

Wednesday, May 18, 2016

## **2016 ISRAEL AND INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM ("MISHPATIM") TESTIMONIALS**

*Note: this summer marked the sixth offering of this program, created by Dr. Bryan Schwartz, and delivered by Dr. Daniel Ohanna and Dr. Schwartz at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem in cooperation with the Hebrew University Law School.*

### **To David Asper, the Dean of Robson Hall, Canadian Friends of Hebrew University, and the Asper Family Foundation,**

My name is Laryssa Bogucki and I am one of the students who have benefited through your donation to the Mishpatim program's bursary. I had heard so many good things about this program from past participants before I even started at Robson Hall that I knew that this was an opportunity I wanted to take advantage of during my time at law school. Your generosity has made it possible for me to attend this program, which has left a profound impact on my legal education and has broadened my knowledge about the issues that Israel, as a nation, is facing.

Some of the topics that this class covered related to cyber security, Israel's role as a start-up technology nation, and the evolution of the complex relationship between Israel and Palestine. These are areas which I knew very little to nothing about prior to this course. Combining the topics that were covered in class with the opportunity to live in Israel for a month and experiencing several important days for Israelis (such as the Holocaust Memorial Day, Independence Day, and the Day of the Memory of the Fallen Soldiers of Israel and Victims of Terrorism), has provided me with an opportunity to gain a more in-depth understanding of Israel as a nation and has introduced me to new areas of law to explore as I choose the path that I want my legal career to take. The information that I received through this course, and the connections that Professor Schwartz made from the course material to the situation in Canada, is knowledge that I am excited to apply to the courses that I take throughout the next two years at Robson Hall.

I particularly enjoyed how the course was structured: it was a combination of in-class learning, which included guest lectures from a variety of notable individuals in the Israeli legal community who willingly took the time to speak to us, and field trips to places like the Knesset, the Supreme Court, where we met a sitting judge, and host organizations of tech start-ups. These field trips were incredibly useful for providing a hands-on method of showing how the lecture material was applicable to real life. Further, while the days in class were quite long, there was plenty of time to explore the country and to

discover how beautiful it is. While Israel may not have been a country that I would have thought to visit before this course, it is definitely one that I wish to return to now that I have been here.

Thank you again for your support of the program. I have learned so much about Israel and international law and have strengthened my friendships with many students from Robson Hall as a result of this course. This program is such an amazing opportunity and I will be strongly encouraging any law student from Canada to participate in it, should they have the opportunity. I hope that this program will continue in the future so that other students can have the same once in a lifetime experience that I have had.

-Laryssa Bogucki

**To David Asper, the Dean of Robson Hall, Canadian Friends of Hebrew University, and the Asper Family Foundation,**

I would like to extend a sincere thank you for your generous donations to the Mishpatim program. I honestly don't know if I would have been able to participate in the course had it not been for the substantial subsidy.

I am very happy I decided to come spend three weeks at the Hebrew University. I have always wanted to study abroad, and this gave me a great opportunity to see how I would fare. I have learned a lot about the different way Israel's legal system works compared to Canada's, and the struggles that exist between the different Israeli populations. To top that off, I have loved every moment of my time in Israel. There is so much culture to experience and great food to try! I think my favourite day was spent at Ein Gedi and the Dead Sea.

So, again, thank you for making it possible for me to spend a great month learning and exploring Israel.

Sincerely,

Gwen Muirhead

**To David Asper, the Dean of Robson Hall, Canadian Friends of Hebrew University, and the Asper Family Foundation:**

My name is Samantha Wong and I have just completed my second year at Robson Hall Law School at the University of Manitoba. I wanted to personally thank you for your generous donations to the program and for giving me the opportunity to be a part of the 2016 edition of the Mishpatim program.

Before this program, my knowledge of the Jewish culture was very limited; I knew a few general facts about the Holocaust, but unfortunately, that was the extent of my knowledge. I had no idea about the ongoing struggles of the Jewish population, the religious significance of the area, or the creation and state of Israel. Through this program, I was able to attend the Memorial Day ceremonies, the Independence Day parties, and the Latrun ceremony, and fully immerse myself in the Jewish experience. It was an eye-opening experience, and allowed me to truly empathize with the young members of the IDF.

This program has also helped broaden my thinking and I've been able to study an extensive swath of topics, ranging from the creation of Israel, to security concerns, to start-up companies. I loved the fact that the program explored a range of information from an Israeli context, and that it was not simply limited to legal issues, despite the fact that it is a law class. Coming from a business background, I am always appreciative of the chance to see day-to-day operations or the creation and development of businesses, especially since I have never had the chance to study how incubators and accelerators can help start-up companies prosper.

