Joseph Bensmihen ’91YC, ’95W, the newest member of the Yeshiva College Board of Overseers, has long believed in the power of education.

“My father’s motto was ‘Education is freedom,’ and it was something he emphasized to me every day,” said Bensmihen, who is known to most of his family and friends as simply “JB.”

A native of Montreal, JB was born with spastic cerebral palsy, and doctors told his parents that their son would never walk. Fortunately, his parents never told that to JB, and never indicated that he couldn’t do anything because of his disability. “In addition to emphasizing the power of education, my dad told me I was the best every night before I went to sleep,” said JB.

“Because of him, I believe it to this day. Not only did JB walk, but the confidence his father instilled in him has carried him through his life and been instrumental in his success.

JB is a successful social worker and businessman in Florida who, with his wife Lisa, is co-owner and CEO of Boca Home Care Services, a private duty home healthcare agency. He is also the founder, in 2005, of Boca Home Care, a Medicare-certified home health agency. Both companies serve seniors and their families in South Florida. He is a former president of Boca Raton Synagogue, has four wonderful children, the eldest of whom will have his bar mitzvah in October; and is a kind, extremely funny and engaging person. JB also administers the David Bensmihen Charitable Foundation, named in memory of his father, which provides scholarships for deserving students.

His accomplishments started early in life. At seven years old, JB was told he had to attend a special education school, instead of the local public school, in accordance with Canadian law at the time. “I hated going to that school, which had children of all ages and with various kinds and levels of disabilities, such as deafness and being wheelchair-bound,” said JB. “I just wanted to go to the regular school my sister was attending. I knew I could keep up, and thought the law was really stupid.” Thanks to his unwavering determination and confidence, the very young JB decided to tell the prime minister of Canada, then Pierre Elliott Trudeau, that the law should be changed, and so he had his father drive him to Trudeau’s office in Ottawa. “I learned then that if you walk like you know where you’re going and act like you belong, nobody’s going to bother you,” he said. He got all the way to the main office before a security guard even noticed the young visitor and tried to prevent him from entering. Hearing a commotion, the prime minister emerged to see what was going on, and when he was told what was happening, he declared, “If this young man got all the way to my office, I want to hear what he has to say.” The law was “stupid,” JB promptly told the prime minister. “I was just as bold and confident at age seven as I am today,” said JB.

In just a few years, after much petitioning and struggling with government officials, he and his father succeeded in changing the law so JB could attend the mainstream school with his sister. Such ambition and determination has marked JB’s path through life. In the sixth grade, he said, he simply knew he was going to be valedictorian of his high school class, which JB saw come to fruition upon graduating Hebrew Academy of Montreal. Growing up with a strong foundation in Torah U’mada, he always knew he would attend Yeshiva University, and was further impressed when several Yeshiva College (YC) students—among them, Moshe Kranzler, director of undergraduate admissions at YU—came to spend a few days learning and chatting with the high school students on a retreat.

At YU, JB took advantage of every opportunity that came his way. “I was involved in many extracurricular activities, like writing for the YC Commentator and acting with the YC Dramatics Society,” he recalled. JB’s roommate at the time and close friend to this day, Andrew Goldsmith (who also happens to be YU’s director of institutional advancement for the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary and the Center for the Jewish Future), said of his inspirational one-time roommate: “Where others see obstacles, JB sees opportunities.”

After graduating YU with a degree in political science and working at a Montreal bank, JB befriended Jerry Lifschitz, a ’92, who headed Canadian Friends of Yeshiva University. Lifschitz thought JB would make a great social worker, and insisted he attend Wurzweiler School of Social Work, with a scholarship fully funded by Canadian Friends. JB excelled at Wurzweiler, completing an advanced internship in his first year of studies, though he balked when the dean of the school suggested that he become a clinical social worker because he could empathize with a struggling patient due to his own circumstances living with a disability. “I sometimes say I don’t really care about helping or protecting people, that I just care about providing the resources to make sure that people can protect themselves,” said JB, who, in his job as CEO of Boca Home Care and court-appointed guardian for those who are vulnerable, clearly does help people every single day.

As for how he has maintained ties to YU over the years, JB said, “I have always been plugged into YU since I graduated, keeping in touch with Andy [Goldsmith] and Rabbi Kenneth Brander, who used to be the rabbi of Boca Raton Synagogue. I have supported YU over the years and when asked to become a Board member, I naturally said yes.”

