

The Official Student Newspaper
of the
Abraham Joshua Heschel
High School



"We stand for what we utter..."

- Rabbi Heschel

Honoring the Lives of the Six Recovered Hostages

By Tessa Mank '25, Online Editor

On the morning of Sept. 1, Israeli forces recovered the bodies of six hostages from Hamas tunnels. Autopsies revealed that all six were shot at close range just hours before the IDF found them. While many Israelis blame Netanyahu for these deaths due to prolonged ceasefire talks, the country came together to mourn the six young and innocent lives lost.

Those murdered were Eden Yerushalmi z"l, Ori Danino z"l, Almog Sarusi z"l, Hersh Goldberg-Polin z"l, Carmel Gat z"l, and Alexander Lobanov z"l. Of the six hostages, five were kidnapped from the Nova Music Festival, and one, Carmel Gat, was taken from her home in Kibbutz Be'eri. Various Jewish communities across the world held memorial services, honoring each life taken.

Eden Yerushalmi, 24, was an employee at the music festival on Oct. 7. Her family, whom she had a close relationship with, describes her as a "vibrant young woman with many friends and hobbies." Hours after the news of her death, Hamas published a propaganda video of Yerushalmi saying a final goodbye to her family.

Carmel Gat, 40, worked as an occupational therapist before the attacks. Other hostages who were released in the November prisoner exchange referred to her as their "guardian angel," as she did her best to help them cope with the horrifying circumstances, using her work experience to lead them in meditation and yoga.

Ori Danino, 25 is described as a hero by

all his peers. When the festival was infiltrated, Danino drove several other civilians to safety. He was captured after returning to the scene to save as many lives as possible. Danino represents true courage and selflessness. He was the

festival, the two friends sought refuge in a nearby bomb shelter. When Hamas began tossing grenades into the structure, Goldberg-Polin and Shapira threw them back outside, saving the lives of everyone else in the shelter. Unfortun-

nately, Shapiro lost his life while helping others, and Goldberg-Polin's arm was blown off by a grenade, and he was taken captive into Gaza. His mother has been a fierce advocate for his release and the release of all hostages alike. In her eulogy, she said "you are with beautiful Aner," a testament to the pair's strong friendship and heroism.

Alexander Lobanov, 32, was a loving father and husband, leaving behind his wife, Michal, a two year old toddler, and a baby who was born while he was in captivity. Lobanov fostered strong bonds with everyone he met. He had matching tattoos with his

two closest friends, both of whom have stood by his family since his capture. He was taken by Hamas gunmen at the festival while trying to get others to safety.

Each hostage has a story. It's important to remember who they were before October 7th, and carry on their heroic legacies. In the words of Rachel Goldberg-Polin, "hope is mandatory." A mural, shown above, memorializing the six lives lost is in the works at Heschel and will be displayed shortly.

Art by Yalei Ravin '26, Layout Editor



eldest of five siblings and beloved by all.

Almog Sarusi, 27, attended the Nova festival with his longtime girlfriend, Shahar Gindi. When she was shot and injured, he stayed by her side and comforted her in her final moments. Sarusi had an adventurous personality. He loved to travel and play guitar. His loved ones remember him for his positivity and curiosity.

Hersh Goldberg-Polin, 23, was an American-Israeli dual citizen. He moved to Israel when he was 7. His mother, Rachel Goldberg-Polin, described him as a "happy-go-lucky, laid back, good humored, respectful and curious person." He attended the Nova festival to celebrate his 23rd birthday with his best friend, Aner Shapira. When the terrorists entered the

Family of Hostage Awaits Return

Eliya Yehudai '27, Assistant Art Editor

Matan Angrest, a 21 year old Israeli Defense Force (IDF) soldier from Kiryat Bialik, was among the 251 people taken hostage on Oct 7. While heroically protecting kibbutzim that border Gaza, Matan and three other Israeli soldiers, Itay Chen, Daniel Peretz, and Tomer Leibovitz, were attacked by Hamas terrorists. Matan was the only one to survive but was taken captive while severely injured. The last text message his family received from him said, "Everything is fine, take care of yourselves."

After a few days of concern from his family, IDF soldiers delivered the news of his captivity. Since that day, Matan's family has un-

dergone unimaginable pain.

"The hardest part is not knowing. He [Matan] could come back to us dead, alive, or

happy and healthy." Furthermore, he described his brother as a happy person: "Matan enjoyed parties and hanging out with his friends and family."

