

# Preparing Our Children for Higher Education

## Part I: Our Daughters, Our Jewels, Our Legacy

**Y**ou are proud of your daughter who is studious and bright. The time comes when she will be graduating high school. College is commonly the place where students learn about new fields, develop their interests, and focus in on their career ambitions.

Today, our community is seeing ever increasing numbers of women continuing on to higher education. At the same time, the community is supportive of the girls who get married young and dedicate themselves to family. It is a tribute to our community that the dedicated homemaker is well respected and recognized for the essential role she plays in taking care of the family. Unselfish and devoted, our mothers are frequently the glue that binds family and community together, keeping peace and putting the needs of others before their own.

Many women are now working for a multitude of reasons. Some are assisting their husbands with the high cost of living or to pay for extras such as college, vacations, or weddings. Others may be helping their married children who are not yet established. Of course, there are women who choose to work not out of financial need but for a sense of contribution and accomplishment. No matter what the reason is for working, higher education enables women to have more options. A college or graduate degree and the knowledge gained are valuable assets to have throughout a person's life. As a community, there is a benefit to having women who can make significant contributions because of their educational backgrounds.

### Costs

Of course, the cost of college today can be expensive, so you will want to make sure you are getting

the best return on your investment. Financial considerations should not dissuade you or your daughter from considering higher education. Now, more than ever, families have a multitude of financial options. Many top schools have recently revised their financial aid programs and are replacing loans with grants to students who qualify for aid. The best universities are able to do this because they have huge endowments with billions of dollars. Those who do not qualify for financial aid can avail themselves of academic scholarships offered by many universities.

In order to take advantage of the above opportunities, students need impressive applications with top grades in their high school courses and standardized test scores. Every student, both male and female, should be made aware of these extraordinary opportunities so that they are motivated to take their high school coursework seriously. Students excelling in high school have more choices when it comes to college and may end up going for free.

For us, parenthood doesn't end when the child reaches eighteen or twenty-one. It is an enduring bond with most of us feeling a lifelong duty to guide and help our children to make the best choices in life.

### Hillel Yeshiva High School

Hillel High School believes that the young women of today must have choices. They must be well educated academically so that they can get into a suitable college and succeed when they get there. Hillel views each of its student's as unique, with different talents, predispositions, and dreams. Our high school has tracking in all subjects so that advanced students remain challenged while weaker students do not

feel overwhelmed and can succeed at their own pace.

At Hillel, we strive to prepare each student for life by instilling the values of Torah and emphasizing the importance of our beautiful heritage. We are confident that the Jewish ethics they learn at Hillel will help to keep them on the right path as they encounter the influences of the outside world.

Our dedicated and caring teachers ensure that students emerge with self-confidence and a strong sense of self. In addition, we foster a sense of community and responsibility through our volunteer programs and initiatives to offer help where needed.

Hillel Yeshiva is very proud of its female students and graduates who have flourished. This year, all three Hillel recipients of the Edward J. Bloustein Distinguished Scholars award were females. Our students are getting the message that education is important and this year 100% of our high school seniors have applied for higher education.

### Thoughts from Hillel Administrators

**Dr. Ruth Katz**  
Head of School ELC-8th Grade



"The young woman of the 21st century should be prepared to enter

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adulthood with a broad base of formal higher education. At Hillel Yeshiva our young women are exposed to role models of women teachers who teach both Judaic and general studies, who have been formally educated and trained. Our students are also encouraged to aspire to careers of choice in medicine, law, and other professions of interest."

**Rabbi Howard Bald**  
Head of High School



"Our administrative and faculty team is proud to continue preparing our young women to be vibrant Jewish personalities ready to engage the greater world around them. Our young women carry on a twenty-five year Hillel Yeshiva tradition of contributing to their families, community, and to the professional world."

**Rabbi Saul Kassin**  
Rabbinic Halachic Authority



"I am truly awed by the women of our community. Throughout our

history it has been the righteous women who have propelled us to great heights as a nation."

**Dr. Ben Leibowitz**  
Director of College Guidance



"The main thing I stress to students is that they should seek a college with a strong Orthodox Jewish population."

## Women in the Hillel Community Share Their Thoughts and Experiences

**Dr. Gayle Krost**



*Dr. Gayle Krost currently serves as the Chairman of Hillel's Board of Education and is a member of the Board of Directors. She attended Hillel Elementary School and graduated from Rutgers University. She went on to graduate from NYU College of Dentistry and completed her residency at the University of Medicine Dentistry in New Jersey. Dr. Krost is an endodontist in private practice. She has three children cur-*

*rently enrolled in Hillel and a son who recently graduated.*

"As an alumna and as a parent of Hillel Yeshiva, I am confident that Hillel Yeshiva prepares its students for higher education. With a strong foundation for continued professional educational pursuits, our children go into society prepared for success and to become future leaders."