In his new official YU capacity, JB is most excited to reach out to alumni and the greater Jewish community, articulating the mission of YU and letting everyone know its recent accomplishments. “People take it for granted that YU exists, thinking it was always here and always will be, but that’s not necessarily true—we need to cultivate pride in and support for YU, ensuring that everyone knows YU is improved and keeps getting better every day,” he declared. “I understand the mission of YU intimately, and am one of YU’s biggest fans—I know I can communicate the University’s importance to others who may have doubt. Eight of 10 times, when I speak with a high school student who has arguments for not attending YU, I change their minds and they end up going to YU and loving it.”

Speaking to YU students today, JB emphasizes, “[Being a student at Yeshiva] is the best job you will ever have—you’re in a risk-free environment! Try anything and everything. For instance, I don’t know why students have ‘undecided’ as their major; you can change your major numerous times, so ‘undecided’ is the best job you will ever have. It’s risk-free!...for a Yeshiva student who has arguments for not attending YU, I change their minds and they end up going to YU and loving it.”

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YOUR NEWS IS OUR NEWS!
Class Notes is where YU celebrates the milestones and accomplishments of its alumni. In this section, you can catch up on everything your classmates have been up to, from marriages and births to professional and personal achievements.

Submit your class notes by e-mailing alumni@yu.edu with the subject line “Class Notes,” or by visiting www.yu.edu/alumni to complete the online form. We hope that you enjoy reading about your fellow alumni and friends, and we look forward to hearing about your achievements.

1960s
Prona “Pam” Forman ’68S and Yaelko “Sandy” Aromson (MFA, 1964–
1968) celebrated the birth of their granddaughter, Ephraim. Mazel tov for parents Baruch and Yoav Strulman.


Nancy ’71S and Rabbi Kenneth Hain 199YHS, ’79R announced the birth of their granddaughter, Meira Yeshurun, to Nachshon Aharon Epstein.

Dayle and Rabbi Michael Stern ’74YHS, ’76C, ’79R, ’84R, Dr. Dror and the birth of their grand-daughter, Li脑 Sima, to Dahiha ’D4YHS and Nathan Jacob.

Brenda and Rabbi Dr. Elhu Turkel ’72YHS, ’76C, ’79R, ’84R announced the birth of their granddaughter, Lissie Tzvi, to Dahlia ’D4YHS and Nathan Jacob.

1970s
Miriam and Rabbi Dr. Bernard Rosenweig ’47YC, ’50R, ’70BR celebrated the birth of their granddaughter, Avital. Mazel tov for parents Debbie ’57S, BCM and Judah Rosenweig ’51YHS, ’56YC, ’61R.


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1990s

Miriam 9S5 and Rabbi Eliey Bacon 92YUHS, 97YC, 98A, 00R announce the birth of their son, Yitzchak Daniel, named for his great grandfather, the late Isaac Bacon, dean of Yeshiva College from 1959–1977. Mazel tov to grandparents dean of Stern College for Women Dr. Karen Bacon 64S and Dr. Stephen Bacon 64YU.

Moran and David Baker 94YC, 94A announce the birth of their daughter, Ayala Devora.

Joseph Bensimhen 91YU, 95W was appointed to the Yeshiva College Board of Overseers. Bensimhen is the current CEO and owner of Bocs Home Care Services (1998), Bocs Home Care (Medicare–2000) and was appointed National President of Private Career Preservation in 2010.

Anella and Rabbi Yaacov Ellish 91YC, 96A, 99R, 99F co-founded in 2006. PCIT is an (PCIT) at the Westchester Parenting Center in Mount Kisco.

Yochaved and Rabbi Elly Krinsky 91YC announce the birth of their daughter, Rachel Chana.

Andrea and Nicola Muzin 97YC announce the birth of their son.

Dina and Rabbi David Rabhan 93B, 99R announce the birth of their daughter, Sophia Rivka.

Yeshiva College Professor Rabbi Eleazar Schnall 95YUHS, 00A, 03R, 03S, 06R co-authored “The 15 Minute Hour: Practical Psychotherapy for Primary Care,” a chapter in Primary Care: The Art and Science of Advanced Practice, ed. F.A. Davis Company, 2011.

Dr. Chani (Pearlman) 93YUHS, 94S and Jason Schwartz 93B announce the birth of their son, Uriel Eitan Schain.