Angrest dubs Matan as funny and shy. He said that he "always made sure that everyone was cared for," which he proved while fighting for the residents of Kibbutz Nahal Oz. It is because of these attributes that Matan's family has stayed optimistic.

When asked what he would say to his brother, Ofir said, "I love you, and after hearing your story, I'm very proud of all of the work you did. Stay strong; we are fighting for you."

Submitted by Eliyah Yehudai '27, Assistant Art Editor

KIDNAPPED
#BringThemHomeNow



Matan Angrest

21 years old

Israel

Kidnapped by Hamas

alive and a completely different person," said Ofir Angrest, the hostage's 16-year-old brother. "We just hope that he will come back to us

Student Government Members Return to School Early for Pre-Service

By Hannah Wurzbarger '26, Editor-in-Chief

On Monday, Aug. 26, student government executives, juniors Caleb Creizman and Pierce Malter, as well as seniors Elana Farbiarz, Abby Bruhim, and Eden Bar-Chama, returned to school for a meeting with Rabbi Dahlia, the Director of Jewish and Student Life at the high school. Creizman, the Hesed and Tzedek VP, explained that in preparation for the year ahead, the team “chose the hachana prompt and discussed council plans.”

The following afternoon, Tuesday, Aug. 27, pre-service officially commenced when all members of student government came to school. Upon arrival, students met with their respective councils. Subsequently, members were split into five groups to discuss the five Heschel commitments.

In this time, each group reflected on a different commitment, discussing concrete ways to incorporate them into daily life at school. Finally, all student government members congregated in the Beit Midrash to reflect, share ideas and ask questions. Once student government members left, the execs met with Rabbi Dahlia to plan for the day ahead.

On Wednesday, Aug. 28, student government members returned to the building, this

time split into four random groups that cycled through four 15-minute workshop rotations. In them, Hesed and Tzedek facilitator Lindsay Biebelberg led an interactive workshop in which students acted out phrases in either “welcoming” or “unwelcoming” manners to explore the significance of tone and facial expression when



welcoming new students, Programming Council facilitator Rabbi Jonathan Klatt led a workshop using Heschel’s new logo. Symbolizing a Ner Tamid, an eternal flame, Klatt used the logo as a metaphor for the student government’s eternal

commitment to enhancing the school environment. Spirit council facilitator Julia Bernstein used an image of swimmers diving head-first into a pool, prompting students to draw conclusions about the importance of boldly taking chances. Lastly, Student Affairs facilitator David Riemenschneider presented a TED talk about problem-solving, which was followed by a discussion on its content.

After these workshops, student government members returned to their individual councils to work on upcoming initiatives. Finally, the execs met with Rabbi Dahlia one last time to reflect on the day and discuss future council plans.

Thursday, Aug. 29 was the final day of preservice. All student government members arrived at 4:00pm for individual council meetings. The day concluded with a 5:00pm meeting in the Beit Midrash to reflect on preservice as a whole and discuss remaining concerns and updated policies. Overcrowding and elevator traffic received a lot of attention because

of the unprecedented size of the Heschel High School!

Photography by Olivia Levine '25, Editor-in-Chief

2024 Presidential Election: Seniors Vote for the First Time

By Parker Slarskey '25, Features Editor

It is crucial for all Heschel students eligible to vote to cast their votes on November 5. You can register to vote online, by mail, or in-person. If you have a valid NYS driver license, permit, or non-driver ID card, go to the DMV’s voter registration website. Alternatively, you can go in-person to one of the many registration locations spread across all five boroughs. Once registered, prepare ahead of time where you will go on Election Day. The website “vote.nyc” allows you to look up the closest polling location to your home address. Be sure to check the hours of your polling site, and be prepared to wait on line.

Additionally, it is important to learn about and stay current with each candidate’s policies and outlook in order to make an in-

formed voting decision. Social Studies teacher Jason Perlman recommends reading newspapers such as the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*. Also, he suggests watching the candidate’s speeches and debates.

Many of our Heschel seniors are voting for the first time in this election. Senior Elana Farbiarz commended her Heschel education for providing her with the proper skills to make an informed decision when she votes on November 5. She said, “Heschel gave me the tools to read critically and conduct my own research.” Conversely, senior Abe Charcow does not think his education helped him make an educated choice. “Heschel is very one sided, and it’s difficult to hear and comprehend different perspectives,” said Charcow. However, he has done his own research by reading the news and feels prepared to vote.

