

The Kollel Spirit

סיון תשפ"ב | June 2022



FROM THE DESK OF THE MENAHEL

Building on the Success of the Past to Grow into the Future



As you probably know, this past year has been quite exciting at the Kollel. We have been building on the success of the past 30 years to further grow into the vibrant Torah center we are today, with a promise of a bright future of continued achievement and inspiration (see timeline on page 4). The rejuvenation of the past year, including the installation of Rabbi Dovid Miller as Rosh Kollel, and an influx of six additional new member families, has brought our Kollel, and our community, to an exciting new level.

Now, we are celebrating this success with a new look. As you can see, our new St. Louis Community Kollel logo ties together the theme of the Kollel (see Unleashing Unlimited Potential on page 3).

Keeping the Midwest tradition, the colors and type style is warm and friendly and the bottom of the “K” sweeps across like a welcoming arm. The Gateway Arch above the two “L”s creates an inviting entrance to learning with the Kollel, as symbolized by the book in the doorway.

A Look Back...And A Look Forward

The Kollel opened in 1991 with four Rabbis, and now, 30 years later, has tripled in size. With more members than ever before, we are now able to offer more classes, more events and more learning opportunities, allowing us to reach more people and make so much more of an impact in our community.



A Kollel, by definition, is a place where Kollel Rabbis learn on a high level and develop into greater Torah scholars. From this foundation, however, the Kollel mission is further accomplished as not only are they themselves growing in scholarship, the Kollel Rabbis and their families learn with others throughout the community, inspire others, and serve as exemplary role models of a true Torah Jew.

Now, with this recent revitalization, the Kollel, more than ever, is super-intertwined with the community, and that involvement creates strength in our community, with a ripple effect that has no bounds.

A look at our learning schedule (see back page) shows just how involved the Kollel is in the Greater St. Louis community. With offerings in many shuls, on every level, and for every Jewish demographic - from Tefillah Tune-Up for Men & Boys to the Senior Kollel, and monthly classes for the women’s Eishes Chayil division, there is literally something for everyone. We look back at the past 30 years of the St. Louis Community Kollel with pride and gratitude, and we look forward with joy and excitement as we envision the next 30 years of learning and growing together.

Have an idea to further our mission? Please share it!

I look forward to partnering with you on furthering the mission of the Kollel in building a vibrant Torah community together!

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FROM THE DESK OF THE ROSH KOLLEL

It is customary to learn Pirkei Avos during the six weeks between Pesach and Shavuos. In the sixth chapter the following story is related:

אמר רבי יוסי בן קיסמא פעם אחת הייתי מהלך בדרך ופגע בי אדם אחד ונתן לי שלום והחזרתי לו שלום אמר לי רבי מאיזה מקום אתה אמרתי לו מעיר גדולה של חכמים ושל סופרים אני אמר לי רבי רצונך שתדור עמנו במקומנו ואני אתן לך אלף אלפים דינרי זהב ואבנים טובות ומרגליות אמרתי לו בני אם אתה נותן לי כל כסף וזהב ואבנים טובות ומרגליות שבעולם איני דר אלא במקום תורה.

Rabbi Yossi Ben Kisma related: One time I was walking on the road and I encountered a man and he wished me peace, and I wished him peace in return. He said to me, "Where are you from?" I said "From a large city of wise men and scribes." He said to me, "My master, would you be willing to live with us in our place, and I will give you millions of gold coins and precious gems and pearls?" I responded, "Even if you were to give me all the silver and gold precious gems and pearls in the world I would only live in a place of Torah..."

At first glance, this exchange is troubling. What was wrong with the man's request? Throughout the generations, we find great Talmidei Chachomim going forth even to areas weak in Torah in order to strengthen them. Why did Rabbi Yossi rebuff the offer in such an emphatic manner?

The Maharal explains that we need to look carefully at the man's request. He was not asking that Rabbi Yossi should come and teach them Torah. He only wanted him to live in their midst. Perhaps having a Talmid Chochoch of note in town would add prestige, maybe there would be someone to ask questions of Halacha to every so often. But he was not seeking someone to fundamentally transform the town.

And that means that it was simply not a Makom Torah; a "place of Torah", and Rabbi Yossi could not possibly live there.

What "Community Kollel" means is something very powerful. It means a Kollel, a place of higher Torah learning, that is not just a place for the Kollel yungeleit to learn and further their own studies, but a place where they seek to connect, to teach, to inspire. To make the city a "makom Torah". And it means that there is a community that shares that vision, supports that vision, and wants to be part of being that makom Torah.

