ARZA
ארצה
Association of Reform Zionists of America
Connecting Reform Jews and Israel
AN AFFILIATE OF THE UNION FOR REFORM JUDAISM

THE REFORM ISRAEL EXPERIENCE

As the organization in the Movement dedicated to connecting Reform Jews and Israel, ARZA strives to bring Israel into the hearts and minds of every member of our community. One of the ways we do this is by gathering all the opportunities to engage with Israel and showcasing them at the Reform Israel Experience at the Biennial of the Union for Reform Judaism.

ARZA created this guide in order to encapsulate the Reform Israel Experience in an easy-to-use encyclopedia of programs and organizations geared toward Reform Jews and Israel. We also hope this will be a useful tool for those who were unable to attend the Biennial and need to have the Reform Movement's Israel resources in one place.

The guide is organized into four themes:

Connect:
This section presents the organizations that Reform Jews and Israel. These organizations help their members take the initial step in deepening their relationship with Israel through culture, social action, religion, travel, fundraising and more.

Explore:
This section presents programs that will get you to Israel and enable you to see, touch, taste and soak up everything Israel has to offer in ways you can only experience by being there. These programs offer opportunities to study, tour or volunteer, for people of all ages and experiences.

Act:
This section presents programs that reflect a commitment to Israel activism, in Israel and here in North America. These resources will help you put Reform values into action by organizing people to take action on behalf of Israel.

Live:
In recent years, Aliyah has returned as an important concern to the Reform Movement. This section will help you take the next step toward spending a part of your life in Israel.

We hope this guide will be helpful on your journey to finding your way to all Israel has to offer Reform Jews. Please take this information beyond the Biennial and share it with others as an important resource. We at ARZA encourage you to experience Israel personally as a Jew, friend, advocate, family member, student, teacher---which ever way is most meaningful to you.

L'Shalom,

Rabbi Stanley M. Davids
President, ARZA

Rabbi Andrew S. Davids
Executive Director, ARZA

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ARZA (Association of Reform Zionists of America)

ARZA is the Zionist arm and voice for the Reform Movement in the United States. ARZA endeavors to make Israel fundamental to the sacred lives and Jewish identity of Reform Jews. It was established in 1978 after almost 50 years of the increasing presence of Israel as a component of Reform Jewish identity. As a Zionist organization, ARZA champions activities that further enhance Israel as a pluralistic, just and democratic Jewish state. A membership organization, ARZA is an affiliate of the Union for Reform Judaism (the umbrella organization for the more than 920 Reform synagogues in North America). ARZA represents the URJ in its dealings with the World Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency for Israel, and is a member of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations and of the URJ's Commission on Social Action.

ARZA is the sponsor of the Institute for Reform Zionism, or IRZ. The outgrowth of the former Reform Zionist Think Tank, it serves as a forum for sustained and significant intellectual activity concerning the relationship between North American Reform Jews and Israel. The IRZ mobilizes a broad range of thinkers, including rabbis, academics, and lay leaders, to research, explain and enrich the meta-narrative of the Reform Jewish relationship with Israel. The IRZ furthers its intellectual agenda by refining and disseminating its ideas through papers and other publications, policy guidelines and programmatic initiatives.

ARZA is a founder of the Israel Religious Action Center, and through its membership dues is a major source of financial support for the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism. ARZA also offers many resources for congregations to use to bring Israel programming to their communities, including traveling exhibits, adult education workshops, information on including Israel into holiday celebrations, resources for youth, and material on Israeli current events. In addition, ARZA is a source for information about travel to Israel, aliyah, and Israel advocacy.

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ARZA Canada

ARZA Canada is an affiliate of the Union for Reform Judaism and its Canadian Council. It is a member organization of the International Association of Reform Zionists, and the Canadian Zionist Federation. ARZA Canada is also a member of ARZENU, the umbrella organization of Reform and Progressive Religious Zionists.

ARZA Canada believes in fostering a liberal, pluralistic and democratic society in the State of Israel. ARZA Canada's mission is to engage with Reform congregations throughout Canada in order to foster connections with and strengthen its members' ties to Israel and the Reform Movement in Israel.

ARZA Canada hosts study trips to Israel, supports congregational and personal Israel travel, hosts lectures and educational programs across the country on subjects relating to Israel and Zionism, facilitates twinning and other joint activities between the Canadian and Israeli Reform movements, supports Canadian Reform youth activities in Israel, and provides resources for congregational activities and education on Israel-based topics. It works closely with the Reform movement in Israel in developing and supporting the Israel Reform movement's activities in support of their common vision.

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CANADA
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Phone: 1-800-560-8242

ARZENU

ARZENU is the umbrella organization of Reform and Progressive Religious Zionists. Founded in 1980 as an "ideological grouping" or Brit Olamit within the World Zionist Organization, ARZENU has constituent groups in ten countries and represents the interests of these groups and of Reform and Progressive Judaism worldwide in the governing bodies of World Zionist Organization and in the Jewish Agency for Israel.

