# CONNECTIONS Alumni Association NS

#### היום אתם יוצאים בחדש האביב: (שמות יג:ד)

"ועוד נקרא ניסן אביב, לפי שהוא אב לי"ב חדשים, ובו מזל טלה, אב ובכור לי"ב מזלות." (רביעו בחיי שם)

Chodesh Nissan is the Rishon L'Chodshei HaShana. With Nissan, the yearly cycle begins again. After a long and cold winter, "spring-fever kicks-in" and we feel rejuvenated, once again. A task that seemed so arduous when the nights were so long and daylight was so sparse, seems much easier to tackle, when the sun shines and the temperature rises. Pesach ushers in a new phase of cheirus and we utilize our new status and our spacious new plateau to "build towards Matan Torah." This is what the Torah calls Aviv – a season of new beginning, of rebirth and of new vibrant energy...

With that in mind, we are happy and proud to present you with this expanded edition of Connections, which is nothing if not an overview of the "new beginnings" which are happening in Ner Michoel.

This year, as always, the Ner Michoel brass is busy planning the Annual Memorial Day Weekend Yarchei-Kallah. However, this year's Yarchei-Kallah, will come with a "new twist." Daniel Cohen, the newest member of the Yarchei-Kallah team, gives us an insider's view of "what's new?" in this year's Yarchei Kallah.

Additionally, you will read of many of Ner Michoel's new "pilot-projects" in this issue. You will read of the new Ner Michoel initiative, in which Hanhala members rekindle relationships with alumni by (re)joining them in their local Beis Medrash on their "home turf". You will read of the new Ner Michoel initiative in presenting videos of both the Rosh Yeshiva's and Mashgiach's weekly shmuessin, via the Ner Michoel Website and of the new availability of various series of shiurim, via podcast.

You will read of a new initiative of the N'Shei, in which Rebbetzin Twersky speaks to and inspires the women during the days leading-up to a Yom Tov. And you will read of the first major milestone of Ner Michoel's "Ohr Miriam Mishnayos Project" as it celebrated its first Siyum, completing, Seder Zera'im.

In pictures, we present to you this year's Chanuka Mesiba, both in Yeshiva and at the Kollel's event, which established the Kollel's new "Lilmod U'lilameid initiative and program."

Acharon Chaviv... in this issue we officially welcome the newest key-member to the Ner Michoel team. We are very pleased that Rabbi Moshe Chaim Jacobowitz - someone that many of us know in Yeshiva as a very accomplished mechanech, a "super-positive" and effective person and as the creator of Lilmod U'lilameid – has joined Ner Michoel as its Executive Director. We wish Reb Moshe Chaim great success in this new undertaking...

And may we all continue to work to be *mekadesh shem shomayim*... with projects both new and old... with verve and vitality... together...







Rabbi Shmuel Weiner

### Fourth Annual Yarchei Kallah to Feature a Broad Spectrum of Alumni Roshei Chabura

Planning and preparation are in full swing for this year's Yarchei Kallah, to be held *iy"h* on the Sunday before Shavuos, May 28<sup>th</sup> – Gimmel Sivan. The event will feature the Rosh HaYeshiva *shlita*, along with a broad selection of *roshei chabura* from throughout North America. Together, we will join in a *KabbolasHaTorah BiTzibbur*, through *limud haTorah*, *divrei chizuk*, and *dibbuk chaveirim*.

"While this one will be a bit different than those in the past, they will be similar in many ways," says Daniel Cohen, who is joining with Ner Michoel's Central Committee in chairing the event. He reflected on how the Yarchei Kallah evolved from a half-day yom iyun to this year's exciting new format. "It began when people recognized that with the Rosh Yeshiva and the rebbeim visiting the US a number of times a year,

it would really be wonderful to be able to sort of 'recreate' a day in Yeshiva on a Sunday or legal holiday in the tri-state area where people can come together. From the start, it was very successful; people appreciated the idea of hearing *shiur* from their old *rebbeim*, meeting friends, and coming back to the environment where they were nurtured.



Daniel pointed to several key elements of the Yarchei Kallah that account for its wide appeal among the alumni. "I believe the primary factor is the idea of having structured learning *sedorim* for a full day. Most of our alumni are likely *kove'a ittim* on a daily basis, and learn as much as possible in their spare time. When everybody knows, however, that we're having one day together, free of distractions, dedicated entirely to *limud haTorah*, the hope is that they will put everything else aside, and do all they can to make sure that date will work for them, and be there from beginning to end.

