

World Times

Educating for Life

Spring 2003



Fashion forward

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Tribute to a hero

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New academic year in Argentina: Buenos Aires mayor opens ORT schools

MAYOR of Buenos Aires Dr. Aníbal Ibarra was on hand to open the 2003 school year at ORT's schools in Buenos Aires where he welcomed the more than 7,000 ORT students, who despite the country's economic situation, started the 2003 school year in March.

During the ceremony special mentions were given to students who received medals in national and international olympiads during the 2002 school year in the presence of Secretary of Education Daniel Filmus; the Director of Private Education, Dr. Gerardo Suárez; community leaders, parents and teachers

ORT Argentina is planning many exciting projects for the 2003 school year. National Director of ORT Argentina Baruj Zaidenknop announced a number of initiatives, "We will be offering a sabbatical semester to exceptional teachers and appointing notable personalities in the fields of sciences and education as mentors to students."

ORT Argentina is the largest Jewish educational network in the country. Just recently, all of its educational centres were under threat of closure. Thankfully, this was averted. Through a special global appeal, ORT raised in excess of \$2 million, allowing the schools to remain open.

The economic and financial misfortune has strengthened solidarity amongst the Jewish community in Argentina. ORT Argentina students are aware of the importance of their solidarity, and they offer their time and skills with great generosity.

Students are urged to join solidarity programmes to help less fortunate people. While many families are not able to pay for their medical services, ORT's medical service provides annual check-ups for students and medication when needed. There is also a psychological department, where students can talk to a trained professional about the stress the situation around them creates. Tutoring is also provided with special attention given to those who have special needs.

Prior to the schools' official opening, the United Jewish Communities Mission visited ORT Argentina. In a moving video teleconference organised by the Jewish Agency for Israel, the families of ORT Argentina's students were reunited with relatives who made Aliyah to flee the dire economic situation in Argentina.

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Students at ORT de Gunzburg show off their costumes on project day

Students shine at annual project day

THE students at the ORT de Gunzburg School in St Petersburg impressed guests at their school with an extensive exhibition of the projects they have been working on this year.

First through 11th grade classes at the school participated in the Annual Project Day, organised to give students the chance to take what they have learned during the school year and bring it to life. In addition to being the focus of the school's Purim celebrations, the day allows the students to use the new and practical skills they have acquired as a result of their ORT education.

Students created an exciting competition by offering a variety of different themes, which included a robot competition, environmental studies projects, Jewish theatre, scriptwriting, biology, and a historical perspective of the school.

Multimedia students at the school designed awards to be given to the winners. The top prize, the Golden Pegasus award was given to the winning students for their excellent and innovative work.

Representatives of the St. Petersburg Education Committee, Heads of Jewish Studies Departments at the

ORT schools in Kharkov, Nizhny Novgorod and Minsk, and local Jewish Community Centres Heads all acted as judges as students spent the day creating innovative projects based on the research the students conducted as part of their studies.

The highlight of the day's events was a performance based on the theme of Harry Potter. ORT de Gunzburg head teachers and a number of the school's students all played a part in the production.

See more festive Purim pictures of page 4

World ORT expresses gratitude to US Federations

WITH Pesach, the festival of freedom, upon us, World ORT would like to take the opportunity to express its sincere gratitude to the Federations for their support of World ORT and through it, ORT's schools in Israel, CIS and Argentina. This is more poignant today during the current world crises. World ORT appreciates their long-standing partnership and cooperation, and welcomes the renewed relationship with UJC and the Federations' system.

The Detroit Federation for its support of:

ORT Rogozin, Migdal Ha'Emek; ORT Alon, Nazareth Illit; ORT Sharet, Nazareth Illit; and ORT Ye'arat Ha'Emek, Migal Ha'Emek.

The Bergen County Federation for its support of: ORT Guttman, Netanya.

The Atlanta Federation for its support of ORT Shomron, Binyamina.

The Cleveland Federation for its support of ORT Bet Shean.

The Philadelphia Federation for its support of ORT Ma'a lot; ORT Afula; and ORT Gadish Ramot, Jerusalem.

The Houston Federation for its support of ORT Hermetz, Givat Ram, Jerusalem.

The Boston Federation for its support of ORT Hannah Szenesh, Haifa.

The Indianapolis Federation for its support of ORT Acco.

The Kansas City Federation for its support of ORT Zeil, Lod.

The Central New Jersey Federation for its support of ORT Arad.

The Washington DC Federation for its support of ORT Hanevi'im Oleiski, Jerusalem

The New York Federation for its support of ORT Lipman Center, Moscow.

The Atlanta Federation, The Boston Federation, The Cleveland Federation, The Houston Federation, The Northern New Jersey Federation, and The Tidewater Federation for their support of ORT's schools in Argentina.