Perhaps the most striking thing to me about moving to St. Louis is how much interest and desire there is to learn and connect with Chavrei HaKollel, and how much excitement there was over the Kollel's expansion. And above all, a true appreciation of what it means to have Talmidei Chachomim living here, with a Bais Medrash filled with the sounds of Torah learning. And without question, this is due to the legacy of the Kollel's founders, and the over thirty years of the Kollel's connection with the community. May Hashem grant us many more years of success, together with the entire community of St. Louis.

Don't Just Take Our Word For It!

Bob Kaiser
Board Member Nusach
Hari B'nai Zion

I can't overstate the impact the Kollel has had on the general St. Louis Jewish community. Both the learning opportunities and the Rabbis themselves are engaging, approachable, understandable, and relevant. That is what happens when the starting point is love of all Jews and the desire to serve the community.

Rabbi Menachem Tendler
Sha'arei Chesed
U. City Shul (Shul rav)

The St. Louis Kollel has had such a tremendous impact on the Torah growth in our community. The presence of the Kollel yungerleit in community shuls adds so much to the important culture of ruchniyus.

Rabbi Menachem Greenblatt
Rosh Kollel Emeritus and Rav
of Agudas Israel Congregation

The growth and impact of the St. Louis Kollel has been a source of utmost gratification over these past three decades. I encourage everyone to take advantage of this amazing community asset.

Rabbi Sroy Levitansky
National Director for
Community Development
at Beth Medrash Govoha

The St. Louis Kollel is an amazing Kollel that has brought together incredible Yungeleit that excel in learning as well as a passion to create a vibrant makom Torah for the community.

Unleashing Unlimited Potential



Rabbi Dovid Miller
Rosh Kollel

The St. Louis Community Kollel is dedicated to building and maintaining a vibrant Torah community. We believe that every Jew has a genuine connection to the Torah, and the strength of that connection determines the strength of our community.



Rabbi Yaakov Berkowitz
Menahel

At the heart of the Kollel is our cadre of meticulously selected Torah scholars dedicated to the highest levels of advanced Torah study. Our Rabbis are not only passionate about learning Torah, they are also passionate about teaching Torah. They tirelessly give of their time to learn with community members one-on-one and through a wide array of classes, and in the process, they sharpen their talents while gaining the skills and experience to become the leaders and educators of the future.



Mr. Mayer S. Klein
President

The Kollel meaningfully engages all demographics through an array of community programming, partnering with our local shuls to bring inspiring and engaging Torah programs throughout the community. We offer a wide variety of subject matter, one-on-one learning, group classes, events and activities; and we have dedicated divisions focusing on Seniors and Women. In short, we are committed to unleashing the potential of every Jew.



Yungerleit Learning: Regular daily learning among the Kollel Rabbis is the foundation of the Kollel. Everything they give back to the community has its roots here.



Kollel Boker: Daily high-level learning for retirees led by Rabbi Yerachmiel Frank and Rabbi Chona Muser.



A GLANCE AT OUR PROGRAMMING

1. **Senior Kollel Division**
Daily and weekly classes for senior men and women. Unique opportunities for physical, emotional and spiritual wellness.
2. **Eishes Chayil Division**
Monthly in-depth and Inspirational learning programs. Spiritually uplifting and engaging social events.
3. **Chavrusa Learning**
Nightly at Agudas Israel
Weekly at U. City Shul
4. **Amud-a-Week**
Community-wide learning program (in partnership with Agudas Israel, Nusach Hari B'nai Zion, U. City Shul and Young Israel).
5. **Weekly Mussar Vaad**
Presented by Torah personalities from across the country (via video conferencing).
6. **Advanced Learning Opportunities:**
Daf HaShavua, Kinyan Hamasechta, Yorucha
7. **Men & Boys Tefilla Group**
Bi-weekly class in partnership with Young Israel.
8. **Partners in Torah**
Partnering with AISH St. Louis.

St. Louis Kollel

Phase I

Kollel founded by Rabbi Menachem Greenblatt and Mr. Mayer Klein with three yungleleit: Rabbis Frank, Muser and Yaroslawitz (Yari)



Kollel Influx

Rabbis Levitansky, Feldman and Golombeck join Kollel



First Jewish Unity Live in St. Louis, 250 participants attend.

