

THE DENVER COMMUNITY KOLLEL KOLLEL UPDATE

Because Torah Is for Every Jew

Special Dinner Edition

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'Together We Have Built a Community of Torah' Unprecedented Kiddush Hashem at Kollel's 10th Anniversary Celebration

In what proved to be an evening of an unprecedented *Kiddush Hashem*, glorification of G-d's name, nearly 350 community members attended the Denver Community Kollel's 10th Anniversary Celebration, paying tribute to the Kollel and its Torah Leadership Awardees, outreach directors Rabbi Yehuda Amsel and Rabbi Yechiel Erlanger.



Kollel Dean Rabbi Shachne Sommer (l.) with Torah Leadership Awardee Rabbi Yehuda Amsel.

The evening opened with an address from Kollel Dean Rabbi Aron Yehuda Schwab.

"The completion of ten years is an important time to reflect and pay tribute to those who make this possible," he said. "The visionaries, our dedicated lay leaders, and all of our supporters, who have helped the Kollel fulfill its mission of being *Mekadesh Sheim Shamayim*, glorifying G-d's Name, day in and day out."

But most of all, Rabbi Schwab thanked the thousands of people who have joined the Kollel in Torah study over the last decade.

"Together we have built a community of Torah," he said. "Together we have made learning Torah the 'in'

thing to do in Denver."

In his address, Kollel Dean Rabbi Shachne Sommers paid tribute to the Kollel's tireless Community Scholars, who devote their days to in-depth Torah study and dedicate their evenings and other hours during the week to community outreach and teaching.

"I'd like to mention six people here tonight, and their families, whose dedication to Torah study has made an 'impact beyond measure' on our community," said Rabbi Sommers, "They are our community scholars."

As he listed off the scholars' names – Rabbi Avraham Abrams, Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher, Rabbi Dovid Gertz, Rabbi Moshe Heyman, Rabbi Ari Jakubowicz, and Rabbi Michel Levitansky – each was greeted with thunderous applause.

Rabbi Sommers then introduced the Kollel's alumni, four of whom had come in from out-of-town especially for the event: Rabbi Aryeh Erlanger, Rabbi Chaim Gobioff, Rabbi Chaim Mandelbaum, and Rabbi Shlomo Rosenberg.



(Clockwise from bottom l.) Dr. Susan Heitler, Phil Weiser, Adam Hirsch, Abigail Hirsch, Bruce Heitler, Dr. Diane Pincus, Dr. Tomas Berl and Dr. Dan Abrams at the Kollel's 10th Anniversary Celebration on March 25, 2008.



Kollel Dean Rabbi Aron Yehuda Schwab (l.) with Torah Leadership Awardee Rabbi Yechiel Erlanger.

The four local alumni - Rabbi Shloime Abraham, Rabbi Elchonon Joseph, Rabbi Daniel Krausz and Rabbi Yissochor Steinharter – "continue serving as role models here in Denver," said Rabbi Sommers.

Once again, as he listed the alumni's names, each was met with thunderous applause.

The highlight of the evening, however, was the award ceremony in which the Kollel's outreach directors, Rabbi Yehuda Amsel and Rabbi Yechiel

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Kollel Honors 'Visionaries of Greatness'

Because so much of what the Kollel does would not be possible without the financial support of community members, the Kollel made a special presentation to its donors at its 10th Anniversary Celebration.

"It is difficult to find a way to express our appreciation to those who have made the Kollel a priority in their philanthropic giving – especially in today's tough economy," said Rabbi Sommers.

He pointed out that a number of Kollles throughout the country found themselves in a similar situation, so they recently joined together to produce the "Visionaries of Greatness Encyclopedia."

The book is a handsome, coffee table edition of Pirkei Avos designed



Kollel Dean Rabbi Shachne Sommers (l.) presenting the Visionaries of Greatness Encyclopedia to Founding Trustee Jonathan Beren.

by the renowned Yona Weinrib.

"[This book] is dedicated to those who support the Kollel movement, which is giving life to the Jew-

ish people by facilitating Torah learning and living for America's Jews," said Rabbi Sommers.

Rabbi Sommers then called upon Jonathan Beren, a founding trustee, to come forward and accept his personal copy on behalf of the supporters of the Denver Community Kollel.

"Over the past decade, Mr. Beren has dedicated hundreds of hours to Torah study in our study hall," said Rabbi Sommers. "At the same time, he has brought numerous people to our programs and classes, giving them a glimpse of the beauty of Torah and Judaism that the Kollel has to offer."

In honor of our completion of a decade, the Kollel will be distributing the gift, throughout the year, to its donors of \$1000 or more.

Together We Have

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Erlanger, received the Torah Leadership Award.

When Rabbi Amsel was called to the podium to accept his award, he was given a standing ovation – the first ovation an honoree has ever received at a Kollel dinner since its founding a decade ago.

And when Rabbi Erlanger was called to the podium just minutes later, he too, received a standing ovation.

In their acceptance speeches, both Rabbi Amsel and Rabbi Erlanger



(l. to r.) Fred Altberger, Jeff Wedgle, Torah Leadership Awardee Rabbi Yehuda Amsel, Bruce Berman and Michael Engleberg.

credited others for their achievements.

"I'd like to thank the Roshei Kollel for carrying the responsibility of keeping the Kollel in existence, and for giving me the opportunity to spread the word of Torah," said Rabbi Amsel.

He also thanked Hashem for "affording me such a wonderful past ten years."

"I hope tonight's milestone serves to me as a stepping stone to keep on growing," he said.

In his acceptance speech, Rabbi Erlanger called the Denver Community Kollel a great "success story."

"The proof is that we are sitting here together tonight, celebrating ten years of the Denver Community Kollel," he said.

He attributed its success not just to the kollel deans, scholars and their families, and their parents and teachers, but to the numerous Jews throughout Denver who attend the Kollel's many programs.

"The reason for this success is all of you who are assembled here tonight," said Rabbi Erlanger.

A Decade in Pictures



In honor of the Kollel's 10th Anniversary, it produced a new retrospective video "Ten Years of Impact," which debuted at the Celebration.

To watch the video, visit www.denverkollel.org

"Your thirst for the pursuit of the truth, the Words of Hashem, is the reason why Hashem has enabled us to come to these achievements.

"May we go *mei'chayil el chayil*, from strength to strength," he said.

To view the honoree video or hear the acceptance speeches, visit www.denverkollel.org