



NEWS & VIEWS

February 20, 2020 | 25 Shevat 5780



Hebrew College 2019 Annual Impact Report

With tremendous gratitude for your commitment and trust, and for the part you have played in Hebrew College's journey during Rabbi Sharon Cohen Anisfeld's inaugural year as president, we are proud to share the College's 2019 Annual Impact Report with you.

In our just released [Hebrew College 2019 Annual Impact Report: *New Beginnings*](#), we tell a number of impact stories, share the College's accomplishments, and celebrate our dedicated and diverse faculty, our passionate students, our devoted volunteers, our talented professional staff, and the profoundly generous individuals and foundations whose gifts make all that we do possible.

As Rabbi Anisfeld writes in her Letter from the President, paraphrasing Tracy Kidder, "During my first year as president of Hebrew College, I have had the privilege and joy of witnessing the acts of generosity of countless people 'who can never fully know the good that they have done.'... Thanks to each and every one of you for your commitment and trust, and for the part you have played in our journey this year."

Thank you for all that you do for Jewish learning and leadership at Hebrew College. Board Chair Andy Offit shares in his cover letter that "Annual reports do an excellent job of reporting what has happened. What annual reports do not tell you is what is going to happen. What does the next year

...non-professionals and lay leaders on our team and board, further enhancing our communal unity, and celebrating the College's Centennial in 2021, we look forward to continuing to collaborate with you to make a meaningful impact on our community.

[View the report](#)

70 FACES OF TORAH

Posts from this [Hebrew College-hosted blog](#) are published weekly in [Patheos](#).

36

Parashat Mishpatim (Exodus 21:1-24:18)

By **Rabbi Brian Besser, Rab` 10**

Rabbi, Congregation Beth Shalom in Bloomington, Indiana



The Torah purportedly reiterates its mandate to protect the stranger 36 separate times. Variations in negative form (“do not wrong the stranger,” “do not oppress the stranger”) and positive (“you shall love the stranger,” “you shall have one law for the stranger and citizen alike”) appear throughout. Attesting to their importance, two such instances bracket the categorical commandments of the Book of the Covenant in this week’s portion. Righteous conduct toward the stranger—the outcast, the powerless, the destitute—lies at the heart of the Torah’s vision of a just society.

36 is an apocryphal number, contrived rather than actual, like the “613” commandments of Judaism. What does 36 signify? The source text is an offhand Talmudic comment:

Rabbi Eliezer said: “Why does the Torah warn against wronging the stranger in 36 ... places? Because [they] may turn to bad.” (Baba Metzia 59b)

Before we address the matter of 36, the statement itself is provocative. At first glance, it seems to feed xenophobia, claiming that foreigners are up to no good. I don’t think that’s what Rabbi Eliezer is saying. He takes as a given that outsiders already live among us. Our dilemma is whether to treat them harshly or compassionately. If we overburden their already difficult lives, we encourage errant behavior on their part. The immigrant landing in alien territory has been uprooted from the social structures that normally reinforce proper conduct in all of us: family, friends, steady employment, religious community, governmental benefits, and so on. Without these supports, temptation increases to “turn to bad.” Therefore, we must interact with newcomers especially sensitively, because their vulnerability already renders them demoralized

[Read more](#)

COMMUNITY LEARNING



Connection Across Generations

By Leann Shamash (above, second from left)

Instructor, [Grandparenting Through a Jewish Lens](#)

When we say the word "grandmother" or "grandfather," it can conjure up a swirl of strong images from our pasts. If we were fortunate enough to have loving grandparents in our lives, we recall them in so many ways – from the stories they told, to the food they cooked, to the clothes they wore, to the kisses they planted upon our foreheads.

Time has flown by and now we find ourselves grandparents! [Grandparenting Through a Jewish Lens](#) (GTJL) gave us the opportunity to ask ourselves whether we want to retain the same grandparenting model as our own grandparents, or whether we wish to reconsider what we can take in order to become more thoughtful and mindful grandmothers and grandfathers.

Our GTJL class was the perfect opportunity for a group of animated and thoughtful grandparents to sit around a table together at [The Rashi School](#) and consider together how to mindfully approach grandparenting today. We considered which of our own family stories we wish to share with our grandchildren and how to share them so our grandchildren will remember them. We had fascinating discussions of how we got to have the title of Bubby or a Nana or Grandpa or Grand-dude! We learned that behind every name, whether it be the names bestowed upon us as a grandparent or the names of our children and grandchildren, there is a narrative that carries us backwards and forwards at the same time!

[Read more](#)

EVENTS



Learn more & make a reservation

Azamra: Alternative Shabbat Community Minyan

Join Rabbi Lev Friedman, Rab`18, for a morning service in the Hebrew College Beit Midrash, followed by a pot-luck vegetarian kiddush luncheon. Supported by the [Hebrew College Innovation Lab](#).

February 22 | 10 am-12 pm
Hebrew College Beit Midrash
[Learn more](#)

CEO Forum with John Hirschtick

Please join us for a kosher breakfast and networking event for Jewish professionals featuring Jon Hirschtick, Executive Vice President of SaaS at [PTC](#), and moderated by Aron Ain, CEO of [Kronos](#).

March 25 | 7:30-9 am
Hebrew College | Free
[Learn more and RSVP](#)

February Yom Iyyun: Teen Mental Health

A Hebrew College Rabbinical School and School of Jewish Music Yom Iyyun on Teen Mental Health with Support from the Ruderman Synagogue Inclusion Project – a partnership between the Ruderman Family Foundation and Combined Jewish Philanthropies.

February 26 | 9 am-3:30 pm
Hebrew College
[Learn more](#)

Seeing Torah Gallery Opening

"Seeing Torah" is a visual diary documenting artist Anita Rabinoff-Goldman's study and artistic response to each of the 54 portions of the Torah over the cycle of a single Jewish year. Refreshments will be served. Sponsored through the generosity of Deborah Feinstein and Susan Schechter.

March 24 | 6 pm
Hebrew College | Free
[Learn more and register](#)

MARCH

**Teens Take Action Open House:
Learning Philanthropy to Make Change**

Hebrew College's Jewish Teen Foundation of Greater Boston (JTTFGB) hosts an evening of learning how JTTFGB teens are making a difference in the Greater Boston community.

March 3 | 7-8:30 pm
Hebrew College
[Learn more](#)

**Hebrew Roots, Jewish Routes
A Tribal Language in a Global World
Featuring Dr. Jeremy Benstein**

Discussion and book signing with Dr. Jeremy Benstein, author of Hebrew Roots. Local co-sponsors: [Hebrew at the Center](#) and [Hebrew College](#).

March 18 | 7:30 pm
Hebrew College
[Learn more](#)



Re-envisioning Jewish Inclusion in 2020 and Beyond: How Interfaith Couples & Families Belong

A one-day program including panel discussion, text study, and presentations. Supported by the [Hebrew College Innovation Lab](#). Breakfast and lunch available.

March 26 | 8 am-4 pm
Hebrew College
[Learn more and register](#)

