

MOSAIC



FALL 2016

NEWSLETTER OF SAUL MIROWITZ JEWISH COMMUNITY SCHOOL

How far will we go to better the world?

It's only October, and Mirowitz odometers have already covered a lot of ground this school year — about 1,523 miles to be exact. By June, groups of students will have traveled another 15,000 miles in excursions that inspire them to repair the world.

“When you're a Mirowitz student, learning happens everywhere,” says sixth grader Sophia Ohrenstein.

It happens in **tall-grass prairies**

where third graders assist in the recovery of a native ecosystem and experience Missouri's rich biological heritage.

It happens in the **Jefferson City**

offices of elected government officials, where fourth graders articulate their positions on bills under consideration in the state legislature, and experience the power of their own young voices in affecting social change.



It happens in **Springfield, Illinois**, where fifth graders step off an Amtrak train and into the 1860s, grappling with the dilemmas ethical people faced during the Civil War.

It happens in the **Deep South**, where middle school students walk in the footsteps of Civil Rights activists who marched across bridges and changed the course of history.

It happens in **Israel** where eighth graders hear a siren spark a moment so poignant that it stops vehicles in their tracks and calls drivers to stand in silence for 60 seconds. “From the sadness of Memorial Day comes the music, dancing, silly string and big inflatable hammers of Independence Day. It was one of the best experiences of my life,” says Eric Ruff.

Each Mirowitz adventure is thoughtfully planned to prepare students to be capable leaders. “Our goal is not merely to transfer information about history or science,” says Cheryl Maayan, Head of School. “We want them to know that ordinary people can do extraordinary things when knowledge is combined with empathy and passion. We will travel far and wide to inspire our students to better the world.” ★



CHERYL MAAYAN, HEAD OF SCHOOL

Headlines

The greatest investment

Last month, I experienced the outcome of my parenting when Jon and I moved our son, Gabe, into his college dorm.

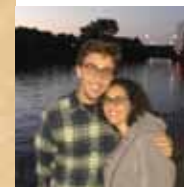
We had thoughtfully made each parenting decision, including Jewish day school, and at that moment, standing outside his dorm, we felt great satisfaction. We were proud of Gabe's confidence, his sense of purpose, and his ability to add to the diversity of his college campus.

I kissed him on the forehead, and empathized with Moses who was not able to enter the promised land with the Israelites. This guy frees the slaves, leads them from Egypt, schleps them through the desert, tolerates their whining...and he doesn't even get to enter the land with them.

So it is with parenting. Once our children have developed into capable, considerate young adults, we watch them walk into their dorm and towards a bright future — the promised land we've been raising them for all along.

I returned to St. Louis the next day with even more passion for the holy work we do at Mirowitz...because now I

know for certain that when Mirowitz parents one day watch their children walk into their dorm rooms, they will be filled with satisfaction for the young adult they have raised, and confident that Mirowitz was the greatest investment they ever made.



Annual Campaign Gifts

July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016

We are grateful for all of the generous donations we receive and make an attempt to accurately acknowledge them. Please accept our apology if your donation has been inadvertently omitted. Please contact us at 314-576-6177, and we will gladly include it in our next edition.

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The following donors contributed \$1,800 or more to our Annual Campaign.

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STEAM-Powered Ecology Lesson

We have a problem at Mirowitz. Our butterfly gardens, planted by students a few years ago to attract monarch butterflies on their migratory path, are growing, but slowly. Monarch caterpillars were eating away at the milkweed at a speedy pace. The students realized that a more robust garden could attract even more butterflies to undergo metamorphosis right outside their classroom window.

What seemed a project that might require consultation with a professional botanist turned out

to be a perfect challenge for our second-grade STEAM teams. "We need more pollinators to help our garden," explains Eden Raviv. In science class, Eden and her second-grade classmates learned about bee hotels and their ability to attract solitary bees.

The young engineers wasted no time. They researched specifications, and then worked in teams to develop architectural plans. They developed strategies for stacking bamboo segments and learned how to use an electric drill. They experienced setbacks when their design did not hold up, and renewed confidence when revised plans worked better. This week, they hung their beautiful bee hotels near the gardens and are awaiting their buzzing guests.

STEAM projects integrate science, technology, engineering, art and math so that students can make sense of the natural world and create solutions to real world problems. "We may be little, but we can fix real big problems," says Abigail Pupillo. ★



Problems Solved...

STEAM projects at Mirowitz have led to the creation of our:

Amphibian Pond

Problem: Kindergartners, studying amphibians, wanted to see them in a natural habitat.

Solution: The pond has provided a natural habitat for toads in the area. "It's our job to make sure there is not too much algae in the pond," says kindergartner Orli Roth.

Chicken Coop

Problem: With four new chickens joining our school community, we needed a bigger coop!

