



The Beren Summer Fellowship Research Conference

August 6-8, 2024 | 2-4 Av 5784

Tikvah Summer Fellowship 2024
Conference Presentation Schedule
165 E. 56th St. New York, NY

Tuesday, August 6: Foreign Policy and US-Israel Relationship

10:00 AM: Elan Kluger

The Life and Legacy of Vladimir (Ze'ev) Jabotinsky

11:00 AM: Rachel Friedman

The Great Zionist Rivalry: David Ben-Gurion and Ze'ev Jabotinsky

12:00 PM: Ben Guggenheim

Thirty Years of Shifting Rhetoric on Israeli Democracy and Security: A Michael Oren Reader

Lunch Break

2:00 PM: Aaron Cohen

Anti-Interventionism in U.S. Foreign Policy: Past, Present, and Future

3:00 PM: Jackie Goloborodsky

Israelis Have Proven Their Resilience - Can Economic Policy Rise to the Challenge?

4:00 PM: Kyle Sajoyan

The American Interest in an Israel-Hezbollah War

Wednesday, August 7: US Public Policy and American Jewry

9:00 AM: Darius Gross

Policymaking at the Local and National Level

10:00 AM: Sam Zahn

Mental Health, Social Media, and Educational Technology Policy in Jewish Day Schools

11:00AM: Leila Tilem

The Solution to Violent Antisemitism: A New Jewish Self-Defense Program for College Students

Lunch Break

2:00 PM: Binyamin Fox

The Past, Present, and Future of Free Exercise: A Time to Reflect

3:00 PM: Tziporah Pinczower

Funding the Future: Religious Liberty, School Choice, and the Debate over Substantial Equivalency

Thursday, August 8: Jewish Education and Jewish Culture

9:00 AM: Tzivya Lutch

Preventing *Stare Decisis* as a Tool of Judicial Overreach: Justice Clarence Thomas' Doctrine of Limiting Precedent

10:00 AM: Eden Weinstein

Developing an Art History Curriculum at Emet Classical Academy

11:00 AM: Shabbos Kestenbaum

Reimagining Holocaust Education after October 7th

Lunch Break

2:00 PM: Tamara Yeshurun

Rethinking Hebrew Language Education in America

3:00 PM: Rivka Werner

The Gap Year and the American University

4:00 PM: Hayley Monson

Exploring the Personal, Pedagogical, and Political Implications of the International Bible Quiz

A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

This academic year has been a supremely challenging one for all the Jewish people and their friends. The Simchat Torah attack on Israel, and the dismal aftermath of Israel-hate that was especially evident on college campuses, made many of us feel like we had entered a new and ugly chapter of Jewish history.



But there is comfort. The Jewish people are strong and brave. Our people's literary canon and record of strong leadership in crisis provides a repository of excellence that we can draw from to face the challenges of our time. There is comfort in knowing that young Jews in North America and beyond are devoting themselves to drawing from this repository. This is certainly how I would describe the seventeen 2024 Beren Summer Fellows.

We are very proud to host this culminating conference for this group. As ever, the Beren Fellowship aims to inspire and empower young men and women to lead lives of Jewish purpose and leadership. In their eight weeks of residence with the Tikvah Fund, students learn from great professors, public figures, and religious leaders who straddle the worlds of academic research and active engagement in Jewish affairs.

They also undertake an independent research project or internship, suited to their own interests and exposing them to practical challenges faced by Jewish leaders today. Each fellow works directly with a senior figure from Tikvah's wide network of practitioners and scholars. Exploring topics that range from the future of Jewish education to the US-Israel strategic relationship, and from defending religious liberty to combatting anti-Semitism, our fellows build a foundation for themselves as rising leaders. I invite you to explore the background and the project descriptions of all our 2024 Fellows in the following pages.

Alan Rubenstein
Senior Director

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Aaron Cohen

Washington University in St. Louis

Aaron Cohen hails from Chicago and is a rising senior at Washington University in St. Louis, where he is majoring in political science and minoring in history and Jewish, Islamic and Middle Eastern studies (JIMES). His intellectual interests include the intersection of Western and Jewish philosophy, comparative legal studies, and international affairs. A member of Pi Sigma Alpha political science honors society, Mr. Cohen has served for several semesters as a research assistant for a political science PhD student. Aaron first found his love for Israel advocacy in high school and serves as vice president of WashU's Israel Public Affairs Committee (WIPAC). He is involved in a number Jewish spaces on campus, including serving as music director of WashU's Jewish acapella group, Staam. At Tikvah, Aaron appreciates the robust exchange of political and philosophical ideas that synthesize with his interest in Judaism and Jewish identity.

