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The world has almost always been a challenging place to be Jewish...

In many ways, this past year has reflected that age-old experience: learning to face significant tests in our day-to-day lives while experiencing immense pride as *Klal Yisrael* – the whole, global Jewish community – overcomes those hurdles.

We have seen this in action across World ORT's network of schools, universities and educational programs. We marveled at the innovative work of our students at their summer schools in the Panama rainforest and in Bulgaria's digital studios. We were inspired by our teachers at their professional development courses and workshops on AI. All while we simultaneously admired the bravery of our Israeli and Ukrainian beneficiaries receiving psychological assistance and overcoming the challenges and demands of war.

As we move forward into a new era for our organization, it is with renewed hope and vigor, safe in the knowledge that for the past 145 years, the ORT students, teachers and leaders who came before us have done the same, whatever challenges they faced around the world.

In these testing times for Jews, whether in Israel or in the diaspora, World ORT's pledge to our 350,000 beneficiaries is to continue to unleash the potential of young people and to prepare them to lead fulfilling lives while having a positive impact on the world around them.

And we issue a heartfelt thank you to all those who continue to support us as we make an impact through education.

Our Mission

To transform lives through education driven by Jewish values and innovation that empowers people and strengthens communities.

Our History

ORT has been transforming lives through training and education since 1880. From focusing on teaching 19th century Russian Jews essential trades and professions, we have evolved to provide 21st century skills that empower individuals and strengthen communities and Jewish life worldwide. The ORT network reaches 350,000 people, across more than 40 countries, and in more than 40 schools, universities, and vocational training programs.

Our Values

- Sustainability
- Integrity
- Innovation
- Passion
- Cooperation
- Versatility
- Excellence
- Tikun Am
- Tikun Olam

Our Pillars



Education for Life

Providing students with the skills to thrive through high-quality teaching and training.

ORT programs prepare students for careers in developing industries. As workplace opportunities rapidly evolve, ORT teaches new skills needed to gain and maintain expertise for employment in sought-after fields.



Global Citizenship

Preparing students to lead socially responsible lives.

ORT students develop an increased understanding of moral and ethical issues beyond their geographic boundaries, allowing them to make better-informed choices for themselves and for society.



Jewish Experience

Ensuring Jewish continuity by enriching Jewish education, identity and appreciation of Jewish tradition, values and culture.

ORT schools are the primary source of Jewish affiliation for many students and their families – providing a direct connection to our religion, history and culture.





Education Department Updates

Gaining Skills for Life

Saar, a World ORT Kadima Mada student, and Martin, from ORT Jewish school No. 134 “Dimcho Debelianov”, Bulgaria, took part in the two-week Digital Skills Academy in Sofia, Bulgaria, in July. Sessions included visits to professional environments, such as TV and film studios, and Jewish enrichment programs.

Saar

“I already knew how to edit, but I wanted to take it to the next level, and I thought this was exactly the right platform to do it – and with new people from different countries.

“This was ideal for me. I learned loads, but what I liked the most was how to film videos, good videos – and not just with your phone.

“My dream job is to be a producer. I actually didn’t realize this before the Digital Skills Academy course, but I really like to control everything – you have the vision in your head and then it happens on camera and in the editing part, so it’s incredible.

“I hope I will be able to have something to do with film-making in my future.”

Martin

“I learned a lot at the Digital Skills Academy. The main thing was to work better with the camera. We also had time to work in a studio and we learned to use the lights.

“We also learned a lot of things from professional videographers and photographers. I’m more confident in my skills now.”





Education Department Updates

An Amazing and Unique Experience

Ilai, aged 16, from Colegio León Pinelo in Peru, and **Galiana**, aged 17, from Colegio Moral y Luces 'Herzl-Bialik' in Venezuela, were participants of the Ecology Summer School that took place in the Gamboa Rainforest in Soberania National Park, Panama, in February.

Ilai

"My highlight from the Ecology Summer School is that we went to the jungle to see all the animals by ourselves, and that was amazing. My project was researching leaf-cutter ants and how they carry their materials and why.

"I learned that the ants don't eat the materials they get outside the nest; rather they feed the materials to little fungus and they eat that fungus instead. The ants prefer to carry flowers and leaves.

"I connected well with my peers, especially those from Mexico and Colombia, and I really learned a lot about their culture, music and food.