World ORT thanks the UJC and the Federations for their ongoing support of its projects.

Board meeting sets pace for 2003



A message from the Director General

Even before the first shots were fired in the Iraq campaign, the talk was of rebuilding the country after the destruction of war. Destruction can be accomplished in a very short time; rebuilding takes a lot longer. And rebuilding does not just mean the reconstruction of damaged buildings and infrastructure; it means the renewal of life - with new vision and new hopes for the future.

All this is very familiar to ORT. For all of its 123 years, our organisation has been in the business of building and rebuilding the lives of individuals and of communities - and we continue to do so. In territories such as Israel, the former Soviet Union and Latin America in the aftermath of political, economic and physical devastation - as well as in good times - our education and training services provide a lifeline for families looking forward to improving their lot.

We do not believe in short-term fixes; ours is a far-sighted view. Our mission is to lay the foundations of knowledge, skills and heritage education upon which entire programmes of personal and communal development are constructed. In Hebrew, the word Binah, meaning "understanding" is related to the word Boneh, which means "build"; it is only through knowledge and understanding that the individual and collective building process can take place.

Therein lies the difference between ORT and our other partners working in the field of community development, both within and outside the Jewish world. While others take care of the immediate requirements such as the provision of food and welfare, we address ourselves to the longer-term needs and aspirations of our clients. As vital as the welfare provision is in restoring damaged lives, we believe that it is only education and training that can lead to self-sufficiency and sustainability. Indeed, welfare provision has in-built dangers: in excess it can give rise to a culture of dependency. Education and training, on the other hand, encourages independence, self-sufficiency and dignity.

The problems of the world are not about to go away. Other battles - physical, political and economic - still face us. If we ever despair of the enormity of the task and need encouragement, we need only read the letters from our students, reproduced in this issue. They show, as nothing else can, how ORT restores confidence, gives hope and makes a difference to so many lives.

The festival of Pesach occurs in the Northern hemisphere in the spring, and marks the season of annual renewal. Historically it celebrates the rebirth of the Jewish people after their period of slavery in Egypt. In 1948, it was two weeks after Pesach that the new State of Israel emerged from the ashes of the Holocaust. It is not too far-fetched to hope that, amidst the trauma that surrounds us, Pesach this year will mark the beginning of a transition towards peace and tolerance throughout the world - a time where coexistence replaces animosity.

Whatever the future holds in store for us, we at ORT, with the help of our supporters, will continue our mission to build and to nurture individuals and communities to create a better world.

Robert Singer
Director General



Above: The World ORT Executive Committee meets with President of Israel Moshe Katsav in Jerusalem, top left: Deputy Director General of World ORT Dr Gideon Meyer with Prof. Shlomo Ben Ami, middle left: President of World ORT Chief Justice Richard Goldstone with Professor Aharon Barak, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Israel, bottom left: Chairman of the Board of Directors Mauricio Merikankas opens the meeting

MORE than 140 delegates from across the globe travelled to Israel in January for the World ORT Annual Board of Directors meeting, where the organisation's achievements in 2002 were assessed, and new targets set for 2003.

Despite the current situation in the region, the Board was determined to conduct the meetings this year in Israel as a show of solidarity with ORT students and staff members, many of whom have been affected by the Intifada.

"I wanted the meetings to go ahead," said Martin Behr, Chairman of the World ORT Finance Committee. "It would have been a terrible morale destroyer had we postponed. It was an excellent and constructive meeting, and emotionally satisfying as well."

Prior to convening for the Board of Directors' Meeting, World ORT's Executive Committee gathered for two days on the campuses of ORT Ramot and ORT Givat Ram in Jerusalem. A highlight of the events in Jerusalem was the address to the Executive by Professor Aharon Barak, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Israel. Delegates also met students and head teachers from ORT's

Jerusalem area schools and the Michael Rosner Resource Centre at ORT Givat Ram was inaugurated.

Board members gained additional insight into the current situation in the country when Former Israeli Foreign Minister, Professor Shlomo Ben Ami gave a lecture on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. He also commended board members for deciding to hold the meeting in Israel.

"In times like these, every visit from Jewish and non Jewish groups is an exhibition of solidarity that all Israelis appreciate," Ben Ami said.

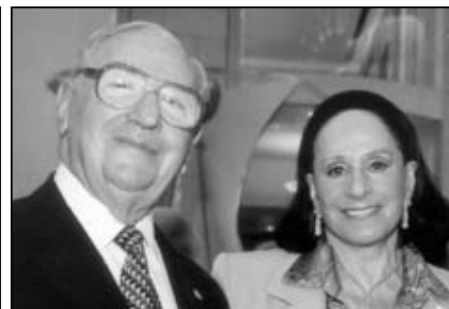
President of Israel Moshe Katsav and Gaby Kadosh, the Mayor of Eilat also addressed the Board, and the ORT Kiryat Bialik Dance Troupe gave a festive folk dancing performance.

