# 2003 Annual Report

Cincinnati Community Kolle



## 2003 Annual Report

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KOLLEL DIRECTOR / OPERATIONS

## Rabbi David Spetner



#### Introduction

Welcome to the 2003 Annual Report of the Cincinnati Community Kollel. The Kollel has just completed its eighth year of activity and we are proud of the accomplishments of the past year. It is with great excitement that we offer this review to our community and supporters. The report in your hands contains our activity reports, as well as staff bios, an income statement and balance sheet, and an alphabetical list of our contributor base.

What is our Community Kollel? At its core it is a *makom Torah*, a place dedicated to the study of Torah. The Kollel operates with the philosophy that, more than any other spiritual or physical asset, it is our Torah and the study of it that have kept our people alive throughout the millennia. It is the goal of our staff to share the beauty of Torah study throughout the Cincinnati Jewish community and, through that, to help each Jew draw closer to his or her Judaism.

We call the Torah *Etz Chaim*—a Tree of Life—and, like a tree, in order to bear fruit it must have roots deep within the earth. In order to share Torah, our staff must be deeply rooted in their own dynamic Torah study. Our staff scholars maintain two daily study sessions, each three hours in length, where in a group format they probe, study, and analyze the Torah. This daily effort is led by my co-director, Rabbi Meir Minster. The study of this last year has found us deep in the study of the laws of *kashrus* and its sources in Talmud Chulin. This upcoming year we look forward to completing this two year project.

Our Mission Statement reads, "To enrich the Cincinnati Jewish community by creating an environment of Torah study and providing access to our spiritual heritage." Anyone who has stepped into the Kollel's Beis Midrash (study hall) understands how an environment dedicated to Torah study energizes Jews to pass on their heritage from generation to generation. But to provide education to the members of a community, you must meet them "where they are," and the Kollel has done that, by partnering with a host of community organizations. Our Outreach Director, Rabbi Yitzchok Preis, has effectively led that charge, overseeing all of the Kollel's off-site learning opportunities.

This past year was witness to a significant change in our team of four Staff Scholars. Staff Scholars join the Kollel for an average of two to five years as a "first step out" from the purely academic world. When we began last year, three scholars had just left the Kollel for new and exciting positions, and three new scholars had joined us. I am pleased to report that our new team has been a smashing success, both in their teaching and reaching out to others as well as in their own study sessions. They are truly a special group, each with a unique blend of humanity, compassion, and scholarship.

We look forward to the coming year and the opportunity to touch the lives of ever more Jews with the beauty of Torah. KOLLEL DIRECTOR / TORAH STUDIES

## Rabbi Meir Minster



#### Report on On-Site Learning

This past year marked a milestone for the Kollel. We began the study of tractate Chulin—which deals with the laws of *kashrus*—for the second time in our history. The arrival of three new Staff Scholars and their families, which completed the full turnover of our original founding team, allowed us the opportunity to restart our cycle of learning.

During its first seven years, the Kollel had completed five tractates of the Talmud, covering practical areas of Jewish living. Chulin had been our first area of focus and engaged us for our first two years. This was followed by Niddah - the laws of family purity and then Berochos - the laws of Blessings and Prayer. The final three of those years were spent covering the laws of Shabbos, found in the tractates Shabbos and Eiruvin.

This coming year, our ninth, we look forward to completing the study of Chulin, continuing through our second cycle.

I would like to take a moment to describe the daily activities of our Beis Midrash. A Beis Midrash translates literally into a "study hall" or "place of learning," but in our case it is much more. Besides serving as the physical hub for much of the Kollel's activities, the spiritual impact of the Torah learned there permeates and drives all that we do.

This is the essence of the Kollel. From our own learning come the Torah insights that we are able to share with others. Our day is anchored by our personal study. In the morning session we attempt to master specific areas of

halacha, legal conclusions, while in the afternoon we survey the entire tractate at hand, gaining an appreciation for the context from which Halacha is derived. No less important, however, is the community learning which we view as flowing from these sessions.

