

THE DENVER COMMUNITY KOLLEL KOLLEL UPDATE

Because Torah Is for Every Jew

January 2008 - Shevat 5768

Kollel to Celebrate 10th Anniversary

The Denver Community Kollel will celebrate a decade of Torah education and inspiration at its 10th Anniversary Celebration on Tues., March 25, 2008, at the Red Lion Hotel, 440 Quebec St., Denver.

The Kollel will honor its outreach directors, Rabbi Yehuda Amsel and Rabbi Yechiel Erlanger, with its Torah Leadership Award.

"Rabbi Amsel and Rabbi Erlanger, along with their families, have touched the lives of Jews of all backgrounds from throughout Denver," says Kollel Dean Rabbi Aron Yehuda



Rabbi Yehuda Amsel, Torah Leadership Awardee

Schwab. "Through their many classes, programs, and one-on-one study sessions, they have shared the beauty of Torah study – and Torah life."

Both Rabbis Amsel and Erlanger were founding members of the Kollel when it was established in February 1998. After receiving four years of training as community scholars, they were appointed outreach directors in 2002.

Rabbi Amsel, 35, studies at the Kollel part time. He also leads several Lunch and Learn programs, runs the Fathers & Sons program, and gives classes throughout the week in East Denver.

Rabbi Erlanger, 36, runs the Kollel's Executive Learning Program, leads a Lunch and Learn in Glendale, and is involved in many of the Kollel's large-scale outreach initiatives. He also serves as a Judaic Studies teacher at Beth Jacob High School of Denver.

"Over the last ten years," says Rabbi Erlanger, "the Kollel has brought



Rabbi Yechiel Erlanger, Torah Leadership Awardee

great *Kiddush Hashem* to Denver. I am proud to have been a part of that, and am honored that the Kollel has chosen me to represent its achievements over the last decade."

"The Kollel has given me the opportunity to develop into something I never knew I had within me," adds Rabbi Amsel. "I am very grateful to the *Roshei Kollel* for providing me with the chance to spread the word of Torah."

To RSVP or place a journal ad, visit www.denverkollel.org or call 303-820-2855. 📧

Hundreds Turn Out for Jewish Children's Extravaganza on Dec. 25

Despite inclement weather and icy roads, hundreds of people turned out for the Kollel's Annual Jewish Children's Extravaganza on December 25.

The Extravaganza, held at the Funtastic Fun Indoor Amusement Park in Englewood, featured rides and arcades for children of all ages, and a chance to learn more about the Kollel and meet its scholars and their families.

The event was sponsored by Nancy Gary, Auerbach Kosher Foods, East Side Kosher Deli and Crystal's Kosher Cuts.

"We were excited to offer this fun day once again to Jewish families in the community," says Esti Schwab, Director of the Kollel's Women's Division. "The Extravaganza has been a unique opportunity for Jewish parents to provide their children with a fun day in a Jewish environment."

To view an album of pictures, visit www.denverkollel.org 📧



Samuel Kaufman, 4, and Irit Kaufman, 10, going for a spin in the teacups at the Kollel's Annual Jewish Children's Extravaganza on December 25.

Tips for 'Taming Workplace Toxicity' at January T4T

"Communication" was the key word at the January 9 Torah for Tycoons, "Taming Toxicity: Managing conflict in the workplace," with Daniel Hettleman, Ph.D., clinical psychologist, and Kollel Dean Rabbi Shachne Sommers.

In his presentation, Dr. Hettleman stressed the importance of bringing out the best in employees, and using the correct communication style when dealing with conflict.

"When you level criticism," he said, "do it so it raises the bar and acknowledges the best in the person and what they are capable of."

Kollel Dean Rabbi Shachne Sommers agreed, and focused on the right way – and wrong way – to give criticism.

He explained that the verse in Leviticus 19:17, "You shall not hate your brother in your heart, you shall reprove your fellow, and do not bear a



(l. to r.) Dr. Daniel Hettleman, Kollel Dean Rabbi Shachne Sommers and moderator Phil Weiser at the January Torah for Tycoons, "Taming Toxicity."

sin because of him," teaches that one should communicate his negative feelings, but has to be careful not to do so in a way that will make the situation worse.

He cited Maimonides on the proper way to give rebuke (Hilchos De'os 6:6-7).

"Don't turn it into a confrontation – it's me against you; do it in private," explained Rabbi Sommers.

"[Second,] be careful how it's said, the tone and the actual words being chosen. And third, the trickiest part, it should be done in a way that communicates that it's for his own benefit. We are both on the same team; this is for your benefit – not my needs against your needs."

Rabbi Sommers then brought several other sources for further insight on how to appropriately give rebuke.

To hear the class online or read a complete summary of the class, visit www.denverkollel.org

Please join us next month as Doug Seserman, President and CEO, Allied Jewish Federation of Colorado, joins Kollel Dean Rabbi Aron Yehuda Schwab for "Anonymous Giving: Is it the highest form of charity?" on Wed., Feb. 6, at noon at the East Side Kosher Deli. For information or to RSVP, call 303-8202-2855 or email info@denverkollel.org 

'Body Augments the Soul' at Jan. B9-5 'Beauty & Cosmetic Surgery'

If everything G-d gives us is for the good, should a woman undergo treatments to improve her "G-d-given" looks? And what if the procedure would put the woman at a considerable life-threatening risk?

Dermatologist Leslie Stewart, M.D., posed these and other related questions to Kollel Dean Rabbi Aron Yehuda Schwab at the Jan. 15 Beyond 9 to 5, "Beauty and Cosmetic Surgery."

In his response, Rabbi Schwab explained that the Talmud learns from

the verse "You shall surely heal" (Exodus 21:19), that a doctor can administer medicine and perform procedures in a life-threatening situation, for clear medical need, or for general health maintenance (Bava Kama 85a). The question arises over a procedure that is exclusively cosmetic.

He quoted Maimonides, which says, "It is forbidden to injure oneself or another person" (Laws of Damages 5:1), and made reference to the *Shulchan Aruch Harav*, which says that it's forbidden to hit another person, even with the victim's permission, "because a person doesn't have ownership of his body."

Are procedures like botox, face lifts and liposuction included in the prohibition of "injuring someone?"

Wholesome halachic authorities say they are, said Rabbi Schwab, Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, the most authoritative halachic decisor of our day, says one

can do such procedures. This is because the prohibition against injuring other people or ourselves is limited to when it is done in aggressive and destructive manner.

Rabbi Schwab concluded his presentation by explaining that if a woman needs to do a procedure to feel good about herself, she can have the procedure done.

However, he suggested that the goal to work toward is to develop a healthier attitude to aging.

"White hairs are given as a wakeup call, that we are getting older and need to think about life more seriously," he said. "We should also realize that the body is a gift to us to use to accomplish our spiritual mission in this world. It is not the main part of our existence; it is here to augment our soul."

To hear the class online, visit www.denverkollel.org 



(l. to r.) Chaya Major, Yehudis Heyman and Tracey Douglas share a laugh at the Jan. 15 Beyond 9 to 5, "Beauty and Cosmetic Surgery."