"I feel really proud of being Jewish. My favourite chag is Purim because we get to dress however we want and go to school like that and I really enjoy making up a costume. My Jewish hero

is mainly my Dad because he knows everything and he's a pretty good listener. Einstein would be another one of my Jewish heroes because he was a really good scientist.

"I really enjoyed meeting all these new people, making new research and going inside the jungle to do the research. It was an amazing and unique experience and I'm really grateful to ORT for that."



Galiana

"My favorite thing about the Ecology Summer School was meeting new people, going to new places, having new experiences and learning about new animals and species.

"For our project we wanted to find out the differences between plants in different microhabitats including dry, semi-moist and moist areas, so we compared 30 shrubs in each microhabitat. We found out that they have different physical characteristics; if they are near to water, they have less leaf damage than if they are in a drier area.

"In Venezuela, we have a big community, which I'm part of. I'm very proud of being Jewish and of my community. I love to learn about my religion and we took a trip to Israel last year. When I leave school, I want to live in Israel for a year. I hope we can finally have

peace. After that, I want to study computer science and software engineering in Spain and have the opportunity to do an MBA in Boston or New York.

"I want to thank ORT for the opportunity to come to this Summer School and all the tutors and people who helped me to have this experience."



Alexandra

11th grade student, Chernivtsi Lyceum ORT No. 15, Ukraine

"We celebrated Tu Bishvat in January. This holiday is a great opportunity to emphasize the close connection between man and nature because the tree is a symbol of life, growth, and rebirth. The New Year of the Trees reminds us that every human being, like a tree, must constantly evolve and strive for perfection. To better realize this simple yet complex truth, we, the students of the graduating 11th grade, planted trees in pots with soil.

"Tu Bishvat also takes on a new meaning in the current context. Due to the global environmental issues that are becoming more pressing, it is necessary to call for respect for nature and to take care of the environment.

"We are all sincerely grateful to the ORT network for the active preservation and promotion of the cultural values of the Jewish people, and also for the support of our school.

"Thanks to this support, we were able to celebrate Jewish holidays together. A shared holiday strengthens the student body, and observance is important to the Jewish community because it helps to preserve spiritual, environmental, and family values.

"The celebration helps to further emphasize and realize the connection to nature, tradition, and religion."

Education Department Updates

Connecting with our Traditions

Stella Dinkova

ORT No. 134 "Dimcho Debelianov" Jewish School, Sofia, Bulgaria

Stella Dinkova was one of seven educators selected for the Beatrice Wand-Polak Award for going the extra mile in her role. Stella has been a teacher for 19 years and is currently a Hebrew and Jewish Studies coordinator.

"In the past year, the most difficult moment was – and still is – the war in Israel. I have many relatives and friends in Israel, I have lived there for seven years, and it has been very difficult for me to cope and move on. On the other hand, at that moment the students needed me more than ever – they had questions, they couldn't understand why this

terrible thing was happening. We help each other every day and keep moving forward in the name of Jewish values and in the name of good.

"At ORT, we are part of a big family – the contact with other people in the network, the exchanges between ORT teachers, and the contact with students from different countries are invaluable.

"I believe I am a teacher by vocation, and it is the students who influence me the most; they are my motivation to continually learn and develop. I am grateful for every lesson I have received from my principals, colleagues, and students."

Education Department Updates

My Students are my Motivation

A Landmark Moment in my Career

Language and literature teacher **Victoria Guevara** from the Instituto Dr. Jaim Weizman, Costa Rica, shares her thoughts about the Hatter Technology Seminar she attended in November.



"The Hatter Technology Seminar has been one of the most inspiring experiences of my life. It is no exaggeration to call it a landmark in my professional development journey, pivotal in reshaping my perspective of education and instructional design."

"Over four days, we learned from AI experts from some of the world's most prestigious tech-oriented universities and shared experiences with world-class teachers and educational leaders from 17 countries.

"As emerging technologies increasingly rely on AI and as our students integrate these tools into

their everyday lives, we must guide them to become critical and informed users – embracing AI's potential for innovation while understanding its challenges and responsibilities.

"We delegates are united by common values, a genuine enthusiasm for learning, and an unyielding commitment to fostering our students' development. AI leaders emphasized the importance of establishing robust policies to promote regulation, access, and transparency.

"These discussions helped us to create a roadmap to position schools within the ORT network as leaders

in leveraging AI in education. We added our unique perspectives and cultures to the mix, sharing stories of family, love, and a search for purpose. I understood that AI is as much about people as it is about technology.