"There's also the idea of reconnecting with our rebbeim, members of the hanhallah, the Rosh Yeshiva and friends - people whom you haven't seen for some time. A common scene I've witnessed several times at a Yarchei Kallah: you notice your *chavrusa*, or close friend from yeshiva days who had lots to do with you back then, but you've been totally out of touch with for some time – this is nobody's fault, it's just the way things work. You see him, walk over to greet him, and you smoothly pick up exactly from where you left off, leading the people watching to believe that you've been in touch – or learning together - during all this time!

"I should also mention a side benefit that can be very valuable – the networking aspect. While catching up with friends during lunch or during the coffee and cake reception at the beginning of the day, you discover that someone you knew is now a rosh chabura in Lakewood, a rav or maggid shiur, or in a position in the business world that you can benefit from. Until now, you had no idea that you had this connection. It may even be someone you didn't know before, from a different tekufa in Yeshiva;

there may have been an age difference or

lack of shared interest that is no longer a

factor. It's an exciting opportunity to meet

new 'family members'.

"Most significantly, the Yarchei Kallah is an opportunity to reconnect with....yourself! By reliving Yeshiva life for a day, you return to the past in order to reenergize, reassess, and reprioritize your future – coming face to face with your true self. For most of us, our years in Yeshiva were a special time, when we didn't have the many distractions and responsibilities we have today. This is our foundation; we have a chance to build upon it, strengthen it, and get in touch with it again. It's a positive form of looking back to the past – with an eye to the future. The goal is not to turn everyone back

into the full time yeshiva bochurim or kollel avreichim they once were, but to influence and enhance their current situation. Even if you've 'changed' somewhat since your Yeshiva days, and you're not exactly the same person you were back then; you may have plotted and embarked on your own derech, but you still gained from Yeshiva days. You've taken it and developed in your own way; it's a good idea to go back and reconnect with where you started, while comparing notes with other people whose diverse paths share the same roots.

"This year's Yarchei Kallah will offer all of this, plus more. The added feature of the roshei chabura touches on the reconnecting aspect that I mentioned. They are people who went through the system along with you; you may or may not be aware that today they are established maggidei shiur, roshei kollel and rabbonim, etc. They're our contemporaries, we certainly gained from them, but they also gained from us, we helped make them into what they are today. They have a share in our success, but we also have a partial share in theirs. In Yeshiva, there always were chaburos, which served as a training ground for leadership in the future. The Yarchei Kallah provides a venue where – because of the connection we share - we can feel comfortable speaking up during their shiur. Even a working alumnus can "handel" confidently with his klei kodesh friend in this kind of environment.

"I have been told that the Rosh Yeshiva is encouraging even those alumni who are learning full-time to attend and enhance this unique event," Daniel concludes. "Special representatives will be reaching out to their classmates to participate and make this a day of *Kabbolas HaTorah b'achdus*! It all depends on YOU!"

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4TH ANNUAL

# VARCHEI KALLAH

with practical, in-depth shiurim by the Rosh HaYeshiva, RABBI MOSHE MEISELMAN, and ROSHEI CHABURA FROM THROUGHOUT NORTH AMERICA

