

# NORTH SHORE HEBREW ACADEMY

ישיבת חוף הצפון



## Parashat Bamidbar- Finding Purpose in the Wilderness

By Matthew Radparver



Parashat Bamidbar begins with the Jewish people in the desert, or Bamidbar, which literally translates to “in the wilderness.” It’s a dry, empty place. No cities, no stability, no distractions. Nothing but sand, sky, and silence. And yet it’s exactly there, in that barren, dry place, that Hashem chooses to give the Torah.

The Midrash writes “אין התורה נקנית אלא למי שעושה את עצמו כמדבר,” “The Torah is only acquired by someone who makes themselves like a wilderness” (Bamidbar Rabbah 1:7). What does this mean? It’s not telling us to be lost or disorganized. It’s telling us to be open.

In a desert, there’s nothing to block your view. Nothing stands in the way. That’s exactly how we need to approach the Torah. Without ego. Without noise. Ready to be something bigger than ourselves.

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In school and in life, we're always trying to be "somebody." We want to make our voice heard and to build a name. Yet sometimes, growth happens when we pause and make space for something more. Bamidbar reminds us that in the silence, as in the desert, we can hear Hashem.

There is also something else powerful about this parasha. It's full of structure. The tribes are counted and arranged each with a flag, a place, and a purpose. In the middle of a chaotic and unorganized wilderness, Hashem creates order. What this reminds us is that even when we feel we're wandering, whether that be spiritually, emotionally, or socially, Hashem is always with us, holding our hand and guiding us on the path.

The Torah isn't given to us in perfect circumstances. It's given to us in our "midbar" moments, which can be the confusing, chaotic, and challenging parts of life. That's when the Torah can truly enter and make a difference.

So as we prepare for Shavuot, the time we reaccept the wonderful gift that is the Torah, let's not wait for the perfect setting. Let's make ourselves open, like the desert. Let's be ready like the tribes. Because sometimes, the wilderness is where we find our true purpose and direction.

Shabbat Shalom and Chag Sameach!

Shabbat  
Shalom

## **Senior Internships: An Entrance Into the Workforce By Eva Zubli**

As the school year begins to come to an end, North Shore seniors are given the last month of their year to explore real world interests through the senior internships. Senior internships are an amazing opportunity to explore potential careers and to be in a real work environment.

Internships range from working in hospitals and labs to certain businesses, law firms and much more. These internships not only give insight into a field North Shore students are interested in studying, but are a crucial part in what helps prepare students for college and their next steps in life. For example, Jordan Zubli, a graduating senior in the class of 2025, had the opportunity to intern at a Cardiology office in the area. He was able to learn a lot from this first-hand experience and gained more valuable knowledge about the field and medicine in general, sharing "This has really been an eye-opening experience.

Waking up every morning and getting exposed to something I wouldn't have otherwise experienced gives me a taste

of the real world and real work settings." Jordan has been really enjoying this opportunity as an intern and has been learning a lot.

Another senior, Michelle Bassanell, has been spending her internship time working at a law firm, and she shared, "I had a great learning experience, and I think that this will benefit me greatly in my future career."

This is a very exciting stage for the seniors as they prepare to graduate and begin to start their adult lives, and through this internship month, they are able to experience real life work settings and truly prepare for what is to come.

### **Guess the Teacher!**

How well do you know your teachers...?

1. My favorite sport is hockey-- Knock Hockey.
2. Back in high school, I performed at Carnegie Hall as part of an Israeli dance troupe.
3. One of the worst things and the best you can say to me is to compliment me on my hair.
4. I was on campus the day the Columbia riots started-- in 1968.
5. You might be surprised to hear that I am a terrible Scrabble player.

Answer on page 10 of the issue!



## **NSHAHS Students March for Israel**

### **By Elaine Novogrudsky**



On May 18, NSHAHS students woke up early and traveled to Manhattan for the annual Israeli Day Parade. The parade marks an event where students join approximately 50,000 people to showcase their pride in Zionism, showing up with immense energy, enthusiasm, and props! Flags, both American and Israeli, in addition to NSHA banners, were proudly displayed by attendees. Music played loudly as students exuberantly danced to it, allowing a large crowd to share in the Israeli spirit.