ANTI-INTERVENTIONISM IN U.S. FOREIGN POLICY: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

Today, as America sees allies such as Ukraine and Israel fighting for their security and sovereignty, important questions emerge as to America's role in the world and its commitment to our allies abroad. On both the right and left, voices are calling on the U.S. to scale back support for such allies. These critics exhibit an approach to U.S. foreign policy that is deeply skeptical of U.S. involvement in foreign "entanglements," seeing robust intervention, militarily and in some cases diplomatically, as fundamentally misguided. The growing prominence of this perspective in our national dialogue prompts a revisiting of the American strategic tradition and how opposition to American intervention in global affairs has manifested historically.

In this project, Aaron investigates the theory and history of anti-interventionism within the American strategic tradition. Drawing upon diplomatic history, international relations theory, and contemporary discourse, Aaron examines the historical and theoretical assumptions that undergird this approach to American foreign policy, as well as how anti-interventionist sentiments have been revived today. This summer, Aaron was mentored by defense policy expert and Beren Summer Fellowship alumnus Harry Halem. Aaron conducted a close study of isolationism under Halem's tutelage. To culminate his research, Aaron will produce an article for publication analyzing how anti-interventionism would influence the foreign policy of a prospective second Trump Administration.

MENTOR:

Harry Halem, Yorktown Institute



Binyamin Fox

Columbia University

Binyamin Fox is a rising sophomore at Columbia University, studying political science and history. Prior to attending Columbia, Binyamin spent two years at Yeshivat Har Etzion in Israel. A long-time participant in various Tikvah programs, Binyamin is currently a member of the Tikvah Collegiate Forum. Additionally, he is a member of the Columbia Pre-Law Society and a debate coach at his high school alma mater, YUHSB. Binyamin is incredibly passionate about constitutional law and religious liberty and looks forward to attending law school after graduation..

The Past, Present, and Future of Free Exercise: A Time to Reflect

Binyamin spent the summer immersed in religious liberty jurisprudence. The focal point of Binyamin's project was born from a tutorial on the history of the Free Exercise Clause at the United States Supreme Court with Professor Michael A. Helfand of Pepperdine Caruso School of Law and Yale Law School. Building on his work with Professor Helfand, Binyamin researched critical debates regarding the historical understanding of the Free Exercise Clause and pressing religious liberty issues and cases of our day. The Supreme Court's 1990 decision in *Employment Division v. Smith* has been subject to vibrant debate and scholarship, particularly concerning the issue of religious exemptions to neutral and generally applicable laws. In light of the Supreme Court's recent opinion in *Fulton v. City of Philadelphia*, in which some justices called for a reconsideration of the *Smith* precedent, it behooves us to reflect upon these debates and the future of Free Exercise. Binyamin will summarize and expand this research in a future undergraduate law article.

Alongside his research, Binyamin had the unique opportunity to attend the Notre Dame Law School Religious Liberty Summit in South Bend, Indiana, where he was fortunate to hear from some of the leading academics and experts on the important topic of "Depolarizing Religious Liberty."

MENTOR:

Michael A. Helfand, Pepperdine University School of Law



Rachel Friedman

Emory University

Rachel Friedman is a rising senior at Emory University studying international relations and history. She is a leader in the Emory Israel Public Affairs Committee, an active member of Emory's Tikvah chapter, and the former president of the Oxford Jewish Student Union and Oxford International Relations Association. She also served as a research assistant to Dr. Salmon Shomade, studying the impacts of British and French colonialism on African countries' judicial systems. Professionally, Rachel is exploring the world of foreign affairs. She was an Iran Research Intern at AEI's Critical Threats Project, a Young Global Professional at the Atlantic Council's Middle East Programs, a Diamond Summer Intern at AIPAC, and a Research Intern at NGO Monitor. During the 2024-25 school year, Rachel will collect open-source intelligence on Chinese and Russian activities in the Middle East as a VSFS intern with CENTCOM at the Department of Defense. In her free time, Rachel is an avid reader and enjoys cooking and photography.

The Great Zionist Rivalry: David Ben-Gurion and Ze'ev Jabotinsky

Amidst the current Israel-Hamas war, the need for improved education and access to accurate, unbiased information on the history of Israel, Zionism, and the Arab-Israeli conflict is greater than ever.