"As a lay leader the Board meeting confirmed my sense of pride in what ORT accomplishes," said Women's American ORT President Carol Linch. "It was particularly meaningful for us to be in Israel with our ORT family at this time. The time we spent together was educational, thought provoking and filled with pride."

New tech centre at Givat Ram



National Director of ORT Israel Zvi Peleg with Jenny Rosner at the entrance to the new Michael Rosner Resource Centre on the campus of ORT Givat Ram in Jerusalem



Sir Jack and Lady Roslyn Lyons

Living in the Shadow of Terror: The art of coping

LONG time ORT supporters Sir Jack and Lady Roslyn Lyons recently inaugurated an ORT art competition for students at ORT Israel.

More than 300 ORT Israel students entered the competition entitled "Living in the Shadow of Terror," and the winners' works were displayed in an exhibition at the World ORT Board of Directors meeting in Eilat at the end of January. Judged by an experienced panel of adjudicators, the winners were awarded cash prizes generously sponsored by Sir and Lady Lyons.

"My wife and I decided to inaugurate an Israel ORT Art Competition with students' works, in an effort help ORT children cope with the traumatic effects of the current horror," Jack Lyons said. "The paintings are a very powerful indication of the emotions felt by these youngsters whose lives have been affected by the problems surrounding Israel in these difficult times."

"We pray that World ORT and ORT Israel continue to find innovative means to create pleasure and more peace of mind in its continual pursuit of Educating for Life."



Above: The late Col. Ilan Ramon, below: STARS students before the launch at Cape Canaveral, Florida, far right: ORT students in the CIS sent letters of condolences in Hebrew to the family of the late Ramon



ORT Kiryat Motzkin pays tribute to a hero

TALKS are underway to rename ORT Kiryat Motzkin in memory of Col. Ilan Ramon, Israel's first astronaut who was tragically killed with his six fellow astronauts when the Columbia Space Shuttle broke up upon re-entering Earth in February.

The students, who worked closely with Ramon, visited his gravesite in Nahalal, Israel one week after he was buried, and by chance met the heroic astronaut's family. "The children made an impromptu ceremony for Ilan Ramon at the site and members of his family, including his son, asked to join them," said Marga Segal, the head teacher of ORT Kiryat Motzkin. "The family said that they are very aware of the influence Ramon had on the lives of so many students and that they are very interested in carrying on Ramon's memory through the school."

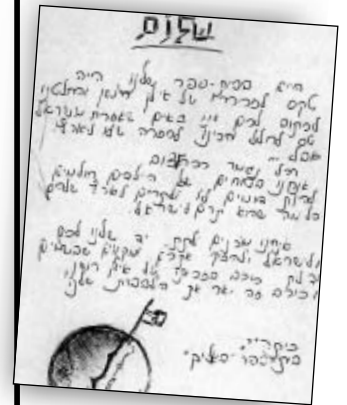
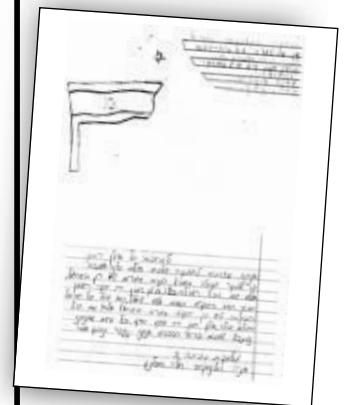
ORT Kiryat Motzkin students created an experiment, which was chosen by NASA to go up with the Space Shuttle that was to find out how solid filaments would grow in a weightless environment. Ramon carried the experiment with him into orbit and although the physical evidence was destroyed, he had emailed the results to the students. The students had been preparing for this mission for more than two years as part of their involvement in the STARS Programme, a one-of-a-kind project that lets students from schools around the world send actual experiments into space. The ORT students were chosen out of all the schools in Israel to participate.

The ORT students were particularly saddened by Ramon's tragic death, not only because of their own terrible personal loss, but because of the importance they had placed upon their experiment for the future of scientific research, "I saw the debris coming off the shuttle, and I didn't understand what had happened," said Pini Shekhter, 14, one of ORT Kiryat Motzkin's STARS project participants who was at the launch of the shuttle in January. "I just wanted to see the shuttle land and Ilan and our experiment come back. But when I saw the shuttle explode, all our dreams and expectations exploded with it."

