

## 2019 ISRAEL AND INTERNATIONAL LAW PROGRAM (“MISHPATIM”)

### TESTIMONIALS

*Note: This summer was the ninth offering of this program, created by Dr. Bryan Schwartz and delivered at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem in cooperation with the Hebrew University Law School. The following student testimonials were written as thank-you letters to donors and sponsors who helped make the students' experiences possible.*

I wanted to thank you for your contribution towards the Israel and International Law Program this year. It was an incredible opportunity to be able to attend this program after having completed my first year at Robson Hall. It was an unforgettable experience that I was able to share along with my fellow students from Robson Hall, as well as various other law students from across Canada.

Thank you for allowing myself and other students to be able to attend the program, we greatly appreciate your continued support.

Sincerely,  
Sue Ahn

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Thank you so much for your continued support for the Mishpatim program. The time, efforts and funding you provide to give students a once in a life time opportunity is greatly appreciated. I have thoroughly enjoyed the course and my time here in Israel. Throughout the course, I was able to learn about a new culture and society while gaining first hand exposure to the culture by living in Jerusalem and traveling to various other areas of the country. This experience was a rare opportunity to engage in a country full of history and monumental religious sites.

This course gave me the chance to learn about a different legal system in contrast to what I have learned about the Canadian legal system back at Robson Hall. Israel is a dynamic and unique country in that it has to face a wide variety of economic, social and legal challenges. This course allowed me to learn about these challenges such as integrating immigrants, doing justice towards minorities all while protecting Israeli's.

My time spent in Israel as part of the Mishpatim course has been rewarding and unforgettable. Thank you again for your generous support, without it, this program and my experience would not have been possible.

Sincerely,  
Alexis Bailey

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First, I'd like to formally thank you for your donation to the Israel International Law and Society Course at Hebrew University, Jerusalem in May 2019. This was truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and I would not have been able to participate without your generous contribution.

Having the chance to take an international law course in the country it pertains to allowed for an immersive experience. My learning spanned further than the classroom, as I was able to relate the course content to what daily life is actually like for those living in Israel. Beyond specifics of Israeli law, what I have gained from this course in terms of understanding how legal systems might operate in different countries will stick with me in years to come.

Academically, a personal highlight for me was learning about some of the "hot-topic" issues in Israeli law, especially those concerning international criminal law and the religious court system in Israel. It was also meaningful to have various guest lectures and excursions, to gain different perspectives from experts in those fields. The visit to Yad Vashem was particularly memorable, as our guide was a former lawyer and was able to relate the content of the museum to the law and to our future careers as potential lawyers.

I only have good things to say about this program and I hope that other students will be able to receive the same opportunity in the future.

With gratitude,  
Meghan Bjorklund

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Dear the generous donors of the Israeli International Law Program,

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to each of you for the support you provided to the Israeli International Law Program. I was a late applicant to this year's program, which meant the flights were more expensive than usual. As a result, the trip would not have been feasible, absent your support. I learned a lot while on the trip – about the country, and the students I attended it with, especially, so it was invaluable.

Israel is a beautiful country, and it was an absolute privilege to visit. Being there radically changed my thinking about it too – on the first day, the school impressed upon me that venturing outside of Tel Aviv or West Jerusalem was risky for a gay student (particularly as one who does not pass as straight). This was largely borne out in the following weeks, and the lesson – that I'm safe in Israel, and not so much elsewhere – was not lost on me. It is easy to be sympathetic to people who are willing to protect you. I would go as far to say that Israelis are more comfortable with gay people than Canadians are, which was a shock, since it means we have a long way to go still.

While there are many things to admire about Israel, the people certainly were the most remarkable part of it, for me. Israelis are hearteningly different from Canadians – they're direct, warm and seem happy, in a way that I rarely see in Winnipeg. The contrast was enlightening, and I hope I'll be able to put that to use here. It would be nice if people here were a little happier, I think.

Regardless, you have my sincerest thanks for your support,  
Christian Balagus-Warren

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Thank you! I had a meaningful learning experience in Jerusalem!

Sincerely,  
Kara Cao

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I am writing to express my sincere gratitude for your donations to the Israel Exchange Program that took place this May. In addition to the information I learned in the classroom, the various field trips as well as the program in general allowed me to experience first-hand the various cultures in Israel. In addition to that, the program gave me the opportunity to meet other law students from across Canada and to make life-long friends.