This summer Rachel served as a research assistant to the Former Undersecretary of Defense Douglas Feith as he completes his upcoming book. The book explores the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict from the beginnings of political Zionism during the Ottoman period to the founding of the State of Israel in 1948. It covers a wide range of topics and perspectives including the development of Arab and Palestinian nationalism, British motivations for and management of the Palestine Mandate, and intra-Zionist political debate and conflict. In her role, Rachel explored the heated political rivalry between two of the foremost Zionist leaders, David Ben Gurion and Ze'ev Jabotinsky, and their respective political parties — the Labor Zionists, also known as Mapai, and the Revisionist Zionists. These two men represent ideas integral to understanding Israel's past and present.

MENTOR:

Douglas Feith, Former U.S. Under Secretary of Defense for Policy



Jackie Goloborodsky

Brandeis University

Jackie Goloborodsky, originally from Brooklyn, New York, graduated from Brandeis University in December 2023 with a double major in economics and philosophy. During her time at Brandeis, she served as the news section editor of *The Justice* and was involved in TAMID, Chabad, and IAC Mishelanu. Jacklyn also spent a semester abroad at University College London, where she studied religious philosophy and Hasidic thought. Her academic journey culminated in her senior thesis which explored trust dynamics and economic expectations in the context of the Federal Reserve Bank, monetary policy and inflation. In her free time, Jacklyn enjoys drawing, painting, yoga, and re-reading *100 Years of Solitude*. Having recently returned from a three-month trip across New Zealand and Australia, she developed a passion for hiking, scuba diving, and hanging out with cows, alpacas, and other creatures native to Oceania.

Israelis Have Proven Their Resilience - Can Economic Policy Rise to the Challenge?

As the Swords of Iron war enters its eleventh month, the nation finds itself in the throes of geopolitical instability and economic turbulence. How can Israel not only survive but thrive amidst these challenges? To develop resilient economic policies that sustain growth and foster innovation, it is crucial to assess Israel's macroeconomic challenges. Jacklyn's research combines quantitative and qualitative analysis to evaluate Israel's response to major war related economic challenges and the gaps in Israel's current monetary and fiscal policies.

What strategies can be used to bring momentum back into the high-tech sector? How can Israel incentivize Haredi men to enter the skilled labor force? These are among the critical questions facing Israeli economists.

Jacklyn has interviewed Professor Karnit Flug, former governor of the Bank of Israel; Uri Gabai, CEO of RISE Israel; and Dr. Sergei Sumkin, senior researcher at the Aaron Institute for Economic Policy. They revealed a point of consensus: short and long-term fiscal stimulus should be accompanied by tax measures and spending restraint that align with Israel's current priorities. Using expert insights, economists' projections and independent research, Jacklyn proposes three key policy initiatives as part of a comprehensive memo designed to address immediate economic challenges, while simultaneously paving the way for a future Israel where economic growth aligns with national values and aspirations.

PARTNER ORGANIZATION:

The Paul E. Singer Foundation



Darius Gross

Princeton University

Darius Gross hails from Englewood, NJ and is a recent graduate of Princeton University with a concentration in history. He is an incoming analyst at Baron Public Affairs, a DC-based consultancy, where he worked as a researcher last summer. At Princeton, Darius ran a Tikvah campus chapter and served as Publisher for the Tory, Princeton's journal for conservative thought. He previously worked for Walter Russell Mead at the Hudson Institute and is an alum of the Hertog political studies program. Before university, Darius spent a gap year at Yeshivat Migdal Hatorah in Israel. In his free time, you may find Darius reading, drawing, writing, gaming, volunteering at a local nature reserve, or pretending to be competent at the guitar.

Policymaking at the Local and National Level

This summer, Darius contributed to varied research projects at the intersection of public policy, politics, and the role of media at City Journal. A publication of the Manhattan Institute, City Journal's reporting and in-depth analysis is essential to making the case for creative conservative solutions to both local and national issues. Its work is especially critical in the domain of school choice and parental rights, both areas of abiding interest to American Jews and religious communities more broadly. To this end, Darius' work is a portfolio of collaborations with numerous scholars on their research. This includes City Journal editor-in-chief Brian Anderson's editorial projects, John Ketcham on New York City's electoral reform, Steve Malanga on cannabis legalization, and Renu Mukherjee on the Biden administration's messaging about discrimination and affirmative action. The City Journal editors have also given Darius the opportunity to research, write, and publish his own analysis of the national-level discourse regarding religious pluralism.

PARTNER ORGANIZATION:

City Journal



Benjamin Guggenheim

Columbia University/The Jewish Theological Seminary

Benjamin Guggenheim is a student at the Columbia/JTS joint program, studying the Middle East and the Hebrew Bible, respectively. He is particularly interested in the historical and literary lenses often omitted from the study of Jewish law, legend, and philosophy, as well as the challenges and harmonies of Judaism's interaction with the liberal world. These topics furnish much of his writing, including fiction, essays, and poems, some of which have been featured in the Lehrhaus and Jewishfiction.net.