Solution: Third grade architectural engineers designed a coop that comfortably houses our feathered friends and makes it easy for students to retrieve eggs.

Compost Bin

Problem: A fourth grade food waste audit revealed that our school could do a better job of composting.

Solution: Our new receptacle, designed and built by fourth graders, sufficiently holds our daily scraps and produces loam for our vegetable garden.

Get Movin'

Team Players

Our sports program has grown under the direction of **Coach Gary Lerner!** We've added volleyball to our lineup, and compete against other schools in flag football, floor hockey, soccer and basketball. Thank you to our "Fund the Need" donors and **Washington University and St. Louis Children's Hospital's Young Athlete Center** for making this program possible.



After School...

...Mirowitz students can choose from Tae Kwon Do, fencing, yoga, circus, and other activities that build strength, skills and community.



Peace through Pyramids

Again this year, Mirowitz students are learning circus arts each week with students from Ferguson. They build trust and cooperation, and then perform together. "Cooperation, communication and standing on the shoulders of each other are keys to the path of peace," says Jessica Hentoff, Director of Circus Harmony.

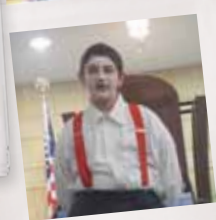
Watch their circus act at our MLK Day event on January 16, 2017. See next page for details.



Inspiring Artists

Every Mirowitz student participates in art, music, drama and dance. In fourth grade, band is a required component of the fine arts curriculum. Why? We are committed to doing more than simply preparing students for success on standardized tests. The arts develop originality, inventiveness and poise, and prepare children to be citizens of the world.

Join us December 18 for **Chanukah Extravaganukah, our Winter Arts Festival.**



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Blogging from the Deep South

Each year, the Mirowitz Middle School focuses on a theme of social justice. This year, our focus on Civil Rights began with a week in August spent walking in the path of the activists who peacefully pursued justice in Birmingham, Montgomery, Selma and Memphis. The trip combined lessons about Civil Rights activists with deep discussions about our Jewish responsibility to continue their legacy.



"I linked arms with my friends and started singing at the top of my lungs. I thought 'how cool that my friends and I are doing the exact same thing in the exact same place as Civil Rights Leaders.'" **Elior, 7th grade**



"you hear stories about the Civil Rights Movement, but actually being in that space makes you feel different. When you see actual objects, like segregated classrooms, a burned-out bus, a church that was bombed, a bridge, it makes history more real to me."

"We all came home a little different than we left. I think we are more mature.

We saw some difficult things, and we understand that racism still exists today, maybe not in the same obvious ways, but things need to get better."

Max, 7th grade

Ilana, 6th grade

Small Hands, Big Difference

Music, Mitzvot and a little bit of Messy

Enjoy a morning of messy fun and Robert's Music Together. Then participate with your pre-schooler in an MLK-inspired mitzvah project.

January 16, 10 a.m. at Saul Mirowitz Jewish Community School

For more information, contact Patty: 314-576-6177 or pbloom@mirowitz.org

Pre-School
 Messy Morning
 (with Meaning)
 Jan. 16, 2017
 MLK DAY

My small hands
 made a
 difference!

Learning from our Leaders

We are fortunate that so many community leaders spend time in our classrooms inspiring students to think deeply and to practice Jewish ethics as a habit. Each Friday, a surprise guest – a rabbi, cantor, educator or even a Jewish rock musician – helps us welcome Shabbat with story and song. The following leaders have shared their time with our students during the past year:



Ellen Allard
Rabbi Noah Arnow
Rabbi Michael Alper
Liessa Alperin
Rabbi Jim Bennett
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Rabbi Jonah Zinn
Sam Zitin



Burrito Pluralism

By Rabbi Scott Slarskey, *Director of Jewish Life*

Most people at Mirowitz know that burritos are my staple lunch. My criteria of burrito greatness: fresh ingredients and distinctive flavors that taste noticeably more delicious combined than they would sitting side by side and consumed separately.

Such is the case with Jewish pluralism. Distinctive and fresh perspectives are more informative and more appealing when they share proximity and conversational space with others. **Growing up in an intentionally pluralistic Jewish community strengthens Jewish identity.** Research confirms that passionate and respectful engagement

with “the other” helps everyone better articulate and grow confident about their own Jewish perspectives.

