



from strength  
to strength

The Sandra E. Lerner Jewish Community Day School Annual Report 2007-2008



## Faculty & Staff

### Administrative Staff

Head of School..... Alice Maniloff  
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Director, Judaic Studies..... Ofra Sheetrit  
Preschool Director..... Renee Price  
Afterschool Director ..... Eric Mann  
Director of Admissions..... Jordana Brown  
Director of Development  
and Public Relations..... Ivy Wingate  
Financial Analyst..... Brynne Peterson  
Administrative Assistant... Foley Coleman  
Administrative Assistant... Elizabeth Sewell

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Ariel Krusch  
Noelle Paull  
Carolyn Rogers  
Caryn Rosenberg  
Carly Shubitz

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Sally Brown  
Barbara Deena  
Arielle Derby  
Hinda Lind  
Cecilia Payne  
Nicole McIntyre  
Amber Teske  
Integrated Arts ..... Laurie Siegel  
Physical Education ..... Jordan Shamp

### Hebrew & Judaic Studies Faculty

Guy Ben-Eliyahu  
Inbar Rehes  
Michal Unna  
Ronit Zahavi

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# from immediate to resonating results

The Lerner School has enjoyed an abundance of gifts this year. Gifts of time and tireless effort from families. Gifts of knowledge and intellect from our teachers. Gifts of vision and leadership from our Board of Directors. And, of course, generous gifts of financial support from families throughout the community. We celebrate the lasting impact of your gifts on our students, our families and our school. We celebrate the power of giving.

# from poised to positioned

*from the Head of School*

When I first arrived here in 2005, The Lerner School had moved past its infancy and was poised to grow by leaps and bounds. Over the last three years, by building on the vision and hard work of Lerner's founders, we have elevated the school to a new standard of education.

As my tenure ends, and I move on to a new phase of my life (one that include beaches and kayaks and great books), I am proud to leave the Lerner School with a highly gifted staff, a robust enrollment, and a clearly defined strategic plan.

I am confident that my successor, Bini Silver, will continue to lead the Lerner School in our tradition of excellence. Please welcome him into our community.

Thank you so much for your support as the Lerner School continues to move from strength to strength.

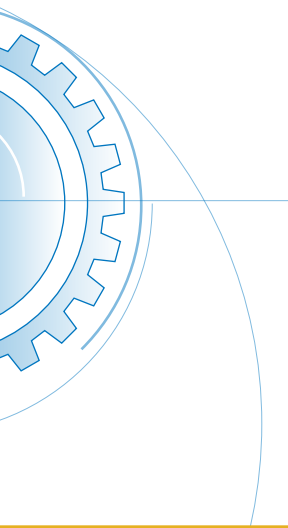
B'shalom,  
Alice Maniloff



Alice Maniloff  
Head of School

"From the daily t'fillah to year long themes such as 'Global Awareness,' the students at Lerner are guided to be socially responsible and ethically thinking citizens within the context and values of Judaism."

—Dual Accreditation team, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools  
& Southern Association of Independent Schools.



Together, with your support and Alice Maniloff's leadership, look what we've accomplished:

### Solid Academic Foundation

Our rigorous professional development and updated curriculum guidelines have helped Lerner students achieve excellent standardized test scores as well as high acceptance rates into top middle schools for our graduates.

### Dual Accreditation

The Lerner School received dual accreditation from the Southern Association of Independent Schools and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and earned special commendations for fulfilling our mission of fostering the learning of Jewish values.

### Early Childhood Pavilion

As part of our long range strategic plan to expand our facilities, our new Early Childhood Pavilion is nearing completion. It includes new classrooms complete with kitchens, a parent lounge, a resource room, and administrative offices.

### More Kindergarten Students & Graduates

We opened a second Kindergarten classroom this fall, welcoming 15 new students. We also graduated the largest class of 5th graders in our history (16 students) who went on to join Lerner alumni at the private and public schools of their choice.

### Expanded Learning Differences Program

Lerner's elementary teachers received yearlong individualized coaching in differentiated instruction. Next year, we will add a Reading Specialist to our faculty, to enable us to provide essential support for a diverse learning community.

## From Strength to Strength

**חזק חזק ונתחזק**

**Chazak, chazak v'nitchazek:**

Its literal translation is "Be strong, be strong, and we will be strengthened." We rise to say this blessing each time we complete one of the five books of the Torah. *Chazak* speaks to us as individuals, and the second part, - *v'nitchazek* - refers to our collective strength.

