

## Newsletter Update – September 2010

**"Were you there or did I dream it?"**

**On Rosh Hashana 5770 we had a dream that students from low socio-economic backgrounds, would be provided with outstanding young teachers and educators.**

**This year, the dream became a reality.**

**Seventy participants have recently taken their first steps as part of the first session in the Hotam program. We wish all the participants our good wishes for success in their studies and in the advancement of their influence on Israeli society in the future.**

**This is also an opportunity for us to thank our partners who, as a result of their aid and involvement, helped our dream take on substance:**

**To the employees and dedicated Directors of the Ministry of Education, the Directors and supervisors at the various schools, the "It's All About Education" Organization, the "Naomi" Foundation, the University of Haifa and the Beit Berl Academic College for their successful training program; and last but not least, to JDC-Israel for its patience and professionalism.**

**We wish you all a happy and wonderful New Year!**

**The Hotem staff: Assaf, Gali, Itai, Dita, Amnon, Daniel, Naama, Maya, Hadas, Lynn and Shlomit.**

**On Sunday, July 18<sup>th</sup> 2010 (7<sup>th</sup> of Av, 5770), the first summer semester of the training program for instruction began. Seventy outstanding students from all parts of Israeli society participated in the training program: men and women, orthodox and secular, Jews and Arabs. The opening day was celebrated at the University of Haifa. There, the students were welcomed by representatives of the University and the Beit Berl Academic College – who are responsible for the training of the students throughout the year, right up until they receive their teaching diplomas. During their training, the students resided at the Meir Shefiya Youth Village.**

**The opening ceremony took place on Wednesday, July 21<sup>st</sup> that same year in Ramat HaNadiv. 140 people participated, including the seventy "Hotamists" and our dedicated partners. During the evening event – which was officiated by Assaf Banner, the Director-General of Hotam – there were greetings, a celebratory dinner and an activity on the topic of "choosing teaching" under the guidance of Noam Feinholtz.**

The guests were greeted by Dr. Shimshon Shoshani, the Director-General of the Ministry of Education, Rabbi Shai Peron, the Director-General of the "It's All About Education" Organization, Prof. Aharon Ben-Ze'ev, the President of the University of Haifa, Prof. Tamar Ariav, the President of the Beit Berl Academic College, Prof. Yossi Tamir, the Director-General of TEVET of JDC-Israel, Noah Greenfeld, the Director of the Division for the Training of Teachers at the Ministry of Education, and Shlomit Amichai, the Chairwoman of Hotam of JDC-Israel. A number of Hotam representatives also spoke during the evening. Among other things, they said that the lecturers whom they have met so far at Hotam, are the most distinctive and interesting that they have ever met. Another lecturer described his feelings and his indecision: Should he "come out" and tell his friends that he has decided to go into teaching? This sort of declaration is almost always accompanied by the word "but" - "but I'm getting a scholarship". "Does that sound better?", asked the Hotamist, and added: "This past week, Dr. Keiser suggested that we declare, with heads held high, "I have chosen to become a teacher". I embrace this suggestion! And here is one more thing that I got from the program: I have "come out" – I am going to be a teacher!"

During the 5 weeks of training – morning and evening – the students studied in the universities and participated in enrichment and integration activities. From the feedback received from the students, regarding the training, the most prominent conclusion was: "In order to succeed in teaching, you must first like the students whom you are teaching - out of belief – and only then can you actually start teaching...". The studio activity was considered to be the most successful, and Yossi Bar received the title of "the most significant person in the students' professional lives". In their feedback regarding Hotam evenings, the participants expressed the opinion that the program had evolved from "just" a program into a unique one.

On Wednesday, August 18<sup>th</sup> 2010, at the Meir Shefiya Youth Village, the training course's graduation evening took place. Among the guests present, was also Mr. Bart Vigdortatz, the founder of the parallel program in England and a member of the worldwide program's Board. He warmly greeted the "Hotamists" and shared with them stories about the hard work and subsequent success of the comparable programs around the world.