"When you attend a Hatter Technology Seminar, you will expand your network and broaden your vision.

"I am astounded by how much I learned from the innovative ideas of my fellow delegates, and I am equipped with cutting-edge knowledge to empower my fellow teachers and my students back home."



The past year has been the most testing time in the modern history of ORT's work in Israel. Our students, teachers and staff across the country have been forced to respond to the myriad of unexpected needs as a result of the October 7 terror attacks and conflicts in Gaza and Lebanon. They have done this each day with sensitivity and while working through their own trauma.

Israel: One Year On



After the initial emergency responses in late 2023, particularly at World ORT's Kfar Silver Youth Village and at evacuation centers around Israel, early 2024 was a time for significant assessment of the likely ongoing support required.

World ORT's emergency international fundraising campaign continued to provide urgent educational and psychological support. Many students have displayed post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms or acute anxiety, and the therapeutic workshops run by World ORT Kadima Mada experts have proved to be a lifeline.

Lives have been affected throughout World ORT's network of schools and educational facilities. Our students and teachers have come together from far and wide to show their support for Israel amid rising global antisemitism. Students around the



world have been deeply affected by fears of expressing their Jewish identity in their home countries.

World ORT's Education Department is continuing to support our schools and we expect to continue the weekly enrichment activities into 2025, adapting as the needs arise. Our specialist mental health program of counselling and therapeutic activities continues for students at Kfar Silver.

Dr. Moshe Leiba, Chief Pedagogical and R&D Officer of World ORT Kadima Mada, said: "Since the war began, World ORT Kadima Mada programs have had profound and positive effects on our students and staff. Through flexible learning models, robust psychological support and leveraging technology, we have successfully maintained educational continuity and enhanced emotional resilience."

Daniel Tysman, Head of World ORT's Education Department, took part in a mission to Israel, alongside 30 leading educators from around the world (pictured below). Participants explored the educational opportunities presented by October 7 and considered the resources needed to transform a Jewish crisis into an opportunity for fostering greater Jewish belonging, confidence, and resilience.

"Witnessing examples of unity, kindness, and heroism gave me optimism that educators responsible for Jewish identity can use this time to rethink and rebuild. The kindness shown to displaced families and the support for the loved ones of the victims and hostages showed us a better way to respond to cruelty.

"Our schools share a sense of belonging to a global Jewish family

and their educational programs put emphasis on our collective history. In the wake of 7/10, our connection to this supportive network helped us to navigate the dark months that followed.

"For all of us responsible for building confident Jewish identities and positive connections to Israel, the Jewish educators' mission came at a critical time. In the short-term, we need measures to address specific challenges, to find some order in the chaos, to look out for each other's wellbeing, and to provide a level of security that makes us all feel safe.

"The social entrepreneurs we met taught us that it is important to respond to a need with action, and that having a clarity of mission can overcome obstacles and lead to impactful change."





Israel: One Year On

World ORT Kadima Mada introduced an additional opportunity: international respite trips. Groups of teenage Israeli students travelled to Mexico, Britain and across the United States on a series of respite visits throughout 2024.

Each student had experienced different types of trauma: some had lost family members, parents, siblings or close friends, and one Ukrainian student had fled one war only to again be faced with violent conflict. The trips included rehabilitation sessions with a team of consultants, social workers, and psychologists.

Judy Menikoff, Vice-Chair of World ORT, hosted one group during a visit to the U.S.

"For much of my adult life I have been engaged with the work of ORT, but the single most rewarding experience of my time in this organization was the day I spent with 21 of our Israeli students at my home in Connecticut. They took part in activities, cultural exchanges, and recreational programming. But they also benefited from daily counselling sessions, helping them to process the emotional impact of this unprecedented upheaval and loss.

"At my home, as a blue and white cake iced with the words 'Am Yisrael Chai' was placed on the counter, we played *Jerusalem of Gold*. The students and their teachers, together with our friends and others, stood swaying, arms around each other, waving the lights from their phones. Everyone was crying. The kids had such a sense of unity. You could see their love of their country in their eyes.

"Like many organizations working in Israel or in Jewish communities worldwide, we talk about delivering impact but too often measure it in

terms of refurbished buildings and new constructions. We must not lose sight of who is receiving the real benefits – the students, teachers, social workers and families at the heart of everything we do.

"Whether it is delivering our extracurricular programs in the Galilee or running our youth village close to the Gaza border, the true impact of our supporters' dedication and our decades-long work is most clearly measured in the hearts and minds of this group of young people."



