



Gratz Insider, July 2013 - Story Continuation

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Ricky Markovitz: Teaching Hebrew Online with a Personal Touch

Passionate about her job, Ricky Markovitz began teaching Hebrew at the Gratz Jewish Community High School (JCHS) at least 15 years ago. In 2010, she stopped teaching on campus and established Gratz's online Hebrew program, where she teaches students of various ages and skill levels.

Her Hebrew teaching experience and computer expertise combine to make Markovitz ideally suited for this position. Not only was she born and raised in Israel, but she also received a certification in Hebrew teaching from Hebrew College in Massachusetts. She earned her technology credentials from the former Philadelphia College of Textiles & Sciences (now called Philadelphia University), where she received an M.S. in Computer Education. In addition to her work at Gratz, Markovitz also teaches Hebrew at the Jack M. Barrack Hebrew Academy in suburban Philadelphia.

Coupled with her impressive credentials, it is Markovitz's dedication to her students that makes her such a well-liked and motivating teacher. As she explains, "I strive to form a close relationship with my students. It is more difficult in an online situation, but nothing is impossible. I have students that I have never met in person, but continue to correspond with and know about their families and their lives. Without this special bond, students will not be inspired to learn."

Markovitz recounts the story of one of her online students, a lawyer and mother of two, who used to study with her young children on her lap. This gifted student went on to graduate from the program with honors and also to have a third child. Later, she contacted Markovitz, not only to send her pictures of her newly expanded family, but also to tell her of her plans to pursue ongoing studies in Hebrew language.

In another particularly compelling story, a student, who had originally enrolled in Markovitz's Hebrew class simply to obtain college credit, later decided to apply to The Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS). Upon his acceptance to JTS, he wrote the following to Markovitz:

I am writing to tell you that I have been accepted to the MA program in Ancient Judaism at The Jewish Theological Seminary in New York! Of course I owe a great deal of this wonderful news to you and I sincerely thank you for bringing my knowledge of Hebrew from zero to where it is today. I truly believe your classes played a major role in getting me to JTS and I will never forget any of it. . . . Things are really starting to look up for me. Once again, thank you very much for all the time and effort that you devoted to me throughout my year at Gratz.

Whether their desire to study Hebrew has been for personal or professional reasons, Markovitz's students have clearly been inspired by her dedication and commitment to their success.

In the fall, Ricky Markovitz will be teaching Hebrew I (Beginners), Hebrew II (Advanced Beginners) and Hebrew III (Conversational). For more information on these course offerings, visit our [website](#) or contact Debbie Aron in the Gratz Office of Online and Distance Learning at 800-475-4635, x115.