The day of the parade marks almost 600 days since the hostages were taken and the brutal attack of Hamas. Since then, the North Shore campus has been full of heartfelt support, as students initiated chesed, wrote letters to IDF soldiers, and created Israel-themed art. The recent fashion show, spearheaded by Mrs. Berner and the student leadership team, raised money for an Israeli Organization for the Hachnasat Kallah fund for brides who are struggling to pay their expenses. On Yom Haatzmaut, students alternated between classrooms to learn from Judaic faculty about different Zionist topics, in addition to digital literacy courses.

Despite seeing some anti-Zionist protestors near the parade, many students stated that they were able to unite and say, “Am Yisrael Chai” back. Miriam Kagan ‘26 shared, “The pushback empowered us even further to advocate for Israel. I think it’s important that we acknowledge that.”

The parade also provided an opportunity for the entire school to come together, including to join with the middle school students and faculty. Evan Novogrudsky, an NSHA middle school student who attended, stated “The parade was so inspiring. It was so great to be united with the entire school, chanting “Bring them Home.”

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A special shoutout to David Dynkin '26 for being acknowledged as the parade MVP and Rebecca Ahdout '28 as the runner-up. Their spirit at the event stood out to NSHA students and faculty alike. Overall, the parade was an incredible opportunity for students to celebrate Israel as a community.





## North Shore Fashion Show

The NSHAHS gym transformed into a runway on May 20th for the highly anticipated Fashion Show. Nearly 60 female students from all grades participated, with 45 models showcasing stunning pieces generously loaned by local boutiques like Maya's Place, Lev Couture, Clementine NY, Natalie's Fashion House, Moda Mia, and Apparael. The event was a true testament to student leadership, with girls taking on roles as producers, stylists, and dance heads. Over 170 tickets were sold, filling the audience with supportive moms, grandmothers, aunts, sisters, friends, community members, and teachers. Beyond the glitz and glamour, a core goal of the fashion show was to empower the girls, providing them a platform to shine, build confidence, and develop leadership skills, leaving a positive and lasting mark on the school's culture. The evening's professional atmosphere, enhanced by Gary Wallin's expert sound, lighting, and staging, made the students look and feel incredible. Inspirational speeches by Elianna Oken, who spoke about modesty in fashion and finding one's passion, and Maya Namdar, who shared the story behind her modest clothing brand, Maya's Place, and how her late daughter Liel continues to inspire her, added a meaningful depth to the night. Congratulations to NSHAHS faculty member Mrs. Meira Berner for all of the hard work she put in to making the night one to remember!



## A Reflection on the Boys and Girls Torah Bowl Championship Rounds By Valerie Bruckheimer



Congrats to our boys' and girls' Torah Bowl teams on a terrific season this year! Both teams had stellar performances in the regular season, with the girls also going undefeated!

Torah Bowl is a fun competition where players try to answer questions posed, based upon their study of designated Parshiyot from a given Sefer of Chumash, this year Bemidbar, including both the Pshat (simple meaning) and the commentary of Rashi. The competition can get very fierce, especially so with our very dedicated teams at North Shore! In March, both teams successfully won their respective playoff matches, making them division champions and earning themselves a spot in the championship game. Competing then in late April against other top-notch schools from across New York and New Jersey, our teams showcased the incredible amount of effort and studying they put into the competition. While neither team came in first, the players should all be commended for their time and dedication towards studying Torah. Their experience this year will help them to hopefully bring home the trophy in the future. As Joel Mordekhai, '26, captain of the boys' team, put it, "Even though we lost, this will just be further motivation for next year to win."

While we look forward to another incredible season next year, we are sad to say goodbye to the seniors on both teams, especially Girls' Captain Jordana Bruckheimer, who has been on the team her whole high school career. She has showcased her dedication to the team as well as her organizational skills, making sure that all of the team members put effort into their studying. Thank you, Jordana, for your leadership, and we wish you success in the future!



