

 Philadelphia

## Phila. Community Kollel Holds 10th Anniversary Dinner

On Sunday, January 9, the Philadelphia Community Kollel held its 10th anniversary dinner, celebrating a decade of *harbatzas Torah*. Emotions ran high among the crowd of 550 people who came to celebrate this milestone.

Drs. Len and Gilya Freedman, the guests of honor, are longtime participants of the men's and women's programs of the *kollel*, respectively; their children also learn there several times a week.

Rabbi Uri and Mrs. Sara Leah Greenspan received the Harbatzas HaTorah Award. Rabbi Greenspan is a veteran member of the *kollel*. He and his wife both teach in the Torah Academy Girls' High School in Wynnewood, Pa., and are regarded as superb *mechanchim*. Rabbi Greenspan also teaches in the Hebrew Academy of Cherry Hill, tutors in the community, and has given several popular, long-running classes at the *kollel*.

The dinner also paid tribute to Dr. David Epstein, z"l. Dr. Epstein was a pillar of the community who played a crucial role in the success of many of its institutions, and he was a founder and friend of the *kollel* from the time it was established. He served as a physician to hundreds in the community, including many leaders and students of the Philadelphia Yeshiva, and is remembered by thousands of *talmidim* for his care and patience during late-night consultations, some of which took place at his own home.

"Dr. Epstein was an incredible, unusual human being," says Rabbi Yoel Zeffren of the *kollel*. "...one of the kindest, sweetest, and most idealistic people I have ever met."

The dinner program opened with greetings from chairman Dr. Jack Abboudi. Mr. Ted Kosloff, president of the *kollel*, also spoke, commenting that just as the *Aron Kodesh* in the *midbar* carried its carriers, those who support Torah learning will be blessed in all their enterprises.

In his address, Rabbi Yechiel Biberfeld, *Rosh Kollel*, discussed the fiery angels that were placed in front of Gan Eden to stop Adam Harishon from eating from the *Eitz Hachaim*. These angels, Rabbi Biberfeld explained, are the *yetzer hara*, which tries to stop us from "eating from the *Eitz Hachaim*" — learning Torah. If we fight our *yetzer hara* and learn Torah, we will be *zocheh to chayot olam*.

"This concept was internalized by Dr. David Epstein," Rabbi Biberfeld explained. "He drank Torah with thirst... and his life and his family's life became richer and fuller... It is hard to keep up with Dr. Epstein's long strides, but we can follow in his footsteps. May the *chizuk* we gain be an eternal *zechus* for him."

Participants viewed a video highlighting the growth and development of the *kollel* over the past decade. Everyone left inspired by the the impact the Kollel has had on the Philadelphia community.



Rabbi Yechiel Biberfeld presenting an award to Dr. Len Friedman.



L-R: Rabbi Yoel Zeffren; Ted Kosloff, President; Rabbi Greenspan; and Rabbi Yechiel Biberfeld.