

RRIS CAMPUS LIFE MAGAZINE



2025-2026

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WELCOME TO CAMPUS LIFE!



At the Raphael Recanati International School, the Campus Life department is dedicated to creating a vibrant student experience through a wide range of social, cultural, and community-building opportunities. As the largest international school in Israel, we are committed to fostering a welcoming, inclusive environment where students from around the world can connect, thrive, and truly feel at home throughout their academic journey at Reichman University.

From the moment students arrive on campus, our signature Orientation Week lays the foundation for meaningful friendships and a strong sense of belonging. Throughout the year, Campus Life offers countless opportunities to explore Israel, celebrate diverse cultures, take part in Shabbat dinners and holiday events, join sports activities, and create lasting memories. Even during periods of uncertainty, our commitment remains unchanged: to provide a supportive community where every student feels safe, connected, and knows there is always someone to turn to.

Looking back on the past year, we recognize that it brought its share of challenges for our country and our community. Yet through every obstacle, we witnessed remarkable resilience, unity, and determination. We honor those who made tremendous sacrifices and carry their memory with us as we continue to move forward with hope and purpose.

It is with great pride that we present this year's RRIS Campus Life Magazine – a collection of stories, experiences, and reflections written by the students who make this community so extraordinary. Your passion, involvement, and dedication inspire everything we do, and we hope these pages capture the spirit of another unforgettable year at RRIS.

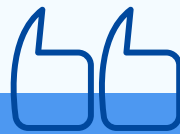
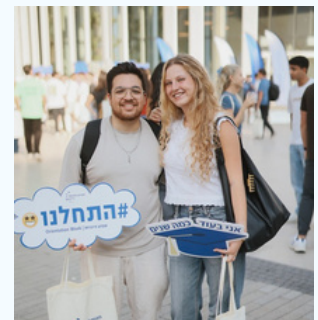
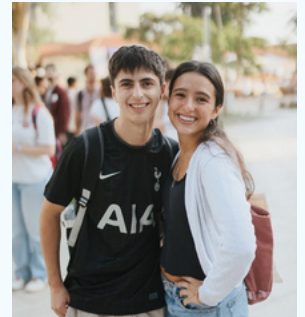
Nichole Amar
Campus Life Manager



THE ETHEL & LEONARD TIGAY ORIENTATION WEEK

My name is Elinoi, I am 18 years old and originally from Venezuela. After spending a gap year here in Israel post-high school graduation, I knew I wanted to stay in Israel and pursue my BA in Communications at the RRIS at Reichman University.

I had such an amazing experience during my first day and throughout all of Orientation Week. All incoming students were greeted with warm faces, a lively registration gathering, and the excitement of a new beginning. The RRIS organized an entire week full of introductory lessons, group activities, welcome ceremonies, an amazing orientation trip, and so much more. The energy that was brought to us during this time was a great way to integrate us into our new academic journey. One specific person who played a very important role in this transition is my RRIS Peer Counselor Johnny, who always shows a genuine interest in addressing my doubts, guiding me, and offering the kindness and support I need to keep moving forward. I must confess that all the anxiety I felt on the morning of my first day disappeared in no time. Upon arriving to the campus, the RRIS staff and team were patient, dedicated and supportive – values that were essential for me to feel at home from the very beginning.



Orientation Week allowed me and my peers to get acquainted with one another, integrate into university life, and ease into the place we will be calling home for the next three years, and who knows, maybe longer.



I am so happy that I had the opportunity to share a little about my experience as a new student at the RRIS, and I hope that anyone who is debating studying an academic degree in Israel will read this and get an idea of the amazing experience they could have, right here.



ELINOI CORIAT WAHNON
VENEZUELA
BA COMMUNICATIONS



ORIENTATION TRIP

Orientation Week can feel really crazy; meeting so many new classmates, seeing your schedule for the first time, doing group activities, and even the overall adjustment to a new environment. It's exciting, but also a little nerve-racking. To end such an intense week of preparing to begin our new journey, we ended our Orientation Week with an unforgettable trip to the South of Israel.