From 5:30 in the morning until after 10:30 at night, members of the community can be found learning in the Beis Midrash—with the Kollel staff or on their own. They are taking time from their schedules to incorporate the beauty of Torah into their day. Whether studying one-on-one at breakfast, lunch or during our evening community session, or by joining a class or lunch-and-learn, people are finding their lives enriched by the Torah.

Over the past few months, Cincinnati has joined the growing number of cities that are participating in a new and exciting early-morning learning program called Kollel Dirshu International. This program, led locally by Rabbi Yitzchok Preis, encourages the mastery of sections of the Talmud by setting a daily pace and a weekly examination of the material covered. A stipend is offered for those who reach attendance and grade requirements. Although the learning ends by 7:00am, the participants have found their entire day transformed by this early morning spiritual workout. Some even return later in the day to continue their Torah discussions.

We have been pleasantly surprised by the number of people this program has attracted. Kollel Dirshu joins our other successful programs, Yesodei Hatorah (where participants acquire the skills to learn on their own) and Daf Yomi—the daily study of a folio of Talmud, gaining an appreciation for the breadth of the Talmud.

Perhaps our proudest moment is at Father and Son Learning, where parents, grandparents and children gather on winter Saturday nights, filling the Kollel building to capacity. The sweet sound of Torah being passed on from generation to generation is truly inspiring. Special thanks go to volunteer Josh Kibel, who runs this program so effectively. We also thank Rabbi Shai Scherer, for expanding the program to include a summer version, on Shabbos afternoons.

I invite you to come in to the Kollel. Join us in our learning and discover your own place in Torah. We look forward to seeing you.

**OUTREACH DIRECTOR** 

## Rabbi Yitzchok Preis



#### Report on Off-Site Learning

The Kollel's vibrant Beis Midrash continues to create an energy that spreads far beyond its walls. This past year saw expanded Kollel outreach activities for teens, college students and adults of all ages in a wide variety of settings. Highlights of this past year's "off-site" endeavors include:

- Miami Universtiy Hillel continues to play host to our popular, weekly Discovering Judaism dinner-discussions.
   A Kollel Shabbaton at the university, in Oxford, Ohio included upbeat services, home-cooked meals and festive Shabbat meals.
- Campers in **Camp Livingston** were once again treated to a memorable **Kollel** *kumzitz* as Kollel rabbis shared

- inspiring stories and spirited songs with campers and staff. The kumzitz was co-sponsored by Cincinnati's only kosher **Dunkin' Donuts**.
- "What if I Get Angry at G-d?" was the topic of a lecture presented by noted scholar and educator Rabbi Eliezer Breitowitz. The presentation, hosted by Yavneh Day School was a joint venture of the Kollel and Jewish Family Service.
- Northern Hills Congregation became the newest local congregation to host Kollel Torah Partners sessions. The topic of interactive study was "Torah Perspectives on Pleasure."
- Woman to Woman Partners in Torah continues to provide unique one-on-one learning experiences that bring together women of a variety of ages and backgrounds.
- Our Women's Learning Initiative also initiated new home study partnerships and home study groups addressing topics of interest to area women.
- The Kollel hosted **Rabbi Berel Wein**, who presented a Talmudic discourse on the **Ten Commandments**.
- Go Bananas Comedy Club was the site of Pamensky
  Live, a Discovery Productions Relationships Seminar
  brought to Cincinnati as joint venture of the Kollel,
  JSTAR, and the Jewish Social and Sport Network of
  the JCC.
- Our **Jewish Learning Center** in the Communicare Building in Blue Ash has been home to variety of one-on-one and group study sessions.

- Holiday workshops before Sukkot and Passover brought important information and insight to classes in the Blue Ash Jewish Learning Center. Other programs there included "A Glimpse into the Supernatural" and weekly Rambam study.
- 9/11 Survivor Oded Aron shared his experience and inspiring insight in a pre-Chanukah presentation hosted by Jewish Federaton.
- The JCC teamed up with the Kollel to address the ageold question of anti-semitism with a seminar entitled "Why the Jews?"
- Reincarnation and other concepts in Jewish Mysticsm were explored in a three-part series presented at the JCC.
- The Jewish Culture Club at Walnut Hills High School has been maintained with special pre-holiday after-school study and discussion sessions.
- The Kollel's "Test Your Knowledge" Torah portion quiz is enjoyed by readers of all ages and enhances many a local Shabbat table. Produced by Dov Wise, it is featured weekly in the American Israelite.
- Jewish IQ's are enhanced with our **Jewish I**nterest **Q**uestion **of the Month** email. Distributed to almost 200 readers, this free publication provides basic understanding of important Jewish principles, customs and practices.
- The Kollel provided **Koshering Assistance** to several families who were interested in providing themselves and their children with the benefits of kosher.