## ג' סיון תשע"ז Sunday, May 28th

MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND

LOCATION
KHAL KOL TORAH

2022 Avenue M · Brooklyn, NY 11210

#### SCHEDULE

9:30AM Welcome: Coffee & Refreshments

10:00 AM-12:00 PM First Seder

**12:00**рм-**12:45**рм Shiur, Rosh HaYeshiva

**12:45**рм**-1:30**рм Lunch will be served

**1:30**PM-**3:00**PM Second Seder, Break into Chaburos

**3:00**рм-**3:45**рм Presentations of Roshei Chabura

**3:45**рм-**4:15**рм Divrei Chizuk & Farewell, Rosh HaYeshiva

**4:15**рм Mincha

#### FEATURED ROSHEI CHABURA

**Harav Dovid Azer** 

Harav Yehudah Eisenstein Class Of 1995

Harav Zev Flaumenhaft Class Of 1998

Harav Rafi Fuchs Class Of 2002

Harav Sariel Kalish Class Of 2001

ilarav barrer karisir erass oj 20

Harav Naftali Katz Class Of 1995

Harav Moshe Kaufman Class Of 1997

Harav Simcha Lang Class Of 2000

**Harav Avrohom Rudner** Class Of 1997

**Harav Avidon Soroka** Class Of 1997

**Harav Reuven Schwartz** Class Of 1996

For more information please contact

Chairmen

## DANIEL COHEN 213-810-0234

David Danesh Rabbi Naftali Katz Yanky Weitman

#### CLASS REPRESENTATIVES

2014 Chezky Tuchman, Chaim Schmerhold 2013 Dovid Blinder, Dovid Lasson
 2012 Zevi Krupka, Leibel Anhang 2011 Yedidya Pillemer, Yisrael Aryeh Vann
 2010 Reuven Knobel 2009 Yehuda Sitzer 2008 Yoni Pomper, David Danesh, Daniel Danesh
 2007 Saadia Zakarin 2006 Noam Hack, Ephraim Weiss 2005 Rafi Cohn, Reuven Gidanian
 2004 Aryeh Liebhard, Shmuel Katz 2003 Daniel Cohen
 2002 Zev Aeder 2001 AND ON Jay Kosowsky, Binyomin Plotzker

OUR YESHIVA, OUR KABBOLAS HATORAH

### **Pre-Yom Tov Inspiration for the N'shei**

#### Appreciating the Woman's Role with Rebbetzin Twersky

Since the *petirah* of Rav Mosheh Twerskv zatzal, a number of his talmidim – avreichim as well as bochurim who are still in Yerushalayim – have been continuing to attend *mesibos lichvod* the Yomim Tovim at his home in Har Nof. The *mesibos* are hosted by his esteemed family – the Rebbetzin tichyeh, and her sons shlita. The talmidim and *mishpocho* share stories and *divrei Torah* connected with their beloved *rebbi* and sing the *nigunim* he used to sing. The elevated atmosphere at these gatherings has provided a *nechama* of sorts, a way of continuing Rav Twersky's unique *mehalech* and keeping his cherished memory alive. Most significantly, they provide an opportunity for the talmidim to collectively remember the great lessons they learned from Rav Twersky, thereby continuing his *aliyas neshomo*.

About a year ago, it was recognized that the women, too, could greatly benefit from Rebbetzin Twersky's ability to convey her husband's ideals, hanhagos, and his approach to the Yomim Tovim along with her own powerful and inspiring words. As it was not feasible for the N'shei to come to her home in Har Nof, she graciously agreed to come to the neighborhood surrounding the Yeshiva, where most of the Kollel families reside; she has since addressed the N'shei several times, prior to each Yom Tov season.

"Until now," says Mrs. Shevy Feld, wife of alumnus Rabbi Matis Feld, "our connection to Rav Twersky came through our husbands, who shared many stories and *hanhagos* with us. With the Rebbetzin, however, we feel we're getting an 'inside story' – she makes it very tangible and real. She goes beyond lofty ideals and abstract concepts by giving practical and very hands-on suggestions that we can actually put into practice the very next day in our own homes and lives."

"Rebbetzin Twersky has this very awe-inspiring way of making you feel like you were just at Har Sinai," says Mrs. Aliza Rosen, wife of Rabbi Noam Rosen and co-head of the N'shei. "She shares very real stories about her husband that bring out his yiras shomayim and his various hanhagos before each Yom Tov, creating an atmosphere of yearning to live on a higher madreiga. After the

pre-Chanukah event, for instance, I remember thinking, 'It can't just be the same after hearing the way Rav Twersky approached Chanukah'. Although we recognize that we're not on that lofty level, we're inspired just from seeing how far someone can actually go. She has this way of making it very relatable, possibly because we're in a small group, so it's very personal and she's able to provide many of the details. She'll share her true feelings with us, perhaps things she didn't want included in the book. We're left with the feeling of 'She's so normal, she's like one of us', and that certainly we should strive to grow despite our shortcomings and try to not lose our focus."

about your husband doing such-and-such?' Her responses will be something like 'You know what, you do the best you can'; she might describe for us how she felt very distressed when such-and-such happened. She teaches us that it's OK to exhibit the 'normal' emotions of a of a 'regular' person and still strive for higher madreigos. After the Rebbetzin leaves, those who are able to stay will spend some more time together: we review, discuss, and strategize how we'll apply what she said, which is a special opportunity in itself."