Mirowitz students passionately explore, dialogue with and respect the beliefs of others even as they examine and hold fast to their own distinct flavors. Conversations about Jewish practice offer deep and authentic engagement with diverse Jewish ideas and strengthen the abilities of students to maintain relationships that both transcend and preserve the diversity of our community. That kind of learning is simply delicious...like a good burrito. ★

What a Difference a Jewish Day School Makes

Prospective parents ask all the time: “What difference does a day school make?” Studies show that:

Jewish day school graduates express an extraordinary sense of responsibility towards helping those in need and affecting social change. They know

*from experience that social action is easy, it's possible and it's Jewish.**

Jewish day school graduates are more resistant to social pressures that lead to risky behaviors than their public and private school peers. They develop a moral compass, a sense of

*integrity, and the confidence to make personal decisions about what is right and what is not.**

*Jewish day school students develop a proficient knowledge of prayer, and a profound commitment to Israel and Jewish people.**

*Neuro-scientific research shows that learning a second language supports academic achievement, problem solving and increased cognitive abilities. Day school students study Hebrew daily, and are able to read, write and speak competently by graduation.***

* <http://bir.brandeis.edu/handle/10192/22974>

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COME TOGETHER

A Gala to Benefit

SAUL MIROWITZ
JEWISH COMMUNITY SCHOOL



With the Beatles tune “Come Together” offering a fitting theme, 350 supporters did just that on April 17 at Mirowitz’s annual gala, and raised \$205,000 to fund operating costs and financial aid. In addition to tunes of the Fab Four, the event celebrated individuals whose passion shapes our community: Ken Kranzberg, recipient of the Meyer and Marcelle Kranzberg Visionary Award, and Michael Rubin and Jackie Levin, recipients of the Community Service Award.

► **Susie Knopf and Renee Wasserman** co-chairs of the gala, brought together a band of volunteers: **Dr. Barbara Green** (sponsorships); **Ann Mayer Eisen** (graphic design); **Cynthia Vickar** (decorations); **Talia Bender, Jennifer Bernstein, Melanie Bernstein, Susan Bosse, Lindsey Glass, Amy Hammerman, Marlene Hammerman, Alice Handelman, Mindy Horwitz, Emily Kaiman, Jackie Kleban, Rick Lerner, Sue Matlof, Galia Movitz, Sherri Newstead, Michelle Rubin, Lori Sheinbein, Marsha Soshnik, Patsy Spector, Bonnie Vickar and Jessica Wax.**

▼ **“Ken Kranzberg, Michael Rubin and Jackie Levin** set an example of communal responsibility and leadership,” says Cheryl Maayan, Head of School. “We hope our students grow up to be just like them.” (Pictured below: Ken and Nancy Kranzberg, Jackie Levin and Michael Rubin)



Save the Date!
Mirowitz Gala
at the Ritz Carlton
APRIL 2, 2017

▲ Our speakers, Mirowitz 8th grader **Mahlet Fentaw** and alumna **Rebecca Rubin-Schlansky** beautifully articulated what their day school experience has meant to them. Mahlet said, “My parents immigrated to St. Louis from Ethiopia, and have worked very hard to give my siblings and me a good life. Without people like you caring about people like me, I could not have this kind of childhood.”



◀ We celebrated teachers and staff celebrating 5, 10 and 15 years at Mirowitz: **Robyn Folsom, Russell Jaffe, Nancy James, Risa Shyres, Sarah Beth Waxman** (5 years); **Rachel Persellin-Armoza, Betti Blumoff, Martha Brodsky and Andrea Newstead** (10 years); and **Cheryl Maayan** and **Limor Shacham** (15 years).

► With a little help from our friends, our “Fund the Need” auction raised more than \$77,000 to fund the **Cheryl Maayan Future Leaders Scholarship**, to extend the Mirowitz’s sports initiative to younger grades, and to buy new laptops and ipads for the school.



Thank You to our Gala Sponsors

Here Comes the Sun

The Cherrick, Karsh and Rosenthal Families
Barbara Mirowitz

All My Lovin’

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I Want to Hold Your Hand

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Sherry and Gary Wolff

Mazel Tov Graduates

Thirteen students culminated their years of study at Mirowitz with a meaningful graduation service that included presentations from each student in Hebrew and in English.

Here is an excerpt from Avi Adler's graduation address.

My class ranges across the entire spectrum of Judaism, from Orthodox to Reform to unaffiliated, and at first I struggled with this, but that was before I realized I could embrace other ways of Judaism while staying true to my own values. This is one of many important lessons Mirowitz showed me. I am positive there is no other place in the world that could have shown me this better.

