launched

ORT's historic dedication to Israeli education has taken a momentous step into the future with the creation of its first Science City. A joint commitment to invest millions in scientific and technological studies, the project at the Rodman School in Kiryat Yam was made possible thanks to a donation from **D. Dan Kahn** (Warren, MI) of ORT America, the Israeli Ministry of Education and the Municipality of Kiryat Yam.

Representing a strengthening of ORT's Science Journey, the school's conversion into a center for scientific and technological studies will serve 45,000 people, about half of whom are immigrants, as well as Rodman's own students and residents of nearby towns. Access to state-of-the-art laboratories and staff facilities – as well as teacher training and material support for poor students – will provide students with the tools they need to succeed, while encouraging them to achieve personal excellence.



*A trainee is introduced to computing at the Lawson ORT-Career Center in Beltsy.*

## South Africa's ORT SEED Bears Fruit

ORT SEED, ORT South Africa's innovative program to bring science and technology education to under-resourced schools, is creating new opportunities in working-class townships. More than 50 students competed against each other to see which ones would try to win the First Lego League provincial contest in Cape Town.



*A girls-only team from Northwood Primary School demonstrates its robot design to judges. The team went on to become the overall winner.*

The theme of this year's competition is Energy Sources. Each team is challenged to build and program a robot that can perform certain tasks successfully, and must include a research component. The First Lego League gives students from underprivileged areas the opportunity to overcome obstacles as well as the motivation to experiment in science and technology. ORT SEED is also providing practical training for science and technology teachers who did not study technology when they were in school.

## Council of Europe

Leading officials at the Council of Europe during a meeting in Strasbourg praised ORT's contributions to European values of democracy and the rule of law through its work and philosophy.



*World ORT's Executive Committee outside the Council of Europe.*

The President of the Council's International Non-Governmental Organization and the Head of the Division of NGO's and Civil Society at the Council's Directorate General of Democracy Affairs noted their high regard for ORT International Cooperation, and thanked World ORT for partnering with them to achieve common objectives. At a reception at ORT Strasbourg, the World ORT Executive Committee and guests met students from as far away as Djerba who spoke about how they are benefiting from the organization's high academic standards.

ORT became the first Jewish organization to gain participatory status at the Council of Europe in 1992, and this association has resulted in the Council's backing of such ORT projects as ORT France's distance learning, via the Internet, for adults in poor countries.

# Regional News

## Atlanta

Atlanta community leaders were feted at the annual ORT Atlanta Region Tribute Dinner, themed "Banking on the Future: ORT's Journey in Science and Technology."

**Joe Cohen**, partner in the accounting firm of Birnbrey, Minsk & Minsk, and past president of American ORT, was named ORT Man of the Year, **Liane Levetan**, former CEO of Dekalb County, was honored as ORT Woman of the Year and **Bill Linginfelter**, GA State CEO of Wachovia Bank, received the ORT Atlanta Community Achievement Award.

National President **Doreen Hermelin** and Executive Committee Chair **Shelley Fagel** along with many officers and National Board members were at the 2007 Tribute Dinner to celebrate.



(Standing L-R) Michael Garrett (President & CEO of Georgia Power Company and presenter to Bill Linginfelter); Linda Selig (Honorary Dinner Co-Chair); Hilly Panovka (Event Chair); Doug Hertz (Corporate Chair) and Eliot Arnovitz (presented Award to Liane Levetan). (Seated) Doreen Hermelin; Bill Linginfelter (outgoing Georgia CEO, Wachovia Bank and recipient of the Community Achievement Award); Liane Levetan (ORT Woman of the Year); Joe Cohen (ORT Man of the Year) and Judy Menikoff, Vice Chair WO Executive Committee, who presented the award to Joe Cohen.

## Cleveland

Real estate developer and long-time ORT leader **Ronald A. Fisher**, was honored as ORT America – Cleveland Region's 2007 ORT Man of the Year at its annual brunch. This marked the first Cleveland brunch under the new ORT America banner. Beginning with a welcome from **LuAnne Fisher** and Ha'motzi by **Jake** and **Matthew Fisher**, the brunch was a wonderful tribute to ORT and to Ron Fisher. **Larry Kadis**, the first elected President of the Cleveland



Larry Kadis, Cleveland Region President, (L) and Ron Fisher, 2007 ORT Man of the year.

Region, acknowledged the historical significance of the merger and cited the annual ORT Cleveland Brunch as one of those defining traditions that will carry over to the new ORT America.