In an interview, senior Sophia Kasirer-Teitelbaum talked about the issues important to her. She said, “Women’s rights, specifically abortion laws, are important to me. And of course Israel.” She also talked about her experience registering: “I registered when I was 16 at the Heschel blood drive. It was super easy; it only took about five minutes.”

Senior Eli Goldman, who will also vote this November, feels strongly that the elected candidate supports Israel. Additionally, he expressed his belief that the next president should restore America’s reputation in the eyes of other countries. Goldman said, “I am looking for someone who will give our country a positive reputation. I do not want America to look like an embarrassment to the rest of the world.”

Heschel Introduces Veracross Software

By Claudia Messer '25, Online Editor

In recent news, the Heschel school has replaced myBackpack with a new student portal called Veracross. The user-friendly database acts as a hub for all student information—schedules, class lists, report cards, and student/family directories—eliminating the school’s need for multiple systems.

Though the decision caught students by surprise, according to High School Assistant Head Anne Cohen, “The plan to move from myBackpack to Veracross has been in the works for a while now-- the school was actually starting to transition over a year ago.”



The new software has numerous benefits. Cohen said, “Veracross is a significant improvement for administrators in multiple departments.” For example, Cohen continued, “In myBackpack, if a student needed to transfer classes, it was a pretty complicated ordeal. In Veracross, it only

takes a few seconds.” Other schedule changes, such as amended schedules sent in the Hayom or field trips, will also be accessible in Veracross.

Cohen added, “For students and parents,

one of the biggest features is that you’ll be able to communicate directly with teachers through Veracross. All emails from the school will be sent through Veracross, so in addition to showing up in your Heschel email address, they’ll be stored in Veracross for future reference.”

Director of Technology Doni Farkovits shared other benefits of the software, saying, “[Veracross] is fully web-based and has increased security [compared to myBackpack]. It also consolidates a couple of different components of running a school into one location and allows us to sync data across the IT systems and educational tools in a way we were not able to before.”

Photography by Liam Barlev '26, Photography Editor

Summers in Israel Leave their Mark on Heschel Students

By Pierce Malter '26, News Editor

This summer, Heschel students strengthened their connections to Israel while gaining a solemn understanding of the ways the country shoulders the aftermath of brutal attacks perpetrated by terror organizations such as Hamas.

Junior Caleb Creizman went on a ten-day volunteer trip with the B'nai B'rith Youth Organization (BBYO), where he traveled around Israel, delivering food, supplies, and messages of encouragement to IDF soldiers.

Creizman said that beginning to understand how Israelis' lives have changed, especially those in the north and west, was "crazy." One key part of the program was meeting Israelis who have been personally impacted by Hamas' terrorist attacks to hear their stories. Creizman himself lost someone to the conflict, a close friend who was killed in a battle earlier this year. He is grateful for the opportunity the trip gave him to "really contribute." He's attended most of the rallies since Oct. 7, but physically providing aid held new significance for him.

Junior Noah Chessler also participated in the BBYO program, which deepened his connection to Israel. Along with American Jews, 20 children from an Israeli youth group also participated in his program. The group visited the Nova Festival site, which left an indelible impression upon Chessler. He recalled how the demeanor of one of the boys, who was always so carefree and light-hearted, turned heavy and somber. It was then that Chessler learned that the boy's older brother, Aviad Halevi, was one of the 360 victims of Hamas' attack on the festival. Chessler, who has two brothers, recalled thinking about the grim duality of Halevi's behavior: "This is the part you don't see on Instagram."



Junior Omer Dayan, who was born in Israel and lived there until fourth grade, spent the summer like any other, in Tel Aviv with her family. Dayan "could sense [the conflict] all around [her]; there were empty beaches, yellow ribbons on cars, posters covering poles, and people feeling fear in their own houses."

Dayan believes Israelis work hard to offset the impacts the war has on them.

"It might be sad to say, but responding to attacks and threats like this? It's part of Israeli culture at this point," said Dayan. "I feel pride

said she was "struck by the desolate state of the area. It was really depressing, and there were stretches of land that were burnt everywhere." Reflecting on the tragedy that struck the Ortal community during her stay, Gross said, "It could have been any of us. One evening, a bomb struck a car near the kibbutz. The bomb killed the parents of another kibbutz resident, a boy around her age." She recalled the community deciding to forgo work in favor of supporting the family of the deceased.

