

SCHECHTER ALUMNI

Spotlights

At Schechter I learned a lot about my own culture and developed a curiosity and respect for others cultures...it's a place that values diversity, tolerance, and acceptance. The dedicated and passionate teachers at Schechter instilled in me the skills and creativity that helped me succeed in high school, college, and the business world.



OFER SIVAN ('92)

Some of us may think about falafel and hummus like it's our job...but for **Ofer Sivan (SSDS '92)**, it IS his job!

Shortly after earning his Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering at the University of Iowa, Skokie-native Ofer realized he had another calling—his passion for connecting with people and creating memorable experiences led him to make a pivot to the hospitality industry. Now living in Iowa City, Ofer is the co-owner of Oasis Falafel, where he is proud to introduce Middle Eastern culture and cuisine to people of diverse backgrounds.

Driven by customer demand, Ofer expanded production of his restaurant's popular hummus recipe and launched the [Oasis Street Food](#) brand. His CrC kosher, preservative-free hummus is now sold at 80 stores across Iowa and throughout Chicago at Sunset Foods, Sarah's Tent, and more. Ofer was kind enough to provide samples of his delicious product to Schechter Game Night participants last week!

“Hospitality and food manufacturing make for a fun mixture of math, psychology, problem solving, and emotional connection. I’m motivated to make people happy by providing exceptional food and service—we’ve catered over 100 weddings, and our customers enjoy some of the best moments of their lives while eating my food.”

“My passion for falafel and hummus began in childhood. I’m proud to introduce this product to the marketplace because it’s delicious, healthy, and unique—it’s made fresh and doesn’t use any ingredients that you wouldn’t find at an Israeli home.”

During his Schechter days, Ofer was actively involved in basketball and band, which he credits for teaching him valuable lessons in teamwork, discipline, and creativity. “These experiences have contributed to my professional success by shaping my work ethic and ability to collaborate effectively.” He also noted that he has retained close ties to his Schechter roots:



Above: Ofer (left) and Efrem (right) as children

“My closest friend in the world is still the first kid I met on my first day at Schechter—Efrem Fisher (SSDS '92). We’ve remained close all these years, and his friendship has been a constant source of support and reminder of the lasting connections formed during our school days. Additionally, my former classmate and friend Julie Hochstadter-Aberman (SSDS '92) is representing Oasis Street Food Hummus in Chicagoland.”

After Schechter, Ofer attended Niles North High School, where he participated in football, soccer, gymnastics, and photography club, and he attended Camp Young Judea and two of their associated programs: Tel Yehuda, a national teen leadership camp, and the Young Judea Year Course, the largest gap year program in Israel.

Ofer is involved with his local synagogue and Hillel in Iowa City, and has served on the board of multiple non-profits, including his current board membership with “Summer of the Arts” (Iowa Arts Fest and Iowa City Jazz Fest). He enjoys mountain and gravel biking, playing music with friends, and hanging out with his two kids, Opal, age 15, and Archer, age 12.

Ofer’s brother, Ori (SSDS '90), is a management consultant and lives in Bridgetown, Barbados with his wife, Claudia, and two children, Zoe and Talia.



Right: Ofer pictured with former classmate Julie Hochstadter-Aberman (SSDS '92) and her daughter, showcasing his hummus.