## Connecticut

The Julie Kovar Chapter was inaugurated in Connecticut in memory of **Julie Kovar**, an aspiring first grade teacher, who died before she could finish her education. According to her mother, **Ellen Kovar**, Julie was committed to education. The chapter was founded by **Sara Laden**, who had fond memories of her mother's involvement in ORT.



(L-R) Ellen Kovar, Marcia Jamron, Stuart Kovar

## Eastern Massachusetts

The members of Eastern Mass enjoyed the privilege of honoring its Life Members in the Sukkah at the lovely new home of **Marlene** and **David Sheena** during a sumptuous brunch prepared by the Board members. ORT Braude grad **Merav Algon** shared stories about her life in Israel, her successful experience at ORT Braude in Karmiel and her new studies in the Boston area. **Lois Corr**.

**Lois Corr**, a co-President, spoke about local and World ORT happenings.



(L-R): Life Member, Marilyn Held; NAN Consultant, Sandi Sudikoff; Treasurer, Ina Goldstein; NAN Coordinator and Co-President, Aileen Grossman; Recording Secretary, Carol Braverman; and Co-President and Event Co-Chair, Lois Corr.

## Los Angeles

More than 150 ORT supporters gathered at the Beverly Hilton for the Los Angeles Chapter's 27th Annual Chanukah Brunch, which featured the presentation of a special award to LA Mayor **Antonio Villaraigosa**, who was being recognized for improving the lives of LA children and families.



(L-R) Robert Migdal, Murray Fischer, LA ORT President Charles Eberly, Chairman Stanley Black, honoree LA Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, Hal Wiseman, Irvin White, Andrew Stevens, Jona Goldrich, and Beverly Hills Mayor Jimmy Jamshid Delshad.

## Florida



(L-R): Leah B. Siskin, Florida Advancement Director; Loren Krongold, Greater Miami Region Director; Barbara Feifer, NAN Consultant and Chair, 2008 ORT America Annual Meeting; Janice G. Stolar, ORT America Chief Advancement Officer; Annette Israel Holland, Florida Associate Director; Toby Feuer, Coordinator, NAN B – Florida; Marcy Wiseberg, Chair ORT America National Alliance Network; Lorraine Epstien, Financial Specialist, NAN B – Florida; Shirley Sokolsky, Florida major gift donor – 1880 Society, de Gunzburg (Heritage Club), Golden Circle, and NAN Consultant.

**National Alliance Network** – An ORT alumnus from ORT Argentina shared her experiences as an ORT student and teacher with a group of NAN servicers, Region and Chapter Presidents and Treasurers who met with **Janice Stolar**, Chief Advancement Officer, and **Marcy Wiseberg**, NAN Chair and ORT America Board member, to discuss fundraising campaigns and to brainstorm for ORT America fundraising in Florida.

### Greater Sarasota Area Council –

Students of **Ron Jones**, the construction trade instructor at Sarasota County Technical Institute (SCTI), built a gift wrap booth as a class project at no charge to the Greater Sarasota Area Council, at the request of **Barbara Berliner**, President. The Council used the booth at the Westfield Sarasota



(L-R) Alex Lounders, Felipe Arizpe, Vadim Semenyuk, Joyce Kravitz (ORT member), Armaneo Munoz, Jeff DeClercq, Keith Silva, Robert Minor, Jake Frantz, Ruth Michael (ORT member), and Ron Jones (teacher).

Square Mall. **Ruth Michael** and **Joyce Kravitz** then volunteered to coordinate the efforts with SCTI and ORT. Eventually, ORT students will benefit from the profits made by the thousands of presents wrapped in the booth by local area ORT members (from

SaraMana Evening, Palm, and Gulfside chapters of ORT), ORT members and friends at the SCTI construction technology career building.

**Palmward Evening Chapter** – **Merle** and **Dan Verner** hosted a sumptuous dessert reception at their beautiful home in Broken Sound that raised over \$10,000.

Guest speaker **Facundo Poj**, a 1990 ORT Argentina graduate, gave a very moving presentation. Aventura City Commissioner **Zev Auerbach** motivated everyone about the needs of the students and teachers and schools supported by ORT America. The highlight of the evening was a matching gift opportunity that was presented by an anonymous donor.



(L-R) Zev Auerbach, Barbara Feifer, Robyn Gellman, Gail Kuhn and Facundo Poj.