Thank you so much again!  
Autumn Giles

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I am writing to express my gratitude for your donation and contribution to the positive experience of myself and many others that attended Hebrew University for the month of May 2019. Of specific interest to me was the field trip to Tel Aviv to learn about the rights of LGBTQ\* individuals in Israel. I considered this a very valuable opportunity and would highly recommend the experience to future law students that are interested in gaining a greater understanding of the law and the political climate of Israel.

Sincerely,  
Amber Harms

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Thank you for your donation to the Mishpatim Program. I had an amazing time learning about Israeli law and society, and found the trip to Yad Vashem and the lecture by Guy Harpaz particularly interesting and meaningful. These experiences, as well as the program in general, has sparked an interest in international human rights for me. I am deeply grateful for your generosity, as I otherwise would not have been able to participate in this program.

Best,  
Thank you,  
Jonathan Kikuchi

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I would like to thank all those who made it possible for me to come to Israel to participate in the International Law program. It has deepened my understanding of the complexities and complications that Israel has to deal with. It also significantly increased my understanding of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a topic that I had a shallow understanding of prior to completing the program. Studying in Israel also enabled me to travel outside the continent and meet new friends inside and outside the university. Your support for this program is immensely appreciated.

Sincerely,  
Jonhelyn Lantin

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Dear Donors,  
Hello, my name is Daniel Marin and I am a second-year law student at York University's Osgoode Hall Law School in Toronto. I would like to express my deep gratitude for your generous contribution to the *Mishpatim* program at the Rothberg International School in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The opportunity to travel to Israel for a month was an unforgettable experience – and it was all thanks to your help and support! I was able to make new

friends (and future colleagues in the legal profession) and travel throughout Israel and learn more about its culture, history, and people. It was a privilege to have a unique experiential learning opportunity in the *Introduction to Israeli Law and Society: Ancient Peoples and Newcomers in the Start-up Nation* course.

The course was an excellent opportunity for students from different Canadian law schools to meet and study together. In our seminar, we studied different legal issues and topics, such as difference sources of Israeli Law; judicial review and jurisprudence; Israel as a Jewish and Democratic state; language, identity, and electoral politics; and the Israeli Knowledge Economy, among others. We were lucky to have Professor Daniel Ohana teach the course along with Professor Byan Schwartz and several distinguished guest speakers. We were also very fortunate enough to be in different classrooms at the Faculty of Law and the Rothberg International School to experience the beautiful campus overlooking the Old City.

In addition to our coursework, we were also able to participate in excursions around Israel as part of our learning experience. We visited places such as the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum. Masada and the Dead Sea; the Knesset and the Israeli Supreme Court; entrepreneurship centres such as JEST Hub-Tech Entrepreneurship Center in East Jerusalem and HU start at the Hebrew University Entrepreneurship Center in the Givat Ram campus; and the Organization for the Empowerment of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community in Israel. During our visit to Tel Aviv, we also had the amazing opportunity to talk to the co-founder of WMN (Working Space and Ecosystem for Women-Led Entrepreneurial Ventures), and a lawyer from the Hotline Centre for Refugees and Migrants. Each and every trip had a different learning experience, but each and every one had an important and significant impact to my understanding of Israel and the law.

In addition to our academic excursions, we took advantage of our trip to discover Israel. My friends and I explored the Old City many times, relished at the local markets both in and surrounding the Old City, and were able to visit the Israel Museum and the Mount of Olives. We were also able to explore other cities like Tel Aviv-Yafo and Eilat. You can be sure that we got our fill on shawarma, falafels, and shakshuka! Even though our trip was a month long, it was packed with friendship, learning and adventures that will stay in our memories and in our photo albums for a very long time. I look forward to staying in touch with the new friends I made and applying the knowledge I gained to the rest of my courses at Osgoode.

This once-in-a-lifetime experience was all possible with your support, and I wanted to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you for making this unforgettable journey a reality for me and the rest of the law students who participated in the program. I look forward to tune in next year when the program celebrates its 10<sup>th</sup> year in 2020!

Sincerely,  
Daniel Marin

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Thank you so much for making the Mishpatim program a possibility for us. Over the course of the three weeks there, we had an immersive experience which provided each of us with valuable takeaways. It would be hard to narrow it down to what the best part of the course was, but I will try to pick a few. Getting an overall sense of Israel's history and politics from scholars and teachers rather than the news is a huge privilege. I found that most of the course made me more interested in the possibility of going into a human rights-focused career, something that I had not considered as a legitimate possibility before the trip. The course was structured in such a way that we had the opportunities to see not only the nation of Israel but get to know how its people functioned as well. As a whole, this was a valuable and unforgettable experience. I'm so happy to have had the opportunity, and I thank you for it.

