

# NEWSLETTER



Dear Friends and Family,

What an extraordinary year it has been at Chabad at Harbor Point and Downtown Stamford! Your partnership has created a thriving Jewish community that serves as both sanctuary and launching pad for the next generation of Jewish leaders.

The weekly programming creates the foundation for lifelong Jewish engagement among the young community:

## TUESDAYS | Women's Torah Classes with Morah Vivi

Under the guidance of Morah Vivi, the Chabad offers comprehensive Torah classes for women. These classes feature in-depth study combined with practical insights for daily living. Afternoon and evening sessions are available.

## WEDNESDAYS | Young & Jewish Weekly Discussion

A space for honest, thoughtful conversations about real life, grounded in the wisdom of the Torah. It's where the community explores topics like purpose, relationships, and career while discovering how relevant and meaningful Jewish ideas can be today.

## FRIDAYS & SHABBAT | Your Spiritual Home Away From Home

Friday nights begin with candle lighting and Kabbalat Shabbat, followed by dinner with the community.

Saturday mornings bring Shacharit services, Torah reading, and discussions with Rabbi Deren. Kiddush luncheon follows and Morah Vivi's Shabbat afternoon Torah talks.

## MONTHLY | Young Professionals Cocktail Hour

Young professionals' cocktail hours strategically combine Jewish identity with career development. This creates a unique space where shared values meet professional advancement.

## ANNUAL PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

### 2024

#### JUNE 2024: WISDOM & WHISKEY

program showcased the depth and thoughtfulness of young community members. Five participants shared profound insights and engaged with Rabbi Deren and Morah Vivi in a **meaningful dialogue**, reminding participants why **Jewish education** matters.

The **SHAVUOT CELEBRATION** brought generations together, from **ice cream parties** in the park to solemn **Yizkor services**, showing that Jewish life encompasses joy, memory, and continuity.



*Moran Yanai shared her story of being hostage in Gaza at The Armon Hotel-Stamford, CT on September 2024*

#### SUMMER SERIES: THE JEWISH

**COURSE OF WHY** was launched, a six-week **exploration for young professionals** to examine life's deepest questions through Jewish wisdom and to articulate their **Jewish identity** with confidence and pride.



*Rabbi Deren speaking at the state capitol in Hartford, CT on July 2024*

The **SUNSET YACHT RIDES** and **END-OF-YEAR BBQ** showed the participants that Jewish community can be meaningful, joyful, and celebratory.



*Sunset Yacht Social at Long Island Sound on September 2024*

#### SEPTEMBER 2024:

Over **350 community members** gathered to hear former hostage Moran Stella Yanai's testimony. The youth learned what it means to bear witness and stand with the Jewish people in times of crisis.

#### FALL 2024

**High Holiday services** at a prestigious waterfront location provided inspiration and meaningful community connection. The **Breakfast with Friends** made breaking the fast feel like a celebration. The **Shofar on the boardwalk** taught them to be proud ambassadors of Jewish tradition, while **Sukkot programming** showed them how to bring Jewish joy into every aspect of life through innovative **Sukkah Mobile**.



*Putting on Tefilin on September 2024*

#### NOVEMBER 2024

The **Nurturing Relationships course** through the Jewish Learning Institute provided six weeks of sophisticated programming with Rabbi Levi Mendelow. The **memorial service for Rabbi Tzvi Kogan** on November 24th demonstrated the community's commitment to honoring Jewish scholarship and leadership.

#### DECEMBER 2024

Programs with **Rivka Slonim** and collaborative events like **Living for the Nation** exposed them to diverse voices within the Jewish community while maintaining strong Jewish values.

#### CHANUKAH 2024

The **annual Chanukah celebration** drew over **110 young professionals** from across Fairfield County, establishing us as the premier destination for young Jewish adults in the region. The **Fire Station Menorah Lighting** demonstrated positive community presence. The **intergenerational programs at Brighton Gardens** showed them the mitzvah of honoring elders.