ARZENU works to stimulate Zionist interest and activities in Progressive communities throughout the world. In countries where there are ARZENU constituents, we work to further the interests of Progressive Judaism within local Zionist Federations. ARZENU works together with all ideological groupings to promote Zionist activity in local Jewish

communities and especially Zionist youth activity. Netzer Olami, the International Progressive Zionist Youth Movement is officially affiliated with ARZENU.

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13 King David Street, Jerusalem 94101, Israel
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Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism (IMPJ)

The IMPJ is the governing organization for the blossoming Progressive movement in Israel. The movement aims to connect the Judaism of tradition with the challenge of living as modern citizens of the Jewish state. Its foundations come from the North American Reform movement and it has grown over the past 50 years in its own right, creating a uniquely Israeli Progressive movement. It encompasses immigrants from all over the globe, as well as native Israelis. The first Reform congregation is Israel was Har El in Jerusalem, founded in 1958 and today the movement proudly encompasses over 20 congregations.

The movement strongly emphasizes the importance of Jewish education and is committed to developing and instating a diverse range of educational programs. This includes running Progressive Jewish early childhood programs (for children aged 2-6). Forty-one nursery schools around Israel currently serve some 1,500 children. They also have developed Jewish programs at schools in Israel linked to the Progressive movement such as: Leo Baeck High School in Haifa, Tali Beit Hinuch and Tali Bayit VeGan School in Jerusalem. They also have developed a variety of resources for teachers to use in public schools to teach Jewish values, working with 60 schools all over Israel. The IMPJ also has its own branch of Netzer Olami, called Noar Telem. They have meetings and activities throughout the year. During the summer, they run Progressive summer camps starting in the fourth grade, with the high school students serving as counselors.

The Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism welcomes every Jew who identifies with its aims and actions and is interested in cooperation with other bodies and groups, working in Israel in the spirit of its aims. The IMPJ is a public, non-partisan organization. However, it will not hesitate to make a stand on important issues of moral and social value. The IMPJ will fight for the full recognition of the rights of its Rabbis and congregational communities, from a view that pluralism is a legitimate part of Judaism.
The Congregations of the IMPJ:

- Netanya - Natan-Ya
- Ramat HaSharon – Darchei Noam
- Kiryat Ono – Brit Olam
- Rishon Lezion – Achvat Israel
- Kibbutz Gezer – Birkat Shalom
- Modi'in – Yozma
- Jerusalem – Har El
- Jerusalem – Kol HaNeshama
- Jerusalem – Mevakshei Derech
- Mevasseret Zion - Kehilat Mevasseret Zion
- Nahariya – Emet VeShalom
- Har Halutz
- Haifa - Leo Baeck Education Center/Ohel Avraham Synagogue
- Haifa - Or Hadash
- Kiryat Tivon – Maalot Tivon
- Zichron Ya'akov – Sulam Ya'akov
- Ra'anana – Kehilat Ra'anan
- Tel Aviv – Beit Daniel
- Tzur Hadassah
- Kibbutz Yahel
- Kibbutz Lotan

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Phone: +972-2-6203451

Jewish Agency for Israel

For over 75 years, the Jewish Agency has been synonymous with rescuing Jews all over the world and bringing them to their homeland. Its efforts have brought over three million people to Israel and they are instrumental in the building of Israeli society. Their mission consists of three main components: bringing a substantial number of Jews to live in Israel and ensure their successful integration into society through aliyah, providing the next generation with a Jewish-Zionist education to ensure that Israel is a core part of its Jewish identity, and involving world Jewry in partnerships with Israel to mold the future of Israeli society. In addition to extensive programs in Israel, it operates in close to 80 countries on five continents through a network of over 450 emissaries, including hundreds of formal and informal educators.

Using resources provided by different fundraising partners, the Agency's various departments carry out its mission on a daily basis. The Immigration and Absorption Department is committed to the return of the Jewish people to the land of Israel as an integral part of what Israel stands for, and the department plays an active part in every

aspect of that dynamic process. It also provides resources for finding Hebrew language classes, housing, and absorption options. Their Jewish-Zionist Education department is committed to providing Israel-based programming for Jews with a diverse range of backgrounds and experiences. Through the Shlichut Center, professional Israeli-Jewish educators are sent into communities to collaborate with local educators to raise the bar on Israel engagement. The Reform Movement has its own shlichim (Israel emissaries) to provide the movement with resources for high-quality Israel programming. The JAFI also co-sponsors initiative with the URJ to promote Israel education and travel.