Ellen (Payne) 91S, 94A and Rabbi David Solomon 90YU, 94R announce the birth of their son, Moshe Tov.

Lauren “Shoshana” Stein 98YUHS, 99R married Rabbi Shmuly Yanklowitz 10ER.

Rubin M. Stone 92BSp was promoted from corporate controller to vice president of finance and corporate controller for the Tzippis Group in NYC.

Sarah 91S and Kenneth Wagner 92YU celebrated the bat mitzvah of their daughter, Meira Leah Wagner.

Rachel (Israel) 100YUHS, 100C and Isaac Zelwiney announce the birth of their son, Michael Benjamin on February 18, 2011.

2000s

Sara and Rabbi Yaron Barash 05YU, 06R, 06A announce the birth of their daughter, Leah Rivkah.

Sarah 05S and Jeremy Baran 06YC, 10A announce the birth of their daughter, Ahava Meira. Mazel tov to grandparents Brenda and Rabbi Chaim Bromstein 100YUHS, “0YC,” 72R, 73B.


Gigi 05S and Rabbi Dovi Bergman 07YC announce the birth of their son, Shira.

Yamina 05S and Rabbi Elan Berman 07YC, 09R announce the birth of their daughter, Shirah.

Yehuda Bernstein 10YC, Miall Bitton 10S, Simcha Gross 10YC and Shlomo Zucker 10YC all have been selected as Werner Graduates Fellowships for their past achievements and promise as future Jewish leaders. Werner Graduate Fellowships are awarded to 20 outstanding individuals who seek to prepare themselves through graduate training for careers in the cantorate, Jewish education, Jewish professional leadership, Jewish studies, and the rabbinate.

Caroline Sarah 05SS and Rabbi Dr. Eliey S. Cowen 11R announce the birth of their daughter, Elflyn Mendy.

Ona 07S, 10W and Rabbi Michael Davies 07SS, 09R announce the birth of their daughter, Chana.

Joseph Haber 95YU, 98C was promoted to National Director of Business Development at the Garden City Group, Inc. (GCG).

Hila 95A and Rabbi Moshe Goldwicht announce the marriage of their son, Eytzada, to Leora Lichtenstein.

Dr. Patricia Goodman 94A, 94C introduced Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) at the Westchester Parenting Center that she founded in 2006. PCIT is an evidence-based treatment that helps parents build more positive relationships with their children and teaches effective behavioral management techniques.

Greg Haber 95YU, 98C was promoted to National Director of Business Development at the Garden City Group, Inc. (GCG). Haber will be spearheading all of GCG’s business development activities for both class action and bankruptcy matters.

Deyorah (Newman) 97S and Tzvi Harow 97YUHS, 98BSp announce the birth of their daughter, Noelf May.

Rabbi Benjamin Kelsen 94YU, 97YC, 97OR was appointed by New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie and confirmed by the NJ Senate to be a judge of the Passaic Intermediate Park Management Court. Kelsen continues to represent clients in residential and commercial real estate transactions, estate planning (halachic wills), conflict resolution, commercial litigation, beis din, general, and special counsel services.


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RIETS SHAVUOS YARCHEI KALLAH (JUNE 7–9, 2011)

600 alumni and friends enjoy Shavuos at the Hudson Valley Resort & Spa in Kerhonkson, NY, and participate in a Havdalah ceremony led by Hillel Davis ’72YC, 75R, 75BR

ALUMNI NIGHT AT THE NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC (JUNE 23, 2011)

Orna and Melvin S. Sadeh ’85YUHS, ’90YC, ’92R, ’95A prepare to hear the music of “Tchaikovsky and Other Romantics”

SUMMER LECTURE SERIES FEATURING RABBI YAakov Neuburger (JULY 12, 2011)

Rabbi Yaakov Neuburger ’77YC, ’79R, lectures on “The Best of Times, The Worst of Times: Does Refraining From Holding Certain Events During Certain Times Have Any Halachic Basis?”

Nowhere but here.

The Annual Fund supports YU’s values and mission of Torah Umadda

This fall YU welcomed to its campus more than 600 new students from around the country and the world. These students come to YU to prepare for successful careers and experience a true sense of community. Whether from Los Angeles, Boca Raton, Houston, Chicago, Silver Spring, Teaneck, Woodmere, or New York, at YU they will all be part of one community that melds a first-rate secular education with the values of an integrated life based on Torah.