The differences in my 8th grade class fit just right and make a perfect balance. Mirowitz has not only balanced my class, but it has balanced me. This has shown me a different side in life, and a new way of thinking. After graduating, I will go out into the world and put the lessons I



Class of 2016

Pictured above: Back row: Avi Adler, Aidin Yazdi, Levi Rose, Mark Vishnevetsky, Josh Cole, Michael Shapshovich Front row: Nate Rosenberg, Alia Chappell-Beattie, Tali Feen, Mahlet Fentaw, Karyn Lisker, Naya Shacham, Eric Ruff

learned at Mirowitz to good work. Then I hope to look back on my life and see that the lessons and debates that may have seemed simple at the time have given me new opinions and ideas on the world. ★

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OFF TO COLLEGE

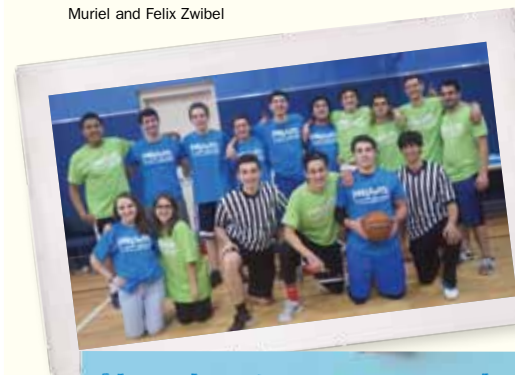
Mazel tov to our alumni who graduated from high school in 2016. They received an average of \$75K in merit scholarship and include 3 National Merit Scholars. This academic year, Mirowitz graduates are using the skills they developed during their day school years at these universities:



Barnard College
 Boston University
 Bradley University
 Brandeis University
 Case Western University
 College of Charleston
 DePauw University
 Duke University

Emory University
 George Washington University
 Harvard University
 Haverford College
 Hebrew University
 Indiana University
 Lehigh University
 Miami of Ohio

Northeastern University
 Northwestern University
 Oberlin College
 Ohio State University
 Penn State
 Princeton University
 Purdue University
 Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
 Stanford University
 St. Louis University
 Stern College
 SUNY Stonybrook
 Tufts University
 Tulane
 UCLA
 University of Alabama
 University of Chicago
 University of Iowa
 University of Miami
 University of Maryland
 University of Michigan
 University of Minnesota
 University of Missouri
 University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill
 University of Pennsylvania
 University of Southern California
 University of Texas
 University of Wisconsin
 Vanderbilt University
 Washington University
 Yale University



Alumni, get your game on!
 Plan to join us for the Alumni Basketball game on February 28, 2017. Free t-shirts for all alumni players and spectators.

Our Board

EXECUTIVE BOARD

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Vice-President, Development
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Our Administration

Cheryl Maayan: Head of School
 Rabbi Scott Slarskey: Director of Jewish Life
 Patty Bloom: Director of Admissions and Marketing
 Sue Lapp: Director of Instruction and Enrollment
 Margo Newman: Director of Development
 Shannon Rohlman: Director of Student Life
 Rick Schmidt: Middle School Coordinator
 Becky Lerner: Hebrew Coordinator
 Robyn Folsom: Director of Support Services
 Andrea Newstead: Director of Technology

Mosaic is designed by
Ann Mayer Eisen, Design Annex

Our Vision

A vibrant, socially responsible and inspired Jewish community led by educated, capable, energetic, joyous, compassionate, ethical and inquisitive leaders



348 South Mason Road
 St. Louis, Missouri 63141
 314-576-6177



Jewish Federation
OF ST. LOUIS



Find us on Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter and Instagram.

VISIT US ONLINE
www.mirowitz.org

JOIN US!

All the right ingredients



RSVP online at www.mirowitz.org.
 For a personal tour, contact Patty:
 314-576-6177 or pbloom@mirowitz.org.

Workshop
 for parents
 Tues. Nov. 15
 7 - 9 pm

Roll up your sleeves! Whether you are intrigued by the idea of a Mirowitz education or simply want your children to be curious learners, this workshop is for you! Mirowitz teachers will guide you in experiential learning and share strategies that provide children the perfect blend of ingredients to help them reach their potential.

The workshop will include information about:

- Learning in a constructivist classroom
- Learning through a Jewish lens
- How STEAM teaches resiliency
- How (and why) to take lessons outdoors
- The impact of Jewish day school
- Expanding the mind with a second language
- Empowering children to pursue justice
- A taste test of recipes using local ingredients
- Panel discussion for prospective parents

Middle School Coffee Talk

Middle school years should be joyful ones. They are about gaining skills and knowledge, and also strength of character and self confidence. They prepare students for academic rigor, and also for ethical leadership. They allow young adolescents to focus on personal growth, yet understand their responsibility to the world around them.

Come see us in action, and hear details about our program from teachers, students and administrators.



Middle
 School
 Show &
 Tell

Tuesday,
 December 6
 at 8:30 a.m.

To learn more or RSVP, contact Patty at
 314-576-6177 or pbloom@mirowitz.org.

Coming this summer...

Summer STEAM WEEK Academy for children pre-K - Grade 6

June 6-10 and June 12-17

(sign up for one week or both)



In our outdoor learning labs, art studio, robotics lab and gymnasium, Mirowitz STEAM Week educators will take your children on an intellectually stimulating journey that integrates science, technology, engineering, art and math.



In partnership
 with the JCC.