Finally, I have had the opportunity to experience Israel in a way that I never would have on my own. Having no connection to the Jewish faith and culture, I most likely would have gone my entire life without ever coming to this country. However, through your support, I have been able to experience this once-in-a-lifetime event. Through the program, I have been able to visit Masada, Ein Gedi, the Dead Sea, the Knesset, and the Supreme Court of Israel. I've explored the Old City of Jerusalem, and haggled for groceries at the Mehane Yehuda Shuk. I also had the opportunity to explore Israel on my own, from Tel Aviv to Haifa to Eilat, and was even able to visit Petra and Wadi Rum. This has been an amazing opportunity, and I truly appreciate all that you have given me in terms of knowledge and experience.

**Thank you again for your kind donation,**

**Samantha Wong**

**B.Sc.,B. Comm.(Hons.), MBA, JD Candidate (2017)**

**Dear David Asper, Asper Family Foundation, Dean of University of Manitoba Faculty of Law and Canadian Friends of Hebrew University,**

I would like to take the time to express my sincere gratitude for your assistance in funding the University of Manitoba Law - Hebrew University Mishpatim International Law Program. Without your help I would not have had the opportunity to travel to this part of the world and participate in the program, through which I have had many profound and unique experiences. I hope to one day return to Israel, and am extremely grateful for your efforts. Thank you again.

All the Best,

Neal Parker

**To David Asper, the Dean of Robson Hall, Canadian Friends of Hebrew University, and Asper Family Foundation,**

Thank you for the incredible experience I've had at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. If not for this program, I believe I would never have had the opportunity to visit to this part of the world or learn about their culture and legal system. I've had an amazing time here and will be a strong advocate for the program to future students.

Thank you very much,

Kevin Bruce

**To David Asper, the Dean of Robson Hall, Canadian Friends of Hebrew University, and Asper Family Foundation,**

I am writing to thank you sincerely for the very generous donation and opportunity that you have provided me to attend the Mishpatim course on Israeli legal systems at the Rothberg International School in Jerusalem. This experience has truly been an experience of a lifetime. I knew very little about the Israeli legal system, the continuing conflicts in Israel and even international law more broadly before attending this course and I cannot think of a better way to get an introduction than in Israel itself. Being able to experience this diverse culture has been absolutely eye opening and I will always be grateful.

Thank you again for your generosity and making this possible for me.

Regards,

Tanci

**To David Asper, the Dean of Robson Hall, Canadian Friends of Hebrew University, and Asper Family Foundation,**

I am writing to express my gratitude for your generous donation that's allowed me to take part in the Mishpatim Program this summer at the Rothberg International School in Jerusalem. This experience has been truly amazing and has provided me many opportunities to experience the culture in Israel and to expand my knowledge of the Israeli legal system and as a start-up nation. Because of this course, I now have a

greater understanding and appreciation for the cultural/religious diversity and tensions that exist in Israel today, which continue to impact the Israeli judicial system. This is something that I will take with me throughout my future studies at Robson Hall. Thank you again for your generosity and allowing us to participate in a once in a lifetime opportunity.

Regards,

Amanda Cheys

**To David Asper, the Dean of Robson Hall, Canadian Friends of Hebrew University, and Asper Family Foundation,**

I would like to send this note to thank you personally for your generous donations to the Mishpatim program. I have had an unforgettable learning experience while studying at the Hebrew University. Further, I was able to discover a new country, which ultimately broadened my knowledge of the classroom studies. Without your donations this trip would not have been possible for me.

-Brittney Hoyt

**To David Asper, the Dean of Robson Hall, Canadian Friends of Hebrew University, and Asper Family Foundation,**

I would like to express my sincere gratitude for your generosity in subsidizing the Mishpatim program.

The opportunity to study at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem was an opportunity like no other. Having the chance to study about Israeli law and society while being an active member in the Israeli community was like no other. It is one thing to sit in Winnipeg and learn about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, but to be here and see the divisions within society and feel the tensions between the peoples was amazing.

Particularly interesting to me was understanding the legal aspects of counter terrorism happening in Israel. The Gaza Strip and the West Bank were places that seemed far away, and very scary. After engaging in the lectures at Hebrew University I can now see that the Palestinians are a diverse group of people, and their interactions with the state of Israel are very complicated.

The field trips provided during the course of the semester were very interesting as well. Learning about the Dead Sea, Ein Gedi, Massada, and the Holocaust Museum were very valuable parts of the trip. Having the opportunity to engage with the land brought my experience to the next level.