Our day started at **Ya'ar Ben Shemen**, where we participated in outdoor group activities that encouraged us to work together as a team. It was a great way to bond, laugh, and get to spend some time in a fun and interactive environment. Many of the activities included lots of teamwork and intense group-coordination, which was a great way to get to know our new friends on a deeper level.

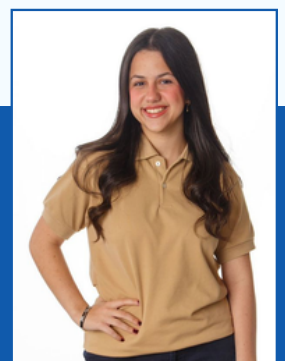
A quick bus nap later (it was actually a 2-hour drive), we traveled to **Sde Boker** for a briefing on the history of Israel's founding, Ben Gurion, and a leadership workshop that was both interesting and eye opening. Being that we are such a diverse group with so many of us coming from a different country, we were given the opportunity to see so many different perspectives on the foundation of the State of Israel. I really enjoyed sharing how the Jewish community works in Venezuela and hearing other students share their stories too. We also visited the David Ben-Gurion gravesite and learned about his life and legacy.

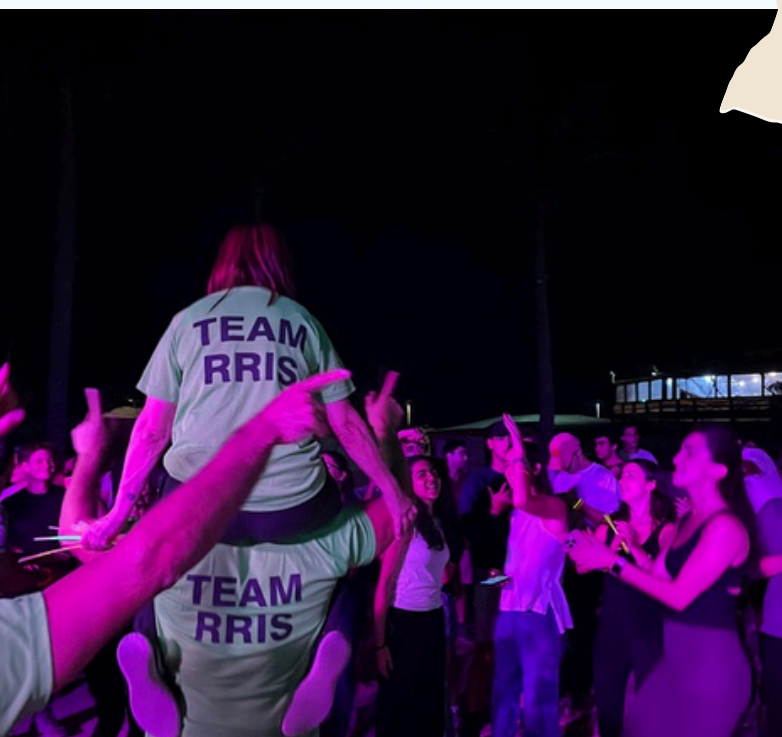
To end this amazing day, we visited the **Han HaShayarot Bedouin Hospitality Site** where we enjoyed a traditional and very tasty Bedouin dinner. The night finished with a desert party featuring incredible international music, and once I heard the music start, I was the first one to run and start dancing! For hours, everyone danced, laughed, and celebrated together.



I think this trip was the best way to end such an intense but exciting week. It helped me see a really fun and welcoming side of the university, and it made me even more excited for the year ahead. **It truly felt like the beginning of an amazing journey at the RRIS.**

CLARA BENJAMIN
VENEZUELA
BA COMMUNICATIONS





YOU can be part
of this next year!