Thirty Years of Shifting Rhetoric on Israeli Democracy and Security: A Michael Oren Reader

Ben Guggenheim's project synthesizes the wide-ranging work of Ambassador Michael Oren, one of the most prolific English-language writers covering Israel over the last tumultuous three decades. In the thirty years since Oren's diplomatic career began, the State of Israel has seen radical change, both positive and negative, in its domestic political landscape, regional position, and reputation worldwide. Corresponding with these shifts on the ground, rhetoric about Israel has undergone change at the global level. Terms and concepts including Democracy, Two-States, and Apartheid have taken on new meanings and usages in response to this landscape. This shifting rhetoric and its ramifications for Israel's future will be made apparent and digestible in the form of new readers constructed from Ambassador Michael Oren's writing. This summer, Ben worked to pull from Oren's expansive oeuvre of published material to compile distinct and thematically organized sections examining topics ranging from IDF reform and Iran to Israeli television and European Holocaust movies. In addition, Ben applied the knowledge and skills gained from this process into his own writing, generating pieces on Israeli and Jewish history that will appear as part of his new Letters to the Tents of Japheth Substack and with Michael Oren's publication Clarity.

MENTOR:

Michael Oren, Former Israeli Ambassador to the United States



Shabbos Kestenbaum

Queens College, Harvard University

Shabbos Kestenbaum is a recent graduate of Harvard University and the lead plaintiff in a suit against the school alleging severe and pervasive antisemitism on campus. He is a regular contributor in international media outlets, including Fox, CNN, and the BBC, and recently addressed the 2024 Republican National Convention. He has testified before Congress and speaks internationally about campus antisemitism, higher education reform, and the bipartisan U.S.-Israel relationship. Shabbos has been involved with Tikvah since high school and is an alumnus of numerous Tikvah programs and fellowships.

Reimagining Holocaust Education after October 7th

Legislatively, Holocaust education is conceived as a tool necessary to combat antisemitism. With the explosion of Jew-hatred since October 7th on college campuses, in national media, and in broad swaths of American society, is Holocaust education meeting its goals? Shabbos has conducted original research intended to examine and evaluate the history and underlying principles of Holocaust education and to assess its impact on American public life. Should its stated political and educational purpose be reevaluated to better reflect the Jewish experience of the 21st century?

MENTOR:

Norman J.W. Goda, University of Florida



Elan Kluger

Dartmouth University

Elan Kruger is a member of the class of 2026 at Dartmouth College and specializes in intellectual history. Originally from Ann Arbor, Michigan, his studies have taken him to Freie Universität in Berlin and the Center for Cross Cultural Learning in Rabat, Morocco. As a Stamps Scholar, he is delving into a research project on the intellectual history of Revisionist Zionism.

The Life and Legacy of Ze'ev Jabotinsky

The project is an examination of the life and thought of the founder of Revisionist Zionism and perennial icon on the Israeli right. Elan sought to explore the following questions: What principles did Ze'ev Jabotinsky stand for? How successful was he in building a movement relating to his ideas? How is his life relevant to the state of Israel and the Jewish people today? Under the tutelage of Professor Brian Horowitz, Elan studied Jabotinsky's origins, his role in founding the state of Israel, and his political and literary writings. Building on his research, Elan will launch a podcast with episodes on the life and legacy of Jabotinsky, interviewing writers, historians, and public intellectuals in Israel and the United States. He will also write an article for a national magazine or online outlet drawing on conclusions from his research. Elan is particularly interested in what Jabotinsky can teach the Jewish people about cosmopolitanism and nationalism, as well as the relationship between Jabotinsky's literary writing and political thought. As part of his podcasting journey, Elan has interviewed Professor Samuel Goldman, discussing related themes of political and national identity in the American context.

MENTOR:

Brian Horowitz, Tulane University



Tzivia Lutch

Touro University

Tzivia Lutch serves as Confidential Assistant to Commissioner Andrew Ferguson at the Federal Trade Commission in Washington. Ms. Lutch previously interned in the office of Senator Tom Cotton where she researched the US-China relationship and the geopolitical standing of Taiwan. Tzivia has also interned at the Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law, the US Court of Federal Claims (chambers of Judge Mathew H. Solomson), and at the Coalition for Jewish Values. Tzivia received her BA in political science, summa cum laude, from Touro University, where she studied appellate jurisprudence, individual first-amendment rights, and the legislative process. While at Touro, Tzivia served as the chairman of the Touro Honors Board and as the founding president of Touro's Tikvah campus chapter.