(continues on page 14)

The Staff of the



## Cincinnati Community Kollel



Rabbi David Spetner

KOLLEL DIRECTOR / OPERATIONS

Before founding the Kollel in 1995, Rabbi Spetner served as a congregational rabbi in Richmond,

Virginia, and as a teacher in Yeshiva Ohr Someach.

While overseeing the Kollel's many facets, he leads a weekly Lunch-and-Learn in Blue Ash.



Rabbi Yitzchok Preis
OUTREACH DIRECTOR
A graduate of Ner Israel and Johns Hopkins School of
Engineering, Rabbi Preis is already a well-known Jewish
educator in Cincinnati. He has taught at the Melton
School, UC's Jewish Studies Program, the Jewish
Federation, and other venues.



ADMINISTRATOR
A Cincinnati native, Alter attended rabbinical schools in St. Louis and Brooklyn, and spent eleven summers as Art Director at a camp in New York's Catskills. His responsibilities range from running the Kollel office to creating publicity materials.

Alter B. Raubvogel



Elisa Travis
COORDINATOR OF WOMEN'S PROGRAMMING
A certified physical therapist and mother of four,
Elisa successfully launched the Kollel's ongoing Woman
to Woman Partners in Torah program.
She is now designing and implementing Jewish learning
opportunities for women, by women.

#### Rabbi Meir Minster

KOLLEL DIRECTOR / TORAH STUDIES

Ordained by the late Rabbi Yaakov Weinberg, of Ner Israel Rabbinical College, Rabbi Minster oversees the academic excellence of the Kollel's staff scholars. He also delivers the Daf Yomi (page a day of Talmud), Women's Chumash, and other classes.



Rabbi A. D. Motzen

STAFF SCHOLAR

A second-generation Special Ed teacher, Rabbi Motzen has put that career on hold to pursue advanced studies at the Kollel and gain experience teaching adults. Among other classes, he leads the advanced level of the Yesodai Hatorah program.



#### Rabbi Shai Scherer

STAFF SCHOLAR

Holding both a Rabbinic degree from Ner Israel in Baltimore and a Bachelor of Commerce from University of Toronto, Rabbi Scherer maintains the Kollel's library while teaching an assortment of classes including "Understanding Prayer – In Depth".



#### Rabbi Zev Weiner

STAFF SCHOLAR

Rabbi Weiner travels weekly to lead a student group at Miami University Hillel in Oxford, Ohio. He also runs an after-school program for junior high-aged boys. Among other classes, he teaches a popular Torah portion group at Golf Manor Synagogue, which even the Rabbi attends!



#### Rabbi Raphael Weinschneider

STAFF SCHOLAR

A native of Chicago, Rabbi Weinschneider hails from a line of four generations of American rabbis. He also holds a Masters in Business Administration from Johns Hopkins University. He leads a class on Practical Jewish Law on Mondays.



#### Report on Off-Site Learning (continued from page 11)

 Study groups and Shabbat experiences for students at Hebrew Union College provided an opportunity for them to learn about traditional Judaism.

As we look forward to the new year, we anticipate continued growth with the introduction of a new "Seniors Study" opportunity, a major Women's Renewal Retreat, the unveiling of the Cincinnati Jewish IQ, our first Internet study option in conjunction with Israel-based JIS, an exciting new, teen project called L.A.V.E., and much more.

## Our Contibutors

We thank the following contributors, listed alphabetically, for their generous support during our first eight years, in ways both great and small.

