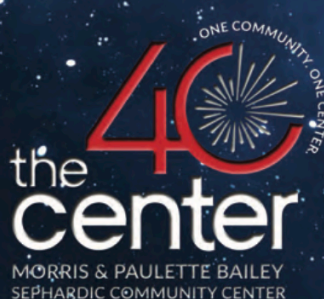


J E W I S H

MAY 2022

# IMAGE™

SCA BOOTCAMPUS  
TEACHING ABOUT ANTI-SEMITISM  
CELEBRATING MOTHER'S DAY  
SPRING & SUMMER SALADS  
REASONS YOU MAY NOT BE LOSING WEIGHT  
THE MIRACLE OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL



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**HOW THE CENTER BECAME OUR CENTER**





# SCA BOOTCAMPUS

## LEARNING TO STAND UP AGAINST ANTI-SEMITISM

THE CHALLENGES CAUSED BY THE BROADENING GAP BETWEEN OUR VALUES AND THOSE OUR YOUTH ARE EXPOSED TO ON CAMPUS AND BEYOND ARE SERIOUS ONES. TO MEET THE CHALLENGES, THE SCA BUILT BOOTCAMPUS, THE FIRST OF ITS KIND 3 DAY IMMERSIVE RETREAT FOR OUR COMMUNITY'S HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS.

The topics included: Sephardic pride, heritage and identity in the campus context, social media literacy, critical thinking skills and how to apply them to recognize the radical ideologies being directed at them from both the far left and far right, recognizing the various forms of anti-Semitism, and combating them from a place of confidence.

BootCampUs took place in the beautiful bucolic setting of the Capital Retreat Center in Pennsylvania. With its ample lecture spaces, break out/workshop rooms, onsite rope courses, zip lines, fire pits and more, the perfect balance of education and social programming was created. Along with almost a year of planning to develop the custom curriculum and bring in world class topic experts, the retreat was a huge success. Following is some feedback from the students themselves.

### **Carol Tawil, Magen David HS**

For me, going on the SCA BootCampUs retreat was memorable because it taught relevant education to high school seniors in entertaining and thought-provoking ways, while also providing opportunities for fun.

The prestigious lineup of speakers included activists against anti-Semitism on college campuses, and representatives from organizations such as AIPAC and Stand With Us. Each speaker inspired me to constantly push and stand up for our Jewish beliefs, and to set boundaries and have sensible conversations to educate people instead of fighting. Engaging in group discussions between our peers helped me understand the various types of anti-Semitism that could be found on college campuses, as well as other people's viewpoints on how the subject is handled in our community. I was particularly intrigued by the lectures dealing with the psychology of social media, how people instinctively believe in fallacies, and tips for avoiding misinformation. I feel that these classes provided me with the tools I will need to combat anti-Semitism in college.

In addition to the classes, the trip provided entertaining activities, such as watching a show from the comedian Modi. When he joked about the many customs of various Jewish communities and retold amusing anecdotes from his life, the audience cracked up! I also enjoyed the intensity of climbing the high ropes course, zip-lining over a lake in the dark, and running between tasks with my teammates in The Amazing Race.





It was an honor to have been invited to the first ever SCA BootCampUs, and I hope that others will take this amazing opportunity in the future.

#### **Jessica Saadia, Yeshiva of Flatbush HS**

It was right before my AP exams and the last two days of the four years spent at Yeshivah of Flatbush High School—so, you could understand why I was hesitant about joining this retreat. My mother reasoned, “These last days of high school will soon be a blur, but the knowledge you can gain from the SCA speakers will be invaluable.” She had a point. I will be heading into the great big world of “University” with no tools to defend my identity and homeland. My mother was right. I gained a new perspective from the speakers this weekend, in particular Adela Cojab and the AIPAC representatives.