A long-time Tikvah scholar, Tzivia began her studies at Tikvah in 2019 as a junior in high school. She is a teaching assistant in the Tikvah Online Academy, where she co-teaches classes on political philosophy and theology.

Preventing *Stare Decisis* as a Tool of Judicial Overreach: Justice Clarence Thomas' Doctrine of Limiting Precedent

The Supreme Court judicial precedent—accepting prior rulings of the high court as advisory sources for constitutional interpretation—affords stability to America's legal tradition by prioritizing continuity. The recognition of judicial precedent, known as *stare decisis*, is a legal concept whose basic premise is accepted by jurists across the ideological spectrum. However, its contours and degree of applicability are hotly debated both on the bench and in the American public square.

This summer, Tzivia has produced research on the judicial philosophy of Justice Clarence Thomas, the current Supreme Court's most outspoken champion of constitutional originalism, to be published in essay form for a law review journal. Justice Thomas favors a jurisprudential philosophy that emphasizes a rigid adherence to constitutional texts and their original meaning. Justice Thomas is often called a "pure originalist," a term not even applied to the late Justice Scalia, and has crafted a more defined role and place for *stare decisis* than his judicial colleagues. The limited value of judicial precedent is part of Justice Thomas' broader Judicial Weltanschauung, in which the Court must not usurp powers reserved unto the citizenry or its elected legislators. Tzivia's writing seeks to define and provide parameters to Justice Thomas' conceptualization of *stare decisis*. It will contextualize that view within the Justice's precise understanding of the role that courts occupy in the American project. To do that, Tzivia will focus on Justice Thomas' vast record of dissenting opinions, specifically as they relate to the legacy of the Slaughterhouse Cases and the Fourteenth Amendment, wherein he addresses *stare decisis* and how the term has been corrupted by the Court.

MENTOR:

Daniel Shapiro, Tikvah Legal Fellowship



Hayley Monson

McMaster University

Hayley Monson is a recent graduate from McMaster University in Hamilton, Canada where she majored in mathematics and where she will be beginning medical school this coming August. Hayley has a wide variety of interests. She loves literature and has also been involved in scientific research throughout her undergraduate degree in fields ranging from medicine and artificial intelligence to pure mathematics. She is an active tutor and teaching assistant, having taught eight classes and tutored over one hundred students. She has a passion for Tanach, and was a Canadian national Chidon HaTanach champion in 2018, going on to compete in the international contest in 2020. She is an active member at the McMaster University Chabad and looks forward to continued participation in the community this coming fall.

Exploring the Personal, Pedagogical, and Political Implications of the International Bible Quiz

Established in 1958 by David Ben-Gurion, the International Bible Contest, or the Chidon HaTanach (known as Chidon), has become an integral part of the Yom Ha'atzmaut tradition in Israel. Each year, students representing up to forty countries compete in front of an audience of attentive Israeli viewers. The competition questions center around the parshat, or the surface-level words, of the Tanakh, rather than interpretation. A Chidon champion will spend thousands of hours pouring over the words of the Tanakh, committing hundreds of chapters to memory.

This display of virtuosic recall would impress most people, but how far beyond showmanship does its value extend? Hayley endeavored to evaluate the enduring religious and spiritual significance to the exercise both for the competitors and for those who cheer them on. With careful consideration of the history of Chidon, along with its halakhic, cultural, and political implications, she has formulated a number of key questions to guide her research; Does studying for the Quiz enhance a student's connection to Judaism and Torah? What social and halakhic questions exist around the memorization of the Tanakh? How has Chidon shaped and been shaped by Israeli culture? And finally, Does the Quiz strengthen relations between diaspora Jewry and Israel? In her essay, Hayley presents an in-depth analysis of the Chidon, ultimately providing a compelling argument for the enduring value of this institution to the Jewish people.

MENTORS:

Alan Rubenstein and Andrew Koss, Tikvah and Mosaic



Fayga Tziporah Pinczower

Yeshiva University

Fayga Tziporah Pinczower is a rising junior and Straus Scholar at Yeshiva University, where she is majoring in political science and minoring in Judaic studies. She serves as vice president of YU's first undergraduate law review journal, officer of YU's Alexander Hamilton Society, and campus fellow for ORA, a non-profit dedicated to fighting get refusal in the Jewish community. Tziporah conducted legal research for two summers at Agudath Israel. She currently works with the KnowUs initiative, which is dedicated to combating misconceptions about the Orthodox Jewish community. Tziporah has advocated for Israel with the Israeli Consulate, AIPAC, and NORPAC. Her writing has been featured in the Wall Street Journal and the Jewish Journal.