## Greater Washington



(Back L-R) Cantor Mikahil Manevich, Barry Chasen, Lyn Chasen and Dean Eisen. (Front) Ema Manevich and Norma Eisen.

The Greater Washington Region honored **Norma** and **Dean Eisen** with the Young Leadership Achievement Award and **Ema** and Cantor **Mikhail Manevich** with the Community Achievement Award at its annual tribute dinner at Washington Hebrew Congregation. The Eisens spoke about the importance of setting examples for younger generations and of ORT's mission to "extend a hand up, not a hand out" Ema and Cantor Manevich were introduced with an entertaining presentation created by **Debi** and **Roger Lebbin**. ORT grads, the Manevichs expressed gratitude to ORT for providing them with English language skills as they waited to emigrate from Russia.

# Regional News

## Michigan



(L-R) Former Michigan Region Development Associate Jennifer Callans; Paula Lynn, who handled WINGO's décor; and Co-Chairs Lisa Brown and Marlo Scott.

Over 320 women played Bingo at the Michigan Region's very successful WINGO event, "Opening Doors, Opening Hearts." The Co-Chairs were **Lisa Brown** and **Marlo Scott**. ORT Moscow student **Danny Agukin**, the first participant in the Michigan Region's Student Ambassador Program, spoke to the crowd at Congregation Shaarey Zedek in Southfield, Michigan.

## Metropolitan Chicago

(L-R) Misha Solodkin, a student at ORT Mexico; Monica and Arturo Merikanskas, who is an ORT Mexico board member; and Shelley Fagel, ORT America Executive Committee Chair.



## New Jersey



J. J. Goldberg (L) Editor-in-Chief, *The Forward*, updated members of New Jersey Region on Israel's hot-button issues at the annual STAR reception on October 28 at the home of Marsha and Larry Eisen. With Goldberg are Mildred Greenberg (R) president, New Jersey Region, and her husband Al.

## New York



**Manhattan Region**—The Annual Manhattan Region Luncheon attendees (L-R) Masha Woolwich, Remi Roberts, Dorothy Pepper, Ruth Goodgold, Rose Rabin, Elizabeth Shwal, Rhoda Kirshenbaum, Jessie Wigler, Irma Goodlin, Sylvia Dolitsky, Iris Nelson, Hazel Caspary, Ethel Friedman, and Phyllis Herschberg.

## Real Estate

Over 250 people paid tribute to one of New York's most prominent real estate financiers, **Andrew J. Singer** (New York, NY), Chairman & CEO of The Singer & Bassuk Organization, as he received the ORT Community Achievement Award from the Real Estate & Construction Industry Chapter of ORT America at its Annual Tribute Luncheon held at The Rainbow Room, Rockefeller Center.



Scott Singer (L) presents the ORT Community Achievement Award to his father, Andrew J. Singer.

## Engineering

A large and enthusiastic crowd of over 250 engineers, architects, building contractors and representatives from the area's labor unions attended ORT America's Engineering & Construction Industry Chapter's Annual Tribute Luncheon at The Rainbow Room at Rockefeller Center.



(L-R) Neal J. Forshner, Chapter President, with honorees Elliot "Lee" Sander, Jane A. Chmielinski and James T. Callahan

The luncheon was held in tribute to **James T. Callahan**, President & Business Manager of the International Union of Operating Engineers, Locals 15, 15A, 15B, 15C & 15D; **Jane A. Chmielinski**, President & Chief Operating Officer of DMJM Harris; and **Elliot "Lee" G. Sander**, Executive Director & Chief Executive Officer, Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

# Florida Open House Celebrates Miracles

More than 100 Florida members participated in a celebratory Open House for the new Florida office and a Hanukkah lighting and mezuzah affixing ceremony, officiated by **Rabbi Richard Yellen**, Temple Emeth, Delray Beach and **Rabbi Josh Brody**, Boca Raton Synagogue, Boca Raton.



*Shirley Sokolsky, Event Chair and Leah B. Siskin, Florida Region Advancement Director*

Just as the mezuzah signifies fulfilling a mitzvah, it also represents the tradition of entering a new home and a new beginning for the entire Florida team of lay leadership, supporters and staff. Working in partnership with lay leadership and chapters, the Florida staff hopes for a new beginning as it moves forward to achieve new goals and objectives. Each of the Florida Regions, as well as the Palmward Evening Chapter, made a contribution of a mezuzah as representation of its connection to the Florida Region.

