

Migdal Ohr at a Glance

A Quarterly Update

Summer 2016 ~ Tamuz 5776

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American Friends of Migdal Ohr News: 2016 Gala Dinner

The American Friends of Migdal Ohr (AFMO) recently held its annual Gala Dinner at Tribeca 360 in Manhattan. With more than 350 people in attendance, the occasion celebrated Migdal Ohr's 43 years of providing a first-rate education and loving home annually to nearly 12,000 Jewish children at-risk across Israel. Rabbi Yitzchak Dovid Grossman, Founder and Dean of Migdal Ohr, traveled from the Migdal Ha'Emek campus in Israel to attend and speak at this momentous event, offering blessings and well wishes to all.



Honoree Dr. Arthur Gerber

The 2016 Gala featured three honoree couples and long-time supporters: Louis and Anat Menaged (Tower of Light Award), Dr. Arthur and Adina Gerber (Guests of Honor) and Rabbi Allen and Alisa Schwartz (Rabbinic Partnership Award).

The honorees gave moving speeches describing their initial introduction to Migdal Ohr, sharing recollections from their many awe-inspiring visits to the campus in Israel, and expressing their devotion to Rabbi Grossman and the



Honorees Louis & Anat Menaged and Family

children and families for whom he provides.

Another highlight of the evening was a spotlight on Migdal Ohr's Mevashlim L'Atid Cooking Up a Future program, presented by Gala co-chair and lay leader Jordana Grunfeld. In addition to a video about this vocational curriculum and its students, Migdal Ohr sent two current student chefs - Sarah Lehrfeld and Shai Edry - to America to attend our Gala. Both students prepared food for guests during the cocktail hour, and Sarah gave a heartfelt speech about her difficult childhood sparked by a

move from the US to Israel, and how Migdal Ohr saved her during her most trying and troubled teenage years.

The event marked a first for AFMO with the introduction of an interactive live appeal by a company called Givergy. Tablets on each table let guests make monetary pledges for Migdal Ohr programs and services to be collected after the Gala. Since the appeal was live, a leaderboard displaying the real time donations could be seen on the main screen during this portion of the evening. The entire evening was emceed by prominent criminal defense attorney and outspoken advocate for Israel and Jewish causes Benjamin Brafman, Esq. Mr. Brafman did a wonderful job keeping the program on schedule and asking all guests at the Gala to support this important appeal.



Honorees Rabbi Allen & Alisa Schwartz



Migdal Ohr students Shai and Sarah

The AFMO Board of Directors and Staff would like to personally thank ALL of the honorees, the Gala co-chairs, our terrific emcee, and all of the supporters and friends in attendance who helped to make this year's Gala a fun and successful event!

To see even more photos from the Gala, please visit <http://bit.ly/2016AFMOGalaPhotos> to view the photo album on our Facebook page.



Chessed Projects: Mitzvah Day at Temple Bnai Jeshurun in Short Hills, NJ

The American Friends of Migdal Ohr (AFMO) partnered with Temple Bnai Jeshurun (TBJ) in Short Hills, New Jersey for two exciting events. TBJ's Early Childhood Center held a Mitzvah Day for their pre-school classes followed by an Israel Day, to celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut, Israel's Independence Day.

On May 1st, the students celebrated 'Mitzvah Day' by making tzedakah purses. They then took the purses home and were asked to bring them back filled with tzedakah (charity) on May 10th as part of their Israel Day celebration. Their chosen charity was Migdal Ohr's Daycare and Kindergarten schools. According to parent volunteer Janine Mondshine, "We wanted the kids to know that they were helping their underprivileged peers in Israel." The money raised by TBJ on Israel Day will be used to purchase educational toys and playground equipment at Migdal Ohr.



TBJ's Israel Day was an impressive affair! The students came dressed in blue and white and were greeted by Israeli music playing in the lobby. The students took a mock-trip to Israel, complete with boarding an El Al plane with seats arranged in an auditorium true to an actual plane layout! They received a snack and watched two in-flight movies—one about Israel and one from Migdal Ohr's very own daycare students. Mrs. Mondshine introduced the Migdal Ohr video and explained to the TBJ students that the kids they are about to see in the video live in Israel and that the tzedakah they brought in is going to help them at their school. The students watched attentively as Migdal Ohr's students danced and sang for their American peers.



Israel Day continued with a full tour of the Holy Land. Students created beaded necklaces in Haifa, learned songs and dances in Eilat, ate lunch at a café in Netanya, put notes in the Kotel in Jerusalem, and went to a Disco in Tel Aviv. The two highlights were being able to participate in the Maccabi Games and visiting a kibbutz with a petting zoo! As students petted a llama, cow, ducks, bunnies and more, they enjoyed this introduction to Israel and are looking forward to one day visiting the real place.



It was an amazing day and we're hoping to make the AFMO and TBJ partnership an annual tradition!

Migdal Ohr Bridal Fund Update: Benchers Available to Rent for Events

Migdal Ohr's Bridal Fund was created to help Migdal Ohr alumni couples in Israel who come from disadvantaged backgrounds and do not have the means for even a modest wedding ceremony and reception. Migdal Ohr celebrates over 140 weddings each year! For \$5,000, a couple receives a full sponsorship that includes a ceremony and reception venue, catering, a one-man band, invitations and more, along with assistance to set up their new home together such as furniture and first month's rent. Every dollar donated to the Bridal Fund goes directly to the couple in need.



In addition to *chuppah tefillah* cards (special prayer cards to be recited during a marriage ceremony), the American Friends of Migdal Ohr is now offering *benchers* (grace after meals booklets) available for rent, and the donation from this rental goes directly to the Bridal Fund. These *benchers* are great for any occasion, whether it's a wedding, sheva brachot, bris, Bar Mitzvah, etc. The minimum suggested donation is \$500. For more information about sponsoring a wedding in Israel or renting benchers for your event in the USA, please contact dori@migdalohrusa.org.



American Friends of Migdal Ohr