SHABBAT DINNER



On October 20th, 2025, I arrived at Reichman University and entered my 11th floor dorm room and as I looked out of the window, I saw the sun setting over the sea. In that moment, I felt it clearly: I had arrived. Luckily, I met my first friend that very evening. We decided to wander through campus, and I couldn't help but be amazed by the energy and the mix of people flowing through every path and courtyard. The first days were a whirlwind of parties, social events, and building the foundations for my next two years in Israel. At some point during that first week of



studies, someone mentioned a "Shabbat dinner." It sounded like the perfect opportunity to learn about Jewish culture and, hopefully, continue expanding my social circle. I thought it would just be a nice meal – something casual and informative—but it turned out to be so much more.

When I arrived, I felt strangely uneasy, as if I wasn't supposed to be there. My mind was racing with questions: What am I doing here as a non-Jewish person? Will I understand the traditions? I hope I don't do something disrespectful. For a moment, I even considered quietly slipping out. Then I noticed someone across the table who looked just as nervous as I felt. Maybe another non-Jewish guest, I thought. I was right—and the relief was instant. We ended up asking the person between us to guide us through the evening, and slowly the tension faded.

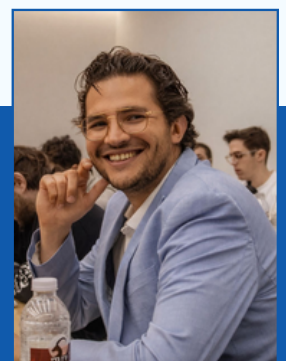
The prayers and songs, the handwashing, the blessing over the bread and salt – everything felt foreign, but also warm, meaningful, and surprisingly comforting. Beyond learning about Jewish tradition, I was thrilled to meet so many international students. My new companion – the one who also felt "out of place" – turned out to be from the United States, and we bonded over our shared confusion and curiosity. Thanks to the kindness of the Israeli students who patiently explained every step, we were able to enjoy the experience and feel part of it rather than outside observers.

Looking back now, that first Shabbat dinner was much more than an event on campus. It became a gentle introduction to the culture, hospitality, and openness that define life here. What began as a moment of uncertainty turned into a feeling of inclusion and connection – with traditions I didn't yet understand and with people who quickly became friends.

For me, that night marked the first time Israel felt not just like a place I arrived to—but like a place I could belong...



ALEXANDRE KNOF
SWITZERLAND / GERMANY
MA GLOBAL MBA



POLAND DELEGATION

SOME JOURNEYS ARRIVE AT THE RIGHT TIME, EVEN IF THEY COME YEARS AFTER YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO TAKE THEM.

I did not join the high-school trip to Poland that is offered to almost every teenager in Israel. When I saw an opportunity to join Reichman University's Poland delegation, I felt I was not going only as a student. I was going as an Israeli, as a Jew, and as someone who had been waiting for this journey for many years.

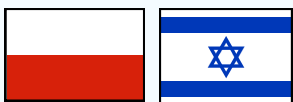
What made this journey especially meaningful was not only the places we visited, but the people I experienced them with. Our group was composed of students from around the world, each coming from different backgrounds, communities, and life stories. For a few days, we paused the rush of studies, work, army duty, and everyday life, and chose to go through this together. We committed to remember, to ask questions, and to feel more connected to our Jewish identity. Walking through the gate of Auschwitz gave me chills before I even understood what I was feeling. And inside the gas chambers, we found ourselves looking at the marks on the walls in silence. I remembered all the times I used to look at pictures of these sights in my history books in school, and after being on this delegation, my entire perspective shifted.



Standing in Poland after October 7th, "Never Again" felt less like a phrase we repeat each year at a ceremony and more like a responsibility I carry every day. After years of military service, I know now that protecting our people is not only about defending, but also about education, unity, memory, and choosing to take an active part in the continuation of the Jewish story. The group became a central part of my experience. There were quiet moments when no one knew what to say, conversations on the bus that stayed with me, and small gestures like a hug or a smile from across the room that meant a lot. At every difficult site, we stood close to one another.

I am grateful for my group of delegation members who became my friends, and for the Jewish and Zionist joy we carried along with us everywhere we were. Our feeling of unity was a gift I received on this journey which I will cherish forever. I am very excited for the next Poland Delegation members. I hope they arrive open, allow themselves to feel, ask questions, connect, and most importantly, be there for one another.