## Journalism Excellence Recognized



Ilana Greenberg, one of North Shore Note's very own editors, and Elisheva Lemonik, one of NSHAHS's Class of 2025 yearbook editors, received journalism honors on May 22. These two North Shore Seniors received awards from the Five Towns Jewish Times after being nominated by Mrs. Zabinsky. As the leader in local journalism for over 20 years, 5TJT likes to take a role in encouraging the next generation of journalists and did so this year with their 4<sup>th</sup> annual Student Journalism Awards. Ilana and Elisheva were invited to the 5TJT office to receive their award and were listed in a 5TJT Congratulatory Ad. They also met with Michele Justic, managing content editor, and got a behind the scenes tour of how 5TJT operates. In addition, they were treated to a lunch with fellow awardees from other high schools and with other members of the 5TJT editorial and journalism team. As Ilana shared, "It was exciting to hear the "inside scoop" on journalism from behind the scenes, and share our interest with other Yeshiva students. We were grateful for the opportunity!" Congratulations to Ilana and Elisheva!





## NSHAHS Students Take On Yeshiva League Model UN By Yael Zargari

This week, the students at the NSHAHS were fortunate enough to attend the third competition of the year: Yeshiva League Model UN (YLMUN). A Model United Nations conference is an educational event designed to foster diplomacy, critical thinking, and global awareness. Representing countries from different continents, delegates from our school joined other delegates from other Yeshivas to discuss some of the world's most pressing issues, from human rights to international security and beyond. The conference, held at the Young Israel of Woodmere, challenged students in political decision-making and negotiation of solutions to solve real-world problems. Preparation began weeks in advance, as students worked hard to research their assigned countries, wrote position papers, and practiced public speaking and debate skills. Once the conference began, delegates spent hours in committee sessions, engaging in debates, drafting resolutions, and forming alliances with other countries' representatives. The conference was also a chance for students to make new friends and gain confidence in speaking, as forming alliances and negotiating with other countries allowed for more peer interaction. Earlier this year, Bryan Haroonian '26 attended Yeshiva University National United Nations (YUNMUN). Having YLMUN be his second conference of the year, he shared that, "Overall YLMUN was a pretty different experience than that of other competitions I've attended; I thought it would be a more informal conference—considering that it was being officiated by high schoolers—however it turned out to be highly competitive and my committee at YLMUN this year was honestly more difficult than my committee at YUNMUN."



Many students had their first Model UN conference experience at YLMUN, allowing them the opportunity to develop skills for next year's season. Yael Zargari '27 shared, "Being new to Model UN, I wasn't sure what to expect—but I ended up loving it. The challenge pushed me out of my comfort zone in the best way."

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A big congratulations to Valerie Bruckheimer '27 on receiving Honorable Mention, who, with her talented oratorical skills and persuasive debate performance, left a lasting impression on both delegates and chairs alike. A big thanks to all our outstanding delegates whose hard work really paid off; North Shore couldn't have been better represented. A huge thank you to Mrs. Goldschmidt, Abigail Rutta '25, Secretary-General, and Mayah Rozenzweig '26, Under-Secretary-General, for all their hard work and dedication in guiding the students and making this event possible.

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### **Murals Come to North Shore!**

NSHAHS Art teacher Ms. Stephanie Folk has started a mural program. Select students will be working with Ms. Folk to create beautiful wall murals around the school, designed to illustrate our core values. The first mural, which was recently started, is inspired by the theme "Torat Yisrael" and celebrates the commitment to and love for the Torah, Mitzvot, Halacha, Medinat Yisrael, and Klal Yisrael, uniting these core values into a visual expression of Jewish identity and pride.



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**Did You Guess? This month's "Guess the Teacher" was Mrs. Fisher!**

## **Engineering Spotlight: Let's innovate!**

### **By Tamar Katz**

On Tuesday May 20, NSHAHS students traveled to the American Dream Mall to participate in the Center for Initiatives in Jewish Education (CIJE) Engineering Competition. When I first heard about CIJE, I didn't expect a Jewish engineering program to feel so exciting and hands-on. CIJE is an engineering competition where students work on a project throughout the year and then present their work. What makes CIJE different from other STEM programs is how it ties in Jewish values like tikkun olam—the idea of repairing the world. We're encouraged to think about how our projects can make a real difference, whether that's in our local community or somewhere across the globe. This year, the competition took place at the American Dream Mall, with over 400 projects submitted. Two of the projects from our school—TrackPass and the 400-Shabbat Smart House—won in their categories! TrackPass is a system designed to prevent constant classroom interruptions from students asking to use the bathroom. It uses fingerprint scans to track when students leave and return, and gives teachers a web interface to monitor the logs. It's a smart, practical solution that helps both students and teachers stay focused. The 400-Shabbat Smart House is a system designed specifically for Jews who keep Shabbat. It features an automatic lighting system and a heating and cooling setup that adjusts to your preferences—all without requiring any action on Shabbat. This project beautifully combines tradition and modern technology in a respectful and useful way, making Shabbat observance easier and more comfortable. The process was incredibly rewarding for all students involved. Maxim Askari '26 shared, "Seeing so many impressive inventions and innovations at the CIJE competition was truly inspiring. It challenged Tamar and me to push ourselves and to improve and advance our invention beyond what we had originally imagined. We're now more motivated than ever to take it to the next level." Congrats to all who participated!