I would like to extend my thanks to the individuals and organizations that made my participation in the Mishpatim program possible.

Chi-Meegwetch,

Victoria Perrie

**To David Asper, the Dean of Robson Hall, Canadian Friends of Hebrew University, and Asper Family Foundation:**

I want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for making the Mishpatim program possible. Prior to this program, my knowledge of Jewish law and Israel was slim. What I have found now that I have been part of this community for a few weeks is far beyond any expectations I held. The community and people in Israel are kind, passionate, and patriotic in a very inspiring way. They are proud of their heritage and their land, constantly working towards its betterment. The modernization and infrastructure of the country were shocking, it opened my mind to the reality in Israel as well as the way the media portrays a very twisted image of the reality here. The historical sites and architecture were inspiring, breathtaking, and life changing. There is a sense of history in every step you take, cobblestones and mosaics abound, bringing a sense of security and serenity that I did not expect. This program has increased my desire to travel and open my mind to different cultures, as experiencing them firsthand is completely different than anything that can be explained or shown to you otherwise.

The class itself gave historical context to an ancient conflict that is not spoken about. The majority of the knowledge the modern world has of the conflicts of Israel do not elaborate on its complexity or the passion behind each decision. It was enlightening to learn from the start of recorded history, to truly attempt to wrap my head around it. Thank you so much for the opportunity, without your aid, it would have not been possible for me and many others to come. Without the opportunity, the thought to visit Israel might not even had crossed my mind, and I would have missed out on an amazing experience. Thank you again.

-Mercedes Ayala

**To David Asper, the Dean of Robson Hall, Canadian Friends of Hebrew University, and The Asper Family Foundation:**

I wanted to express my sincerest thank you for your contribution to or support for the Mishpatim program for without it, I unequivocally would not have been able to afford to attend. This experience had been incredible. Whether it was travelling to the Knesset or

meeting a Supreme Court Justice to visiting the Dead Sea and Massada to receiving an invaluable educational opportunity at one of the finest universities, none of it would have been possible without your support. This trip has not only been a fantastic learning experience but has also sparked my interest to further pursue the study of Middle East politics and the Israeli-Arab conflict. So again thank you for your generosity, without it this experience would not have been possible.

Sincerely,  
Kosta Vartsakis

**To David Asper, the Dean of Robson Hall, Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University, and Asper Family Foundation,**

My name is Aly Sparks. I have just finished my first year at the University of Saskatchewan, College of Law. I am writing to extend my heartfelt thanks for your support in making the Mishpatim Israel and International Law summer program a reality this year.

I was fortunate to be the only University of Saskatchewan student to attend the program this year. I chanced upon the information early in the second term, and immediately my interest was piqued. As a person who identifies ethnically as Jewish, I was very excited to see Israel for the first time and to absorb as much of the culture and history as possible. I think coming to Israel for this class enabled me to have a much more enriching experience here than I might have had if I had come just as a tourist. I am deeply grateful for Dr. Ohana and the many guest speakers who shared their knowledge with the class. Professor Schwarz was also an invaluable resource for us, as he provided the much needed Canadian context to many of the issues discussed. One of the things I loved was getting to see just how similar some of the issues facing these two countries are.

I found many of the field trips to be incredible experiences. Being able to visit Ein Gedi, Masada and the Dead Sea provided us with a much needed break in the middle of the program. The tour of the Supreme Court was one of the highlights of the class. It was very interesting to learn about all of the symbolism of the building. I feel lucky that I attended this program this year due to the new relationship with the Hebrew University Law Faculty. The Supreme Court visit was enhanced by our conversation with Justice Hendel, a meeting made possible through the relationship between the two schools. I also very much enjoyed meeting with Israeli law students to discuss multiculturalism and some of the projects that they are working on to further it in Israel. I cannot thank you enough for your part in enabling me to attend this program!

Sincerely,  
Aly Sparks

**To David Asper, the Dean of Robson Hall, Canadian Friends of Hebrew University, and Asper Family Foundation,**

Thank you very much for your generous support towards the 2016 Mishpatim Program. It was a very enlightening and rewarding experience.

Before coming to Israel I had very little understanding of Israeli Society, including the historical background and the current cultural dynamics. I have found the program, lectures, guest speakers and overall experience very rewarding. I have gained an understanding and a new appreciation for the Israeli State and the current legal issues that surround it.