"By offering a woman's perspective of Rav Twersky's gadlus and highlighting the wom-



"The Rebbetzin personifies the consummate isha k'sheira", Mrs. Feld adds. "Standing before us is a highly accomplished wife and homemaker, a renowned teacher in Hadar, a busy *mechaneches* in her own right. Yet she connects each of her thoughts, every step she takes, to her husband; this connection comes through in every single shiur she gives. At the same time, she often elaborates on how different they were from each other; for instance he was much more reserved, while she's very outgoing. Those of us who are involved in a career for parnassah or other reasons see her as a role model on how to keep our primary focus on our husband and family."

"When she's finished speaking", Mrs. Rosen notes, "the Rebbetzin opens the floor to our questions; this really helps make it very relevant and down to earth. When you hear some of the stories, you think, 'Oh my! That's not me! I can never be like that!' So we'll ask her things like, 'Wait a minute, how did you actually get ready for Shabbos so early?' or, 'How did you feel

an's role in it, Rebbetzin Twersky imbues us with a real appreciation for making a home of Torah and *ruchniyus*-oriented growth. Beyond simply going through the motions, she encourages us to foster and encourage our husbands' aliyah, for kedusha in our own homes. Since our husbands were all talmidim of Rav Twersky, it provides us with a vibrant connection to our husbands' rebbi and mesorah, a major part of where they've come from, learned from, and became who thev are today."

"The N'shei's goal is to make the women of the Kollel's experience as pleasant and meaningful as possible. There are other events we schedule at various times throughout the year, and the shuirim of Rebbetzin Twersky are playing an important role in greatly enhancing the ruchniyus aspect of our lives. It brings us closer together and makes us feel like part of a shared effort toward a higher goal, building a foundation for a Yiddishe home, and fulfilling and uplifting our tafkid as an isha k'sheira and eim b'Yisroel."

## **Keeping the Kesher**

#### Rebbeim Learn with Alumni in their "Home" Batei Medrash

hile visiting the US to attend this year's Dinner, Rabbi Naftali Meiselman and other rebbeim embarked on a new kind of Ner Michoel initiative: visiting alumni in their regular places of learning and sitting down with them for a seder limud.



"I called Dovi Kreismann about two weeks earlier," recalls Rav Naftali. "The last time we sat and learned together was about eighteen years ago when he was a talmid in Yeshiva. Dovi was thrilled about learning *b'chavrusa* once again, so I asked him what he would like to learn. 'Whatever you want, just send me the marei mekomos so I can prepare!' he replied. 'Even a *shverer* Rav Chaim?' I asked him: 'One hundred percent', he assured me, so I told him about Rav Chaim's piece on the sugya on which I was planning to discuss in my afternoon shiur.

"What truly amazed me," Rav Naftali explained, "was the way I felt like I was mamesh back in Yeshiva's beis medrash with Dovi as my *chavrusa* back in the day. Ten, perhaps fifteen minutes into our seder we were deeply involved in Rav Chaim's words, and Dovi was aflame with every bit of his characteristic energy and passion.

sefer he used back then, its yellowed pages attesting to the effort he invested in several pieces. In our brief but intense seder, we 'took apart' the entire sugya until we gained the clarity we sought."

"I very much wanted to visit Eretz Yisroel and return to Yeshiva for a week, but it didn't materialize," says Saadia Zakarin, a recent alumnus. "So I was very eager to at least spend some time learning with Rav Naftali while he was in America. He came to Monsey where I had breakfast with him, and then we went to the Tiferes Yisroel shul where I have my regular seder with Daniel Cohen, and he learned with us. It was a tremendous source of chizuk for me; I was suddenly transported back to my days in Yeshiva. Now I'm back on track in the *mehalech* of my *rebbi*, maximizing my seder time by learning with learning b'iyun, never letting anything go without comprehending the *chiddush* in this *gemora*, asking myself, 'What is it trying to tell me?' When Rav Naftali returned to the US about two months later, we met him at Landau's in Flatbush and learned with him again. It's quality time that I really cherish."

