

PHILADELPHIA

Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Celebrated at Philadelphia Community Kollel

On Sunday, January 11, the Philadelphia Community Kollel marked its 25th anniversary with a gala Legacy Dinner, honoring the community for their support and participation for a quarter of a century. The event celebrated the *kollel's* legacy —



Rabbi Yechiel Biberfeld, *Rosh Kollel*, addressing the Philadelphia Community Kollel's 25th Anniversary Legacy Dinner.

of Torah, of clarity and inspiration for the community, and of continuity as the *kollel* looks forward, *b'ezras Hashem*, to continue its mission of *harbotzas haTorah*.

A highlight of the program was a *siyum* on *Maseches Zevachim* made by Rabbi Sruly Schwartz, a *kollel* alumnus and a *Daf Yomi Maggid Shiur*. Rabbi Yirmiyohu Bauminger, also a *kollel* alumna and a *Daf Yomi Maggid Shiur*, began



Recognizing the *kollel's* founding members (or sons of founding members).

Maseches Menachos. While the *siyum* was celebrated on this particular *masechta*, it was representative of the many *siyumim* that take place in the *kollel*, via its many *shiurim* and learning programs, on a regular basis.

The dinner was a true *kiddush Hashem*, an historic evening honoring Torah learning and those who have been connected to it at the Philadelphia Community Kollel for the past 25 years.



Leibedig dancing at the Dinner.

FLATBUSH

An Unprecedented Kol Torah — BJX Brings Torah to More Yidden

BY MENACHEM SEGAL

The Torah learning that is going on at BJX is not happening by chance. Witnessing secular Jews immersed in a *sugya* is an exceptional sight. Yidden who were never connected are now being drawn to Torah. This kind of awakening isn't created in a vacuum. It emanates from Rabbanim who love their fellow Yidden and know how to ignite a genuine desire for learning.

Chazal teach us, "*Kol Yisrael areivim zeh la'zeh*" — All Yidden are responsible for one another. That responsibility is not only in

moments of danger or need, but especially in moments of opportunity. When Torah begins to grow in unfertile ground, when Yidden are taking steps toward learning on their own, the question is no longer why this is happening — the question is who will carry it forward.

Rabbi Moshe Fingerer, the indefatigable director of BJX, explained how he and his brother, the Rav, got involved in *kiruv*. "We grew up on Avenue J, a few blocks from two major public high schools. One Shabbos, a teacher from these schools, a *frum* man, joined our family for a *Shabbos seudah*. He claimed that he taught hundreds of Jewish students in his classes, who all lived in Brooklyn. His revelation shook us. The seed was then planted to bring Torah

to Yidden in our midst. We realized that there were untold *neshamos* waiting to be ignited."

The *Rebbeim* and staff at BJX create an environment where Torah speaks to the *neshamah*, where inspiration is sparked and students choose to sit and learn. Torah that begins through inspiration can only continue through *areivus*. It is up to the *tzibbur* to carry forward what has begun and allow Torah to continue growing in the heart of our community.

The Chofetz Chaim taught that even a person who is *shomer Torah u'mitzvos* his entire life may go to *Shamayim* and experience a great surprise. The Heavenly Court will assert that the person never upheld the Torah. The person will

not understand. Why is he being harshly condemned? It's because he had neighbors who weren't *frum*. He never tried to be *mekarev* them and introduce them to Torah.

We are guarantors for each other. The learning at BJX cannot continue without the support of the *frum tzibbur*. This support is not an act of generosity, but a fulfillment of our shared responsibility to one another and to the Torah itself.

BJX's mission is to bring Torah to young Jews from Brooklyn neighborhoods who attend public high school and college. Walk into BJX and you will hear an unprecedented *kol Torah* — of people learning Torah for the very first time. When Yidden want Torah, we don't ask why. We ask, "Who will sustain it?"



BJX mentors learning with students.



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