Funding the Future: Religious Liberty, School Choice, and the Debate over Substantial Equivalency

Tziporah's project is a comprehensive guide to expand school choice and education regulatory policy in blue states with significant Jewish populations. Many New York parents lack the financial resources and legal protection to send their children to religiously aligned schools. In 2011, the Young Advocates for Fair Education (YAFFED) alleged that yeshivas fail to provide a "substantially equivalent" education as mandated by New York law. After deliberation, the NYSED outlined "substantial equivalency" guidelines that dictate the content and time required for secular education in private schools. These guidelines undermine parents' and children's religious exercise and set a dangerous precedent for the future of religious liberty. The Supreme Court's harmful ruling in *Employment Division v. Smith* and New York's failure to enact a state Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) imperil religious liberty in the state. Furthermore, yeshiva education remained financially impossible for too many parents even before these harmful legal developments.

Tziporah compared the advantages and risks of two school choice policies: the Education Savings Account (ESA) program and voucher systems. She considered these policies' implementation in several red states, bearing in mind the unique substantial equivalency challenges New York poses. With the mentorship of Jason Bedrick and the Becket Fund, Tziporah furnished an internal memo detailing her findings to help relevant Jewish organizations craft their policy strategy.

MENTOR:

Jason Bedrick, the Heritage Foundation and the Becket Fund



Kyle Sajoyan

Liberty University

Kyle Sajoyan is a recent graduate of Liberty University, where he studied military history. He previously served as an intern with the US Department of State's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs where he focused on regional responses to the Israel-Hamas War. Kyle has held internships and fellowships with the Hudson Institute, Council on Foreign Relations, the American Enterprise Institute, the Hertog Foundation, and the American Foreign Policy Council. As a Beren Summer Fellow, Kyle is excited to learn more about Jewish history, culture, and the role of the Jewish people in the United States. He is currently interning with the Foundation for Defense of Democracies as part of his fellowship.

The American Interest in an Israel-Hezbollah War

The geopolitical situation in the Middle East has deteriorated precipitously in the past 10 months. The dreams of Israeli-Saudi normalization and the enlargement of the Abraham Accords were brutally halted following Hamas's horrific onslaught on October 7th. In the aftermath of the deadliest massacre of Jews since the Holocaust, Israel has launched an ongoing military campaign to eradicate Hamas and demilitarize the Gaza Strip. However, an equally significant and looming threat faces Israel to its north. Just one day after the October 7th attacks, the Lebanese terror group Hezbollah launched a series of rocket assaults against Israel's northern border, prompting retaliatory action by the Israeli Air Force. Kyle's project argues that it is in America's interest to support Israeli defensive action against Hezbollah.

As Israel's security dilemma with Hezbollah continues to metastasize, a full-scale military campaign against Hezbollah may be the only solution to Israel's irreconcilable security dilemma. But it is not just in Israel's interest to strike Hezbollah at a time of Jerusalem's choosing. It is also in the long-term regional interest of the Jewish state's strongest ally: the United States.

Kyle is working with Bradley Bowman, senior director of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies' Center on Military and Political Power. Kyle has provided research support to FDD's ongoing work on the Israel-Hamas conflict and broader Middle East security concerns. In addition, Kyle is writing an op-ed arguing why it is in America's national security interests to support a full-scale military operation to degrade Hezbollah's capabilities. The project will provide an objective analysis of the United States's tangible security interests in supporting Israel's freedom of action and strengthening the longstanding military relationship between Washington and Jerusalem.

PARTNER ORGANIZATION:

Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD)



Leila Tilem

Binghamton University

Leila Tilem is entering her second year at Binghamton University and is pursuing a major in Philosophy, Politics, and Law. She discovered her passion for self-defense through her long-time marksmanship hobby and her volunteer work with Community Security Service at her synagogue. Her love for politics spurred her to establish the Young Politicians Club at Yeshivat Frisch. While spending a year at Midreshet Lindenbaum in Israel, she was able to explore her interest in the intersection of politics and Torah at the Tikvah Overseas Institute. Leila became proficient in political research skills while interning for organizations including Jersey 1st and the Teach Coalition. At Binghamton, Leila is involved in student organizations including Chabad, JLIC, and Jewish a cappella. She is passionately engaged with the Gift of Life chapter, where she swabs hundreds of students every week to match them with blood cancer patients to make life-saving T-cell donations.