In a letter to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, Director General of World ORT Robert Singer, and National Director of ORT Israel, Zvi Peleg expressed the organisation's deepest condolences to the American and Israeli people on the tragic loss of the Space Shuttle Columbia and its seven brave astronauts.

"We at World ORT and ORT Israel understand the significance of the Space Programme and hope that this tragedy does not jeopardize the future of such important missions or deflate the will and spirit of the American people and of the global community," stated Robert Singer and Zvi Peleg. "As ORT is dedicated to the advancement of science and technology, we are hopeful that this tragedy will not be a deterrent to Israel's Space Programme or Israel's participation in future space missions."

In his reply, Ariel Sharon underlined the importance of scientific research, "The world will forever remember the sacrifice made by these brave heroes. They will be remembered through our continued pursuit of scientific achievement."



Nevzlin and Chief Rabbi inaugurate Lipman

RUSSIAN Federation Senator Leonid Nevzlin joined The Chief Rabbi of Russia, Adolph Shaevich in affixing a Mezuzah on the doorpost at the ORT Technology Centre at the Lipman School in Moscow in March.

Leonid Nevzlin is the former President of the Russian Jewish Congress and plays an active part in the regeneration of Jewish communities in Russia.

Other attendees at the ceremony included President of ORT Russia Professor Alexander Asmolov, representatives of the Ministry of Education Vera Bormot and Marina Britova, and representatives of the Israeli Embassy Ehud Balsar and Alex Agmon.

The Lipman School, established in 1991, is one of the largest Jewish schools in Moscow, home to a Jewish community of some 300,000. The students at the school are provided with a standard curriculum specified by the Russian Ministry of Education in an Israeli-Jewish environment. Up until September, when the ORT Centre opened, the school lacked technological facilities.

The Centre at the Lipman School is one of a number of similar World ORT projects in the CIS and Baltic States which are part of ORT's strategy to create successful



Leonid Nevzlin unveils the plaque to the new ORT Centre at the Lipman School

and attractive Jewish schools: built upon delivering high quality education that will provide their graduates with a real competitive advantage when seeking higher education and opportunities for employment.

The Centre at the Lipman School was made possible by Senator Leonid Nevzlin, Sir Maurice and Lady Hatter, Shirley and Milton Gralla, and the UJA Federation of New York.

Syngalowsky whizz kid finds security bug

YARON TAL, a student at ORT Syngalowsky College for Advanced Technologies and Sciences, is a man with a mission. At the tender age of 18, he already runs his own company ytech.co.il, which has been in operation for some three years providing security software for home and business computer use. In addition to software development, Tal also makes detailed inspections and examinations of software, and is now in the process of testing three products currently on the market.

It was during one of his inspections that the Computer Software Engineering student discovered that a protection system to block hackers from PCs operated by US company Zone Labs was suffering from a form of vulnerability. This discovery was no mean feat - Zone Labs Inc. is an international company, and a leader in the field of Internet security solutions. Founded in San Francisco in 1997 Zone Labs Inc. creates products which, to date, have successfully protected millions of PCs from the many risks posed by hackers and data thieves.

Tal first became interested in Zone Labs Inc. when he downloaded one of the company's products Zone Alarm Pro, to protect his own PC from security threats and unwanted intrusions. As he downloaded the software (firewall) he tried to work out how the system operated, putting himself in the position of a computer hacker. It wasn't long before he discovered that he had actually overcome the Zone Alarm's protection system and had uncovered a vulnerability allowing user settings to be modified.

After making contact with Zone Labs Inc. President, Gregor Freund, Tal found that he was in great demand when the company requested that he do all he could to try and restore the firewall to its original secure state. "We worked together to solve the problem," Tal enthused, "I had to dedicate a great deal of time to assisting Zone Labs, but I was more than willing to give as much of my time and knowledge as was necessary. My main concern was that together we would overcome this setback."

Tal worked with Zone Labs for three months until finally, in late February, Zone Labs Inc. announced that the Zone Alarm vulnerability had been successfully repaired paying tribute to Yaron Tal on its website. "We wish to thank Mr. Yaron Tal (of ytech.co.il) for notifying us of this potential vulnerability. He gave us invaluable assistance to rectify the issue."

Yaron Tal sees his education at ORT's Syngalowsky College as a stepping-stone towards professional development and is grateful to have been given the opportunity to advance a hobby into a profession.



Purim fun in the CIS



Above: ORT Kazan kids show off their very creative costumes, below: Preparing for celebrations in Moscow



St Petersburg students performed the story of Purim



'Live life to the fullest' ORT Hannah Szenesh student's final words

THE students at ORT Hannah Szenesh did not celebrate Purim this year. Just two weeks before the holiday, the school was dealt a severe blow and left grief-stricken when a suicide bomber blew himself up on a local bus in Haifa's Carmeliya neighbourhood, killing two students and two graduates of the school.