# from core beliefs

## Beginning with our Preschool: a tribute to its founder and director, Renee Price

Lerner's preschool program opened in 1998 with 31 students under the direction of Renee Price. Based on her educational philosophies, experience and Jewish values, Renee created a nurturing environment in which children's imaginations are free to roam.

"All preschool activities focus around the concept of "play is a child's work," Renee explains. "Every activity is a building block for each level of learning. Preschool is the foundation for learning, and the stronger the foundation, the more confident children are in their abilities."

Under Renee's leadership, the program became a 5-star licensed program, the highest certification awarded by the North Carolina Department of Child Care and Human Services. In 2006 the program added a third classroom due to the large demand for high quality Jewish preschool programs in our area.



For parents, Renee created a sense of community that starts in the preschool and continues to grow and deepen throughout elementary school. Teachers watch students enter as youngsters and emerge seven years later as independent and empowered people. One such example, Renee recalls, is Zoe Smith. To see how Renee's early introduction to Jewish values can shape students, read Zoe's story on the following page.

Renee is moving on to a new chapter of her life, beyond the walls of the Lerner School. We thank Renee for her 10 years of commitment and dedication to our school. She has left an outstanding legacy for our youngest students.

Thank you, Renee!

# to global action

## From great beginnings comes great work alumni spotlight: Zoe Smith



Zoe Smith wants to be the president of Heifer International when she grows up. Heifer is a nonprofit organization that combats world hunger and poverty by donating farm animals to struggling communities in developing countries.

“I like animals,” says Zoe Smith, Lerner School class of '08, “Heifer is a special charity because all donations go right to the purchase and distribution of the animals.”

Zoe remembers the story from Little Heifer magazine about a boy and his goat. The boy lived in Africa and couldn't go to school because his family had no money.

When the boy's family received a goat from Heifer, they earned enough from the goat's products to purchase a tin roof, new clothes and school supplies.

“I didn't always like going to school, but once I read the article I realized that I am so lucky, and I started to like school much more.” Zoe told us.

Zoe started by asking people to make donations to Heifer instead of giving her birthday and holiday gifts. But she quickly realized this wouldn't be enough to meet her ambitious goal of raising \$5,000. So she started beading and selling jewelry.

By selling jewelry at school, local festivals, church sales, and home shows, she was able to raise \$5,000 in just three months. She is now working on her second donation and has already collected close to \$3,000.

“We can all make a difference in the world,” says Zoe, “that is the motto I live by.”

### Teaching through modeling our behavior

**ושנתם**

**Veshinantam:** Teach them diligently to your children. This verse of the Sh'ma tells parents and the community to teach our children the ways of the Torah, and to let our children learn from watching us live our lives Jewishly.

# from the science of nature to the nature of change

## The Lerner School Global Awareness Project

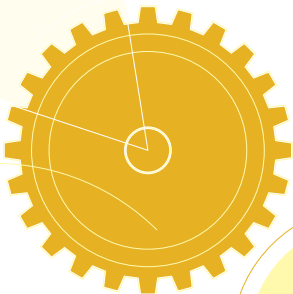
What started as a simple question to the entire school – *What is Jewish about protecting the environment?* – culminated in what most agree was the biggest event of the 07/08 school year for Lerner.

This school wide Global Awareness project drew on all aspects of both our Judaic *and* General studies curriculum to help students discover their place in the natural world. Students reviewed Jewish texts to study the relationship between people and nature. They discussed literal interpretations by mankind on this matter: the human right to exploit nature. They explored the commandments that address how we should treat wildlife and protect the environment.

The breadth of the entire general studies curriculum—writing, reading, math, science, research, art, music, critical thinking and analysis, individual and group work—all came into play as students sought practical ways to protect the environment. Students then prepared presentations, experiments and theatrical sketches to share their findings for the entire community at our Global Awareness Symposium on February 28, 2008.

“It was one of those ‘Ah-Ha’ moments, when everything comes together.” recalls one parent in describing the evening. “I felt proud to be a part of this community, to experience how the school teaches Jewish values. It was very moving, educational and entertaining.”

Another parent remembers it this way: “When you see what these students are thinking about—saving water, renewing resources, changing our energy sources—it leads you to believe that we will be leaving this world in very good hands.”





## A sampling of our Global Awareness projects

*Where does water come from?*

*Can the earth get any more?*



The Kindergarten students first tackled this timely issue (water) by learning the daily blessing for rain that is said until Pesach. Then, by creating water vapor, they learned about condensation and clouds;

coming to the conclusion that we should not waste water.