The celebration served as a great opportunity to introduce the ORT America Florida team which includes **Leah B. Siskin**, Florida Region Advancement Director; **Annette Israel Holland**, Florida Region Associate Director; **Loren Krongold**, Greater Miami Region Director; **Loretta Dennis**, Florida Region Development Associate and **Judy Ziet**, Florida Region Office Manager.

ORT America has set a goal to focus on Florida as one of two pilot areas (Los Angeles is the other area). Activities are

being coordinated and communications improved with a Florida Region Council that will increase fundraising efforts, increase membership, educate members about Planned Giving and Next Generation opportunities, and do outreach to untapped areas.

A message of congratulations from **Doreen Hermelin**, ORT America President; **Shelley Fagel**, Chair, Executive Committee; **Hope Kessler**, Executive Director and **Janice G. Stolar**, Chief Advancement Officer was shared with the ORT America members and contributors.

Participants gathered to celebrate the Festival of Lights with an impressive Hanukkah candle lighting ceremony, celebrating the "Miracles of ORT" with its rich history and success in educating individuals, impacting communities and improving the world. Speaking on behalf of a "Student at Risk," National and Florida lay leadership were invited to light a candle with the hope that each Hanukkah candle will empower modern-day miracles and light the way for a better life for ORT students worldwide.

Lighting candles were the Honorary Chair of the Open House, **Shirley Sokolsky**, National Alliance Network (NAN) B - FL Consultant - Planned Giving; followed by **Marcy Wiseberg**, National Board of



*Marcy Wiseberg, member of National Executive Committee and Chair of National Alliance Network (L) and Toby Feuer, Coordinator National Alliance Network B - Florida*



*Steven Schlosser, National Board member, and Lois Hollander, National Mission Co-Chairs with major gift donors Barry and Florence Friedberg.*



*Major gift donor Daniel Verner with Barbara Feifer, Annual Meeting Chair and NAN B Consultant*

Directors, member of the Executive and Chair of the NAN; **Steven Schlosser**, National Board of Directors along with his wife **Lois Hollander**, National ORT America Mission Co-Chairs; **Toby Feuer**, Coordinator, NAN B - FL; **Lorraine Epstien**, National Alliance B - FL Financial Specialist; **Barbara Feifer**, NAN B - FL Consultant and Chair of the 2008 ORT America Annual Meeting; **Shelley Stewart**, **Abbey Schenk**, **Shirley Slavin**-Presidium of South Palm Beach County Region (Shelley is also a NAN B - FL Consultant); **Audrey Bornstein**, President, South Broward Region and NAN B - FL Consultant and **Lynda Rosenbaum** and **Barbara Siegel**, Co-Presidents - North Palm Beach County Region (Barbara is also a NAN B - FL Consultant).

# ORT Student Ambassador Program Inaugurated in Michigan

Touring with his father, an active ORT supporter, **Keith Lublin** was impressed with the excellent education students received as he traveled to ORT schools in Argentina, France and Israel.

Acknowledging that most ORT members cannot travel to these schools, Keith suggested bringing students to the members. ORT America Michigan Region leadership responded by creating the Student Ambassador Program (SAP) with Keith as its first Chair. In addition to offering members an opportunity to learn more about ORT, the program allows exchange students to discover more about their Jewish heritage, heighten their awareness of American culture and enhance their English skills as they attend the Frankel Jewish Academy.

Once the concept was developed, nine donors stepped forward and contributed \$75,000 to underwrite the program. Founders of the SAP program are **Patti Aaron, Dana Burnstein, Jennifer and Brian Hermelin, Robert and David Colburn** Family Foundation, HoMedics (**Alon & Sheri Kaufman**), **David Jacobson, D. Dan Kahn, Rebecca and Gary Sakwa** and **Randy Wertheimer and Nancy Katzman**.



*Vice Principal Ilya Zhivotovsky and ORT student Danny Agukin.*

This year's pilot program began in August when **Danny Agukin**, a 16-year-old student from ORT Moscow School #1299 arrived in Detroit with **Ilya Zhivotovsky**, the vice principal. After getting acquainted with their host families, Danny joined the Frankel Jewish Academy's tenth grade class, enrolling in both Judaic and secular classes. Ilya assisted with the Judaic curriculum and helped Danny integrate into his new environment.

Danny and Ilya met the founders and ORT members at a series of events including a welcome reception, dinners, social events and holiday celebrations. Danny has been invited to speak at several parlor meetings at the homes of ORT members as well as at large ORT gatherings like WINGO, where he shared his ORT experience with 320 "Jewish mothers."

