

DEAR TORAH TIDBITS FAMILY

RABBI AVI BERMAN

Executive Director, OU Israel



Elul and the beginning of the academic year means that this time of year is one of new beginnings. We start fresh and try our best to implement positive behaviors in our day to day lives. For those starting a new stage in life, this is particularly true. For the most part, my job is the same as it was in June, July and August. Sure, specific tasks and meetings change, but the overall responsibilities remain the same. Yet, for those beginning a new school, Yeshiva/ Midrasha, IDF or Sherut Leumi service, or a new job, the excitement is palpable.

This past Sunday was very exciting. The OU Israel building was packed. This was the first in-person weekly staff meeting we had in a long-time (since Covid they have primarily been virtual). We had hundreds of people in the building between our L'Ayla Rosh Chodesh Seminar in memory of Mrs. Linda Pruwer-Brachfeld a"n and other Shiurim and programs taking place in the classrooms. Yet, while all of this was beautiful there was a particular room which had the greatest impact on me.

I had the privilege of speaking to a room of young women embarking on their Sherut Leumi at the OU. These young women will be spending their year of Sherut volunteering for Yachad Israel and our OU Israel Youth Centers. What was unique about this room is that these individuals chose

and were selected to do Sherut Leumi for OU Israel, and I am proud to say that majority of them come from Torah Tidbits readership homes. While most of the people in the building on Sunday were returning to what they had been doing prior to summer break, these young women are starting something new.

This is the first time they are entering a year where they are going to have to initiate, create, dream and implement on their own. We obviously have a dedicated staff to guide, help and support them, but they are no longer in school where they are told what to learn, when their tests are, what time to show up and what time to leave. There is an energy here which will hopefully accompany them not only throughout this year but that will Bezrat Hashem guide them throughout their lives to become initiating creative, and inspirational individuals.

One of the many inspiring traits we see in Bnot Sherut is their passion. Throughout the year, I see them working late at night or out early in the morning to brainstorm and execute innovative programs. Their love of Chessed and their "can-do" attitudes are truly praiseworthy.

While this is my small professional window into these wonderful young women, the Bnot Sherut, we as a society get to see them in many places across the

country. We meet them in hospitals, our kids' schools, community centers, historical museums



and attractions, government offices and so many other places. Yet, unlike soldiers they don't wear a special uniform, so we often miss seeing the incredible dedication and spirit they bring to their respective establishments.

Soldiers feel tremendous pride when they leave their bases with a new beret or pin – an external item showing themselves and those around them that they accomplished new milestones of service. The Bnot Sherut do not have that external uniform, but their contribution to the State of Israel is no less important. Let's all try to identify the wonderful Bnot Sherut who improve our lives and the lives of those around us.

Wishing them a year of tremendous success and with hope that they end this year being able to see the tangible impact they made and embark upon their lives with that gratifying feeling. Wishing you all an uplifting and inspiring Shabbat,



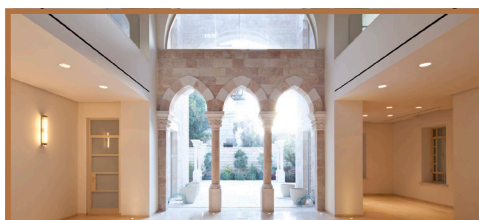
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The OU Israel Family wishes
Mazal Tov to OU Israel President
Zvi & Tamara Sand and
Yisrael & Ariella Spero and families
on the marriage of their children
Zevulun to Daniella
Mazal Tov to the grandparents:
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