



dedicated learning. dynamic leadership.



Vision

A world in which Judaism is relevant, Jewish communities are educated, and diverse leaders guide individuals to live spiritually engaged lives.

Mission

To educate, ordain and invest in passionate and committed Orthodox women who model a dynamic Judaism to inspire and support individuals and communities.

Our Name

Maharat is a Hebrew acronym which represents the core values of Maharat as an institution and of our graduates.

MANHIGUT מנהיגות **LEADERSHIP**

HALAKHA הלכה **JEWISH LAW**

RUCHANIYUT רוחניות **SPIRITUALITY**

TORAH תורה **JEWISH TEXT**

History

Maharat was founded in 2009 after the ordination of Rabba Sara Hurwitz by Rabbi Avi Weiss and Rabbi Dr. Daniel Sperber. It is the first yeshiva to provide semikha, enabling women to serve as Orthodox clergy.

Now in its 11th year, Maharat has ordained 34 women who serve in clergy roles in synagogues, schools, hospitals, universities and Jewish communal institutions. Thirty-six students are currently studying in our programs and training to bring their voices, thoughts and perspectives to inspire and enliven Orthodox Judaism and the Jewish community at large.

Ordination

Maharat grants women semikha, conferring a degree of *'toreh toreh'* - a decisor of Jewish law. This is the culmination of a rigorous course of study and demonstrated command of Jewish law, Gemara and Jewish thought, as well as proficiency in leadership and pastoral counseling. The semikha program is designed to enable women to serve Jewish communities as fully credentialed spiritual and halakhic leaders. We encourage graduates to use the professional title most appropriate to them, in consultation with the communities they serve.

Over half of the nearly 4000 people surveyed in the Nishma Research Profile of American Modern Orthodox Jews, 2017, and an even higher percentage of respondents between ages 18-34, agreed that women should have expanded roles as clergy.

34 GRADUATES

36 CURRENT STUDENTS

50+ COMMUNITIES IMPACTED

27 MORE INQUIRIES FOR INTERNS AND GRADUATES

\$2.6 MILLION BUDGET

3300+ FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS

400+ ARTICLES PUBLISHED BY MAHARAT SCHOLARS

1800+ COURSES TAUGHT BY MAHARAT SCHOLARS

1570+

LIFECYCLE EVENTS PERFORMED

1,870+ HOURS OF TORAH LEARNED EACH WEEK IN SHIURIM AND THE BEIT MIDRASH



“Maharat is paving the way for women in the twenty-first century to pursue their dream to grow in their Torah knowledge and to serve the Jewish community.”

- Ann and Jeremy Pava, West Hartford CT

Our Work

Maharat enables the Orthodox movement to call upon both women and men as sources of scholarship and voices of authority to address the most pressing questions affecting, not only Orthodox Jews, but the Jewish community as a whole. Issues such as the inclusion of LGBTQA+ Jews, singles and people with disabilities; conversions and the changing model of the Jewish family, are examined through halakhic and pastoral perspectives.

Maharat students grow into scholars ready to meet the demands of the 21st century Jewish community as inspiring rabbis and educators. They go on to transform the Jewish landscape as pulpit rabbis, educators, high-level executives in established Jewish organizations and as entrepreneurs creating new and innovative Jewish start-ups.

Programs

Core Semikha Program

Taught over four years, the program combines the traditional Orthodox semikha curriculum focused on mastery of key sections of Jewish law with insightful pastoral education and practical rabbinic skills.

Halakha and Gemara

The Belz Center for Halakhic Studies offers the classical skills required for *p'sak halakha* through mastery of relevant sections of Gemara, Rishonim, Tur, Beit Yosef, Shulkan Arukh and contemporary teshuvot.

Pastoral Torah

Pastoral Torah is a specially designed curriculum that integrates Jewish text with a grounding in the range of mental health experienced in different life situations. Students gain psychological and spiritual insights enabling them to becoming effective spiritual counselors.