Contact Information:
Website: www.jewishagency.org
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Email: GCI-en@jafi.org

World Union for Progressive Judaism

The World Union for Progressive Judaism, founded in 1926, is the umbrella organization of Reform and other liberal Jewish movements worldwide, serving 1,200 congregations with 1.7 million members in 42 countries. The World Union strengthens Jewish life in Israel and around the world by supporting and guiding the birth and development of Reform Jewish communities, training professional and lay leaders, nurturing a love of Israel and Reform Judaism among youth and young adults, and advocating *tikkun olam* (repairing the world).

The World Union headquarters are located in the heart of Jerusalem at Mercaz Shimshon/Beit Shmuel, which is adjacent to the campus of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. Mercaz Shimshon/Beit Shmuel is the premier educational and cultural center of the Reform movement in Israel. It is also home of the World Union's Anita Saltz International Education Center, which offers liberal Jewish studies and leadership training for Reform Jews from around the world.

The World Union partners with the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism by supporting programs such as rabbinic training and placement, Jewish enrichment in public schools, the pre-army *mechina* preparatory course for high school graduates and the social action programs of the Israel Religious Action Center. These initiatives serve to advance Jewish religious values and tradition while promoting inclusiveness, gender equality and individual autonomy.

In addition to Israel, the World Union has affiliated communities in the former Soviet Union, Europe, Latin America, South Africa, Australia, Asia and, of course, North America.

The World Union is also represented internationally by Netzer Olami – the international Zionist youth movement, which brings together more than 16,000 young people in 18

countries, including the members of NFTY (North American Federation of Temple Youth) – and TaMaR, its leadership program for young adults. Through camping, international conferences and many other local community programs, these leadership development programs inspire the next generation with a love of Israel and Jewish peoplehood, and a commitment to Reform Judaism.

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In Israel:

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EXPLORE

ARZA World

ARZA World is an outstanding tour operator and has rich experience in planning and implementing educational programs in Israel and beyond. ARZA World works closely with ARZA to create deeply meaningful Israel travel experiences for individuals and groups, including many Reform congregations. ARZA staff work closely with ARZA World to help ensure that the travel experiences it provides are uniquely geared to meet the needs and interests of Reform Jews traveling to Israel. The ARZA Travel Committee works closely to monitor this relationship and to find ways to enhance the partnership. Groups are able to choose from a wide range of programs and destinations such as Italy, Spain, Central and Eastern Europe. ARZA World plans the perfect group travel experience by listening to your expectations and needs and then facilitating them. A member of ARZA World programming team will work closely with you in producing a program that will meet your needs and expectations whether it is a private tour, an organized group travel, a family tour, or a Jewish heritage tour.

ARZA World is committed to using a holistic approach to the tour experience. Their programs are designed thematically, combining a great balance of sightseeing and entertainment. Introductions to each day's program are given by an educator and site visits always allow for extra time, so that your questions can be answered.

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Har Halutz

Har Halutz is a community village situated in the rocky terrain of the Western Galilee, one hour northeast of Haifa. Har Halutz was originally settled by a group established in the U.S. under the auspices of the IMPJ. The first nine families, a mix of native Israelis and English-speaking immigrants, moved to the site in September 1985. The village consists of 330 family homes located in six neighborhoods around a core service center. The center houses a day care facility, kindergarten, two office buildings, a youth clubhouse, and a synagogue/community center.

Community life is based around holiday celebrations and Jewish lifecycle events. These occasions serve as important bridges of Jewish observance for the secular families. The pluralistic nature of Har Halutz allows the inhabitants to see Judaism in a pluralistic, creative context.
The Har Halutz population continues to grow and change, with the community constantly planning for the future. From building new facilities to constructing more neighborhoods to planning a new softball field, this is truly a dynamic, unique community.

Contact Information:
Website: www.har-halutz.org.il
Har Halutz Community Village
D.N. Bekat Beit Hakerem, Israel 25129
Email: Har-halutz@har-halutz.org.il
Phone: +972-4-980-5772

HUC-JIR

The Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion is the Reform movement's institution for training rabbis, cantors, educators, and leaders. It is the intellectual and educational center of the Reform movement and it prepares men and women from all over for their careers as Jewish leaders. It reinforces the movement's belief in the importance of the state of Israel and developing a lasting relationship with the Progressive movement there.

HUC's Jerusalem campus is home to the HUC Year-in-Israel program, taking place during the first year of study. Many other exciting programs are located at HUC-Jerusalem as well. The Israeli Rabbinical School is the program for Israeli citizens seeking Reform ordination. The rabbinical students obtain a Master's degree in a Judaic studies specialization while taking their HUC courses to gain their M.A.H.L degree at the same time. These students receive instruction and study in areas relating to their professional and spiritual development, and they are given the opportunity for hands-on training in the Reform synagogues and institutions throughout Israel.
The College-Institute is also home to the Beit Midrash/Liberal Yeshivah. Continuing in the ancient tradition of the yeshivah, the Beit Midrash provides a space for in depth Jewish study in an egalitarian, liberal environment. Students are encouraged to think critically and raise difficult philosophical question in addition to learning Torah, Talmud, Midrash, and other Jewish texts. In addition, on campus one can find the Nelson Glueck School of Biblical Archaeology, Hebrew Ulpan and Jewish Studies classes for new immigrants, and teacher training seminars.