One of the students, 15-year-old Tom Hershko was travelling on the bus with his father Mordechai, who had just delivered a lecture on peace and non-violence at a local educational establishment. They were both killed.

The principal of ORT Hannah Szenesh, Rivka Shav remembers Tom as a shy and creative boy. She recalled a chilling moment that occurred the day after the attack when a girl, who was a friend of Tom, suddenly began to scream during a literature class.

Tom had been known to write comments in his friends' diaries, giving them perspective on the current situation. She had come across the last entry in her diary where Tom had written: "In order to live life to the fullest, make every minute count and understand that the present will never return. Live today like it will be your last and live it as best you can."



Principal of ORT Hannah Szenesh Rivka Shav with Robert Singer in front of memorial to Hannah Szenesh students and graduates

And then she noticed the date -- 5 March, 2p.m. Tom had been killed one hour later. The class is blessed in a way, Shav said, because they are able to remember their friend as someone who kept positive and look-

ing to the future. But for many students, staying positive is not so easy.

"Many students are now very reluctant to take the bus to school if they come to school at all," laments Shav. "Some are

not ready, psychologically, to go into the classes where those that were killed used to study and so significant psychological help is needed, both for the students and for the teachers. This is a hard time for us all."



Lunch date: ORT Argentina student with Davis Academy student bond during a lunch break

Southern hospitality for ORT Argentina students

AMERICAN ORT recently teamed up with the Jewish community of Atlanta in a special campaign to bring respite to some ORT Argentina students who continue to feel the effects of the bleak situation in their country.

Twenty ORT Argentina students just finished a two-month exchange programme at the Davis Academy in Atlanta where they studied general, Judaica and English classes at the Davis Academy, the city's Reform Jewish Day School.

Rabbi Steven Ballaban, the school's principal, said: "We are really trying to bring in children who have been severely impacted by the economic collapse in Argentina. I think one of the things that is really critical that I hope comes from this, is that our students and the Atlanta community really have a chance to experience the fact that all Jews are one family."

In Atlanta, ORT runs a computer centre at the Marcus Jewish Community Centre and at Ahavath Achim synagogue, and also provides technological support to Jewish schools.

ORT fashion forward



Above: Fashion design lesson at ORT Isfahan, Iran, 1950s, below: Fashion design course at ORT Binyamina, Israel, 2002



Portable skills

THOUGH trends have come and gone over the years, ORT's fashion courses have remained a classic.

When ORT was founded 123 years ago, numerous political, economic and legal restrictions prohibited many forms of employment to Jews. It was essential therefore for them to learn skills that would promote self-sufficiency and the ability to provide for themselves and their families whatever changing circumstances they faced. At a time of such insecurity, providing people with portable skills was of utmost importance in the minds of ORT's founders. Within both a home and a professional environment in the Pale of Settlement, tailoring became the mainstay of a growing section of the impoverished population of the shtetl.

ORT responded by providing tailoring courses to help craftsmen to acquire and improve their skills.

Now no longer impoverished in the shtetl, all fields of endeavour are open to Jewish people. The tailoring trade has evolved as well, allowing today's ORT students who study fashion design to use the most modern computer methods for design and production.

Anna Shaforostova is a fifth-year student at the ORT Moscow Technology College specialising in clothing design. She has already won a number of national competitions for her work.

"I enrolled at the ORT Technology College because I heard that the teachers are excellent and that I would get the opportunity to participate in competitions all the time," Shaforostova said. "I am sincerely grateful to ORT because I have learned how to use a computer to my advantage. Now, for me, it is just as reliable as a pencil."

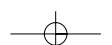
This summer Natasha Shaulova will study at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York, and she is grateful to ORT for helping her achieve her goals. Though she graduated from the Advertising Faculty at the ORT Technology College, Shaulova now works in the fashion industry. In addition to designing clothes, she works as a boutique manager and is responsible for marketing and merchandising.

"ORT has given me the tools to achieve my goals," she said. "After only two years of studying, I found a job and now I am off to New York to study fashion."

Fashion design students at ORT schools around the world carry on the ORT tradition of learning how to be self-sufficient. While trends come and go, ORT's brand of meeting the needs of its students is always in fashion.



Above left: Winning design from the ORT Moscow College, 2003, above right: Student from the ORT vocational school for girls, Grodno, Poland (now Belarus), 1928, above right: High fashion dressmaking at ORT Montreuil, Paris, 1960s and above far right: Fashion illustration class at ORT Moscow, 2000



FEEDBACK

Rave reviews for new ORT Centre in Baltics

"I am very happy about this possibility to learn how to use the computer, because up to now I have not had any, even elementary skills in it. I have a computer where I work, but before it was just standing on my desk gathering dust. Now I know how to use it. I have two children. My younger son studies PhotoShop here. He talked me into coming here for classes, because he likes the teachers who work here and the modern equipment available for studies."