Rabbi Avi Kula kicks off Torah & Turf



Kollel Grows a third Time

Rabbis Charner, Kamenetzky and Shapiro join Kollel



J. Lesler Zeffren
Chair of Jewish Medical Ethics established

Rabbi Yaakov Berkowitz and Rabbi Yitzchak Kowalsky join the Kollel



1991

1994

1997

2005

2006

2007

2008

2009

2012

2013



Rabbi Gidon Nitsun joins Kollel

Kollel Really Expands

Rabbis Soroka, Mintz, Kula, Schwartz, Davidovits and Swidler join Kollel



Two Tablets Medical Ethics established by Dr. Neil Abramson, a"h

First Kollel Yarchei Kallah with Rabbi Naftali and Rebbetzin Tehila Jaeger



Launching of Eishes Chayil Division



Beth Medrash Govoha remote learning begins with Rabbi Shaul Katz as Rosh Chabura



St. Louis Partners in Torah begins at the JCC

Through The Years

Weekly Parsha Class
renamed in memory of
Allen Sabol, a"h



2015

Rabbi Yerachmiel Frank named first
Chair of Talmudic Law
and Tradition
in memory of Rubin Feldman, a"h



2017

Virtual Beis Medrash
set up for remote learning

Torah Learning Center
expanded and rededicated in loving
memory of Lisa Lerman, a"h



First Mussar Vaad
takes place in Torah Learning Center

2020

Yorucha,
Daf Heshavua &
Tefilla Tune-Up
programs launched

2021

2022



Senior Kollel
Rabbi Nitsun named "Stan Jacobs
Chair of Senior Kollel Learning"

Amud a Week
launched

"Torah Bits" Newsletter
becomes Family Torah Journal

Kinyan HaMasechta
launched



Phase 2
Largest Kollel
Expansion Yet:

Rabbi Dovid Miller
joins as Rosh Kollel

Rabbi Yaakov Berkowitz
assumes position of Menahel

Rabbi Menachem Greenblatt
named Rosh Kollel Emeritus

Welcome Rabbis Bin-Nun, Farkas,
Freund, Goldstone, Hess and Tajerstein

KOLLEL BY THE NUMBERS

11

Full Time Kollel Rabbis

175+

People Learning and Growing
With Kollel Rabbis Each Week

794+

Hours of Torah Study
Facilitated by Kollel
Each Week

17

Weekly Chaburos/Classes

60

People Comfortably Seated
in the Expanded Kollel Torah
Learning Center

482

Recipients of the
E-Version of the Weekly
Family Torah Journal

Spotlight



The Tajerstein Family

Joined the Kollel
August 2021

Came From
Lakewood, NJ

Currently
Rabbi Tajerstein
learns in the kollel
Mrs. Tajerstein
teaches at Torah Prep
School of St. Louis

“The Kollel provides a setting where an individual or a family can grow to their potential. People here are more than just polite; they’re warm, encouraging and accepting. It’s a great place to live.”

Today we shine the spotlight on the Tajerstein family. Rabbi and Mrs. Binyomin and Rivka Tajerstein joined the St. Louis Community Kollel in August 2021. They came with two young children: Hadassah, now 3 years old and Hillel, now 2. Since their move, they have been joined by little Yisroel Dov, their firstborn St. Louisan.

Rabbi Tajerstein was born and raised in Baltimore, MD, learned in Monsey, NY at Yeshivah Gedolah Kesser Torah under Rabbi Fishman, followed by the Mir in Yerushalyim and Beth Medrash Govoha in Lakewood. Mrs. Rivka Tajerstein hails from Monsey, NY and is a trained Speech and Language Therapist.

When the Tajersteins first married, they lived in Lakewood, and it was there that they were connected with the Ner L’Elef organization, where Rabbi Moshe Katz introduced them to the Community Kollel of St. Louis, and the rest, as they say, is history. Despite having only been here for less than a year, they feel completely at home. As Rabbi Tajerstein puts it, “It feels like it’s been over ten years already, but in a good way!

We feel like part
of the com-

munity already; it’s a very warm and welcoming environment.”

The Tajersteins are indeed “part of the community already”. Mrs. Tajerstein teaches Pre-K at Torah Prep School of St. Louis, and Rabbi Tajerstein learns with the Kollel on the same schedule of learning he has kept since high school. That, he says, is the anchor and the reason he came to the Kollel; “to have and create a foundation of Torah. That’s the basis. Everything else comes from that.”

After his regular learning seder with the Kollel, Rabbi Tajerstein tutors and teaches a wide variety of individuals and classes, including “Tefilah Tune Up” men and boys. The cohesive nature of the community allows Kollel members to learn with and befriend a wide variety of Jews of all ages and backgrounds. Rabbi Tajerstein’s students range in age from sixth graders to octogenarians!

As the Kollel continues to grow, the Tajersteins look forward to being able to spread more Torah and help even more people to grow. When asked if they have any advice for anyone considering moving to St. Louis or joining the community, the simple answer was “Move! Come! You’ll love it here.”