"There was such a heavy feeling; I can't describe such a feeling... and I was thinking, if it had been the next day, I could have been in that car," Gross said. Gross thinks there are some parts of the conflict that "can't be understood until there's bombs dropping on your head." At any time, a siren could blare, and everyone would "drop to the ground, put their hands over their head, and watch the bombs fall. It was close. Too close."

After her time at the school, Gross found work in the Golan. She first worked on a hydroponic farm, later packaging fruit in a factory while staying nearby with friends from the boarding school.

Gross said, "The work was freeing, and getting paychecks, buying groceries, and cleaning was a taste of real adult life."

"I'm grateful to experience things, to still be alive," Gross said. "I came back to the US as a much broader human being." Gross, who plans to enlist in the IDF next year, has nothing but optimism: "Our country is in shambles. But these people are fighters."

Photography by Noah Chessler '26, Contributing Photographer

for my country, for its capacity to recover."

To senior Miriam Gross, Israel will first and foremost be a home. Part of her family is Israeli, and she's spent a considerable amount of her life at their house in Ramat Gan. But this summer, Gross saw "a whole other side" of the country.

Her summer started with three weeks as a guest in an agricultural boarding school where Israeli students spend their mornings farming and their afternoons planning curriculum for the school year to come. The school is located on Kibbutz Ortal in the Golan Heights; Gross

Heschel Students Travel Around the Globe This Summer

By Aviva Guttman '25, Opinion Editor

This summer, Heschel students participated in a wide array of exciting summer programs and activities.

Senior Eden Bar-Chama took part in Ramah Seminar. Bar-Chama said, "I spent one week in Poland and then five weeks in Israel, traveling and learning with Ramah campers from all over the United States and Canada. We visited a shul in Poland where we lit candles and sang songs. Then we went to Israel where we stayed in Jerusalem and heard from a lot of speakers, including Rachel Goldberg-Polin. I met good friends, learned, and traveled. It was a fulfilling and amazing summer."

Senior Lila Nanasi studied with Putney in Siena, Italy. Nanasi said, "I participated in a two-week program where I studied architecture. We had classes in the mornings for four hours, and then we were free to explore the city. I met great friends and enjoyed the freedom to explore a foreign city."



Senior Mia Perry participated in scientific research. Perry said, "I interned at a research

Bronfman Fellowship. Farbiarz said, "Bronfman is a five-week Jewish study and travel program.

It normally takes place in Israel for 3-4 weeks and in America for one week; however, this year, because of danger in the region, the program spanned four weeks in America and an optional fifth week in Israel. In the mornings, we studied, and in the evenings, we explored. It was a really great group of people who came from all different Jewish backgrounds, ranging from non-observant to Orthodox. I had a great time and would definitely recommend it to others."

While this is only the tip of the iceberg, Heschel students partook in many exhilarating adventures and learning experiences this summer. We hope you've all had fantastic summers and will share your stories with the Heschel community. Welcome back!

Photography by Miriam Gross '25, Opinion Editor

lab at Columbia University in the Department of Genetics and Development. Then, I traveled with my family to Japan, which is a place I've wanted to visit forever."

Senior Elena Farbiarz took part in the

Buy a New Pair of Back-to-School Shoes

By Noa Chorowsky '25, Features Editor

As summer comes to a close and the 2024-2025 school year begins, the annual dilemma returns: What shoe should students buy for the upcoming year? Whether you are looking for a sneaker that will make your commute more comfortable or hoping to put your best foot forward, the search for a perfect back-to-school shoe can be challenging and overwhelming.

According to a school-wide survey, the most popular back-to-school shoes are Onitsuka Tigers due to their comfort and style.

Senior Anabelle Gononsky said, "The red, white, and blue Mexico 66 Onitsuka Tigers are undoubtedly the best shoes! They are trusty, cute, and comfy."

"Onitsuka Tigers are a great investment for the school year," said junior Hannah Goldman. She added that "they are totally worth the complicated process of buying them and the high shipping cost from Japan." Goldman noted that although she loves the look of her suede shoes, they are very susceptible to dirt and wa-

because they match every outfit. Everyone likes a guy in Vejas."

Senior Tessa Mank complimented her Autry's for their snug feel. "They are perfect for my train ride and walk to and from school. They are also original; not that many other students have them!"

A small majority of students argued that boots are the way to go this year, ideal for cooler temperatures.