During his visit, Danny's English improved and his confidence increased. He explained that as an ORT student, he is in a safe school where he is comfortable being Jewish. Danny is proud of his academic achievements and the excellent technology curriculum which is preparing him for university studies. He has truly been an ambassador for ORT America.

## Does Your Employer Have a Matching Gift Program?

Thousands of corporations have matching gift programs as a way to support the nonprofit organizations to which their employees make contributions. Most companies provide one-to-one matches, but the range can be from half to double the employee's gift, and sometimes even higher. Many companies have a minimum and maximum employee contribution amount that they will match.

Most corporations provide matches directly to educational institutions in the U.S. (for example, Bramson ORT College and the Los Angeles ORT Technical Institute), while a smaller number will allow a matching gift to be made to an organization such as ORT America, which isn't itself an educational institution but is a nonprofit organization that exists to send funds directly to educational institutions – in our case ORT schools in the U.S. and around the world.

The normal procedure for getting a corporation to match an employee's donation is for the employee to contact his/her Human Resources Department and ask to be given a copy of the company's matching gift application form and guidelines. The employee completes the first section of the matching gift application form and sends the partially completed application along with the

employee's contribution to the ORT America National Office (Attention: Matching Gifts).

When applying for a matching gift, the employee should read his/her company's matching gift guidelines and make the check payable to the institution (ORT America, Bramson or Los Angeles ORT Technical Institute) to which the employer will provide a matching gift. If the employee is not clear about the company's guidelines, it is always safe for the employee to make his/her check payable to Bramson ORT College or Los Angeles ORT Technical Institute, complete the company's matching gift application form accordingly, and send the check and partially-completed application to the ORT America National Office for further processing.

Upon receipt of the employee's donation and employer matching gift form, the National Office will complete its section of the matching gift form and forward it on to the employer, requesting that a matching donation be made. In so doing, we are verifying to the employer that we have indeed received the employee's contribution. We will keep the employee informed of our actions. When the matching gift comes in (sometimes several months afterward), we will send an acknowledgement



*Corporate matching gifts can help ORT students in the U.S., like this Bramson ORT student.*

letter to the company and send a copy of the acknowledgement letter to the employee, so he/she knows that the matching gift has been received.

Some companies offer variations of the standard matching gift program, for example, through automatic employee payroll deductions. The employee should check with his/her HR Department on the various matching gift program options available.

To see whether a company has a matching gift program and what the terms are, search online by keying in the company name and "matching gift program."

For further questions, please contact **Herb Kaplan** at [hkaplan@ortamerica.org](mailto:hkaplan@ortamerica.org) in our National Office.

# PLANNED GIVING:

## Sally Morgan’s Gift Annuity Honors Her Mother and In Return She Receives Rewards from Giving – “The ORT America Gift Annuity is A Win-Win Situation!”



Sally Morgan

**Sally Morgan** (Honolulu, HI) inherited her love of ORT’s mission from her mother, **Rose Wolk**, of blessed memory, who faithfully volunteered her time and energy for many years as secretary of the Waterbury, CT branch of Women’s American ORT.

“I set up three gift annuities with ORT America in memory of my mother as a High Holiday donation,” Mrs. Morgan noted. “My mother was active in her ORT chapter and the idea of giving people skills and knowledge is one that appealed to her and to me as well.”

Mrs. Morgan described her thoughts on her donations. “I think that setting up these gift annuities with ORT America is a win-win situation. ORT receives funds; I receive quarterly payments and a tax deduction – what a deal!”

Quite often, ORT America donors discover that their stock, CD or money market account pays less interest than they would earn by establishing a charitable gift annuity.

“ORT receives funds; I receive quarterly payments and a tax deduction – what a deal!”



### How a Gift Annuity Works

If you are 55 or older, you can donate \$5,000 or more in cash or appreciated marketable securities to establish an ORT America charitable gift annuity. In return for your gift you will receive very attractive, fixed lifetime payments – a portion of which are tax-free, and you’ll also receive a charitable income tax deduction, further enhancing your return. Gift annuity rates vary from 5.5% to 11.3%, depending on your age when you set up the gift. Like a fine wine, gift annuity rates get better with time. The older you are at the time you set up the gift annuity, the higher the payment rate will be. Additional gift annuities can be established after your first gift. In addition to these benefits, your generosity will help future generations of ORT students worldwide.