"Following the Dinner, I headed straight to Woodmere," Ray Naftali continues, "where I joined Eliyahu Berger at 5:45 AM, in his sugya in Avodah Zara. I felt the same sense of reconnecting as I witnessed Eliyahu's unique brand of genuine, sincere striving for the *emes* coming to the fore, just the way he was in Yeshiva whenever he faced a *sugya*, he doesn't want to miss even the smallest nuance. Boruch Hashem, he hasn't lost it!

He brought with him the same Ray Chaim's "That same morning, I continued on to the Yeshiva Gedolah of Five Towns, in whose beis medrash I found many of our alumni sitting and learning. Lapproached Chaim Wachspress, who happened not to have a chavrusa that day, and said, 'Chaim maybe I can be your *chavrusa*, I came all the way from Eretz Yisroel just for that!' We sat down and learned, and once again, there was the Chaim I knew from Toras Moshe, here in his beis medrash in the US.

> Anyone who learned in Toras Moshe knows what it means to learn in the Yeshiva's spirit of incisive iyun with excitement and tremendous energy. The rebbeim see this as their mission; we're ready and willing to reach out and help our alumni maintain that mehalech wherever they currently find themselves, and regardless of how many years it's been since they left. We want every alumnus to recognize this, and to take the initiative and the opportunity. Reach out to us when we're here, and if we give you a call, know that we really mean it, we want YOU as a chavrusa!"





VIDEOS OF THE ROSH YESHIVA'S AND MASHGIACH'S WEEKLY SHMUESS, ALONG WITH OTHER HIGHLIGHTED SHIURIM IN YESHIVA

**AVAILABLE AT THIS LINK:** 

HTTP://NERMICHOEL.ORG/GALLERIES/VIDEOSHIURIM

# **Planting Seeds**

Ner Michoel's Mishnayos Project Celebrates Inaugural Siyum on Seder Zera'im.

his past Elul, in Far Rockaway, Ner Michoel's Mishnayos Project was launched with the goal of connecting alumni all over the world to the Daily Mishnayos Shiur (Mishna Yomi) which has taken place in Yeshiva since the beginning of the most recent cycle. When the project recently celebrated its first siyum on Seder Zera'im, a festive seudas mitzvah was hosted by Rabbi and Mrs. Daniel Sinowitz in their home, with all of the local participants in attendance.



The project, named Ohr Miriam, is dedicated *l'ilui nishmas* Rabbi Sinowitz's niece, Miriam Sinowitz, *a"h*, (Miriam Shaindel bas Reb Ephraim Shimon), and Rabbi Sinowitz's father, Dr. Mel Sinowitz, offered *divrei zikaron* about his granddaughter's brief but meaningful life, as well as words of appreciation and *chizuk* for the participants.

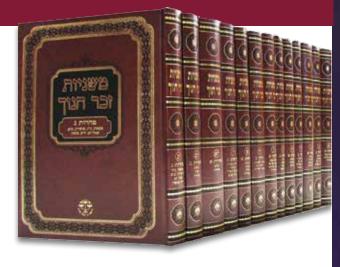
Aharon Loiterman, one of the participants who also takes care of many aspects of the *seder*, spoke on behalf on the entire *chabura*. He began with a *drasha* on the

overall theme of Seder Zera'im and the significance of a *siyum*. He presented Rabbi Sinowitz with a gift from all the members of the *chabura*, reading aloud their warm and grateful note of appreciation. He expressed everyone's collective hope and desire to continue the *seder* and "become great *talmidei chachomim*, one Mishna at a time".

We have a plan, Aharon continued, for holding on to what we've learned even as we move ahead in Seder Moed. Amid some gentle laughter, he announced that the name chosen for the *chazarah* system – is "Mishnayos Madness". Every member tries to "stump" his *chavrusa* with five questions – based only on the actual Mishna with the Bartenura's comments, nothing beyond that.

Rabbi Sinowitz thanked the members of his immediate family for all of their support and enthusiasm for the Mishnayos chabura. He went on to thank numerous members of the chabura and the Project, each who played a special role in making this *chabura* what it is - a close-knit, almost family-like unit that meets to learn daily, with a broader base in the big-wide world. Repeating Aharon's theme that "with a siyum we have to begin again and take things up a notch." Rabbi Sinowitz announced that in order to enhance the chazara, he will be giving a bi-weekly chabura on the perakim currently being reviewed, which will be insightful as well as inspiring, in the true spirit of Toras Moshe.