Revekka, Businesswoman

"I am already retired, but young in my soul. I come to the Centre in order to gain new knowledge. I want to say that such a pleasant and friendly atmosphere here makes the studies much easier!"

Evgeny, Retired

ORT Latvia



Adults learn IT skills at the new ORT Centre in Latvia

LAST October, World ORT re-established itself in the Baltic region by opening two new ORT Technology Centres in Riga, Latvia. ORT Technology Centres were opened at the Dubnov Jewish School and at the Jewish Community Centre. The ORT Centre is considered the most modern and well equipped computer centre in the city and it greatly benefits Riga's elementary and high schools students, as well as adults and members of the Jewish Community.

The ORT Centre at the Dubnov School was made possible through the generous support of the Lauder Foundation, the Clore Foundation and Terri and Jean de Gunzburg

"I am currently looking for a job and sincerely hope that the new knowledge I am gaining at the Centre will help me find a good one. I like very much not only the classes itself, but also a possibility to come here and work independently."

Yuri, Unemployed

"I come here so I can upgrade the level of skill in my field. I like the modern equipment, excellent teaching, getting my questions answered, and of course, the friendly atmosphere."

Nehama, Database Administrator

"I come to the ORT Centre because I like the warm and friendly atmosphere, the high-range professionals who work here and the first-class equipment of the Centre."

Daniel, Law student at the Latvian University



Layleader perspective

By Mark Mishon
World ORT Executive Committee Member

I WOULD like to think that ORT is a family business - not exclusively mine - because my story echoes that of many key supporters of ORT around the world.

Twenty- five years ago, like any good self respecting undergraduate, I was encouraged to become involved in something communally useful by my mother, Judith Mishon, another veteran ORT leader. ORT was the only organisation that fitted the bill for me. It was and remains non-sectarian and international, and its work was and still is vitally important to Jews and non-Jews in need. Not only can ORT claim the credit for providing me with a circle of friends around the world, but it is also credited with introducing me to my career - with Lord David Young - the then Chairman of British ORT - who had the courage to employ me all those years ago.

Keeping me motivated within ORT for more than 25 years is a tribute to the current and past

leadership of the organisation, which has always recognised the importance of developing and nurturing new leaders. Nothing was more satisfying for me than to assume the Chairmanship of British ORT following in the steps of many exalted predecessors who stamped their mark on ORT.

ORT has identified the priorities for people around the Jewish world - and allowed me to focus on what really makes a difference - on those young and disadvantaged people around the world.

This focus is vital when my colleagues and I in the UK, promote ORT's important work to prospective donors and partners.

I did and continue to do my bit, but I believe it is equally important to encourage others to assume the privilege and responsibility of taking ORT into this new millennium.

Now that I am married and have two children, who knows, ORT could see another generation of Mishons!



Students from the Chad Improved Agricultural Programme

Chad update

THE Chad Improved Agricultural Programme, an ORT International Cooperation project has just completed its first year. ORT and ESSO are currently negotiating a contract extension between two and three years.

Project participants and many other villagers were trained in the fields of improved agricultural techniques, animal husbandry and vegetable growing which they have been able to implement into their own personal projects.

Argentina reunion



Top: ORT Argentina staff and students get ready for an emotional reunion by way of a video teleconference organised by the students at ORT Argentina, bottom: ORT Argentina graduate Luis Koenka with his wife Laura are reunited by video teleconference with Luis' brother Ariel, also an ORT graduate, who recently made Aliyah. Ariel is living in Ra'anana where he works in the catering industry.



Microsoft recognises ORT Venezuela



Microsoft Venezuela's Alvaro Celis with ORT Venezuela National Director Anita Lapco

ORT Venezuela's Labour Training for Young People project was selected as one of the winners in Microsoft's International Social Responsibility competition held in Caracas in March.

Labour Training for Young People is geared to local young people with a low-income and aims to help them ease their way into the workforce with appropriate skills. As part of the project, a training work centre will be established in Paraguaná and will offer computer courses in management, secretarial studies and accounting.

"Thanks to the support offered by Microsoft we will be able to carry out this project of educating and incorporating young people in the area to the workforce which will contribute to the improvement of their lives," said Anita Lapco, National Director of ORT Venezuela. "It is of great importance to establish this type of alliance with companies as prestigious as Microsoft Venezuela. Together we can create social programmes that will have a great impact in these communities."