Senior Olivia Levine said, "I love my handy Ugg minis. They are perfect for cozy days in winter. Senior year is all about comfort!"

With so many fantastic options on the market, it is impossible to make the wrong choice while



ter.

Many other students agreed that sneakers are a must-have this year, raving about Vejas, Autrys, Reboks, New Balances and Asics.

Senior Ari Weinstein said, "The classic white and black Vejas are THE back-to-school shoe

purchasing a back-to-school shoe!

Art by Olivia Levine '25, Editor-in-Chief

Double Chunk Chocolate Cookie



Eliya Yehudai '27, Assistant Art Editor

Bring in the new school year with these deliciously easy double chunk chocolate cookies!

Ingredients:

- 1 cup unsalted butter
- 2 ¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup brown sugar
- ¾ cup granulated sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 tablespoon heavy cream

- 2 ½ teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 cup semi sweet chocolate chips
- 1 white chocolate bar(chopped)

Instructions

- Preheat oven to 350°
- Melt butter in microwave in 30-second intervals
- Chill the butter in the freezer for 10 minutes
- Mix together the flour, cornstarch, baking soda, and salt together in a small bowl and set aside
- Beat the butter and both sugars until light and fluffy
- Add in egg, yolk, cream, and vanilla
- Stir in flour mixture
- Fold in chocolate
- Place balls of dough onto parchment lined baking sheet
- Bake for 13 minutes

Photography by Eliya Yehudai '27, Assistant Art Editor

Hesed and Tzedek's Volunteer Resource Guide is Here!

By Hannah Wurzbarger '26, Editor-in-Chief

The *Hesed and Tzedek* council has worked since March of last year to bring a Volunteer Resource Guide to the student body. Six months later, on Sep. 22, the guide was released! This guide was created with the goal of encouraging students to find individual projects that they're passionate about, and it consists of many out-of-school volunteer opportunities for students to get involved with. Please find the guide linked on the *Hayom*!



Girls Soccer Team Starts the Season on a High Note

By Daphne Stifelman '25, News Editor

With the loss of last year's seniors, the founding members of the team, and the addition of five freshmen, the 2024-2025 season ushers in a new era of Heschel girls soccer.

The team is off to an excellent start with an extremely successful preseason marked by a 13-2 victory in a scrimmage against Calhoun. With a new era comes a new mindset. Returning head coach George Alaverdashvili is leading the girls with one goal in mind: securing the championship.

"Now I'm more familiar with the teams

we played last year. I'm looking for a good season," explained Alaverdashvili. His razor-sharp focus culminates into five words: "The aim is to win."

Assistant coach Tehila Zaghi explained that she has already seen Alaverdashvili's determination reflected in the team's two-week preseason. "A lot of them run faster and longer without realizing it. During the first practice it took them ten minutes to run four laps. Now, it's gone down to six."

Freshman right-winger Zoe Nadel, who scored an astonishing seven goals in the Calhoun scrimmage, spoke about her anticipation

for the season. "I'm really excited for the season to start. I think that if we put in the work we could definitely go to the championships and win."

Junior Amelie Prevor, entering her third year on the team, said, "I think the whole dynamic of our team has changed. We are very committed to balancing being together and having fun, while also working hard to win." The team's clear-sighted attitude and impressive win in the scrimmage signal that this season will be a good one. We can't wait to see what the girls soccer team achieves!

Girls Varsity Volleyball Team Starts the Season Strong

By Miriam Gross '25, Opinion Editor

With an impressive preseason performance, the girls varsity volleyball team is poised for a strong season. The addition of several new faces on the roster, including five promising sophomores, has set the team up for success this fall.

The team is also benefiting from the addition of the new assistant coach, Edwin Martinez, who has joined forces with the head coach, Jazel Encarnacion. Throughout preseason, Martinez brought fresh ideas and increased intensity, adding depth to the team's training approach.

The preseason has already shown the benefits of the team's hard work. Junior Eden Litt has been impressed by the progress. Litt said, "The focus and effort during practices have



been intense. While we're able to have a good laugh here and there, the quality of work is great."

Senior co-captain Aviva Guttman, one of the players who impressed in the preseason scrimmage against Calhoun, expressed her

enthusiasm for the season. "In addition to basic skills like hitting and rotation, we've been working on our communication and teamwork, and it's really paying off," she explained. "The team has a lot of good energy, and we're all motivated to have a memorable season."

