

helped carry their friend's pain and they did it naturally, as though it could not have been different. They had internalized the sense of family that permeates within our yeshiva and so clearly resonated when most needed."

Last year there were 41 graduates. Typically, 99% attend *beis medrash* after graduating, 99% of these in Israel. Within three years of graduation, 85% are attending college.

Davis Renov Stahler Yeshiva High School for Boys of the Hebrew Academy of Long Beach. 700 Ibsen Street, Woodmere, admissions office 516-295-7700, ext. 0. Founded in 1997, DRS is part of the HALB system and boasts a *beis medrash* with 15 students. Their mission statement is to "provide a high level Jewish and general studies education in a warm and caring atmosphere. We provide a wide array of extracurricular opportunities for students to thrive beyond the classroom." Uniquely, their building is used for activities until midnight every weekday. They also highlight "the tremendous love and care we have for each student."

To illustrate this, Rabbi Yisroel Kaminetsky shared an experience from several years ago about a member of the hockey team who was diagnosed with cancer. Each student undertook to perfect one *middah* or one *mitzvah* to merit a *refuah sheleimah* for this teenager. In addition, the hockey team raised money for Chai Lifeline. This has become an annual undertaking and the hockey team has raised some \$100,000 so far. The happy ending: Rabbi Kaminetsky was *mesader kiddushin* at this boy's wedding. He confided that he has been invited to nearly all of the 120 weddings of DRS grads. "We like to say that if your son attends DRS you must be prepared to invite his 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grade *rebbeim* to his wedding," said Rabbi Kaminetsky.

DRS is the largest school with 325 enrollees. Last year, the graduating class had 79 boys. Typically, 95% attend *beis medrash* after graduation—99% in Israel. All boys attend college within three years of graduation.

Rambam Mesivta. 15 Frost Lane, Lawrence, admissions office 516-371-5824. Established in 1991, Rambam has no affiliated elementary school or *beis medrash* program. Their mission statement is to offer "a unique educational program with a proven track record of success year after year spanning hundreds of graduates. Substantially, all of our graduates continue post-high school Torah studies at leading *yeshivot* in *Eretz Yisrael* where they are eagerly recruited."

Rambam is "a small school by design with a purely merit-based admissions policy, which ensures a unique environment and *chevrah* in which the development of *middos*, character development, and leadership are emphasized. They inculcate their students with critical Jewish values such as *ahavat Eretz Yisrael*, *ahavat Yisrael*, *kavod habriot*, *tzniyut*, *yosher*, and *hakarat hatov*."

Rambam is the second smallest school with 165 enrollees and 36 graduates in 2010. Typically, 98% attend *beis medrash* after graduation—90% in Israel. Within three years, 100% of graduates are attending college. Last year, eight

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Continuing Series for Men

Guide To Yeshivas
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Rambam graduates received *semichah* from Yeshiva University—a disproportionately large representation from a rather small school.

In an exclusive interview, Rabbis Friedman and Eliach captured the essence of their school with the following anecdote: During the 2001 *intifada*, tourism in Israel was suffering terribly. For winter vacation, Rambam Mesivta created “Mitnadvim,” a student volunteer program. Fourteen students visited Israel in January 2001 (of course with parental consent) and volunteered on an air force base. They had daily *shiurim* and were able to give *chizuk* to our Israeli brethren. This grew into an annual mission that has expanded to include painting bomb shelters, volunteering in soup kitchens, and assisting in Shaarei Zedek Hospital. This program truly reflects a deep commitment to *chesed* and to *Eretz Yisrael*.

Hebrew Academy of the Five Towns and Rockaway. 635 Central Avenue, Cedarhurst, admissions office 516-569-3807. Established in 1978, HAFTR graduated 95 boys and girls last year. The school, evenly split between the genders, consists of 163 boys. Their mission is “to offer a warm, Torah-rich, student-centered environment in which students enjoy a dual curriculum of intensive *limudei kodesh* and rigorous academics in the humanities and sciences. Their challenging course of study is designed to foster creative and independent thought and to facilitate stu-

dent success in the finest *yeshivos* and universities. Our graduates are knowledgeable, articulate, dedicated Orthodox Jews who become productive members of society and ardent advocates for the Jewish people.”

HAFTR prides itself on designing individualized courses of study for each student; there is no specific track for lower-performing students. They also “provide a wide array of extracurricular activities that give students opportunities to engage in community service, cultural arts, athletics, student government, religious and political activism, and academic competition and research.”

In an exclusive interview, Rabbi Oppen (*limudei kodesh* principal) and Ms. Lippman (*limudei chol* principal) indicated that their graduates served in leadership positions and as volunteers at top universities throughout the United States—and maintained their responsibilities as *halachah*-observant Jews. HAFTR graduates have organized *minyanim* through the Hillel chapters at Princeton, Harvard, and elsewhere. They also play active roles in Chabad and MASA. “Recently, one of our graduates stood up to anti-Israel propaganda on the University of Albany campus. He organized counter-demonstrations, influenced others, and made a *kiddush Hashem*.”

Mesivta Yam HaTorah. 27-16 Healy Avenue, Far Rockaway, admissions office 516-295-5700. Established in 2008, MYHT will have its first graduating class (seven boys) in 2011. There are a total of 35 boys enrolled in the school.

“MYHT’s mission is to establish stu-

dents to become ‘healthy’ *Bnei Torah*, developing in students a love of G-d, Man, and Torah. Upon completing MYHT, students will be dedicated to the betterment of the *klal*, and to continuing to strive both in their studies and in developing their relationship with Hashem.” Uniquely, interactive learning is practiced in all classes; there is no lecturing.

Conclusion. Which is the best yeshiva high school? This is impossible to answer. More importantly, which is the best high school for your son? Also not an easy one. When our son was graduating from eighth grade, a decision had to be made. We did our best to research the options and make an educated, informed decision. There is so much inaccurate information and rumor that it can be difficult to uncover the truth. Be diligent in your research!

We and our son, who just started tenth grade, are delighted with our selection. Of course, dear reader, we may not share the same priorities and goals. May Hashem guide you and your son to maximize his potential and may he bring us all much *nachas*.

Asking an overworked *menahel/principal* to complete a checklist and grant a personal interview is more than a small imposition. I want to thank all the wonderful institutions who cooperated with data submission and personal interviews to make this article possible. *Yasher ko’ach* to the *rebbeim* and teachers who devote so much of their energy into the *chinuch* of our children. May you all enjoy much *nachas* from your *talmidim* and wonderful institutions! ❖

Renee Jeret, MA, a retired audiologist, resides in Lawrence with her husband and three children. Her son is in 10th grade at one of the fine schools listed above.

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Aerobic Core Training with Circuit Training (girls) 1 st -3 rd Grade Sunday 11:15am-12:15pm 4 th -8 th Grade Sunday 11:15am-12:15pm 5 th -8 th Grade Saturday Night 7:30-8:30pm	Dance Combo Jazz / Hip Hop / Tap 4-6 year olds Sunday 9:30-10:15am 4-6 year olds Tuesday 4:10-5:00pm Ballet 3-4 year olds Sunday 10:30-11:15am
Hip Hop for Fitness & Fun 1 st -High School girls Thursday Nights Times vary for different ages	Total Body Conditioning 1 st -4 th Grade Monday 4:30-5:25pm (Girls) Monday 5:30-6:25pm (Boys)
Friday After School Fitness & Fun 4-6 year olds Friday 12:45-1:30	Cardio Blast 1 st -4 th Grade Wednesday 4:30-5:25pm (Girls) Wednesday 5:30-6:25pm (Boys)

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