The Microsoft project is aimed at reducing the existing gap between those with easy access to technology and those with no access at all. More than 20 countries from Asia, The Pacific and Latin American took part in the competition and ORT is the third Venezuelan organisation to win this contest. Microsoft continues its commitment to support programmes that allow young people to benefit from the use of technology in education by recognising organisations like ORT, that aim to reduce the technological gap within the most needy communities.

"At Microsoft we truly believe that by providing people with necessary tools, we can help them to achieve their full potential. We are pleased that the project developed by ORT Venezuela has been selected in this special contest, allowing us to play a part in the education of children and young people in our country," said Alvaro Celis, General Manager of Microsoft Venezuela. "By making use of our specific resources, we demonstrate our serious commitment to the Venezuelan community."

Digital Village aims to end cycle of poverty

THEMBI Mashinini is one of more than 250 satisfied graduates of ORT South Africa's Hewlett Packard Digital Village Employability Skills Course.

"I can't believe that I am where I am today and it's all because of the skills that ORT gave me. There's nothing that can stand in my way to achieve my goals and it all started with ORT," Mashinini said.

Before embarking upon the ORT Careers Course, Thembi was living in a squatter camp, with no prospects for the future. Through the computer training she received at ORT, she is now employed as a receptionist at a local college and putting her ORT training into practice.

Launched in the United States in February 2000, and managed by ORT South Africa, the HP Digital Village programme brings the tools for learning and competing in the digital economy into communities with the greatest need. Dikhatole Digital Village, with more than 90 Internet-enabled workstations, is the largest HP facility of its kind in the country.

Dikhatole started as a squatter camp for black labourers under the apartheid regime. The camp has water and electricity but no paved roads, and most of the houses are shacks. The 10,000 families living in the camp suffer from some of South Africa's worst problems, including AIDS - South Africa has the world's largest incidence of the disease- unemployment, violence, crime and an inadequate educa-



Thembi Mashinini accepts her ORT diploma

tional system with run down schools.

Dikhatole Digital Village Project Manager Siphon Kubeka proudly reports that a significant number of course graduates have found both permanent and temporary employment and some have even opened their own small businesses. Many graduates were able to find excellent temporary work opportunities with companies that provided essential services to last year's World Summit on Sustainable Development held

in Johannesburg.

The course's current students are already putting their newly - acquired skills into practice, and offering services within their own neighbourhood. The ORT students are doing database work for Pavilion, an organisation for children with physical disabilities, the local Youth Summit and the local Social Services council.

In addition to the courses offered by Digital Village, the project has also succeeded in promoting the advancement of women in the area, by creating the Dikhatole Women's Organisation (DWO). Members of DWO wanted to set up an income generating activity and with the assistance of the Digital Village, secured land, machinery and materials where they are now learning to make and sell high quality bricks - an extremely marketable commodity in Dikhatole. The bricks will then be sold to local construction companies, the community, and even used to build the women's own homes.

Zolani Quvane, a trainer at ORT Dikhatole Digital Village said she feels that the project has brought about significant change to the community and has been rewarding for the participants.

"The project is very successful because there are no projects like it in South Africa. Some of our graduates are already working, some are still looking for jobs and some are volunteering to gain experience. Peoples' lives are really changing," he said.

Uruguay

THE ORT Uruguay School of Management, and Social Sciences and the Chapman Graduate School of Business at Florida International University have signed an agreement that will grant a dual degree - Master of Business Administration (MBA), and Master of International Business (MIB) by way of a cross credit transfer.

ORT Uruguay MBA students who successfully complete three semesters of this programme will be accepted at Florida International University where they will be able to complete the MIB by taking an eight-month accredited programme at the Chapman Graduate School of Business.

ORT Uruguay University already has a similar accreditation in the form of the dual MBA degrees in Agribusiness with the Royal Agricultural College. In Latin America the ORT Uruguay school ranks among the top 25 business schools in the region.

Events 2003

April

Preparatory meeting of the Congress 2004 Committee, Geneva

May

12 - 16: The Fourth World ORT Wingate Seminar, London

June

1 - 4: The Fourth World ORT National Directors Forum, at The Sorbonne University, Paris, France

5: Fundraising and IC standing committee meetings

September

15 - 19: The First World ORT Head Teachers Seminar, London

World ORT and American ORT Mission to Argentina (TBC)

October

22 - 24 World ORT International Mission to Kharkov, Kiev and Odessa

25 - 26 World ORT Executive Meeting in Kiev

November

3 - 7: The Second World ORT Hatter Technology Seminar, London

12-14: World ORT Solidarity Mission to Israel

UJC General Assembly, Jerusalem

December

3 - 5: World ORT Chief Financial Officers' Conference, London

World ORT International Mission to Eastern Europe, Bulgaria and Czech Republic (TBC)

Why not join our mailing list and receive up to date information on upcoming missions? Further details can be obtained by emailing int.liaison@ort.org

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A warm welcome for Ambassador

IN traditional Russian style the ORT Moscow Technology College students welcomed Arkady Mil-Man, Israel's Ambassador to Russia, to the college in March.