I thoroughly enjoyed the first hand experiences that were made available to us during the program. Specifically, the material presented and field trips surrounding the idea of Israel as a Start Up Nation. It was very interesting to visit Jerusalem Venture Partners and hear about new start up organizations, their background, process, struggles and success. I personally found the national culture and support for entrepreneurship and innovation very inspiring.

Thank you,

Elizabeth Czynryj

**To David Asper, the Dean of Robson Hall, Canadian Friends of Hebrew University, and Asper Family Foundation,**

I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the opportunity to study at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. I consider the Mishpatim course an opportunity of a life time. I was able to gain insight and an appreciation for a very complex part of the world. Israel and city of Jerusalem in particular offer a different experience than any other place in the world. The course, with all of the lectures, guest speakers, and interesting field trips, have allowed me to see Israel and the Middle East more generally from different perspectives, opening my mind to the diverse issues that Israeli's deal with on a daily basis.

Experiences that I especially cherish are the trips to Tel Aviv to visit Venture Capitalist start-ups and the trip to the YadVashem Holocaust Memorial Museum. It was interesting to learn about how high-tech and innovative Israel is on a global level. The Holocaust museum was eye-opening, heartbreaking, and very educational. These two experience will have a lasting impression on me going forward.

Again I am very thankful for the opportunity to learn about a complex society with such a turbulent past. I would encourage any and all Canadian business and law students to participate in this program as it is an experience that will have long-lasting impacts on



their lives.

Sincerely,

Michael Zacharias  
Robson Hall Faculty of Law

**To David Asper, the Dean of Robson Hall, Canadian Friends of Hebrew University, and Asper Family Foundation,**

I am writing to thank you for your generous donation to the Israel and International Law Program (Mishpatim). I would not have been able to attend the program had it not been for your contribution. Studying Israeli law in Jerusalem provided me with unique insight and perspective. It was an eye-opening educational experience that I will never forget. I made so many wonderful memories and gained knowledge both inside and outside of the classroom. I am so grateful that I was able to be a part of this trip. It truly was a once in a lifetime opportunity.

Sincerely,

Nicole Deniset

**To David Asper, the Dean of Robson Hall, Canadian Friends of Hebrew University, and Asper Family Foundation,**

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your generous donation to the Mishpatim Program. Without your support, this program would not be possible. I can say unequivocally that my time at Hebrew University has been the most meaningful experience of my first year in law school. The opportunity to study in one of the most interesting cities in the world is one that I will never forget. I was especially grateful for the chance to hear a number of distinguished guest lecturers. Their views on the current situation facing the state of Israel were eye-opening and impressively nuanced.

I also enjoyed the number of field trips that we went on, including to the Dead Sea, Masada, Yad Vashem, the Knesset and the Supreme Court.

Again, thank you so much for your generosity.

Sincerely,  
Davis Hirsch

**To David Asper, the Dean of Robson Hall, Canadian Friends of Hebrew University, and Asper Family Foundation,**

Thank you for the opportunity to partake in the Mishpatim program 2016 at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

I thoroughly enjoyed my time in Israel, and hope I will have another opportunity to travel there again in the future.

The most moving part of the trip for me personally was the Holocaust museum. As a person who has done considerable study on the Second World War, I hold deep sorrow for the events of the Holocaust. I have already had the opportunity to visit the museum in Berlin, and observing the different tone and context provided through the Israeli museum was a deeply moving experience.

We have learned a great deal about the struggles that Israel faces as a nation, and how they are overcoming those challenges.

I hope that you will continue to aid the Mishpatim program, it is an experience I would highly recommend to any Robson Hall student.

Sincerely,

Mark Alward

**To David Asper, the Dean of Robson Hall, Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University, and Asper Family Foundation,**

I am writing to express my sincere gratitude to you for making the Mishpatim Program possible. Since receiving my acceptance to Robson Hall I have looked forward to participating in this exchange program. As a undergraduate student I had the opportunity to study at the Rothberg International School at the Hebrew University so I was particularly excited to return to Jerusalem to study law.

Upon reflection, it is clear that I, as well as my fellow students, gained a great deal from this program. Due to similarities in our legal systems, not only do I feel that I have learned a lot about the Israeli legal system, but also that this knowledge will be beneficial to my understanding of the Canadian legal system. While attending the program I felt truly immersed in the Israeli culture, and I feel that this experience enhanced my comprehension of classroom concepts.

When I look back on my experience in law school I am confident that the Mishpatim program will stand out as one of the most enjoyable aspects of my degree.

Sincerely,

Ashley Kaufmann  
University of Manitoba  
Robson Hall Faculty of Law, Class of 2018