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13 King David Street
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Website: http://huc.edu

Israel Ministry of Tourism

The Israel Ministry of Tourism (IMOT) is a government agency of the State of Israel focusing on regulating and encouraging travel to Israel. Prospective tourists can contact the IMOT for inquiries relating to lodging, destinations, and security information. Tour operators, travel agents, and other tourism industry professionals work with the IMOT to ensure that any and all Israel travel experiences maintain high standards of quality and customer service. In addition to producing marketing and advertising materials for print, web, and other media, the Israel Ministry of Tourism produces guides and other educational materials for the public. Individuals, families, religious group leaders and travel agents can consult the Information Center of the IMOT for help in planning trips and their itineraries.

In addition, the partnership between the Israel Ministry of Tourism and ARZA has created an important position known as the Israel Travel Specialist. The Israel Travel Specialist is a full time employee of ARZA, serving the entire Reform Movement by providing support in Israel travel preparation, promotion and programming.

Contact Information:

Phone: 1-888-77-ISRAEL or 212-499-5660
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Website: www.goisrael.com

RSI: Reform Semester in Israel

A university semester abroad in Israel with a Reform focus

RSI is semester abroad program for Reform college students who are looking for a fulfilling and positive way to spend a semester and to experience Reform Jewish life in Israel. Students will have the option of studying at either Hebrew University in Jerusalem or University of Haifa, and to enjoy the services provided by these programs, as well as participate in a number of program specific extra-curricular activities geared for Reform college students throughout the semester. Students will receive college credit based on the number of courses taken. Prior to the beginning of the spring semester begins, RSI participants will take part in a journey to Spain which will explore Spain's ancient Jewish world as well as gaining an understanding of where the modern Jewish community is headed, as well as an *ulpan*, a Hebrew language immersion classes provided by each university in Israel.

RSI aims to give participants the greatest access to both the chosen university as well as Reform Judaism in Israel. By participating in additional Shabbat retreats, optional volunteer programs and integration into the progressive Jewish community in Israel students will gain a broad view of Israeli society.

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Union for Reform Judaism - Youth Division

633 Third Avenue, 7th Floor
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Phone: 212-650-4070
Website: www.rjisrael.org
Hebrew University: http://overseas.huji.ac.il/
University of Haifa: http://overseas.haifa.ac.il/

Kibbutz Lotan

Kibbutz Lotan, established in 1983 is a cooperative kibbutz, situated in the Arava desert, near Eilat. The kibbutz is affiliated with the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism and the Global Eco-Village Network. Through a commitment to Am Israel, Torat Israel and the State of Israel, members learn and work together to create a community based on Reform Zionist Jewish values. Lotan offers a wide range of holistic, ecological and Jewish experiences for individuals, families and groups in the setting of a Reform Zionist community. They are experienced hosts to visiting groups from the Reform Movement worldwide!

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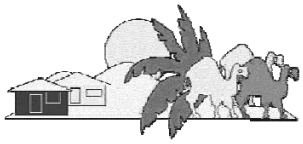

Kibbutz Yahel

Kibbutz Yahel is located in the southern Arava, about 25 miles north of Eilat. It was founded in 1976 from joint efforts of the Progressive Movement in Israel and the United Kibbutz movement. Yahel consists of about sixty-five members and over eighty children. The community is diverse and dynamic; 60% of the population are native-born Israelis and 40% are Olim (immigrants) from the United States, South Africa, England, South America, Rumania, France and Russia. The kibbutz economy is based primarily on field agriculture: dates, pomellos, onions, melons, watermelons and peppers. The dairy herd of over 500 cows provides a steady year-round income. Kibbutz Yahel's rapidly expanding tourism branch houses a seminar center that offers educational programming, runs guided desert tours of the Negev and Arava, and hosts Israeli high school students during their annual field trip to the Eilat area. Other members of Kibbutz Yahel work in regional industries as computer programmers and analysts, comptrollers, laboratory technicians, teachers and managers.

Kibbutz Yahel's community life is traditional yet modern. The Kibbutz has a Reform synagogue in which services are held every Friday night, Saturday morning and on

Chagim (holidays). At Yahel traditional and secular Jews live together in a spirit of harmony and mutual respect. The sanctity of the Shabbat and Kashrut in the communal dining hall are community values, but there is total freedom of choice regarding activities within each member's home.