**Mrs. Elizabeth Sitt**



*Elizabeth Sitt earned her teaching degree in secondary education from Brooklyn College, and her master's degree in education from Rutgers University. She is currently teaching English at Hillel High School.*

## Do you feel that girls in the community have a disadvantage in the social arena as they pursue academic interests?

"Not at all, girls can concentrate on their coursework and at the same time have a social life. I did not find it hard to socialize and date while at Brooklyn College and even started and completed my master's degree after I was already married."

## Any other thoughts you would like to share?

"Today, in the professional world, I feel that a post-graduate degree is increasingly important. I am not sure I would have gotten a job at Hillel if I did not have a master's degree. I think it is fine for kids to start out in a local or community college as they figure out their

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career goals. Many students will have a second chance of getting a prestigious university on their transcript if they go to graduate school. In today's world, a graduate degree is needed for many career paths."

## Mrs. Jennifer Litz



Jennifer, a Hillel alumna, graduated from Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale with a degree in elementary education. She is now teaching 2nd and 3rd grade at Hillel Yeshiva and plans to become a reading specialist.

### What were your thoughts in deciding to pursue higher education?

"I chose to achieve a higher level of education to create a bigger impact on society. As I prepared to become an educator, I was motivated not only by the education I would provide to future students, but by the knowledge I would gain for my own personal development. Now, as I apply to graduate school, I think of the students I hope to enrich and prepare, for their choices of higher education."



## Dr. Ellen Setton

Dr. Setton graduated from SUNY Downstate Medical School and did her internship and residency at NYU Bellevue. Dr. Setton is a pediatrician in the Deal, NJ area and serves on the Hillel Board of Education.

### What are your thoughts on higher education for women?

"I feel that today more than ever it is important for women to have outside interests, something that they enjoy or want to pursue. College is a great way to expose our daughters to broader horizons."

## Mrs. Vicki Shammah



Vicki Shammah attended Hillel Elementary and High School and graduated from the University of Pennsylvania. She has been working for JPMorgan Chase's investment bank for the last 7 years and is currently head of their software global outsourcing division. She has also recently launched a new community website, called VixList which is a great free place to post ads and share information ([www.vixlist.com](http://www.vixlist.com)).

### Do you feel that graduating from an Ivy League university has been beneficial?

"It helps me all the time. I get respect, recognition, and credibility in my dealings with the outside world. It is something that you bring

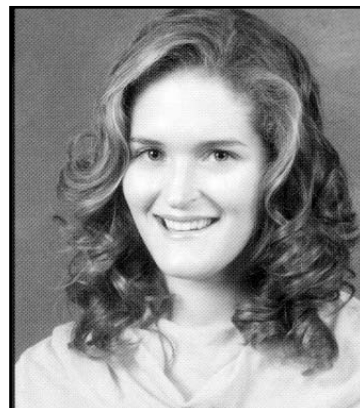
to the table, just like any other asset and gives you a better footing as you step out in the development of your career. You also gain an invaluable network of people and resources that you will definitely be able to tap into at various points in your life."

### Graduating from Hillel High School, did you feel academically prepared for the challenges of an Ivy League university?

"For sure. In some ways I felt more prepared than most. At Hillel, we were so busy with a dual curriculum and so many extra-curricular activities that transitioning to college was not hard at all. I developed good study habits at Hillel and was taught well."

## Our Alumnae & Students Speak Out

### Ruthy Sher



Ruthy graduated from Hillel High School in 2007. She is currently in Midreshet Amit in Israel and will be attending Columbia University in the fall of 2008.

### What made you decide to study in Israel for a year?

"The very interesting Judaic courses at Hillel made me want to further my Jewish Education. I had amazing teachers and loved learning. And of course, my love for Israel made me want to go."

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**Sarah Ezon**



*Sarah graduated from Hillel in 2007 and is currently attending New York University.*

**How are you doing at NYU and how has Hillel helped you to get where you are?**

"I am loving NYU. At Hillel, we learned how to manage a heavy work load and because of that I am finding the work at college very manageable. The AP English classes at Hillel helped me develop good writing skills. I am able to do well in the classes that require written essays."

**Debbie Adler**



*Debbie is a senior at Hillel High School. She will be attending New York University next fall.*

**Can you comment on your experience at Hillel High School?**

"I feel like we have good college guidance here at Hillel. Dr. Leibowitz is always available to us and on top of things. Having such a long school day enabled us to build strong secular skills while getting an excellent Jewish education. I think having AP Calculus, and several AP English courses on my transcript, helped me to get accepted to NYU. Having Mr. Puglisi and Mr. Sheridan for English courses helped me learn how to write. I had no trouble writing my essay for my college application."

**At Hillel Yeshiva, preparing your children for higher education is our mission. Making sure that they arrive there with Torah values is our life's work. □**