The challenges facing ORT's educational communities in Ukraine are even more urgent today than when the war started almost three years ago.

Together we will make a difference, and continue to have an impact through education.

Ukraine Update



The ongoing conflict has deeply affected our students, teachers, and their families. It is not just the classroom environment that has faced significant disruption; it is their daily lives, their safety, and their physical and mental wellbeing. Despite these challenges, ORT Ukraine's commitment to maintaining educational excellence remains steadfast.

In April, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky visited the ORT 'Simha' School in Kyiv ahead of Pesach. He met students and teachers and heard about the work being done to continue Jewish education across the country during the war.

This past winter, as temperatures dropped, the situation became even more dire. With extensive damage to the country's energy infrastructure, extended power outages have left schools without electricity, water, and heating.

World ORT continues to lead efforts to raise the funds necessary to make our schools energy-independent, ensuring learning can continue without disruption, no matter the circumstances. We are also focused on providing comprehensive support to address the broader needs of our school communities across Ukraine, from financial aid for staff and infrastructure improvements to psychological services for those affected by the trauma of war.

Since February 2022 we have together raised millions of dollars, already providing stability, continuity, and hope to students and families who desperately need it. The stakes remain high, but with your help, we can ensure that our commitment to education – and to each and every student – is upheld.

We have identified more than a dozen areas of urgent need across ORT Ukraine's areas of operation as we head into 2025:

- Winter Needs – including blankets, fleece jackets and Thermos flasks
- Electrical System at Odesa School – Overhaul of power system to ensure safety and functionality.
- Financial Support for School Staff – Supplemental payments to overcome economic hardships caused by war.
- Professional Development for Teachers – Training projects including webinars, online courses and specialist materials.
- Meals for Shelters – Feeding students during prolonged bombing and missile attacks.
- Renovation of Hebrew Classroom in Odesa – New floor, waterproofing, heating improvements to create safe learning environment.

- Support for Jewish Formal and Informal Education – Sustaining Jewish holiday celebrations and supporting educational programs through 2025.

- Training for School Psychologists – Specialist training for 13 psychologists in 10 educational institutions.

- Continuing Support for Trauma Counselling – Funding for our psychological support project covering art therapy, self-regulation techniques, group interaction strategies and psychoeducation for students, teachers and parents.

- Security at Zaporizhzhia and Bila Tserkva Schools – Professional security services until Summer 2025.

- Meals at Chernivtsi School – Providing hot lunches to students in one of the poorest regions of the country, with many families displaced by the war.

- Internet and Networking Equipment for Shelters – Installation of fiber internet and reduced power consumption operations.

- Power Supply Needs – Batteries for schools, generator maintenance in all ORT schools.

We are seeking an additional \$1.5 million to enhance our schools' energy independence via integrated inverters, solar panels and generators.