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The Lokey International Academy of Jewish Studies

Since opening its doors in 2003 as a part of the Leo Baeck Center in Haifa, the Lokey Academy has become an invaluable Progressive Israeli institution. The Academy holds two unique values at its foundational core. The first is a commitment to grapple with issues of spirituality, faith, and God, actively putting these Jewish ideals into practice as a vital part of a Jewish way of life. As such, the Lokey Academy holds itself as a religious alternative for secular, liberal, and Orthodox Jews – and not a secular alternative. The second is the concept of "Jewish People-hood," i.e., the idea that Jews in different parts of the globe should recognize the great importance of being exposed to the richness of Jewish life beyond their own backyards, and actively share and learn from one another's Jewish cultural reservoirs.

The Academy hosts many educational programs and provides unique opportunities for Jewish learning for visitors from all over the world. They hold important programming for North American Jewish educators visiting Israel that include a variety of seminars, text-based field trips, and meetings with Israeli Jewish educators. In 2005, 5,000 students and educators participated in Lokey Academy educational programs and teacher training, in Israel and around the world.

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MASA

MASA Israel Journey is a joint project of the Government of Israel and the Jewish Agency for Israel. It is an umbrella organization for over 120 long term programs to Israel (from one semester to a year). MASA's mission is to provide every young Jewish adult around the world with the opportunity to participate in a long-term Israel experience and thereby build a life-long relationship with Israel and a firm commitment to Jewish life. There were more than 8,000 MASA participants in the 2006-7 academic year. Among the programs it promotes, MASA includes the Reform Carmel Program and Netzer Olami's Shnat Netzer.

MASA provides a one stop shop for information about the various programs available, as well as universal grants for all participants, and needs-based scholarships. Their activities throughout the year consist of promoting existing programs and the development of new ones. The range of programs MASA promotes is great and most anyone can find an appropriate and meaningful way to travel and learn in Israel. They include post high school (gap year), undergraduate study abroad at any of the universities and colleges in Israel, graduate study (MA and MBA), professional internships at Israeli organizations and businesses, volunteer/community service, and Jewish Studies.

The universal grants available for all North American participants are based on age group programs. The grants are:

- $2,000 for ages 18 to 21
- $3,000 for ages 21 to 30 for semester long programs
- $4,500 for ages 21 to 30 for year long programs

Additional needs-based scholarships are also available.

Contact Information:
Website: www.masaisrael.org
Phone: 212-339-6077

NFTY in Israel

The North American Federation of Temple Youth (NFTY) is the youth organization serving the Reform Jewish teens of the United States and Canada. NFTY has a strong commitment to the state of Israel and believes in making its members deeply connected to Israel through education, study, and travel.
The NFTY Experience in Israel is a 5-week summer program. Participants spend the first week in Prague and Poland, exploring the remnants of the rich heritage of the Eastern European Jewish community and the tragedy and destruction from the Shoah (the Holocaust). The next part of the journey takes place in Israel. Participants travel to

biblical sites, Crusader ruins, modern Israeli malls, and everything in between. They spend ample time in Jerusalem, as well as the northern Galilee and Golan regions. In addition, participants have the chance to connect with Israel through social action, archeological digs, backpacking, the Israeli army, and water adventures. Travel to Kibbutz Yahel provides the participants with an opportunity to see the ancient deserts of Israel and to travel to Eilat, at the southernmost tip of Israel.

Contact Information:
NFTY Travel Programs
URJ Youth Division
46 Bowen Road
Warwick, NY 10090
Phone: 212-452-6517
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Email: ljacobs@urj.org

NFTY-EIE High School in Israel

The NFTY-EIE High School in Israel provides the unique experience of studying abroad in Israel for sophomores, juniors, and seniors in high school. Since its start in 1961, it has sent over a thousand outstanding students to live, study, and travel in Israel. The program lasts four months and is based out of Kibbutz Tzuba, located in the Judean Hills only a short ride from Jerusalem. The program offers a blend of Jewish learning and the general studies courses students would take at their American high schools. The "Israel: Land, People and Cultures" class is an intensive and challenging Jewish studies course which includes field trips throughout Israel in connection to the history the students are learning. Participants are also given instruction in Modern Hebrew through the Ulpan program. All of the general studies courses offered at American high schools, including APs and Honors are available for any qualified student, as well as SAT and AP testing. EIE also gives students the chance to experience the Progressive movement in Israel. The EIE community celebrates Shabbat and all of the Jewish holidays together, often with Hebrew Union College students. The opportunity is also available to attend services at different Progressive congregations throughout Israel. In addition to seeing Israel, EIE also takes a week-long pilgrimage to Europe that also includes visits to Prague, Krakow, Warsaw, and Auschwitz incorporated with their Jewish history class.

