

Youth Visions

Hebrew High Graduation

Another Hebrew High Post Confirmation Graduation has come and gone. Through smiles and tears we send the next group of Jewish leaders out into the world. One of our graduates addressed her peers and gave the following address:

By Carly Ruda

As a soon-to-be graduate of Hebrew High, I am proud to make this speech in order to reflect and touch on the unforgettable experiences I've had over these four years. It's hard for me to try to pinpoint my most memorable experience with Hebrew High; however there is a few that stick out in my mind:

* As a freshman I was coming off the hormonal high of Bar and Bat Mitzvah parties. I couldn't think of any institution that could compare to those years partying with my friends at ridiculously extravagant parties. I was wrong of course; my expectations were blown out of the water.

* In my core classes I got to learn, debate, and understand what it meant to have a Jewish identity, how to live my life with a Jewish mind, and how to appreciate the community I lived in. My teachers of these first classes were knowledgeable and skilled educators that I could not have succeeded

without.

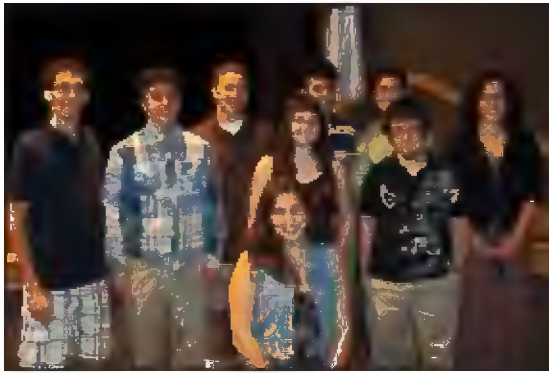
* In my elective courses I was able to experience Judaism through art, music, and topics that were relatable to my daily life. I remember specifically my art class in my sophomore year where I was able to make a mural that I entitled "Jewtopia."

* When I was finally old enough to be part of the Post Confirmation class I had many words of warning about the crazy teachers who would be leading us throughout our academic journey. There was that bald guy who always yelled at my mom in car-pool line. And then that beautiful Israeli woman who never actually got any time to teach because the bald guy would never stop yelling. Yes, my teachers, Tair and Andrew. How could I possibly begin to tell all the memories I have of both of you. Tair, the woman who not only brought Israel with all her grace, beauty, and knowledge to our class but also got most of our class to Israel, myself included. Without your knowledge and expertise we would have never been able to truly



Carly Ruda gives her speech to the Post Confirmation seniors.

understand Israel. And Andrew... a father, a talented photographer, a teacher, and a dear friend. You once said that you hoped to capture all of us in photos that people always look the best when they're not trying. You are the living



The Post-Confirmation seniors: back row, left to right: Max Malter, Steven Kufert, Justin Sly, Gregory Rose, Adam Formica, Miram Rosenthal; center: Jennifer Shapiro, Brandon Hochman; front: Carly Ruda. Not shown: Jeremy Samarel.

embodiment of this line. You are never the man to pose for the shot or to look for the praise, but by living openly and truly as yourself, you impact the lives of these individuals in a way that transcends time - like a picture leaving your pupils with the impression of a thousand words.

To my classmates, I can't think of a better group of individuals to learn with and to grow with. Through the intense debates about morals and our stand on Israel related politics, to our surprisingly not awkward sex-ed pilots, to the stolen cookies and the overwhelming gossip, we form a class that is a colorful reflection of a Jewish generation to come.

As some of us continue on here and others travel abroad to new classrooms, we take with us the convictions and lessons we have come to learn at Hebrew High.

We also give thanks for the opportunity that is unavailable or non-existence to many. For this opportunity I would like to thank Roz Cooper. Roz, you've been in my life forever. You had me as a student once, and your passion for Jewish learning and



The cake says it all.

education is not only admirable but applaudable. I cannot think of a better woman to lead such a smart team of staff and students. If I ever needed anything Roz was the first to answer my questions or come to my aid, as she does for all of the students and teachers at Hebrew High.

In closing, I urge my peers to stay strong to your convictions - the lessons have been taught, the arguments made, and now it is your turn to make of them what you will. Wherever you go in your lives, I hope you remember your time at Hebrew High, and as always, your Jewish Identity. Thank you. ✨



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