*Chanukah Party at Six Thirteen on December 2024*

### 2025

#### JANUARY 2025: GLOBAL JEWISH CONNECTION

The **Young Professional Shabbaton in Crown Heights** (January 17-19) connected the community with **700+ participants worldwide**, demonstrating integration with the global Chabad network and providing members with transformative Jewish experiences.

#### FEBRUARY-MARCH 2025:

February 9th featured **Tu B'Shvat: Painting & Meditation** at the Stamford Nature Center, teaching environmental responsibility through Jewish values while combining creativity with spiritual connection. March opened **with a ski trip to Mohawk Mountain** on the 2nd—a day of snow, laughter, and bonding on the slopes that proved Jewish life includes adventure and joy.

March also brought profound moments of connection to the people's current struggles. The **memorial for Shiri, Kfir, and Ariel Bibas** with IDF medic Amitai Cohen and the **Challah Bake for Women** with Miri, mother of hostage Yosef Ohana, connected your children to the reality that being Jewish means caring for Jews everywhere and taking action when people are in need.

#### PASSOVER 2025

The Passover outreach, distributing **thousands of matzahs** and visiting **over 100 homes**, showed your children the beauty of Jewish service. Support for **UConn Stamford Jewish students** ensured young Jews could celebrate with pride despite distance from family. The **two community Seders** welcomed diverse participants, creating inclusive celebration while maintaining tradition.

#### SPRING-SUMMER 2025

**Wisdom from the Rebbe for Emotkin Health** with Rabbi Levi Shmotkin provided a sophisticated program on mental wellness through Jewish wisdom. The **Friendship Walk** and **Lag B'Omer celebrations** demonstrated community unity and joy. **Wine & Cheese Night** launched Shavuot celebrations with elegance and purpose.



*Lag B'Omer Bonfire and BBQ on May 2025*

#### COMEDY NIGHT WITH MICHAEL RAPAPORT

on March 9th filled the room with laughter and Jewish pride, showing your children how to celebrate their heritage with confidence and humor. The **Purim festivities** were extraordinary: March 13th brought a packed house at **Third Place Brewery** with costumes, dancing, drinks, and vibrant Purim spirit, followed by a community-wide **Purim celebration and festive meal** on March 14th that maintained Jewish authenticity while engaging with the broader world.



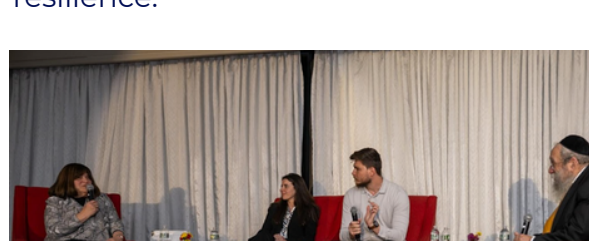
*Tu Bshvat Painting and Meditation at Stamford Nature center on February 2025*



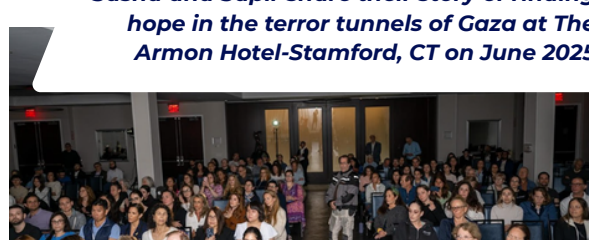
*Purim party at Third Place*

#### The deeply moving evening with

**hostage survivors Sapir Cohen & Sasha Trufanov** inspired them with examples of Jewish courage and resilience.



*Sasha and Sapir share their story of finding hope in the terror tunnels of Gaza at The Armon Hotel-Stamford, CT on June 2025*



Chabad Harbor Point plans for the year ahead with deep appreciation for the trust you've placed in us. Every program designed, every Shabbat hosted, every life touched carries hopes and dreams of parents who want their children to thrive as proud Jews.

Together, we're building futures, creating community, and ensuring continuity. Thank you for being part of this successful year!

*With warmth and gratitude,  
Rabbi and Morah Vivi Deren  
Chabad Harbor Point and Downtown Stamford*