

## ISRAEL SCHOLARSHIP PROVIDED AN EYE OPENING EXPERIENCE MAX BORDMAN'S PICTURES



**READ MAX'S  
ARTICLE ON  
NEXT PAGE**



- Top row from left:  
 —Gadna (IDF) experience in the correct stance while in front of a commander, except Jordan, front right (Max is on the left)  
 —Camel riding at Dimona, an Israel camel ranch  
 —The entire group exiting the tunnels under the City of David  
 Middle row from left:  
 —The entrance to Birkenau  
 —A display of prosthetics that were taken from prisoners as they entered the camps at Auschwitz  
 Left: My class at Tel Gezer

## THANK YOU CARDS FROM CAMP SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



This year the Jewish Federation was thrilled to award 18 Camp Scholarships to 14 Orange County families.

The Jack & Jessica Blinkoff Scholarship which recognizes one special teen with a full scholarship for an approved summer program in Israel was awarded to Kerragan Connors of Goshen.

Dear Federation of Orange County,

Thank you for the financial support that you gave me to attend the URJ Heller High Fall 2018 trip. It was the most amazing, impactful, educational and insightful trip I have ever been on. I would not have been able to go on this trip if it weren't for your support. I write this letter not just to say thank you but to share the experiences I had during the trip.

One of the first experiences that I won't forget was meeting everyone going on the trip and getting to know all the people that wouldn't just become my friends but my family. From becoming friends with Hayden, who was one of the participants, while we waited on line for two hours to get checked into the flight to wandering the plane during the flight talking to all these new and unfamiliar faces that I would be seeing every day for the next four months. However, the true experience started when I stepped into Ben Gurion airport, breathing in the "Israeli air", and finally being in the holy land.

Israel was an eye-opening experience like none-other I have ever had been through before. I felt at home and safe in Israel. To be able to experience the culture, the lifestyle there, "my history" instead of just reading about it was one of the biggest things that actually deeply touched me. Listening to the language that our ancestors spoke, and hearing it all around me was breathtaking and the sense of fairness in shared communities such as the kibbutzim, where people have strong work ethics and equal responsibility was nothing I have seen in America. People ask what your favorite thing or place was but I have no answer due to the fact that I loved Israel so much that I had no singular favorite but that everywhere was my favorite. From going to the Dead Sea after climbing Masada and seeing the most gorgeous sunrise ever to celebrating lifting the Torah during Rosh Hashanah at Kibbutz Kahel. From riding camels to the Gadna in the IDF. All were amazing and so much fun to do with all my friends that there is too much to explain.

Despite traveling in Israel, I was also able to do an immense amount of learning. I was able to learn so much from my classes due to the small classroom sizes that reached a max of six people which allowed for the optimal learning experience. The teachers were nice, kind, and understanding of all the stresses of being a foreigner, and at times needing some extra help, support, or time. With all the support and kindness that was given I was able to prosper as a student and come home being ahead of my classes at my home high school. The classes weren't confined to the classrooms, we were able to travel across Israel and take our studies abroad to Poland.

Our trip to Poland has no real words to describe it. It was emotional, impactful, full of experiences and more. To see the places from the Holocaust and learn about these places in depth and what went on there was like nothing I had ever experienced before. Once we arrived at Birkenau and started walking through it I became speechless. The only thought I had was anger and sorrow. Seeing the buildings and what it was like there was unimaginable. There was also the time when we visited some cemeteries. We were at a cemetery for two hours and only made it through maybe a quarter of the entire cemetery. It blew my mind on how many graves were in this one place and how detailed the graves were. This trip was so impactful that I acquired a deeper understanding of the reality of what happened and to what magnitude of the cruelty that truly happened. It was difficult to be there but to have friends there by my side made it so much easier. Everyone at the program made it easier, better and less strenuous than if they weren't there.

So I thank you again for the help to getting me to Israel. The experience was amazing and I couldn't have hoped for anything more. This was the perfect program for me. I learned independence, knowledge about Israel, and I grew as a person on this trip. So I thank you for everything.

*Max Bordman attends Warwick Valley High School. He lives in Warwick with his parents, Robin and Scott Bordman and his sister Dara. The Bordmans are members of Temple Beth Shalom in Florida, NY, where Scott is a Past President, Robin is Sisterhood President and Dara is Youth Group Past President. Max was awarded Federation's Jack and Jessica Blinkoff Youth to Israel Scholarship in 2018 to study abroad for a semester. The Blinkoff scholarship recognizes one special teen with a full scholarship for an approved summer program in Israel - covering 100% of the cost of the Israel trip (not including spending money).*

*It's not too early to plan your teen's 2020 Israel experience.*

*Visit [www.jewishorangeny.org/scholarships](http://www.jewishorangeny.org/scholarships) for details.*

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Space is limited.  
Please RSVP by July 8th to  
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or call 845-562-7860.



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 The Jewish Federation  
OF GREATER ORANGE COUNTY

## Jewish in OC Micro-Grants

The Jewish Federation of Greater Orange County is excited to announce our first ever round of Jewish in OC Micro-Grants!

The goal of this program is to bring out new ideas in the Orange County Jewish community which will bring the community together, connect people to the community, positively impact the community, and help the community learn and grow together.

Read more and download  
the application at  
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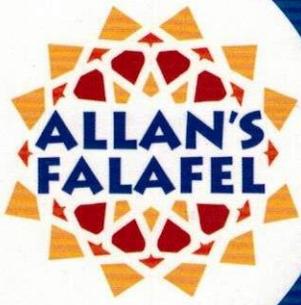
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