NFTY-EIE now offers a summer session of its program. This is an amazing opportunity for students who want the incredible EIE experience, but are not able to spend a full school semester in Israel. This extraordinary 45 day summer program includes many of the highlights of the EIE experience that have made it so meaningful.

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633 3rd Ave., 7th Floor
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Taglit-Birthright Israel: KESHER Israel Connection

Birthright is an incredible free 10 day adventure that is perfect for people between 18-26 years old who are seeking an extraordinary journey with friends. The KESHER Israel Connection trips provide a community that will help participants understand what it means to be part of the Jewish people and the importance of a connection to Israel, while learning about their own identity and enjoying all that Israel has to offer. Examining issues such as social justice, a commitment to pluralism in Israel and the Diaspora, and our personal connection with historical and modern Israel through hands-on activity and discussion, participants will find a variety of ways to explore their own Jewish identity. In order to be eligible for this FREE trip, you must be: Jewish, between the ages of 18-26 at the time of the trip's departure, and never have been on a peer trip to Israel before. Taglit-birthright Israel is the foundation which raises and disseminates the money for this free trip, and there are approximately 25 different trip providers, all with a different vision, who actually plan the trip and bring the participants to Israel. Taglit-birthright Israel is a unique partnership between the people of Israel through their government, local Jewish communities (North American Jewish Federations through the United Jewish Communities, Keren Hayesod, and The Jewish Agency for Israel), and the birthright Israel Foundation, generously supported by private Jewish philanthropic partners. The KESHER Israel Connection is one of the trip providers and we provide participants with a unique Reform Israel experience.

Contact Information:
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Phone: 212-650-4070

Tamarim: Reform Israel Program

Tamarim: Reform Israel Program (TRIP) is a first year university program for Reform Jewish youth. TRIP participants will select from three different tracks, each gives the opportunity to explore different segments of Israeli society and create dynamic a Reform community. The program combines formal and informal learning opportunities, and an exploration of Israel's land, people and culture. Choose from:

Shnat Netzer: Join Reform Zionist youth from around the world. This track is an amazing year-long Israel experience with a variety of options throughout. The track includes: history, Zionism, leadership skills, volunteering, kibbutz life, hiking, and more. Graduates of the Shnat Netzer track are

uniquely prepared to serve as leaders in their Reform Jewish community and to continue their college studies successfully.

Carmel: This track offers an opportunity to combine self-empowerment, living and learning in an exciting Reform community, academic studies, social action and a chance to grapple with the questions of progressive Jewish-Zionist identity. Carmel is a partnership between the Lokey Academy of Jewish Studies at the Leo Baeck Education Center and the University of Haifa, participants can receive up to a full year of academic credit.

Combination Track: Participants on this track spend the first half of the year with Shnat Netzer living in Jerusalem and focusing on informal education. After a month volunteering in a Reform Kibbutz, participants will join the Carmel track for the spring semester and live and study at University of Haifa. This incredible combination offers academic credit from University of Haifa.

All **TRIP** participants will live and study with other students from around the world, complete coursework in Jewish and Israel Studies, receive Hebrew instruction, and earn up to a year's worth of academic credit. Participants have the opportunity to celebrate *Shabbatot* and holidays at Progressive Israeli synagogues and with host families. **TRIP** participants gain further enrichment through *tiyulim* (field trips) and seminars, including a month long stay on a Reform Movement kibbutz in the Arava. Participants contribute to Israeli society through hands-on *tikkun olam* volunteer projects.

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Website: www.rjisrael.org

ARAVA- the Jewish Environmental Experience on Kibbutz Lotan

Arava is a 9 month unique educational accredited study and work experience located in Israel's Southern Arava Desert focusing on the ethical, physical and social components of sustainable development from a liberal Jewish perspective. The program is conducted in English. It lasts from October to May and allows participants to connect to Israel in a different and meaningful way.

The program aims to help improve participants' Hebrew as well as strengthen Jewish identity in a variety of ways. Participants study Jewish sources, explore Israel, volunteer in Israeli society, and gain important leadership training. Students are also given the opportunity to experience Israeli culture, learn sustainable development skills while acquiring hands-on ecological experience and earning up to 15 academic credits. Additionally, all participants in the ARAVA Institute will take part in the Green Apprenticeship, a 10 week hands-on program at Kibbutz Lotan.

Program of study:

- Choice of academic course at the Arava Institute for Environmental Studies
- Course in Judaism and the environment
- Hebrew language studies

Email: info@arava.org
Phone in USA: 1-866-31-ARAVA
Websites:
www.rjisrael.org
CFCE – located on Kibbutz Lotan: www.kibbutzlotan.com
AIES – located on Kibbutz Ketura: www.arava.org

ARZA-KESHER Network

The ARZA-KESHER Network focuses on engaging Reform college age students in Zionist and pro-Israel activities on campuses and beyond, and to help its students spread the message of Reform Zionism to their peers. The framework in which the Network works in, is one that believes that a loud and clear young Reform Zionist voice can and should be heard in the Reform Movement, on campuses, and in the larger American Jewish world.

