



Elan Karoll (SSDS '11):

After graduating from The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign with a degree in Organizational Communication, Schechter alum Elan Karoll (SSDS '11) pursued his interest in the financial industry as a securities broker for Israel Bonds. Today, Elan works as a senior marketing manager at BMO Bank in Chicago, where he manages the marketing-related activities for the bank's 100,000+ small business customers.

"I focus on developing and executing campaigns around the bank's latest products and promotions," Elan said. "I work with a team of talented colleagues to get the bank's message out across digital, social, and print media."

Elan first became interested in marketing and organizational communications when he worked as a marketing coordinator for Willis Tower under the Blackstone Group. "I loved being able to share the story of the Tower with so many people," he said. "I quickly realized that the role aligned with my critical thinking, creative, collaboration, and communication skills. These invaluable life skills were nurtured at Schechter. I use them every day when I help our customers get the loans, credit cards, checking accounts and more to fit their business needs."

Following Schechter, Elan attended Rochelle Zell Jewish High School, where his connection to Jewish life and Israel continued. At the University of Illinois, he became passionate about Israel advocacy, and he led various student groups and helped lead two grassroots campaigns to defeat BDS resolutions. StandWithUs named Elan their Campus Advocate of the Year in 2018, and he received an honorary medal from the IDF Military Colleges in 2019. "I continue to be involved in supporting Israel in other ways," said Elan, "and I find it to be very meaningful."

Elan has many fond memories of Schechter, and the Schechter Simple Machines Fair ranks high on his list. "Students were asked to create and present basic machines, like levers and pulley systems," he said. "These lessons — thinking outside the box and knowing how to demonstrate results -- are great ways to find success in marketing."

Outside of work and Israel advocacy, Elan loves to bike, cook, read, practice yoga, listen to live music, and catch up with friends. "Chicago is a great place to be a 20-something-year-old," he said. "There's always things to do, people to see, and new brunch spots to discover. I live across from the beach, so taking advantage of the lake during the few warm months is a top priority! The Jewish community in the city is amazing — everyone you meet is so warm and welcoming."

When speaking about the Schechter community Elan said, "I ran into an old classmate on the bus last week. There is an instant connection between all Schechter students, which will last forever."