Leadership Development

The Lindenbaum Center for 21st Century Rabbinic Leadership equips students with the entrepreneurial skills to drive growth and innovation in various organizations.

The combination of these three components position our graduates to serve as forward-thinking, visionary Jewish leaders; grounded in halakhic literature and fluent in the diversity of human experience.



Advanced Kollel: Executive Ordination Track

Maharat's Advanced Kollel: Executive Ordination Track was created to provide institutional support and credentials to women who are already Jewish leaders with many years of scholarship. Over three years (part-time), students cover the traditional Orthodox semikha curriculum through a combination of guided self-study, havruta discussion, and weekly shiurim taught online by Rabbi Jeffrey Fox, Rabbi Herzl Hefter, and other esteemed scholars.

The study is complemented by on-site intensive seminars twice a year, during the winter and summer academic breaks. Students are actively encouraged to participate in person in special programming taking place at Maharat throughout the year and integrate into the Maharat beit midrash and community.

The program is open to women who have been in the field of educational and spiritual leadership for at least five years and have invested significant time in advanced learning and teaching.

Beit Midrash Program

This one-year immersive learning program is designed to enhance prospective semikha students' Jewish textual literacy, fluency and skills. The program, offered in conjunction with YCT Rabbinical School, is primarily aimed at semikha program applicants, but also accepts those looking to spend a year in immersive learning of Talmud, Tanakh, Halakha, and Makhshava.

Our Faculty

Maharat faculty are leaders in their fields, including pulpit rabbis, psychotherapists, pedagogy experts, Jewish text scholars, leadership and change management scholars, and more. They are published authors, experienced and awarded educators, and shapers of the Jewish future. Not only do our faculty bring deep intellect and scholarship, they also bring a sensitivity to the work of training well-rounded and effective religious leaders.

Join Us

Maharat seeks knowledgeable and learned Orthodox women who are passionate about Jewish learning and spiritual leadership and have completed an undergraduate degree. Our students range in age and background and share a commitment to Orthodox Judaism, proficiency in Jewish text study, and the aspiration to serve as spiritual leaders in pulpits, on university campuses, in schools, and as Jewish communal leaders.

Finances

Tuition and Living Stipends

Maharat is committed to giving women a role in shaping the Jewish future. In addition to providing women a path to Orthodox semikha, Maharat invests in each student. Applicants that meet eligibility criteria and are accepted to study at Maharat will receive a full scholarship to defray the cost of tuition.

A living stipend is also offered to eligible students.

Interest-free loans

The Hebrew Free Loan Society offers interest-free graduate study loans to help students residing in the five boroughs of New York while studying at Maharat.



Fellowships

Accepted eligible students are encouraged to apply to the **Wexner Graduate Fellowship** and the **UJA Graduate Fellowship Program**.

Students seeking to build new Jewish communities, who can demonstrate initiative in this field, will be considered for the **Rabbinic Entrepreneur Fellowship**. Offered in conjunction with Hillel's OOI (office of innovation), it includes an additional stipend over four years, participation in OOI's course for a year, and further support in the form of mentorship from a seasoned Jewish communal professional for one year.

Visit and Apply

We invite prospective students to experience our vibrant beit midrash and innovative curriculum by visiting in person.

We invite interested students to complete a written application, an oral evaluation on gemara and halakha study skills, and an interview with the admissions committee.

For more details contact Rabba Dina Brawer, Director of Recruitment and Admissions

admissions@yeshivatmaharat.org

Our Graduates

Our students and graduates are women who have achieved a great deal professionally. Several have advanced degrees, including PhDs, MDs, and masters degrees. Women decide to enroll in Maharat because they want to apply their vast talents and intellects as leaders in the Jewish community. Graduates currently serve as rabbinic leaders in Orthodox synagogues and international institutions around North America, Europe and Israel.