ORT CIS R&D Head Sergey Gorinskiy briefed Mil-Man about ORT's history and present activities in Russia. Moscow ORT Technology College Head Yuri Mironenko briefed the minister about the college's departments and recent achievements, after which the first-prize winning students of the National Competition for Young Designers exhibited the two fashion collections. Igor Pavlov briefed the minister on the ORT Vocational Training Centre and its activities, after which Mr. Mil-Man was given a short tour of the VTC facilities.



Ambassador Arkady Mil-Man samples some traditional Russian bread prepared by students

New RJC President visits ORT



Head of the CIS Unit at World ORT Vladimir Dribinskiy with Eugeny Satanovsky at ORT House

THE newly-elected President of the Russian Jewish Congress (RJC), Dr Eugeny Satanovsky, a leading businessman in the steel industry, visited World ORT on 1 April.

Satanovsky, who has a doctorate in Middle East politics, said that the main concern of Jewish parents in Russia is that their kids get the best education, and unfortunately many of the Jewish schools in Russia do not adhere to the highest standards. That is why, he said, the relationship between the RJC and World ORT is so important to the Jewish communi-

ty in Russia.

"ORT and the RJC are old friends and our meetings today at World ORT launched a new era of cooperation between us," he said. "Together we aim to create a new system for Jews in Russia based upon delivering the best education within a pluralist Jewish environment."

Robert Singer said of the visit: "We are delighted to be working with the RJC and together, within the framework of the Russian national curriculum, we hope to raise the level and profile of Jewish education in Russia."

ORT is the world's largest Jewish education and training organization. Since 1880, ORT has been providing service to the Jewish people by promoting self-sufficiency and giving Jewish communities the skills and knowledge necessary to survive and to thrive. For over 120 years, in more than 100 countries, communities have turned to ORT for help and we have always responded in the way we know best - by providing education that can help them to live their lives with dignity and hope

World ORT



Securing their future



Educating for Life

Find out how you can help secure their future by visiting www.ort.org or by contacting World ORT at 126 Albert Street, London NW1 7NE tel: +44 (0)20 7446 8500 e-mail: wo@ort.org or any one of more than 35 ORT National offices worldwide

WAO celebrates Persian Jewish Culture

WOMEN'S American ORT held a celebration of Persian Jewish culture, organised by the Young Women of Suburban Chicago Region. The event, "Lunch with a View: Queen Esther's Legacy - The Iranian Jewish Experience" took place on the eve of Purim, and was attended by more than 200 young women.

"Lunch with a View" is an annual author luncheon and this year featured authors Gina Nahai, author of *Cry of the Peacock* and *Moonlight on the Avenue of Faith*; and Dr. Houman Sarshar, Editor of *Esther's Children - a Portrait of Iranian Jews*. Guest speaker Shahnaz Aghapour, a graduate of ORT Iran, forced to flee the country and abandon her education due to the oppressive regime, spoke movingly about her improved quality of life as a result of ORT. Now based in the US, Shahnaz studied at Zarem/Golde ORT Technical Institute where she is now employed, and emotionally heralded the positive effect ORT had on her, "ORT is my heart. It changed my life," Shahnaz enthused.

Dr. Sarshar, Publications Director of the Centre for Iranian Jewish Oral History, provided an impressive visual presentation about the rich history of the Jews of Iran with images from his book.

Gina Nahai captivated the audience during her vivid description of the experiences of her female relatives, including one who had studied at ORT Iran, on whom she based her novels.

The event raised some \$50,000 for ORT's educational programs, and was held during Purim to raise awareness of the plight of the Jewish people throughout the world underlining the need for support during the present crisis.



Michael Grade, Michael Naughton and Richard Desmond at the British ORT Breakfast

British ORT Breakfast success

NEARLY 300 guests packed London's Park Lane Hotel in February for the Annual British ORT Business Breakfast.

The breakfast raised £50,000 for ORT projects around the world, which were praised by UK media personalities Michael Grade and Richard Desmond for their role in overcoming deprivation and ignorance and achieving great scholastic successes through education and training.

The event's host, Michael Grade CBE, had himself been the principal speaker at the 2001 Breakfast, and this year gave a warm and witty welcome to Richard Desmond, Chairman of Northern & Shell Plc, publishers of the Express and Star newspapers and OK! Magazine.