"I'm very excited about the fact that I'm going to be able to stay with this program", says Chaim Tzvi Kalish, who is leaving Yeshiva but plans to keep up via the website. "Having been there from the



beginning, it means a lot to me. There's a certain feeling when I get that email, and I know that Rabbi Sinowitz just sent this from the ToMo bais medrash, right after he finished saying the chabura. I get this picture in my mind about what's going on there right now, and I begin listening to shiur, feeling as if I'm back there with the chevra. I'm in this together with them; it's my rebbi saying the shiur, and we're working together to understand the Mishna. I will iy"h get to finish Seder Moed together with them; when Rabbi Sinowitz will say his divrei chizuk at the end of each mesechta, I'll be inspired too!"

"Seder Zera'im was a beginning for us,"
Rabbi Sinowitz concludes, "planting seeds in more ways than one. Boruch Hashem, by this time, we are well into Maseches Shabbos and our subscription list has multiplied since the beginning of the new seder. With the podcast option now in place we are aiming for even more alumni participation. Whether by podcast, phone, or (as Chaim Tzvi put it) by simply having me shoot you an email, let's use this medium to stay connected. One Mishna, one masechta, one seder at a time... And may we all meet at next year's siyum in Yerushalayim HaBenuyah!"



#### LILMOD U'LILAMEID CHANUKA PROGRAM



#### RAPHY MEYER'S SHEVA BERACHOS























American Friends of Yeshivas Toras Moshe 1412 East 7th Street Brooklyn, NY 11230

## Ner Michoel Welcomes Rabbi Moshe Chaim Jacobowitz as Executive Director



"Over the last five years, we have Boruch Hashem seen Ner Michoel grow and develop from its infancy into the wide-ranging alumni

association that we know today. The administrative duties that go along with directing Ner Michoel necessitated the creation of the position of Executive Director," Rabbis Shmuli Weiner and Daniel Sinowitz concur. "We believe that we have found the perfect person to fill the role." Rabbi Moshe Chaim Jacobowitz – whose name is well recognized both in Yeshiva and among the alumni – has assumed responsibility for its operation, as well as promoting and expanding its current and future programming.

"We're really growing by leaps and bounds," Rabbi Aryeh Wielgus pointed out. "The time was ripe for someone to come in and go beyond focusing on specific projects. There was a need to put more emphasis on Ner Michoel's overall mission, and a greater effort to bring the alumni together in a more meaningful way; Rabbi Jacobowitz

is perfectly suited for this task. He brings with him a unique skill set, and has a great track record in the various programs he has managed thus far. His infectious laugh and great sense of humor enable him to connect very well with people; he's well-liked and well-respected by many of our alumni. He serves as sho'el u'meishiv for the Rosh Yeshiva's shiur, spearheaded the Lilmod U'lelameid program, and effectively ran many of the events for the younger talmidim. Rabbi Jacobowitz has always been the go-to guy to discuss anything; people regard him as an excellent ba'al eitzah."

Rabbi Jacobowitz is very enthusiastic about his new role. "I've been in Yeshiva for eleven years," he explains, "and loved it from the start. The *ruach* and warm relationship between Rebbi and *talmid*, the excitement for *limud haTorah*, these are incredible aspects of Toras Moshe. *Talmidim* come to Yeshiva with open eyes and leave with a passion and love for *limud haTorah*, *yiras shomayim*, and a close *dibbuk chaverim*.

"At that point, it's not so easy to maintain a close *kesher* with the Yeshiva when there

are oceans in between, so Ner Michoel acts as a critical bridge for many alumni. My goal is to make that bridge even stronger, providing an alumnus every and any potential connection he can want - shiurim online, annual and bi-annual events, continued access to rebbeim, and a true sense of community with fellow alumni. Much of this programming, of course, is already in place, thanks to Rabbis Daniel Sinowitz, Shmuli Weiner, Aryeh Wielgus, and the tireless committee members who have built Ner Michoel for the past few years. We hope to augment what is already built and look forward to continued involvement from all alumni.

"This coming Memorial Day weekend iy"h, we are looking forward to a monumental Yarchei Kallah which will bring together so many of our beloved legendary alumni as roshei chabura, along with Maran Rosh HaYeshiva. Imagine all of our roshei chabura in one room, all working on the same sugya, creating a shakla vitarya only matched by our own beis medrash back in Yerushalayim. It will be an event that will inspire us for Shavuos and for the entire year."