Their solution? There were many. They learned a new way to wash their hands. They posted signs next to sinks and faucets, teaching others how to do the same. They gave demonstrations to the older classes. And they even monitored the school's water meter to see if their campaign was working. (It was.)

*If species become extinct,  
who will miss them?*



Second graders gave a heart-warming performance revealing their findings about extinction. Wearing masks they created themselves, each second-grader 'became' a species—a butterfly, a

bird, a bear. In the words of their 'animal', each student explained to us how the smallest disturbance in the complex web of their habitation affects us all.


*Can new technologies save the environment?*

*Or will they create new problems?*



Dividing into groups, Fourth and Fifth Graders researched renewable alternative energy resources: hydroelectricity, geothermal energy, solar power, ethanol, hydrogen

power, and wind power. Using computer design and presentation tools, each group led an impressive discussion on the pros and cons of each of these potential options for saving the planet.



**In Judaism, every  
day is Earth Day**

**תיקון עולם**

***Bal Tashchit & Tikkun Olam:***

Judaism is permeated with environmental consciousness. We encourage an awareness of the wonder and connection to all creation. The Torah commands us to not waste or unnecessarily destroy anything of value and to be stewards of all inhabitants of the earth.

# from generosity to generations



Martin G. Groder

When is a gift an endowment? How many zeros does it take to make a change? What is the power of giving? There are no right answers and we celebrate every gift we receive. However, when it comes to giving to the Lerner School, no one has matched the generosity of Martin G. Groder.

The newly created Martin G. Groder Endowment is the result of an enormously generous donation by the grandfather of two Lerner students, Sophia and Natalie Groder.

The late Dr. Groder (Marty to friends and family) was a major donor to the school's Annual Fund, because he believed deeply that a strong elementary school education is the key to future school success.



Sophia & Natalie  
Groder

"I recall Marty's decision to send this gift to The Lerner School," says his wife, Leslie Meyers. "He said that the school was doing wonders for his granddaughters and he wanted to show his gratitude for that."

As a renowned psychiatrist—with a long career of practicing, teaching, publishing and speaking throughout the United States—Dr. Groder reached tens of thousands throughout his celebrated life. Today, through his generous gift to the Lerner School, his legacy will continue to reach hundreds of children, destined to make a difference in tomorrow's world.



L'dor v'dor  
לדור ודור

from generation to generation

When is a gift an endowment? The Groder Endowment is a gift that was set aside at the time it was received for the long-term benefit of the Lerner School. Dr. Groder's gift joins the Sam Fuchs Scholarship Endowment and the Albert and Adeline Gelb Fund of the Jewish Community Foundation.

# from obligation to transformation

The joy of giving. The power of giving more than you thought you could afford—and then realizing that you're much richer for it. We thank you for the gifts you've made to the Lerner School over the past year. You have helped to move us onward from strength to strength. We extend a joyous thank you for the generosity of the many families and friends listed here.

# our donors 2007-2008



*Thank you to the Durham-Chapel Hill Jewish Federation for its generous allocation of \$39,000 for financial aid*

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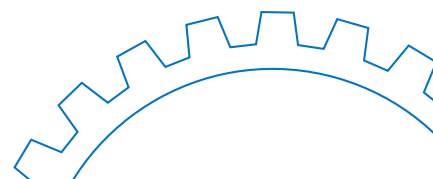
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## From Tithe to Ten!

# ממעשר לעשר

### *Mimaaser Le' eser:*

'Eser' is what you say in Israel to praise a generous and special donation; it's a gift in which you have stretched beyond the expected ten percent tithe. It means moving from giving as an obligation, to expanding your generosity for a cause you feel passionate about.

# A Special thank you to our Signature Sponsors

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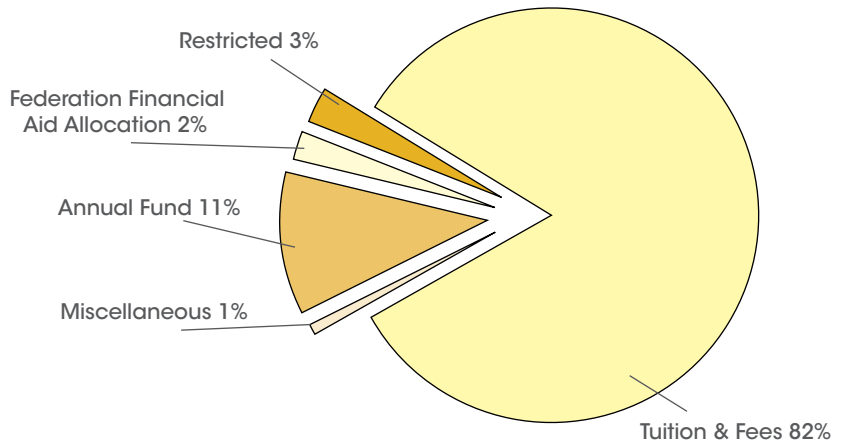
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## 2007-2008 Income & Expenses