Within the KESHER *chavurah* (group) on campus, it is the KESHER/ARZA Fellow who serves as the "Israel chair" and it is their job to lead KESHER's Zionist and Israel related activities. These activities include engaging in Israel advocacy on campus, promoting student programs in Israel, being the Reform Zionist voice in interaction with other Jews on campus, and taking a role as Israel educators at URJ summer camps.

Thanks to the generosity of the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation and the Jewish Agency for Israel, this Fellowship offers an amazing opportunity to student activists who will be leading diverse Israel programs on campus. They will have resources to help them with their projects, support from KESHER staff, and speakers who will come to campuses, as well as funds for special projects.

The fellows are expected to run at least two programs per year on Reform Zionism – one for the Reform students on campus and one for the Israel groups on campus. They are also expected to facilitate cross-denominational dialogue by running a Jewish-Jewish dialogue on their campus, using the material developed by the Israel on Campus Coalition. Fellows are also encourages to actively recruit students to go to Israel on Birthright trips, Hillel missions, and especially long term programs.

Contact Information:
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Phone: 212-650-4237

המרכז לפלורליזם יהודי
לשוויון ערך האדם, צדק חברתי וסובלנות דתית

The Israel Religious Action Center (IRAC)

The Israel Religious Action Center is the public and legal advocacy arm of the Reform Movement in Israel. IRAC was founded in 1987 with the goals of advancing pluralism in Israeli society and protecting and defending the rights having to do with freedoms of conscience, faith, and religion. In its 20-year history IRAC's has established itself through legal work and public policy advocacy as a leading organization working to strengthen the democratic character of Israeli society.

IRAC was originally most known for its landmark legal victories in the arena of Jewish pluralism in Israel including cases which have a profound effect on Diaspora Jewry including its 2002 Israeli Supreme Court victory recognizing Reform and Conservative conversions. IRAC works to both promote a more pluralistic approach to Jewish education and an anti-discriminatory policy towards Reform rabbis and Reform Judaism in general. IRAC's scope is broad as well as deep, extending beyond the fight for the rights of Reform Judaism. IRAC also runs the only pro-bono Legal Aid Center for Olim in Israel which has assisted more than 70,000 new immigrants since its inception in 1994. IRAC's work defending minority rights includes legal and advocacy work on behalf of many Israeli minority groups - from gay rights to Bedouin shepherds, from "agunot" to new immigrants - as we know what it is like to be unrecognized.

In addition, IRAC is committed to social action. Keren B'Kavod, IRAC's humanitarian aid program distributes food and toys to thousands of needy Israelis every year. IRAC also develops "just communities" through Kehilat Tzedek, which organizes social action programs in Israeli Reform and Conservative congregations, infusing the values of tikkun olam throughout Israel.

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E-mail: rachel@irac.org

Jewish National Fund (JNF)

Jewish National Fund (JNF) began in 1901 collecting coins in blue boxes to purchase land and return the Jewish people to their homeland. In over 106 years, JNF has evolved into a global environmental leader and become the central address for the land and people of Israel. JNF has planted 240 million trees. Built over 1,000 parks and recreational areas. Constructed security roads. Educated students around the world about Israel. Created new communities so that Jews from around the world would have a place to call home. Discovered drip irrigation and new means of growing plants under arid conditions, bringing green to the desert. Built over 190 reservoirs and water recycling centers, increasing Israel's water supply by 10%.

As a United Nations NGO, JNF sponsors international conferences on desertification, shares afforestation techniques and funds research on arid land management. JNF is restoring northern Israel, making it home again to its residents and is supporting Israel's newest generation of pioneers by developing the Negev Desert, Israel's last frontier.

The JNF Israel Advocacy and Education department has as its mission to engage, educate, and energize the Jewish community of the United States to a deeper commitment to the land and people of Israel. Our materials and programs are appropriate for students from Pre-K through college, congregations, summer camps and community centers. We look forward to working with you.

Contact information:
42 East 69th Street
New York, NY 10021
Tel: 212-879-9305 ext. 245
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Website: www.jnf.org; www.jnf.org/iae

LIVE - Aliyah

Life in Israel: "Reform Aliyah" – New concept, New definition

Experiencing life in Israel as a way to fulfill Jewish and Zionist values became an important topic in the Reform Movement in recent years. Reform Zionists adapted traditional thoughts about Aliyah to a Reform context. The Reform Movement continues to develop new models, language and concepts through which to discuss Aliyah

With the State of Israel approaching its 60th birthday, we tend to think that the Zionist mission is complete-but questions remain about the face and shape of the Jewish State: What values will the not yet-to-be-written Constitution of the Jewish State contain? Who is a Jew? How will Israel deal with its borders, welfare policy, equal rights…?