Sincerely,  
Jaidan Merry

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I'd like to express my thanks and gratitude to all of the donors that made the Israel and International Law Program possible for myself and my classmates. I feel privileged to have been given the opportunity to travel to Israel and learn so much about the people, culture and legal system that operates there. From climbing Masada and swimming in the Dead Sea, to visiting the Knesset and the Israeli Supreme Court, we were able to see some of the most extraordinary natural, historic, and legal landmarks in the country. Once again, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all the donors who supported this program. The trip was an amazing experience that I will remember for the rest of my life.

Thanks,  
Owen Park

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Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to thank you for the generous bursary that allowed me to attend the Mishpatim Law Program in Israel. I am grateful and appreciative of your contribution, which allowed me the opportunity to visit an incredible country and learn about the culture and society.

Without your contribution, I would not have had the privilege to travel to Israel and explore a country filled with rich history.

Thank you for your generous support.

Yours truly,  
Alexandra Philippot

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Dear donors of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem,

I am writing to express my gratitude for your generous donation that allowed me to attend the Israel Mishpatim Program this past month. As a future lawyer, it is important to learn about the legal systems of various countries in the world, and this program provided me that in an informative and hands on manner. Being a graduate of a Jewish school, this experience was especially enriching as it afforded me the opportunity to learn about an aspect of Israel that I was unfamiliar with. I hope you consider donating in the future.

Best,  
Alexa Smith

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Thank you for your outstanding support of the Mishpatim program. The continued time, effort and funding you provide allows us students a once in a lifetime opportunity. Throughout the course and my time in Israel, I was

able to experience a new culture and society first hand. The exposure of living in Jerusalem and travelling to other areas of the country have given me a rare opportunity to engage in a country full of history and monumental religious sites. This experience would not have been possible without your support.

This course has also given me the chance to learn about the vast and dynamic legal system that currently exists in Israel. The economic, social and legal challenges the country faces provided me with a unique learning experience in which I would not have gained in Canada.

Again, thank you for your generous support. My experience with the Mishpatim course has been rewarding and unforgettable. This experience would not have been possible with you.

Sincerely,  
Carter Suski

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My name is Adrienne Tessier and I am currently a law student at McGill University. I am writing today to thank you most sincerely for your contribution to the 2019 Mishpatim program. Over the course of three weeks, I had the chance to explore both a country that I had never experienced or studied.

A particular highlight were the field trips. I especially enjoyed hearing from Tal Steiner from the Hotline for Refugees and Migrants in Tel Aviv. She was able to talk about her experiences as one of Israel's leading practitioners in immigration law, fighting for the rights of asylum seekers. JEST Start-Up Hub in East Jerusalem was another one of my favourite sessions. The Executive Director spoke about why entrepreneurship is so important in East Jerusalem, and how they educate the community in basic business skills, programming, and social media.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. Without your support of my tuition fees, I simply could not have taken part in this course. Your contribution is most appreciated.

Sincerely,  
Adrienne Tessier

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I am writing this letter to express my thanks and deep gratitude for your generous donations that allowed me the opportunity to attend Hebrew University this past May. The exchange was an incredible experience that I will cherish forever. The opportunity to learn about Israeli law and society through field trips and interesting lectures was fascinating and I am excited to recommend the program to all those entering law school next year.

In addition to the course I was also able to experience other parts of Israel including, Tel Aviv, Masada, the Dead Sea, and Eilat. Snorkelling in the Red Sea, climbing Masada (despite the heat), and visiting the Old City in Jerusalem with fellow classmates were a few of the many highlights. I am thankful that this trip allowed me to meet students from other Canadian law schools and get to know students from Robson Hall better.

Thank you very much again, this once in a lifetime experience would not have been possible without your generous support.

Sincerely,  
Erin Tramley

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I'm a law student at Robson Hall, who just completed the Israel exchange program. I just wanted to say thank you for giving us students the opportunity to participate in this summer program. This is truly one of the most memorable moments of my academic career, and I would like to thank to donors who helped subsidize the costs of this trip as well as Professor Schwartz.

Owen Sasek