Current Graduate Placements

UNITED STATES

Rabbi Tali Adler

Faculty
Hadar Institute, New York, NY

Rabba Dr. Carmella Abraham

Community Educator
Westchester, NY

Rabba Wendy Amsellem

Director of the Beit Midrash Program
Maharat, Bronx, NY

Rabba Dina Brawer

JOFA UK Founder
Director of Recruitment & Admissions
Maharat, Bronx, NY

Rabba Avital Engelberg

Director of Spiritual Engagement
Congregation Beth Sholom, Providence, RI

Rabbanit Jenna Englander

Community Educator, Detroit, MI

Rabba Yaffa Epstein

Director
Wexner Heritage Program, Columbus, OH

Rabbanit Chava Evans

Chaplain
Foundation for the National Institutes of Health, Baltimore, MD

Maharat Ruth Balinsky Friedman

Clergy
Ohev Sholom – The National Synagogue – Washington, DC

Rabbanit Hadas (Dasi) Fruchter

Founder and Spiritual Leader
South Philadelphia Shtiebel

Maharat Miriam Gonczarska

Educator in the Polish Jewish Community - Brooklyn, NY

Rabba Shani Gross

Director of Education in North America
Pardes Institute of Jewish Studies

Rabbanit Goldie Guy

Rabbinics Faculty
Carmel Academy, Greenwich, CT

Rabba Sara Hurwitz

Rabba
Hebrew Institute of Riverdale - The Bayit
Co-founder and President, Maharat Riverdale, NY

Rabbanit Bracha Jaffe

Associate Rabba
Hebrew Institute of Riverdale - The Bayit Riverdale, NY

Rabbi Lila Kagedan

Associate Director of Medical Ethics & Humanities
New York Medical College, New York, NY
Rabbinic Advisor
Mayyim Hayyim and Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Boston
Faculty, Shalom Hartman Institute

Rabba Claudia Marbach

Program Director
Teen Beit Midrash, Boston, NY
Founder of One Night Shtender
Newton, MA

Maharat Rori Picker Neiss

Executive Director
Jewish Community Relations Council
of St. Louis, MO

Rabbanit Alissa Thomas-Newborn

Clergy
B'nai David-Judea Congregation,
Los Angeles, CA

Rabbi Marianne Novak

*Community Educator and Travelling
Scholar*
Skokie, IL

Rabbanit Leah Sarna

Director of Religious Engagement
Anshe Sholom B'nai Israel
Chicago, IL

Rabbanit Tali Schaum Broder

Chaplain Intern
Weil Cornell Presbyterian Hospital
New York, NY

Rabbi Dr. Devorah Schoenfeld

Associate Professor
Loyola University, Chicago, IL

Rabba Melissa Scholten-Gutierrez

Community Camp Ambassador
Jewish Federation of Greater Atlanta,
Atlanta, GA

Rabbi Dr. Erin Leib Smokler

Director of Spiritual Development
Maharat, Bronx, NY

Maharat Victoria Sutton

*Clergy and Director of Education and
Community Engagement*
Congregation Beth Israel -
Berkeley, CA

Darshanit Dr. Miriam Udel

*Associate Professor of Yiddish
Language, Literature and Culture*
Emory University
Atlanta, GA

CANADA

Rabba Rachel Kohl Finegold

*Clergy and Director of Education &
Spiritual Enrichment*
Congregation Shaar Hashomayim
Montreal, Canada

Rabba Abby Brown Scheier

Educator and School Administrator
Montreal, Canada

ISRAEL

Rabba Dr. Anat Sharbat

Community Educator
Tel Aviv, Israel

EUROPE

Rabbi Rebecca Blady

Co-founder of Base Berlin
Founding Executive Director of Hillel
Germany
Berlin, Germany

Rabbi Eryn London

JOFA UK Scholar
London, UK

Rabba Ramie Smith

JOFA UK Rabbinic Fellow
London, UK





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3700 Henry Hudson Parkway, Bronx, NY 10463
(718) 796-0590

www.yeshivatmaharat.org



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