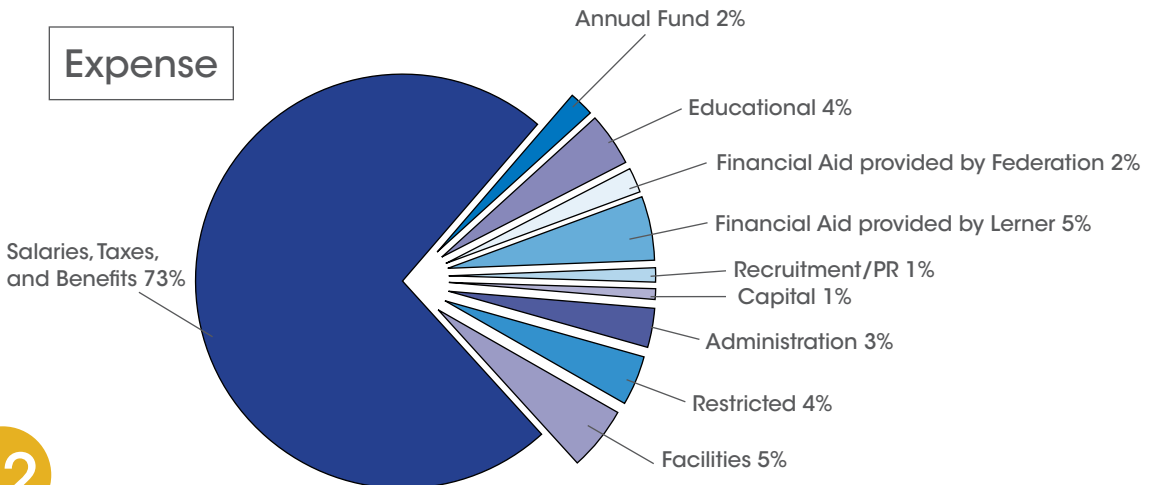
The careful stewardship of the Lerner School's budget is an important responsibility of the Board of Directors. The school's Finance Committee, reporting to the Board, has oversight of all aspects of the budget, including long-term strategic financial planning and endowment and reserves management.

Since a major goal of the Lerner School is to provide an affordable Jewish day school education to each child we accept, tuition was set at \$9,500 for elementary school and full-day preschool. To further promote this goal we awarded \$123,000 in financial aid. \$39,000 of this financial aid was allocated from the Durham Chapel Hill Jewish Federation.

### Income



### Expense



# from giving enough to going beyond

*from the President of the Board*

The theme of this year's report—from strength to strength—represents the trajectory Lerner has been on since its inception 13 years ago. Thanks to the outstanding efforts by people committed to the success of our school, Lerner is now poised to move to new heights of excellence.

Our most important community partner and largest financial supporter has been our local Jewish Federation. This year, leaders from the Jewish Federation and The Lerner School came together to form the Partnership for a Jewish Center (PJC). The goal of the PJC is to create shared facilities that serve the entire community, all ages and interests, and all affiliate agencies. We are now more than halfway to reaching our goal of \$10 million, and have already kicked off the project with the current construction of Lerner's Early Childhood Pavilion.

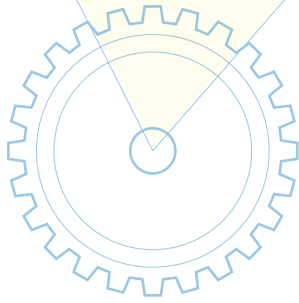
Our visibility as a nationally recognized Jewish day school was raised once again this year as Lerner was honored by the Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education (PEJE) for our recruitment publications, annual report and ad campaign. Our board members were invited to make presentations at PEJE's conference in April about Lerner School projects and initiatives.

Your financial support is vital to the realization of Lerner's potential. In fact, 72% of Lerner's Annual Fund came from donations of over \$1,000, helping us close the gap between tuition and the cost of a Lerner School education. Whatever you can do to help us forge ahead as a school community, I urge you to do so.

B'shalom,  
Patty Wild



Patty Wild  
President of the Board



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# Chazak, chazak v'nitchazek

from strength to strength



The Sandra E. Lerner Jewish Community Day School  
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