The Solution to Violent Antisemitism: A New Jewish Self-Defense Program for College Students

Antisemitism on U.S. college campuses has risen tremendously over the past year. The eight months after October 7th, 2023, saw a 700% increase in reports of antisemitic incidents on college campuses across America, including instances of harassment, stalking, assault, and even documented stabbing attacks. This dangerous trend cannot continue. Leila's work to create a Jewish self-defense program for college students provides a compelling solution to the dual threat of violent incidents and university administration inaction. She argues that change is necessary, urgent, and possible. Students must be empowered with the knowledge and training to defend themselves, and Jewish institutions must stand ready to equip students with the resources they need to stand strong on campus. To ensure viability and uptake of her program, Leila elucidated college students' immediate practical needs, methods to maximize participation, and potential pathways to ensure legal protection for students forced to defend themselves. With consideration of these factors and exploration of numerous case studies, Leila has designed a comprehensive program for students to learn applicable self-defense basics with the intention to prevent violent antisemitic hatred on and off campus.

MENTOR:

Jonathan Mack, Tikvah



Eden Weinstein

Tulane University

Eden Weinstein is a rising senior at Tulane University studying history, art history, and economics. She is a member of Tulane's Alpha Kappa Psi Business Fraternity and Phi Mu Sorority and has held leadership positions in both. In the upcoming year, she will assist Tulane professor and Tikvah instructor Brian Horowitz with his book on the Jewish Conservative movement. After university, she hopes to obtain a master's degree in art history or attend law school.

Developing an Art History Curriculum at Emet Classical Academy

Eden is working alongside Rabbi Abraham Unger to develop art history curricula for Emet Classical Academy. Focusing on the ninth, sixth, and fifth grades, the proposed curricula will build a basic level of aesthetic analysis and strengthen historical understanding through interaction with art and artifacts. Eden's core research question considers how we can approach art history in a classical manner as an intensive and advanced subject, while additionally highlighting Jewish identity.

Eden has formulated curricula that correspond to and complement each grade's overall educational focus. The ninth graders will study antiquities from Mesopotamia, Babylon, Persia, Egypt, Greece, Etruria, Rome, and Israel, learning the discipline in a more traditional fashion. The curricula for the other two grades incorporate art lessons alongside art history classes, so that students can better understand the artists' methods. The sixth graders will examine American art history, centered on well-known works like Edward Savage's "The Washington Family," John Singer Sargent's "Madame X," and Roy Lichtenstein's "Crying Girl." The fifth graders will obtain a broader instruction with lessons from antiquity to the Medieval era.

MENTOR:

Rabbi Abraham Unger, Emet Classical Academy



Rivka Werner

York University

Rivka Werner recently graduated from York University in Toronto, where she majored in Neuroscience. A graduate of Nishmat's Shana ba'Aretz program and the Nachshon Fellowship at HebrewU, Rivka was one of York's President's Ambassadors and served as president of York's Biophysics Club and Toronto's Tikvah Chapter. During her undergraduate studies, Rivka also worked as a research assistant in a visual neurophysiology lab and collaborated with a Wexner Field Fellow to produce a number of literature reviews on education practices and policies. An alumna of five Tikvah programs, Rivka is thankful to be part of the Tikvah community and looks forward to pursuing a master's in Talmudic studies at GPATS this fall.

The Gap Year and the American University

Rivka's project centers on how Tikvah can best educate the next generation of Jewish leaders during the critical juncture of their gap year between high school and college. The Jewish gap year is a pinnacle of modern-day Jewish education; nearly 13,000 diaspora Jews attend such programs annually, contributing \$200 million to Israel's economy. Rivka's project investigated the key elements of the gap year system. Firstly, accreditation: there is a need to expand the list of American colleges that award transfer credit for studies completed on a Jewish gap year program. A deeper understanding of accreditation will allow Tikvah to offer credits for its Overseas Student Institute. Rivka's comprehensive documentation of how colleges award credit to gap year students will also inform the process of transferring credit to an institution like the University of Florida. Second, finances: most gap year programs charge astronomical fees that Jewish families struggle to pay. There is a pressing need for more affordable options. Lastly, the market: there is evidence that existing gap year programs do not cater to the intellectual needs of modern orthodox students. Understanding the demands of academically motivated Jewish students is the first step to filling a possible gap in the market. Based on interviews with students, faculty, and gap year and college administrators, alongside data-driven research, Rivka has produced a report that sheds light on these issues and will improve the relationship between American Jewry and Israeli gap year programs.