The sense of camaraderie is stronger than ever as both veteran players and underclassmen bond over their shared goal of success. "It's nice to feel so integrated into the team," says junior Millie Harris. Practices have become increasingly competitive, with everyone pushing themselves to match the high standards set by the coaches and upperclassmen.

With a strong start and cohesive team dynamic, the girls varsity volleyball team is ready and excited to tackle the challenges ahead.

Photography via @heschelvarsityvolleyball

Boys Varsity Soccer Team Sets Eyes on Championship

By Yhonatan Yehudai '25, Editor-in-Chief

Heschel's boys varsity soccer team won their first organized match of the 2024 to 2025 season in a 4-3 scrimmage victory over Calhoun. Despite entering the game as favorites, the team needed two late goals from junior Zack Levy and sophomore Aiden Barnea to get the win.

"We were able to shift our mentality, and it really showed the team's resilience and our willingness to change," team co-captain Yonatan Amster said.

Amster added that the team's mentality will play a crucial role throughout the season and may be a deciding factor in the team's success: "It's important for us to keep a level head, to keep our composure."

The team maintained its form in the first official game of the season on Sept. 5 against Staten Island Academy, getting a 3-1 win.

Senior Nati Eshaghoff, who scored the Heat's last goal, commended the rest of the team for its performance.

"I want to give credit to the whole team. The entire team persevered, and it wasn't just individual performances, it was everyone," Eshaghoff said.

In the same vein, head coach Jaime Gonzalez Palma said a key component this season will be how players on the team work together and learn from each other.

"A challenge for coaches is how to make the [players] understand the value of their teammates and teamwork instead of being more individual and worrying about themselves,"

Gonzalez Palma said.

Gonzalez Palma highlighted his aspiration to win his first championship as coach of the varsity team. He said that due to the abundance of talented freshmen and sophomores on the roster, the upperclassmen will play a large part in leading and teaching their teammates.

"If the older players come out with the leadership that we need, we have a chance to accomplish our goal," Gonzalez Palma said. "It will be a combination of young and talented players and leadership from our older players."

Amster also expressed a hopeful attitude for the upcoming season: "Every single year, we get a little bit closer to that championship, and I think this year is our year."

Israel Dominates in the 2024 Paralympics

By Ariel Zeltzer '27, Sports Editor

Israel's athletes posted a strong showing at the 2024 Paralympic Games in Paris, earning seven medals: 4 gold, 1 silver and 2 bronze. On the mat, Asaf Yasur, who lost both his arms at age 12, won gold in Taekwondo in the men's under-58kg weight class, besting Turkey's Ali Can Özcan for the title.

Yasur, age 22, said that his three brothers who served in the IDF this past year gave him strength. "With everything my country is going through... this is the least I could do," he said. Reflecting on Yasur's win, sophomore Maya Gleser shared, "It is especially important right

now for the Israeli Olympians to represent their country."

In the swimming pool, Israel brought home four medals, with Ami Omer Dadaon, age 23, winning gold in men's 100m Freestyle, gold in the Men's 200m Freestyle and silver in Men's 150m Individual Medley. Mark Malyar, age 24, snagged a bronze in Men's 100m Backstroke.

Dadaon, who was born with cerebral palsy, finished the 100m Freestyle nearly 1.5 seconds ahead of the Japanese silver medalist. Malyar, also born with cerebral palsy, dedicated his medal to IDF soldiers, saying, "I want to thank the soldiers and everyone who protects us."

On the water, Moran Samuel, age 42, captured gold in PR1 Women's Single Sculls, while Shahar Milfelder, age 26, and Saleh Shahin, age 41, took bronze in PR2 Mixed Double Sculls.

Samuel suffered a spinal stroke in 2006 and became paralyzed in her lower body. Milfelder had a portion of her pelvis removed following a cancer diagnosis as a teenager, and Shahin was seriously injured as a soldier in 2005.

Sophomore Aiden Barnea said, "It is super inspiring to see how the Paralympic athletes don't let their disabilities hold them back from chasing their dreams."

The *Helios* Editorial Board's Advice for Freshmen

The *Helios* Editorial Board

To the class of 2028, welcome to the Heschel School! We hope you love this place as much as we do (and eventually join *Helios*). As a freshman, you are in a unique position. You all have the opportunity to define your own paths, socially and academically. The possibilities are endless. Therefore, we, a board mainly composed of upperclassmen, would like to offer some advice on how to have a successful first year!