Nowhere but at YU is the commitment to the values and mission of Torah Umadda greater. Your gift will provide the critically needed funds to ensure that YU maintains its excellence including small class sizes, outstanding faculty, a rich array of student programs and career planning services.

Visit yu.edu/onlinegiving or call 212.960.5422 to make your gift today.

Annual Fund Committee:
Joseph Kenterman ’90YC, ’90B, Boca Raton, FL
Adam Hort ’90SB, ’94YUHS, ’94C, New Milford, NJ
Saul Barzilai ’90YC, New York, NY
Barry Biner ’90SB, Houston, TX
Benjamin Facher ’90YUHS, ’97YC, Woodmere, NY
Laura Goldman ’90SB, Silver Spring, MD
Joy Sklar ’00S, Bayside, NY
Susan Ussishkin ’87S, New York, NY
Steven Ussishkin ’90YUHS, ’92YC, Los Angeles, CA

ALUMNI TODAY

NIGHT OF FASHION AND GLAMOUR

NOVEMBER 8, 2011

Join us again this year for an exciting evening of fashion and fun to benefit the scholarship program at Stern.

Glitz, Glamour and Giving—this stylish night will have it all!

For more information, please call 212.960.5422 or visit yu.edu/sternfashionshow2011

Adrienne Vittadini | Judith Leiber | Taryn Rose | Steuben

Stern College For Women Hosts Third Annual

Yeshiva University

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Joy Sklar ’00S, Bayside, NY
Susan Ussishkin ’87S, New York, NY
Steven Ussishkin ’90YUHS, ’92YC, Los Angeles, CA

SUPPORT THE ANNUAL FUND AT WWW.YU.EDU/ONLINEGIVING
ALUMNI TODAY

THIRD ANNUAL ANNE SCHEIBER SCHOLARS BRUNCH (AUGUST 21, 2011)

(1–r) First-year medical students at Einstein, Kewae Mirzachi ’15S, Faye Barabkovich ’12S, Rebecca Weiss ’12S

(1–r) Shoshana Gilbert ’10S, Aviva Ginsberg Berkowitz ’10S, Neshama Grunewald Ackerman ’10S and daughter Ashira

(1–r) Ahuva Freilich ’11S, Sarah Ariella Reinstein ’10S, Batya Matia Herzberg ’10S, Jenny Ariella Deluty ’10S and Hadassa Klerman ’11S

YU TORAH MITZION KOLLEL OF CHICAGO’S SUMMER EVENT AT THE LINCOLN PARK ZOO (AUGUST 28, 2011)

Beverly and Ira Piltz ’95YC

Yossi ’86YC and Gina Gottesman ’86S

BEREN CAMPUS ORIENTATION DINNER (AUGUST 29, 2011)


YU ALUMNI FINDER

THE OFFICE OF ALUMNI AFFAIRS IS TRYING TO LOCATE ALUMNI WITH WHOM WE’VE LOST TOUCH. TO DO THIS, WE NEED YOUR HELP!

• For every graduate that you identify (and is confirmed), you will be in the running to win great prizes!
  A recent winner received two round-trip tickets sponsored by EL AL, Israel Airlines.
• Once confirmed, the last graduate, too, will be entered to win a prize.

GET STARTED TODAY!

Visit YU Alumni Finder today at yu.edu/AlumniFinder to start searching for alumni you know.

YU ALUMNI FINDER

YESHIVA UNIVERSITY AND DELUXE KOSHER TOURS PRESENT

PANAMA ADVENTURE

JANUARY 19–29, 2012

Panama, known as “the Bridge of the World,” is a country where man-made wonders perfectly compliment natural wonders. With its biodiversity and its captivating natural beauty, rich culture, ample recreational facilities, well-organized infrastructure and modern amenities, Yeshiva University and Deluxe Kosher Tours promise you a complete luxury leisure package. The friendly approach of Deluxe Kosher Tours will make your vacation this winter to Panama a wonderful experience complimented by the scholarship of Yeshiva University’s top faculty.

INCLUDED IN YOUR TOUR:

• A specially designed sightseeing program to include visits to the colonial ruins of Panamá Viejo, and Casco Antiguo.

• A visit to Miraflores Locks on the infamous Panama Canal offering the best view of the locks at work.

• Activities exploring rain forests, relaxing on the Pacific Coast beaches and enjoying magnificent sunsets.