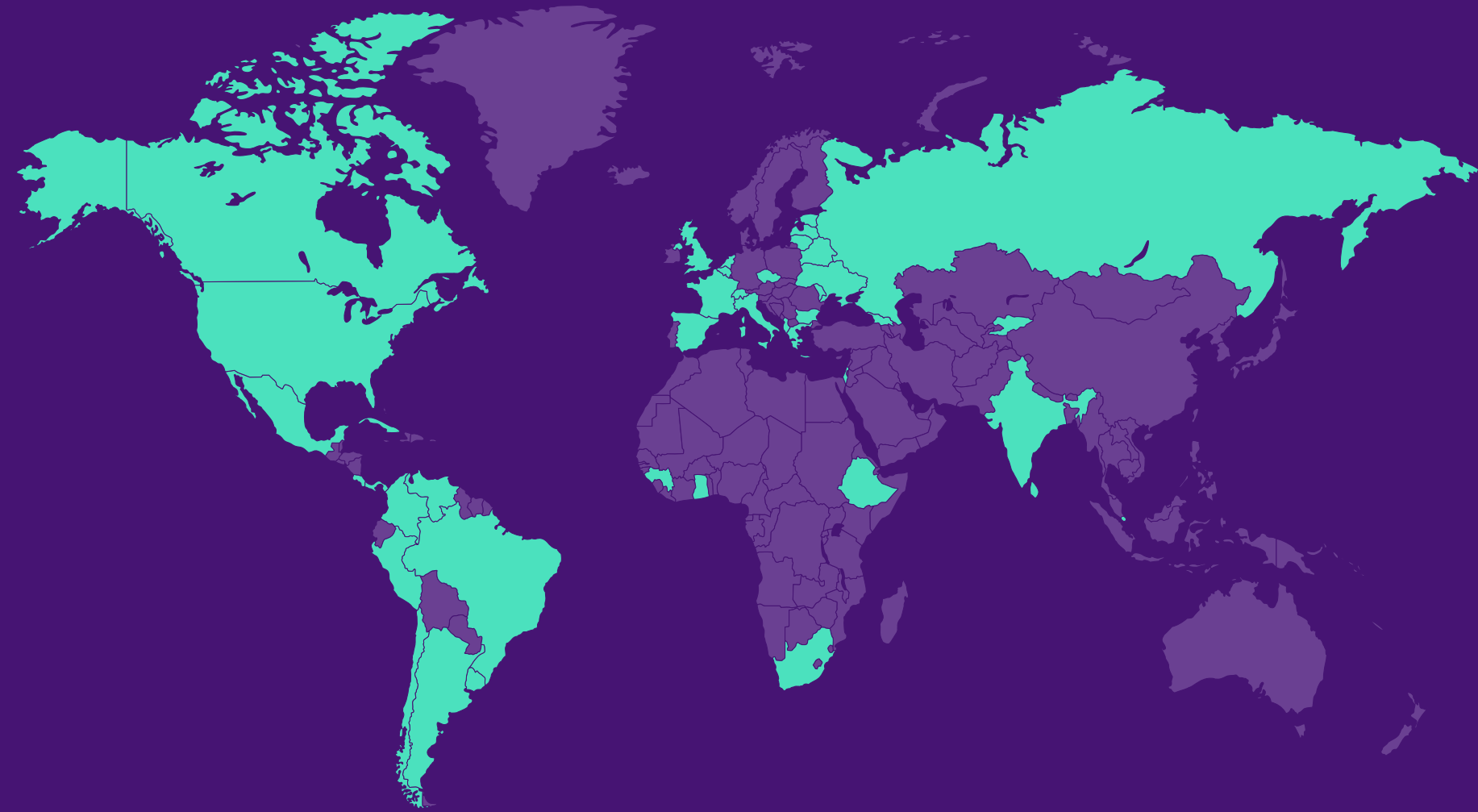


Victoria, IT Teacher, Odesa ORT Lyceum #94:

"It's a hard time for Ukraine. The war has changed my life and the lives of my students. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude for the support we have received during these trying circumstances.

"I work with students across different grades in computer science and technology lessons. Our curriculum focused on essential skills such as information processing, programming and robotics, all designed to ignite their curiosity and creativity.

"ORT extra-curricular lessons are very popular among our students... they explore concepts of modeling, project design and teamwork. Even during air raid alerts, we persevere and continue our lessons, building models in the safety of bomb shelters. It was inspiring to witness the resilience and enthusiasm of my students."



Around the World

Albania
Argentina
Belarus
Belgium
Brazil
Bulgaria
Canada
Chile
Colombia
Costa Rica
Cuba

Czech Republic
Estonia
Ethiopia
France
Georgia
Ghana
Guinea
India
Israel
Italy

Kyrgyzstan
Latvia
Lithuania
Mexico
Moldova
Panama
Peru
Russia
Singapore
South Africa
Spain

Sri Lanka
Switzerland
The Netherlands
UK
Ukraine
Uruguay
USA
Venezuela



Greece

Through our partnership with Irida Women's Center, a local Greek NGO, displaced women find space and support to share and learn, make informed and responsible decisions for their lives, and achieve personal and professional growth.

The ORT livelihoods program includes skill-building activities, vocational training, the development of soft skills critical to building a successful working path, and careers advice.

In 2024, we received a grant from the Livelihood Impact Fund (LIF) to support the program.



Ghana

In Ghana, Anne Frank Fonds and Unesco continue to support our STEM education and leadership program into 2025. These International Cooperation grants, as well as individual donations, enabled ORT to scale up the STEM-focused flexible online learning program that has engaged almost 500 underserved young students in coastal Ghana so far.

The students learned quickly when provided with access to tablets and guidance to take after-school and weekend courses in graphic design, coding, 3-D modeling, game design, video editing and academic subjects including math and science.