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M/M Jay Sien Aliza Sigal M/M Gerson Silver M/M Arveh Silverberg M/M Allen Singer Skilled Care Pharmacy Elaine Skurow M/M Fred Skurow D/M Richard Skurow M/M Barry Smith M/M David Snitzer Henry Sobol R/M Andy Sollofe M/M Harry Solomon D/M Ronald Solomon Helene Sonnenblick D/M Ben Sorotzkin Rose Spector Abraham Spetner R/M David Spetner M/M Jonathan Spetner Kenneth Spetner R/M Dovid Spiegel Sandra Spinner M/M Bernard Spitz M/M Greg Spitz Standard Textile Gayle Statman M/D Michael S. Statman M/M Nicholas Statman M/M Chaim Mendel Stein M/M Andrew Steinberg M/M Label Steinhardt Tara Stepenberg M/M Yitzchok Strauss Dr. Barry M. Stregevsky Ruth Stregevsky M/M Sam Sudman M/M Robert Sugerman M/M Stuart Susskind • Downtown Synagogue Golf Manor Synagogue New Hope Synagogue Northern Hills Synagogue M/M Philip Taliaferro III M/M Donald Taplits M/M Ierome S. Teller Temple Sholom M/M Avi Tepfer M/M Harry Tesler Kevin Tesler

M/M Michael Thomas
M/M Stuart Tobin
M/M Eliyahu Tolchinsky
R/M Moshe Toron
R/M Yaacov Toron
R/M Binyomin Travis
Doris Travis
M/M Philip Travis
Tristate Urologic Services
R/M Akiva Trout
R/M Tzvi Tuchman
R/M Michel Twerski
Vaad Hoeir of Cincinnati
Vaad Machzikei Kashrus
Inc.
M/M Reuven Vadnai
D/M David Varady
R/M Gershon Vogel
M/M Akiva Wagschal
M/M Avrohom Wagschal
M/M Yoni Wagschal
Ahuva Wainhaus
Barbara Waldinger
D/M Raphael Warren
Fela Warsawiak
Nate Waspe
M/M Judah Wassner
M/M Roger D. Watson
D/M Alan Robert Weber

Geoffrey E. Webster R/M Shia Webster M/M Albert Wechselman M/M Abraham Wechter M/M Robert Weil

Weil Funeral Home
M/M Richard Weiland
M/M Wirly Weiler
M/M Howard Weinberg
D/M Michael Weinberg
Drs. Nolan & Susan
Weinberg
Barrett Weinberger
Gail Weinberger
M/M Israel Weinberger
Etty Weiner
Judah Weiner
M/M Moshe Weiner
Nathaniel Weiner
R/M Zev Weiner
M/M Ari Weisberg
D/M David Weisberg
M/M Marvin Weisberger
M/M Mitch Weisberger
Benjamin Weiss
M/M Craig Weiss
Gila Weiss
M/M Bernard Weller
<ul> <li>Irene Wells</li> </ul>
Richard Wesley
M/M Richard Westheimer
M/M Robert Wilder
R/M Asher Wilheim
M/M Ronald Wilheim
D/M Todd Winkler
Marian Winner
R/M Aaron Winter
R/M Aryeh Winter
Sidney Winter

#### Cincinnati Community Kollel Balance Sheet December 31,2002

	Assets							
Cash								
	Cash Petty Cash	246.19 0.00						
	Total Cash		246 19					
Other Receivables								
	Deposits A/R Bureau of Workers Compensa	1,090.00 0.00 134.57						
	Total Other Receivables		1,224.57					
Other Ass	ets Closing Costs - net		1,441 00					
Fixed Assets								
	Land Building Building Improvements Furniture & Equipment Car	100.486 06 518.520.94 45.637.85 22.948.13 1,150.00						
	Total Fixed Assets		688.742.98					
Accumula	ted Depreciation  A/D - Building  A/D - Leasehold Improv.  A/D - Funiture & Equipment  A/D - Car	(74,938.00) (5,513.91) (19,914.54) (1,150.00)						
	Total Accumulated Depreciation		(101,516.45)					
	Total Assets		590,138.29					
Onversil 186								
-ayrun ver	thholding Liability							
	Fed & FICA Taxes Payable State Tax Payable Local Tax Payable	2,174.21 695.28 683.37						
	Other Payroll Withholdings		3,552.86					
Other Sho	rt Term Liabilities AJP Visa Deposils	0.00 0.00						
Long Term Liabilities 0.00								
	Note Payable - Bank One Note Payable - Fifth Third Mortg Star Bank	224,775.24 36,069.30 119,377.85						
	Total Liabilities		380,222.39					
Equity								
	Contributed Capital Retained Earning - Prior Retained Earning - Current	(239.82) 187,385.63 19,217.23						
	Total Equity		206,363.04					