• Panama City Tour visiting key tourist attractions as you learn about Panama’s significance throughout history. A story of Spanish colonization, pirate attacks, independence from Spain and later Colombia and the construction of the Panama Canal.

• Three Kosher meals daily, Shabbat programs, and related lectures by a YU faculty member and scholar

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YU ALUMNI FINDER

WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR IDEAS FOR PROGRAMMING IN YOUR REGION. CONTACT ILLANA FEIGLIN AT FEIGLIN@YU.EDU OR 212.365.3547. ASK US ANYTHING...
Faye '02S and Jay Hellman '01YC announce the birth of a boy, Mazel tov to grandparents Rochel '72S and Rabbi Moshe Bomzer '75R, '75BR and Leona and Rabbi Chaim Zev Bomzer '45YUHS, '48YC, '58BR, '59R, '64F.

The 2010 Bnei Akiva Schools Toronto annual newsletter featured Michael “Micha” Herzog '10YC for his emergency services as an ambulance technician in serving the victims of the Carmel forest fire. Micha shared that a key reason he is an ambulance technician is because, “it allows me to personally see the lessons of Torah.”

Elisha Grinsburg '95S and Rabbi Yosef Kalinsky '06YC, '08R announce the birth of their daughter, Elana Ora.

Naomi '04S, '06YUHS, and Rabbi Elie Kohl '06YC, '08R announce the birth of their daughter, Elana Ora.

Chavia '11F and Yair Libin '12YC announce the birth of their son, Jamie Abraham Libin.

Rebecca Miller '06F and Rabbi Elie Mischel '03SSB, '06BR, '07C, '07R announce the birth of their daughter, Aderet Rayaya.

Rebecca Miller '05S received a research scholarship for a Master of Science in pharmacy at the University of Toronto.

Esther '05S and Rabbi Elion Soniker '05GB, '09R,宣布 the birth of their daughter, Elie Yehuda Beila.

The Jewish Week featured several YU alumni in their annual “36 Under 36” section profiling Jewish leaders under the age of 36. Among the honorees were Rabbi Jeremy Stern '07YC, '09A, '10R who was recognized for his work as the executive director of the Organization for the Resolution of Agunot (ORA) and Uri Westrich '09YC as the music video director for the Maccabeats, YU's male a cappella group.

During the week of May 9, 2011, the City of New York celebrated “Project Sunshine Week,” recognizing the nonprofit organization that Joseph “Joe” Weilgus '00SSB founded in a dorm room at Yeshiva University in 1998. The week received proclamations from both the New York City, Andrew Cuomo and NYC Mayor Michael Bloomberg. Project Sunshine brings over 10,000 volunteers who provide free educational, recreational, and social programs to over 60,000 children facing medical challenges and their families in 150 major cities across the United States and in five international satellite sites.

Rabbi Matan Waxter '05SSB, '05A, '07R and Yaffa Spodek '08S, editor of YU Today were married.

Frieds and Pablo Zamoszycz '03SSB announce the birth of their daughter.

In Memorium
Rabbi Melvin Amos Bunin '50YC, '51R and Yaffa Spodek '08S, editor of YU Today were married.

Dr. Vera Hornstein '56F
Robert Kurtzman '50YC, '55W
Dr. Irwin Smilansky '59F
Stanley Sobolofsky '64YU

REMEMBERING

Rabbi Lipman Blum
'22R
Rabbi Abraham Kligershtam
'41YUHS
Rabbi Shaul Blum
'54YUHS
Rabbi Shalom Averbach
'67YU
Rabbi Kobi Sassoon
'69YUHS
Rabbi Limor Blum
'70YUHS
Rabbi Don sheep
'72S
Yaffi Spodek '03SB, '06BR, '07C, '07R

Rabbi Stanley Blum
'67F
Rabbi Joseph Zuckerman
'71YUHS
Rabbi Arik Sassoon
'72S

Rabbi Uriel Blum
'66YU
Rabbi Cohen
'73YU
Rabbi Dov Blum
'68YU
Rabbi Joseph Zuckerman
'71YUHS
Rabbi Yaffo Spodek
'03SB, '06BR, '07C, '07R

Rabbi Abraham Kligershtam
'41YUHS
Rabbi Shalom Averbach
'67YU
Rabbi Kobi Sassoon
'69YUHS
Rabbi Limor Blum
'70YUHS
Rabbi Don sheep
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