Am Israel Hai.



SHANI AHARON

ISRAEL

BA ENTREP & BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION



JERUSALEM HANUKKAH TOUR



This year, I had the pleasure of celebrating Hanukkah by attending the RRIS Jerusalem Hanukkah Tour. I've lived in Israel for a while and have visited Jerusalem countless times. But to be honest, none were quite as magical as this one.



Exploring the streets of Jerusalem's Nachlaot neighborhood and seeing all the different Hanukkiot lighting up the otherwise dark alleyways **felt like something out of a fairytale**, a true sign of how our people always find light in the darkness. I loved finding the hidden gems throughout the area, like a communal candle lighting ceremony that welcomed the whole town, or the warm and cozy soup pop-up (some of the best soup I've had – that's for sure), or just seeing all the beautiful street art around the neighborhood. I saw a side of Jerusalem I've truly never seen before, and it was so utterly inspiring.

Visiting the Machane Yehuda Market is always an amazing experience, but being there during such a festive time was incredible. While the shuk was packed with people, tourists and locals alike, the energy was festive and full of spirit. It might have been hard to move around, but that didn't stop us from eating delicious jelly-filled sufganiyot!

To celebrate the same holiday our ancestors celebrated, in the same streets they once lived in, was a truly life-changing experience. This trip was really one of a kind and **such a beautiful way to experience the holiday of Hanukkah and the magic of Jerusalem.**



TALY LANDIS
USA
BA PSYCHOLOGY

HANNUKAH CANDLE LIGHTING CEREMONY

Each Hanukkah, the RRIS gathers students, faculty, family, and friends for a festive and homey Hanukkah Candle Lighting Ceremony.

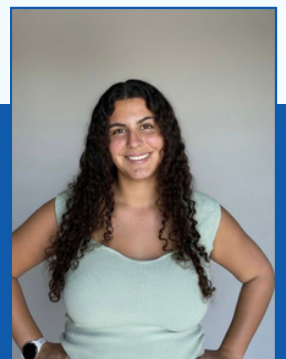
It was an intimate gathering, but one that felt familial. I was honored to be one of six students chosen to light a candle of the Hanukkiah—**each of us representing different forms of service and involvement, from reserve duty to leadership on campus.** The room grew quiet as each of us stepped forward to light a candle, and we watched them flicker to life one by one, their light filling the room. This year, Hannukah felt exceptionally celebratory. There was a palpable sense of hope knowing Israel was moving towards a more peaceful period, anchored by the profound relief of seeing the return of all living hostages from Gaza. Very much like the Hanukkiah, the ceremony marked the closing of a dark period in Israel and brought some much-needed light into our lives.



After the ceremony, we celebrated the best way that we know how: with a spread of sweet treats and Hanukkah-themed food. It was the perfect summary for 2025 - a year of resilience - and served as an important reminder that **even after the darkest of times, the return of light is inevitable.**



NOA HABER
CANADA
BA BUSINESS & ECONOMICS



OCTOBER 7TH SITES TOUR

I signed up for this trip because I wanted to see firsthand the places where the tragedy of October 7th unfolded almost three years ago. Before the trip, I was already familiar with many stories from that day, however, I still felt it was important to visit the sites myself. Our day began at the **Nova Festival site**. Seeing the photographs and memorials of people who had simply come to dance and celebrate life was incredibly emotional. While we were at the memorial it began to rain, which added to the somber atmosphere of the visit.



Next, we traveled to **Kibbutz Kfar Aza**. Unlike Nova, which has become a memorial site, Kfar Aza felt like a moment frozen in time. A resident spoke to us about what life in the kibbutz was like before Hamas came to power and before the security situation changed so drastically. As she spoke, we could see the Gaza Strip in the distance behind her. Walking through the youth village area of the kibbutz, it was difficult to process that I was actually standing in a place I had previously only seen in the news. The visible destruction made everything feel raw and surreal.

