



Alumni Spotlight: Max Pivo (SSDS '14)

Schechter alum Max Pivo (SSDS '14) is passionate about developing relationships and affecting real world change. After graduating from Dartmouth College in 2022 with a degree in Middle Eastern Studies and Religion, he is currently pursuing a masters degree at Harvard University's Regional Studies-Middle East graduate program. Max and his 11-member cohort at Harvard have taken classes that include Islamic mysticism, Israel-Palestine, the Cairo Geniza, and more. He recently had the opportunity to add Judeo-Arabic to the list of languages that he has encountered.

Most of Max's weekdays begin on campus in an Arabic classroom. From there, depending on the day, he will take a quick walk to the world-famous Widener Library or to his next class. His evenings are spent reading, researching, and writing in preparation for his classes and for his own edification.

"My interest in Middle Eastern and Religion Studies is rooted, first and foremost, in my family life and educational background," he said. "At Schechter, my Talmud and Bible courses were what sparked a serious academic interest in religion and the Middle East. I also had the blessing of access to a Jewish education through high school at Rochelle Zell. And my summers were spent at Ramah Wisconsin, where I've continued to work in different capacities to this day."

Max has also interned and worked for several other Jewish organizations, including The iCenter and the Shalom Hartman Institute. In his spare time he has tutored students in Hebrew language skills and in preparation of their B'nai Mitzvah.

When reflecting on his Schechter experience, Max said he is grateful for the gift of a dual curriculum. "Having a balanced approach in religious and secular education highlights the wealth of valuable knowledge present in both realms," he said. "The world needs its educators, social workers, rabbis, and diplomats as much as it does its doctors, engineers, and scientists."

Max is still very close with many Schechter alumni from the Class of 2014, including Idan Chazan, Ben Squarer, Gaby Ecanow, Ben Saxton, Shira Hirsch, Sarah Fishbein, Hadar Halivni, and Dena Romanoff. He added that it is heart-warming to hear about the success of other Schechter alumni, with whom he shares a great bond.

Max's sister, Celia (SSDS '12), attended Harvard Divinity School, and now works as a consultant for TDC, one of the nation's oldest nonprofit management consulting and research firms. Max's brother, Zach (SSDS '16), is a sophomore at Rutgers University in New Jersey.