## CIJE Innovation Day

On Tuesday, May 20, Mr. Santiago took his engineering students to the CIJE Innovation Day competition, where they won two awards! CIJE Innovation Day is the culmination of a yearlong engineering and design journey, where students are encouraged to look at the world around them through the eyes of a problem-solver. North Shore's winners were Tamar Katz and Maxim Askari for their project "TrackPass," which won the "Best Engineering for School Award" and Yosef Hakimi and Daniel Rozic for their project "Shabbat Smart House," which won the "Best Engineering for Jewish Life Award." Congratulations to all who participated and a big thank you to Mr. Santiago for his dedication to engineering excellence!



## NSHAHS Annual Art Show



This year's Annual Art Show was yet another inspiring celebration of creativity and talent at North Shore Hebrew Academy High School. The exhibition showcased a beautiful range of student work, from conceptual oil paintings to intricate architectural models, fashion portfolios and charcoal studies. Each piece reflected the dedication, skill and imagination of our young artists. Congratulations to all the creative minds who brought this vibrant exhibition to life and a special thanks to the art department for all of their hard work and dedication to student excellence!



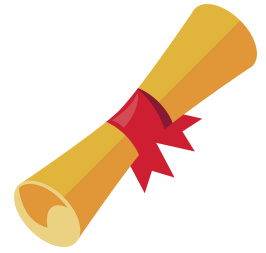


## NSHAHS Annual Art Show





## Evening of Excellence



North Shore's best and brightest were recognized at the annual Evening of Excellence last week. In addition to the gorgeous art show, the school choir performed beautifully and new inductees into the National Honor Society and subject-area honor societies were acknowledged. Many congratulations to everyone who was honored!



**Mental Health Spotlight:  
New North Shore Initiatives  
By Hili Zubli**



As we finish AP Season, students finish a month of standardized tests filled with unnecessary stress and burdens that can negatively affect their mental health. Active Minds is a student-run club that raises awareness about mental health and creates a safe space for students to talk about their well-being. The club works to reduce stigma and support students through education, events, and peer connection. Recently, Active Minds hosted guest speakers Dr. Nira Niffise and Dr. Kalnicki, who shared their expertise with the group. Both doctors introduced different conditions, and shared the exercises and patient treatments they give. The event supported the club's mission to promote mental health and build a stronger, more supportive school community.

This year was the inaugural year for the new club, a chapter of the National movement to increase awareness about mental health. Mayah Rosenzweig '26, the Vice President of the Club, shared that, "We have gotten such inspiring and warm feedback. We are so happy to have positive feedback so quickly and looking forward to furthering our impact next year."

Along with the Active Minds Club, a group of NSHAHS students joined about 10 Long Island Schools to participate in the Cohen's Strong Mental Health Program with Northwell Health. Over the course of the program, students were trained in Teen Mental Health First Aid and journeyed to Albany to advocate for increased mental health resources, trained support, and more on a state level. Over the course of the program, the school cohort was also responsible for producing a project that tackled the issues specific to their community. The NSHAHS group thought it was critical to address the impact of antisemitism on mental health, thus deciding to interview a wide array of speakers, including Legislator Mazi Pilip, Jewish college students, and psychologists about how to best advocate for our community, while, simultaneously, knowing when the best time to walk away is. The interviews are available on Spotify on a podcast called Echoes of Expression, covering topics that range from cultural references in Judaism's relation to mental health to personal experiences with antisemitism. Elaine Novogrudsky '26, co-host of the podcast along with Mayah Rosenzweig '26, shared, "The opportunity to interview such amazing speakers has been incredible so far. The message we are spreading is so incredibly important. We are just getting started, and we hope the podcast continues to inspire other young people to advocate." If these messages hit close to home, we encourage you to go check out the podcast!