The Tajersteins enjoy the combination of the community’s laid-back feel coupled with the passion for spiritual growth they can feel not just in the Kollel, but throughout the community. “The Kollel provides a setting where an individual or a family can grow to their potential. People here are more than just polite; they’re warm, encouraging and accepting. It’s a great place to live.”



Recent Happenings at the Kollel:

Pre-Shavuos Learning Event United by Torah. United for Torah.

Sounds of Torah learning echoed throughout the ballroom of the Clayton Plaza Hotel on May 24th as 160 men and women gathered for a first time ever pre-Shavuos “United by Torah, United for Torah” learning event.

Using a unique set-up of separate “breakout” sessions (Kollel Rabbis for the men and Kollel wives for the women), each table was able to learn and connect to our amazing Kollel families in an unprecedented “up close and personal” way. Warm words of chizuk from Kollel Menahel Rabbi Yaakov Berkowitz and Rosh Kollel Rabbi Dovid Miller rounded out the evening’s festivities and set the stage for a joyous and meaningful Shavuos.

"I enjoyed last night's program immensely. It was well organized. I enjoyed learning with Chavi Frank who is an amazing teacher."

"We greatly enjoyed the evening. It was wonderful to join with so many others for an informative and inspiring evening of learning with the Kollel Rabbis and Rebbitzens."

"I loved this event! The setting was so elegant, I felt I was at the wedding between Hashem and Bnei Yisrael at kabbalas hatorah - a very chashuva setting for learning Torah."

"It was beautiful to see the entire community gather together to devote an evening to learning Torah together."

"The Rabbis and Rebbetzins of the Kollel did a wonderful job. It was a true Kiddush HaShem."



"Absolutely magical... So many people - men and women - all different ages. learning Torah together, connecting with Torah and Hashem all at the same time - made it incredibly powerful. What a preparation for Shavuos! Doesn't get any better than that..."





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Weekly Schedule

The St. Louis Community Kollet Welcomes You To Learn With Us

Chavrusos/ One-On-One Learning

Sunday - Thursday
8:00pm - 9:45pm
Agudas Israel

Tuesday
8:00pm - 9:00pm
U. City Shul

Chaburos & Shiurim

Kollet Boker
Monday - Friday
10:45am - 12:45pm
Agudas Israel
Rabbi Frank & Rabbi Muser

Senior Kollet
Monday - Thursday
10:00am - 12:00pm
Kollet Torah Learning Center
Rabbi Nitsun
Gemara, Halacha and Machshava

Daf Hashavua
Sunday - Thursday
8:45pm - 9:45pm
Agudas Israel
Rabbi Bin-Nun

Kinyan Hamasechta
Sunday - Thursday
8:45pm - 9:35pm
Kollet Torah Learning Center
Rabbi Berkowitz

Yesodei HaTorah Gemara
Monday & Thursday
8:45pm - 9:45pm
Agudas Israel Social Hall
Rabbi Nitsun

Yorucha
Sunday
8:15am - 9:00am
Kollet Torah Learning Center
Rabbi Goldstone

Senior Kollet Lunch & Learn
Women
Tuesday
1:00pm - 2:00pm
Kollet Torah Learning Center
Rabbi Nitsun

Partners in Torah *Men & Women*
Tuesday
8:00pm - 9:00pm
JCC (Creve Coeur)
Rabbi Glazer

Parsha Class *Men & Women*
Wednesday
7:45pm - 8:30pm
Kollet Torah Learning Center
Rabbi Farkas

Tefila Tune-Up *Men & Boys*
Bi-Weekly on Thursdays
8:20pm - 9:00pm
Young Israel Beis Midrash
Rabbi Tajerstein

Mussar Vaad & Cholent
Thursday
10:00pm - 10:20pm
Kollet Torah Learning Center

Amud-a-Week
Monday
8:00pm - 8:30pm
Nusach Hari B'nai Zion
Rabbi Freund

Tuesday
8:00pm - 8:40pm
U. City Shul
Rabbi Bin-Nun

Tuesday *Iyun Shiur*
8:00pm - 9:00pm
U. City Shul
Rabbi Freund

**5 Minute Synopsis of Daily
Dirshu Mishna Berura**
Podcast & Daily Email
Sunday - Thursday
Rabbi Berkowitz

DESIGN BY: AMFcreative



upcoming
events

JUNE

14 Senior Kollet Mindfulness Program
with Dr. Jonathan Feiner



22-23
Unleashing Unlimited
Potential Campaign

JULY

9 Shabbos with the Kollet at Young Israel

17-19 Summer Yarchei Kallah for Women
with Mrs. Sarah Aliza Scheinberg

25-28 Summer Yarchei Kallah for Men

7.29 - 8.28 Bein Hazmanim (*Kollet Summer break*)