ORT America, Inc. Sample Gift Annuity Rates Receive up to 11.3% for Life	
Age	Rate
55	5.5%
60	5.7%
70	6.5%
75	7.1%
80	8.0%
90+	11.3%

ORT America charitable gift annuity rates are those approved by the American Council on Gift Annuities. Sample single-life rates are based on when gift annuity is established. Rates for other ages, as well as for two lives and deferred rates, are also available.

### An Example

Al and June decided to donate \$50,000 in marketable securities (which originally cost \$25,000) to establish a joint ORT America charitable gift annuity. At the time of the gift, the securities were paying a 4% dividend. Based on their ages (Al is 80 and June is 78), ORT will pay them a fixed lifetime rate of 6.8%.

#### Benefits of a Gift Annuity:

- Al and June receive \$3,400 annually for the rest of their lives and approximately \$629 of each year’s payments are tax-free for the first 13.4 years. Given their 35% tax bracket, the added tax deduction they are eligible to receive makes their overall rate of return significantly higher than the 4% dividend they had been receiving from the securities.
- Because part of their gift is a charitable contribution and part is for payments they receive, they are eligible for a charitable income tax deduction of \$20,639.
- They owe no capital gains tax at the time of their gift. And \$1,560 of their annual payment is taxed as capital gains over the next 9.4 years.

The charitable deduction for this example was created using the I.R.S. Discount Rate of 5.2% for November 2007. Calculations to determine the charitable deduction and taxation of payments for a gift annuity may vary depending on the discount rate used when the gift is established.

To learn more about establishing an ORT America charitable gift annuity or to receive a complimentary, personalized illustration showing how a charitable gift annuity can benefit you (and/or another

loved one), please contact ORT America’s planned giving specialists at 800.519.2678, ext. 226 or at [plannedgiving@ortamerica.org](mailto:plannedgiving@ortamerica.org).

# ORT America's Teens for Teens iMitzvah Project



Students often choose to pursue a "Mitzvah Project" in connection with their B'nai Mitzvahs. The **ORT America Teens for Teens iMitzvah Project** engages teens in tzedakah and tikkun olam, as they perform meaningful mitzvah projects for their bar/bat mitzvah. The **Teens for Teens**

**iMitzvah Project** helps students become involved in their community through volunteer work and fundraising for the ORT program.

In synagogues that encourage mitzvah projects, children and their parents frequently seek the guidance of synagogue leadership for the selection of the project. ORT America hopes the **Teens for Teens iMitzvah Project** will give the participating B'nai Mitzvah a direct, ongoing emotional and spiritual connection to the good that he or she is accomplishing for ORT's work in 56 countries around the world, while raising critically needed funds and support for ORT programs, whether in Israel or in other countries.

Teens who select the **Teens for Teens iMitzvah Project** as their mitzvah project can go to [www.ortamerica.org](http://www.ortamerica.org) and sign up for one of two projects. Students receive their own URL, an e-card or letter to send to family and friends, as well as tips and tools for fundraising in their communities, such as using personalized creative buttons on your web pages as a fundraising tool and finding materials that describe the **Teens for Teens iMitzvah Project**.

There are two ORT America projects in the **Teens for Teens iMitzvah Project**.

**Keep a Student in School by Sponsoring a Student at Risk!** By raising \$550, a B'nai Mitzvah can keep a student in school for one year by providing hot meals, transportation, textbooks, school supplies, and clothing for a needy student. Without this help, these young people do not have the bus fare to travel to school, are too hungry to learn, are too embarrassed by their clothing, and even lack shoes to wear to school.

**Adopt a Computer!** Imagine never being on the Internet or having a computer! Help a student keep up with the fast-paced world of technology by raising money to purchase a laptop computer for one or more ORT students in Israel, Argentina or the former Soviet Union. Students in schools near the Gaza Strip or near the border of Lebanon spend many hours a day in bomb shelters and need these computers to complete their school work. A B'nai Mitzvah can even have their name placed on computers purchased as a result of their donation. The cost of one computer for a student is \$1,000.

ORT America will provide **Teens for Teens iMitzvah** participants with a personalized URL on [www.ortamerica.org](http://www.ortamerica.org), a **Teens for Teens iMitzvah** T-Shirt, and a signed ORT America **Teens for Teens iMitzvah** Certificate of Recognition. ORT America welcomes the participation of B'nai Mitzvah youth, their parents, teachers, families or friends.

## WINTER 2008

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