As a senior approaching college it was inspiring to hear that a teenager made a huge difference in the American legal system and for Jews around the world. Adela, now a law student, made a difference on her college campus,



NYU, and far beyond that. She sued NYU for not acting on the anti-Semitic behavior occurring on campus. I learned that our age does not quantify the impact that we can have on combating anti-Semitism.

I was also impressed to learn that both Jewish and non-Jewish people can work together on conflicts surrounding Israel. The AIPAC speakers came from different backgrounds and religions, creating a new perspective that I was excited to hear about. The diversity formed a safe environment and made me feel like the Jews are not alone in combating hate. It taught me that young adults, like us, can make a difference in policies by being active in the government and helping with lobbying congressmen.

There was not a moment on this trip that wasn't enjoyed, and I mean that with no exaggeration. A key message from this retreat that was mentioned in many of the lectures was that just because the overwhelming majority is doing it, doesn't mean it's right. Before the conference, when encountered with hate, my instinct was to turn the other way. It felt like I was fighting anti-Semitism alone; however, I now know that there is a global community backing me up. In all of the interactive sessions, each speaker taught us something new and widened our perspective. I left the retreat prepared to approach situations like these.

I want to conclude by thanking the SCA. We are extremely lucky to have a community who cares for us and our future. I'd also like to give a big thanks to Yeshivah of Flatbush for preparing us for the new vocabulary and topics that were brought up on the retreat.

#### **Noah Levy, Hillel HS**

A day hadn't elapsed from when I heard about SCA BootCampUs, to when I submitted my application. The excitement I had from the ability to spend three incredible





days with my peers from all the community schools was immeasurable. My friends, unsurprisingly, joined with the same fervor that I had. We thought that the goal was to learn more about Israel, but it was about so much more than just that. We had team building exercises with Irene Hanan and Yvette Hidary, a game show hosted by Rabbi Soffer, stand-up comedy by Modi, and an entire Amazing Race event organized by Shirley Catton, in addition to speakers such as Adela Cojab, Dr. Mijal Bitton, Jeffrey Beyda, Stand With Us, Liel Leibovitz, Dr. David Sitt, Noa Tishby, Julian Coakley, Karli Krasinpol, Avi Posen, and Sefi Kraut who left us with a thirst to get involved.





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### FEATURING:



**NOA TISHBY**  
Israeli-American actress, producer, writer and activist



**LEIL LEIBOVITZ**  
Editor-at-Large of Tablet Magazine, and co-host of its podcast, Unorthodox



**JULIAN COAKLEY**  
Director of AIPAC's Sephardic Division



**RENA NASAR FIRST**  
Executive Director of Campus Affairs at StandWithUs



**ADELA COJAB**  
Jewish advocate, NYU graduate and JD candidate at Cardozo School of Law



**KARLI KRASNIPOL**  
AIPAC's Director of Leadership Development



**AVI POSEN**  
Assistant Director of Education at Unpacked for Educators



**DR. MIJAL BITTON**  
Scholar in Residence at the Shalom Hartman Institute of North America & the leader of the downtown community of NYC



**DR. DAVID SITT**  
Licensed clinical psychologist and Deputy Chair of the Dept. of Psychology at Baruch College

Dr. Mijal Bitton's speech really resonated with me. Her intellect, enthusiasm, and deep research, all from an outsider's perspective, gave me an even deeper admiration for all that our community has to offer. The central question of her research is why our community remains as strong as it is, for so many generations. She attributed the phenomenon to collective morality, the influx of new immigrants from abroad who are reminding us of our traditions, and wide, but rigid, social boundaries. Going into the speech, I already knew how lucky we are. Deconstructing each aspect of our community and explaining its importance to our longevity intensified my pride.

The relationships I made will last a lifetime, and leaving felt like saying goodbye to childhood friends. I implore all students to take this opportunity to create a powerful front on anti-Semitism. We must take it upon ourselves to find our own ways to join the fight, and the SCA's BootCampUs offers us a wide range of paths to choose. □