

Youth Visions

Spending a Year in Israel

Hebrew High Grad Lives and Studies in Israel Before Going Away to College

By Leah Weinstein

As I sit writing this article, two of my roommates are chopping vegetables for dinner, another is cleaning her room, and the others are taking advantage of a few free minutes to sleep; any down time is cherished. This is what my evenings look like in my south Tel Aviv apartment with my ten roommates, yes, ten. And that's just people who live on my floor, not to mention the 20 other Israelis who live in the building. I am currently living in south Tel Aviv while studying every day at the BINA Secular Yeshiva, and volunteering three times a week within the migrant worker and refugee community in south Tel Aviv.

When I was pondering a gap year before attending Roanoke College, in Salem, VA, I always knew I wanted to get back to Israel. In the summer of 2011, I participated in the Partnership Together with Hadera, Israel, a month long exchange trip with American and Israeli teens, and loved it. I chose the program, BINA: Social Action and Study in Tel Aviv to be able to learn, grow, and work in a pluralistic environment while learning about Judaism, Israel, and activism with Americans and Israelis. Even though I knew I wanted to go back to Israel, it wasn't an idea that blossomed right away; I had some help along the way.

Over the past two years at Hebrew High, the group discussed various issues from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to what Tikkun Olam, repairing the world, means in the world in which we live. Hebrew High was a great platform for me to express my opinions while also creating a



Leah Weinstein

deeper knowledge on relevant issues regarding Judaism and the state of Israel. Participating in Hebrew High showed me how deeply I cared for the state of Israel and how important it was for me to continue learning while also finding my own deeper spiritual connection to Judaism. At Hebrew High, I participated in Post-Confirmation which was a two-hour long group discussion every Wednesday night. At times, the topics got heated with many opinions and viewpoints, but ultimately made me a better listener, debater, and young adult.

I don't think anything could have prepared me for what was to come over the past three months. Learning and living in a different country with people I've only known for a short period of time is its own experience every day of the week, but one that has been very rewarding and enjoyable. Besides learning about Judaism, I've now learned how to cook a good dinner in less than one hour, shower in under ten minutes, and share a life with six other young adults. We're a small group, five Americans from all over the coun-

try and one German from Hamburg, but even after only three months we have grown and experienced together things one could only imagine. I have two months left here in Tel Aviv and years'

worth of knowledge to gain. I cherish every moment and hope by the time I return home to Charlotte I will be able to give back to the community that has given me so much thus far. ✨



Stick To Your New Year's Resolution

Make a skin screening appointment with Piedmont Plastic Surgery & Dermatology!



Piedmont Plastic Surgery & Dermatology

Offering complete skin care and Mohs micrographic surgery to our patients!

704.542.2220

5815 Blakeney Park Dr. • Suite 100 • Charlotte, NC 28277

Chai Chaverim BBG

On November 26, the girls of Chai Chaverim showed off their moves by joining in with Ohavim and going to Zumba. We got an hour and a half of fun and exercise.

We also had a great city wide Speak Up! program this month which was organized by our very own Sarah Fellman. Every chapter in Charlotte participated and learned



Chai Chaverim at Zumba.

about Israel. Sarah did a great job in getting everyone involved in the activities and teaching us about Israel. We had a special speaker from Israel, Dor Hollander, and he helped to explain what is going on in Israel, especially pertaining to the dispute over the borders. We split up into groups, and each group was told to be a different party of the Israel government. We had to discuss and decide our position on the issue of the Israeli borders that are shared with the Palestinians.

All four chapters also participated in an early screening of *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire*.

We collected six hundred cans that were donated to Jewish Family Services and Loaves and Fishes to help feed the homeless.

The theater was packed and it was a lot of fun being with our friends and seeing a great movie.

International Convention is a convention which allows all members of BBYO to participate in an opportunity to meet Jewish teens from all over the world. Everyone is super excited and Chai Chaverim has over fourteen girls signed up to go. This year the convention is going to take place in Dallas, and the girls will see friends they met at previous summer conventions as well as meet new people from other countries around the world.

Hanukkah has just passed and Chai Chaverim hopes that everyone had a great time celebrating with their families and eating latkes - it is always our favorite time of the year. ✨



DISCOVERY PLACE

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS

JERUSALEM



EXPERIENCE JERUSALEM...
For the First Time on the Giant Screen!

WWW.JERUSALEMTHEMOVIE.COM

NOW SHOWING IN IMAX

TICKETS AND SHOWTIMES: 704.372.6261 | discoveryplace.org