If Reform Jews aim to influence the biggest Jewish undertaking in 2000 years-making the Jewish society in Eretz Israel a reflection of our understanding of Jewish values – we need to take an active role and make part of our lives there. We need to be able to vote, to be heard. We need to embody the concept of *liv'not u'l'hibanaot:* to build the State and be "built" by all that the Land of Israel has to offer. There is nothing Israel needs more than the strong, significant, authentic Liberal voice of Reform Jews from North America, especially as Israelis continue to build a new society, and, in turn, be built by it.

***"Reform Aliyah"* – a re-envisioned term**

The traditional definition of "Aliyah" consisted of permanent relocation to Israel. Recently, Reform Jews from all over have redefined Aliyah as dedicating certain aspects of one's life to the State of Israel. Some choose to spend part of their retirement in Israel, becoming citizens and purchasing a second home. Some pursue academic or professional opportunities afforded to them as new citizens of Israel.

For all of us who care about Israel but are not ready for Aliyah for now, consider "Aliyah La'regel" – regular visits which provide meaningful, ongoing, and extended involvement in Israeli society. The concept of Aliyah La'regel is modeled on our ancestors journey to Jerusalem for the holidays of Sukkot, Pesach, and Shavuot. We can infuse new meaning into the term Aliyah La'regel. Our Aliyah La'regel may take the form of different types of significant life experiences in Israel.

Aliyah La'regel is not about a financial contribution to Israel—it is about sharing ourselves, our stories, our traditions, and our points of view. Aliyah La'regel, can be undertaken in many ways. Some examples include:

- ✓ Spending a **Sabbatical year** in Israel
- ✓ Pursuing **graduate study** in Israel, in Hebrew or in English
- ✓ Spending **summer vacations** there on a regular basis, and sending our children to **Israeli summer camps**
- ✓ **Relocating for a unique job opportunity** with an American, international, or Israeli company
- ✓ **Investing in or opening a new branch of a business** in Israel
- ✓ A **medical, legal, or business internship** at a leading Israeli institution
- ✓ Pursuing **higher scientific or medical research** in Israel

The following programs and initiatives are just a sample of programs offered to those interested in Reform Aliyah:

The Modi'in project with Kehilat Yozma –

"Yozma" ("initiative" in Hebrew) is a young, vibrant and socially conscious Reform community in Israel's newest city, Modi'in, founded in 1997 by Rabbi Kinneret Shiryon-- Israel's first women Rabbi. Yozma, the municipality of Modi'in, the Ministry of Absorption and the Jewish Agency for Israel are encouraging Reform Jews who are considering Aliyah to take the next step. New Olim (immigrants) are provided with a support network, professional guidance and financial assistance in all aspects of immigration and absorption.

Shabbat Lech-Lecha – "My Journey to Israel"

This annual initiative takes place during the month of, "Lech Lecha." This Torah portion tells the story of Abraham- the first immigrant to the Land of Israel-on his journey from the home he knew. ARZA and the Jewish Agency for Israel sponsor a program during which Reform Jews who recently made Aliyah share their personal "Lech-Lecha" experiences and their life as Reform Jews in Israel. Every year we have a different guest speaker who travels to Reform congregations.

The Reform Family Experience

The Annual Reform Family Experience moves participants beyond the tour bus to connect to Israel in an entirely new way!

This program is designed for individuals, couples or families with children grades 5 – 12, and provides a taste of Reform Jewish life in Israel. It was designated for second timers or people who are contemplating Aliyah.

This program includes: apartment-style living with opportunities for group meals and family meals, opportunities for day trips with members of the Israeli Reform Movement, and study, worship and social action in Israel. Children in grades 5-12 will experience five days at Havaya, the Israeli Reform summer camp, in a special program for English speakers while interacting with Israeli peers. This program will take place in August.

The Faces of Reform Aliyah educational kit –

During the Biennial, we will launch the "Faces of Reform Aliyah" kit. This kit will include a short film about the life of Reform Jews who made Aliyah Their stories will be compiled in a booklet with educational activities.

For the first time, the URJ has its own Shlichat Aliyah, Liran Avisar Gazit. She is our coordinator for Reform aliyah, and is an incomparable resource for any questions or concerns about Reform Aliyah. Feel free to contact her at Lgazit@arza.org or visit our website at http://arza.org/travel/aliyah/ for information about these programs and Reform Aliyah.

Association of Reform Zionists of America

Connecting Reform Jews and Israel

AN AFFILIATE OF THE UNION FOR REFORM JUDAISM

For more information on Israel and Reform Movement in North America, contact:

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