Russia

Around 150 students, teachers and graduates from ORT Russia's five schools took part in the organization's first summer camp, 'Bagel'. The week-long program featured activities and workshops including treehouse-building, astrology, volunteering and kayaking – all with a Jewish-themed approach.

The madrichim were all ORT graduates and served as camp counselors and mentors to the younger children, creating a friendly and supportive atmosphere. ORT Russia hopes to run the camp again in 2025.



South Africa

In Durban, ORT South Africa and the Victor Daitz Foundation launched a comprehensive big data analytics training program aimed at equipping young South Africans with the skills needed to excel in the digital age.

By training participants in data cleaning, transformation, mining, engineering, analysis, visualization, integration, machine learning, and report sharing, the program addresses a critical skills gap in the South African job market. Ultimately, this initiative seeks to enhance employability and open doors to exciting career opportunities in the field of data science.



Costa Rica

To celebrate Purim, senior students at the ORT-affiliated Instituto Dr. Jaim Weizman launched the creative initiative 'Día Dona'.

Playing on the word "dona", which means both "donut" and "donation" in Spanish, they designed multiple donation centers where families could contribute clothing, toys, and even blood. In return for each donation, participants were gifted a donut.

This joyful and uplifting event strengthened the school's connection to the essence of Purim, highlighting the importance of generosity and community spirit through an innovative and meaningful activity.



Fundraising Update

ORT America

ORT America proudly welcomed Allison Weinger as its new CEO in early 2024. Allison's leadership has been a catalyst for progress, fostering stronger collaboration across U.S. regions and forging deeper connections with World ORT. Her efforts have ushered in more streamlined processes, enhanced transparency, and growth in fundraising – paving the way for a brighter future. Across the country, ORT America's regional communities exemplified the organization's enduring spirit through a series of dynamic events.

Detroit led the charge with its iconic Rub-A-Dub and WINGO events, together raising an extraordinary \$1.5 million. Atlanta brought excitement with its Men's Poker Night and a Bourbon and BBQ tasting. In Florida, the annual golf outing and the Children Are the Future Gala achieved outstanding success. Meanwhile, Chicago rallied its community through its cherished Lunch With A View luncheon and the heartwarming Fall Friendsgiving Event.

Through these initiatives and countless others, ORT America continues to inspire and empower, transforming challenges into opportunities and strengthening its mission with unwavering determination.

ORT Canada

Significant funds were raised in Canada in support of ORT's Israel emergency campaign, providing much-needed psychosocial rehabilitation support for students, teachers, and their families in Israel, particularly at the World ORT Kfar Silver Youth Village.

ORT Toronto found its master stroke by organizing three golf tournaments at a renowned course. The team also hosted a successful mission from Amos Gofer, CEO of the Kfar Silver Youth Village.

ORT Montreal celebrated the 40th Ted Wise Gala with a Las Vegas casino experience. Montreal also organized ORT's first Pickleball tournament, embracing participants of all ages and skill levels.

Members of ORT Vancouver held two events, including a notable "Ride for STEM" cycling initiative in partnership with a local Jewish Day School.

We recognize major contributions from the Lebovic Charitable Foundation, Peartree Canada, George Fischer and his family, the Goodman Family, as well as The Azrieli Foundation, which continues to back vital bridge-building work with its 'One Team' Camp for Israeli and Bedouin girls at Kfar Silver.

ORT UK

More than 200 guests joined ORT UK to celebrate the ORT JUMP programs at the Bridging the Gap Annual Dinner, raising over £450,000 (\$566,000). The event heard from students, alumni, facilitators, mentors and teachers, who shared the many benefits of the programs, spreading joy, hope and positivity for the next generation.

More than 1,000 students took part in the ORT JUMP Mentoring and Employability Skills Programs. At the end of 2024, ORT UK had matched over 400 students with mentors and had started delivering a Working Skills Day in schools. In 2025 the organization will continue to run its 3-Day Employability Skills Challenge, Alternative Work Experience Programme and International Careers Challenge.



ORT Suisse

ORT Suisse enjoyed a good year in 2024 in terms of attracting new donors. A concert held at the end of November was very successful and specifically targeted a younger and more inclusive crowd – demographics that are important for ORT's continued and future success.

A lunch held in September for leading supporters was a perfect way to thank our 40 largest donors. Amos Gofer spoke via live link-up from Israel and made it a memorable occasion.

Our fundraising in 2024 was successful largely because donors are sensitive to the exceptional needs being felt at this time in our schools and services across Ukraine and Israel in particular.



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