MENTORS:

Alan Rubenstein and Jonathan Silver, Tikvah



Tamara Yeshurun

Yeshiva University

Tamara Yeshurun is a rising junior at Stern College for Women, where she is pursuing degrees in political science and music. Her longstanding passions for Jewish thought, languages, international relations, and literature have pushed Tamara to pursue a range of avenues to explore the ideological exchanges that animate contemporary society. After high school, Tamara spent a year of study at Michlelet Mevaseret Yerushalayim in Jerusalem, during which time she also participated in the Tikvah Overseas Program, volunteered at Keren Or Institute for the Blind, and was a youth delegate at the World Orthodox Israel Congress. Currently, Tamara is a Straus Center Scholar, student council representative, staff writer for the YU Observer, and vice president of the Dramatics Society. These experiences have been instrumental in clarifying how she wants to be engaged in the wider Jewish community. In her free time, you can find her writing, crocheting, catching up on a never-ending book list, or singing pieces from the golden age of Broadway.

Rethinking Hebrew Language Education in America

Hebrew is the lifeblood of Jewish existence. It is the language of the Torah, of prayers and benedictions, and of generations of exegetical commentaries and halakhic responsa. It is the language of elegy and song, the glue of the Diasporic dialects, and, in our unique historical moment, the language of the State of Israel. In America, however, there has been an unfortunate failure in Hebrew education, leaving most graduates of American Jewish day schools severely incapable in the language. As a Beren Summer Fellow, Tamara has compiled a portfolio showcasing her research into the central questions pertaining to teaching Hebrew as a second language in America. Under the direction and guidance of seasoned Hebrew pedagogue Meirav Kravetz, Tamara researched the works of linguists such as Oxford, Ellis, Dornyei, Gardner, Lambert, and Dekyser, as well as reading Alan Mintz's *Hebrew in America*, exploring subjects including the sources of language learning motivation, linguistic differences between English and Hebrew, methods of explicit and implicit language instruction, definitions of language proficiency, and comparisons between American and European multilingualism. Tamara's research will contribute to Kravetz's essay, "The Case for Superb Hebrew Language Instruction," which reimagines Hebrew education in American Jewish day schools. The importance of a conscious Jewish identity cannot be overstated, especially after October 7th. A revitalized fluency in Hebrew is the force that can eliminate the feelings of "foreignness" — foreignness between American Jews and their brethren in Israel, foreignness regarding Jewish texts and practice, and foreignness towards Jewish national identity.

MENTOR:

Meirav Kravetz, The Lobel Center for Jewish Classical Education



Sam Zahn

UNC-Chapel Hill/Duke University, Tsinghua University

Sam Zahn is a recent graduate of Schwarzman Scholars, where he earned his Master of Global Affairs degree at Tsinghua University. Prior to his master's, Sam completed his bachelor's degree as a Robertson Scholar studying History and Political Science at UNC-Chapel Hill and Duke University. Sam has previous experience at the American Jewish Committee (AJC), Hillel International, World Jewish Congress (WJC), Birthright Excel, The Nachshon Project, Shalom Hartman Institute, and the Orleans Public Defenders. In 2021, Sam was named a Truman Scholar for his public service activities. He is proud to have created the course Confronting Antisemitism at UNC-Chapel Hill and hopes to continue contributing to Jewish causes throughout his professional life.

Mental Health, Social Media, and Educational Technology Policy in Jewish Day Schools

Jewish Day Schools are populated with teenagers who are, in theory, insulated from the current mental health crisis plaguing public schools. Sam's central thesis posits that Jewish schools should publicly exemplify the success of their phone-free educational environments. His presentation argues that Jewish Day Schools and Jewish Day School administrators, teachers, and students are uniquely positioned to lead in this area.

A unique confluence of factors underlies the resilience of Jewish Day School teenagers amidst the mental health crisis. Research indicates that religious conservative teenagers exhibit the highest levels of resilience from the effects of the crisis. Interestingly, this resilience is not shared by religious liberals or secular conservatives. It appears that the interplay between the identities of religious and conservative Americans accounts for these findings. This interaction naturally positions Jewish Day Schools as potential models of success for secular schools, both private and public, to emulate.

Sam hopes that secular schools will be inspired by the successful implementation of phone-free policies in Jewish Day Schools. It is crucial to recognize that these issues extend beyond classroom walls and are influenced by broader societal factors. Dr. Jonathan Haidt's research, including his recent book *The Anxious Generation* and his *After Babel* Substack highlight how generational shifts have weakened the resilience of Generation Z. Both are featured prominently in Sam's presentation, which underscores the need to counter this trend for future generations in K-12 education, with the Jewish community leading the charge.

MENTOR:

Carolyn Bryk, Jewish Parents Forum

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