Total Liabilities and Equity

590,138.29

#### Cincinnati Community Kollel Income Statement For the years ended December 31, 2002 and December 31, 2001

		Current Y	Current Year		Prior Year	
_		Amount	Percent	Amount	Percent	
levenue						
	Equity in donated building -Non Cash Donation	0.00 562,399.16	0.00% 100.00%	83,085.00 531,022.96	13.53% 86.47%	
	Total Revenue	562,399.16	100 00%	614,107 96	100 00%	
	Gross Profit	562,399.16	100.00%	614,107.96	100.00%	
xpenses						
	Administrative Salaries	158,092.82	28.11%	152,979.40	24.91%	
	Scholarships	114,972.00		119,394.00	19.44%	
	Honorariums	12,045.48	2 14%	2,719 00	0.44%	
	Accounting Fees	0.00	0.00%	900 00	0 15%	
	Convention Expenses	200.00	0.04%	314 00	0.05%	
	Office Supplies	6 365.24	1.13%	3,026 28	0.49%	
	Religious artifacts Repairs	578.00 2,462.18	0.10% 0.44%	1,574.94 100.00	0.26% 0.02%	
	Printing	4,332.43	0.77%		0.30%	
	Interest - Operating Loan	28.327.14	5.04%		4.94%	
	Meals & Entertainment	5.504.84	0.98%	5,479.38	0.89%	
	Travel	4.226.26	0.75%	5,524 12	0.90%	
	Contributions & Donations	33.750.00	6.00%		4.31%	
	Gifts	31.80	0.01%	154.53	0.03%	
	Dues & Subscriptions	30 00	0.01%	54.00	0.01%	
	Publications & Books	883.52	0.16%	8,080.38	1.32%	
	Telephone	6.848.40	1.22%	6,788.08	1.11%	
	Pager	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	
	Informational Advertising	11,516.52	2.05%		2.10%	
	Legal Fees Miscellaneous	0 00 447.12	0.00% 0.08%	0.00 2.556 37	0 00% 0 42%	
	Repairs & maintenance	17.259.84	3.07%	17,010.82	2.77%	
	Utilities	20.131.44	3.58%	22,842.45	3.72%	
	Payroll Taxes - OBES & BWC	934 74	0.17%	899.21	0.15%	
	Moving Expense	3,660,00	0.65%	989 86	0.16%	
	Benefits - Health Insurance	54.414.99	9.68%	42,520.81	6.92%	
	Fica	12,094.25	2.15%	11,703.08	1.91%	
	Bank Service Charges	270 62	0.05%	571.31	0 09%	
	Car Insurance	398.00	0.07%	1,059.92	0.17%	
	Car Expenses	750.01	0.13%	868.47	0.14%	
	Shipping	7,754 55	1.38%	3,137.30	0.51%	
	Architect - Feasibility Study	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	
	Liability Insurance	3.809.00	0.68% 0.00%	2,008 00	0.33%	
	Rents	0.00 0.00	0.00%	7,202.50 0.00	1.17% 0.00%	
	Copier Lease Real Estate Taxes	9.578.88	1.70%	5.520 45	0.00%	
	Amortization - Leasehold Improvements	1.384.27	0.25%	1.076.65	0.30%	
	Depreciation - Equipment	20,127.59	3.58%	19,621.53	3.20%	
	Total Expenses	543,181 93		518,250 79	84.39%	
	Net Income	19,217.23	3.42%	95,857.17	15.61%	
	less non-cash equity in donated building	0.00		(83,085.00)		
	Net Income from Operations	19.217.23		12.772 17		

## Our Mission:

To enrich
the Cincinnati Jewish community
by creating an environment
of Torah study
and providing access
to our spiritual heritage.