1) Be open to trying new things and meeting new people

Whether you are coming from the middle school or are a new member of the Heschel community, keep an open mind. Explore your passions through Heschel's diverse clubs. Meet as many new people as possible! You never know who may end up being one of your closest friends. Classes you hated in middle school may become your favorites. Give yourself room to grow and explore as much as possible.

2) Don't let how you think you might be perceived prevent you from trying something new

Going hand in hand with our first piece of advice, don't hold yourself back from trying something new due to fear of judgment. Heschel provides a unique space to pursue all of your passions, no matter what they are. Be yourself!

3) Communicate with Teachers

Your teachers are here to help you! We understand that it can feel daunting to reach out to a new teacher. However, from years of experience, we can assure you that every teacher at Heschel is dedicated to your academic and social well-being. We are so fortunate to be surrounded by committed and invested adults. Don't be shy -- ask questions, share feedback, and get to know the people who you will eventually become your mentors and role-models.

4) Time Management

Learning how to manage your time is the key to a successful high school career.

Juggling a dual curriculum, long school day, and extracurricular activities is no easy feat. But with diligence and strong time management skills, everything is achievable. Developing this skill takes time, so start by reviewing your test calendar and short-term assignments. From there, create a plan for when you will tackle all each task! The more effectively you manage your time, the easier it will become.

5) Make Mistakes

Make mistakes! We know it sounds cliché, but it's true. We can't even begin to tell you how many mistakes we've made over the years. Now is the time to take risks and try new things -- expect that things won't go as planned!

We are so excited for your next chapter and are here to support you every step of the way!

The *Helios* Editorial Board

How We Should Remember the Hostages of Oct. 7

Olivia Levine '25, Editor-in-Chief

Upon hearing the tragic news that six bodies of hostages were found in Gaza, time seemed to stop. Just weeks ago, the world witnessed Hersh Goldberg-Polin's parents, Rachel and Jonathan Goldberg-Polin, begging for the safe return of the hostages and diplomacy between Hamas and Israel. While watching the speech at home with my parents, I imagined Hersh embracing his tired-eyed but smiling parents after almost a year in captivity. Not once did I consider the possibility that he would not return home alive.

When I heard the news that six hostages were murdered in Gaza, including Hersh, my mind was immediately transported to Rabbi

Dahlia's *Talmud* class, in which we started each class by highlighting the life of one hostage.



This ritual, however difficult, allowed our class to have an outlet for our emotions during an inexplicably tumultuous time. And, as we did so, we began to feel a deep connection to all the

hostages because we knew their life story, their family tree, and where they came from. Understanding what their life was like before they were taken hostage allowed us to push past how they are portrayed in the media as merely a token of diplomacy. Instead of knowing them simply as "the hostages," a broad term that causes many to feel disconnected, we should try to learn about the hostages individually. Get to know each of their stories before the war. In that way, we can carry them with us, even if they are no longer physically with us. In that way, Hersh Goldberg-Polin, Carmel Gat, Alexander Lobanov, Ori Danino, Almog Sarusi, and Eden Yerushalmi can live on.

Photography by Olivia Levine '25, Editor-in-Chief

Heschel's New Nook is a Welcome Addition

By Maya Ortner '25, News Editor



This school year, Heschel added a new location to its selection of spots perfect for downtime: a brand new nook.

Outfitted with blue walls and an assortment of comfortable seating, this nook is situated near the sixth floor elevators and staircase. Much like the third floor nook, this area is not designated to any specific grade and is a place where all students can spend their lunch or free periods.

Creating this new nook is a fantastic way to adapt to the growing student body. With each incoming grade growing, the school often feels overly crowded. In my freshman year, I was often able to spend lunches with my friends in empty classrooms. However, with the increasing population of the high school requiring spaces for classes and teacher-student meetings, that's rarely an option anymore. Even

communal spaces, like the third floor nook and student lounge, rarely have available seating. Now, with the new nook, more students can enjoy the camaraderie of a lounge while having enough space.

Its location on the sixth floor also adds to its convenience, as many students choose to spend their lunch periods in the library next door.

"I think the nook is a great addition to the school," said senior Shaine Katarivas. "As a frequent visitor to the learning lab and library, I find it extremely crowded on the sixth floor, and the nook adds more space for working and relaxing."

The sixth-floor nook is one of many additions to the school this fall, and will certainly elevate our experience this school year.

Photography by Olivia Levine '25, Editor-in-Chief

First Week Photos!





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