We stopped in **Sderot** for a quick lunch and to walk through the city. During our exploring, it suddenly struck me that the street we were standing on had been the scene of intense fighting between Hamas militants and the Israeli police. It was hard to comprehend how the same street that had been a war zone almost three years ago was now filled with people, cars, and everyday activity.

The last stop of the tour was at **Netiv HaAsara**, one of the closest Israeli communities to the Gaza border. It was surprising to learn that if we had continued just a little farther down the road, we would have reached a checkpoint leading into Gaza. At this stop, we saw the original border wall between Israel and Gaza. It was powerful to hear that the wall had originally been designed with peace in mind, with the panels of the boarder having openings at the top which could allow cranes to easily remove sections if relations ever improved. Despite the tension and tragedy associated with the area, I was struck by how beautiful the landscape was.



Although it is extremely difficult to witness these places and learn about the events of October 7th firsthand, I believe the experience is incredibly important.

I strongly recommend this tour to anyone who wants to better understand what happened and to honor the memory of those who were affected.



AARON ROSENBERG
USA
BA GOVERNMENT







WELLNESS WEEK



A SPACE TO RESET, RECHARGE & RECONNECT

University life is exciting, inspiring, and full of opportunities, but it also brings significant academic, emotional, and social challenges. This year, those challenges have once again been compounded by the realities surrounding us. In a time marked by uncertainty, war, and constant change, many students have found themselves balancing academic demands with concerns for family and friends, reserve duty, disrupted routines, and the emotional weight that comes with living through difficult times.

Against this backdrop, one message became increasingly clear: taking care of ourselves and one another is not a luxury, it is essential.



Recognizing these realities, we launched **Wellness Week 2026**, a dedicated initiative designed to support students and promote a holistic approach to well-being. One that recognizes the interconnectedness of physical, mental, emotional, and social health. Wellness Week was an invitation to pause, recharge, reconnect, and remember that none of us are meant to navigate challenges alone. Throughout the week, students had the opportunity to explore different aspects of wellness through workshops, creative activities, movement sessions, mindfulness practices, and inspirational talks about personal and community resilience. At its heart, Wellness Week aimed to foster a sense of belonging and community – a reminder that even in times of uncertainty, connection remains one of our greatest sources of strength.

But Wellness Week is about more than a single week of events. It reflects a broader commitment to creating a campus culture where well-being is recognized as an essential part of academic success and student life. Because thriving at the RRIS isn't just about grades. It's about being involved, finding balance, building resilience, and supporting one another along the way. **In the end, it's not just about getting through life's challenges, but about growing through them together.**



Here's to making well-being a priority, and carrying that spirit of resilience, connection, and care into the year ahead.



SYLVIA KASSOFF
MEXICO
DIRECTOR OF STUDENT
AFFAIRS & WELLBEING



DJ WORKSHOP



Music has always been a massive part of my life, but my journey to the DJ booth wasn't exactly typical. After sustaining a hearing injury during my combat army service, pursuing a path in music initially felt like an impossible dream. Not only did I overcome this sense of impossibility, I made my way behind the deck to play Indie Dance under the name SELA at international parties. This has, by far, been my biggest personal victory.

While I did have some experience, once I saw the application for the DJ Workshop I knew I had to sign up. My main goal was deeper than just learning technical DJ skills; **it was to connect with people who share the same passion as me.**



The workshop completely exceeded my expectations. The hands-on sessions were absolutely incredible, largely thanks to our instructors, HYPE DJs Nadav Shpilman and Amit Sendler. Their profound professionalism and industry expertise elevated the entire experience of the workshop. Getting to practice, experiment, and receive direct feedback from them was a major highlight. It felt less like a traditional classroom and more like a collaborative studio where we could bounce ideas off one another and **truly feel the energy of the music.**



One of the most valuable takeaways for me was the networking aspect. Nadav and Amit went above and beyond teaching; they actually opened doors for us, offering tangible opportunities to play at major clubs across Israel. Of course, this incredible platform wouldn't have been possible without the seamless organization and dedication of Nichole Amar and Liron Tzour, who brought this whole vision to life and created the perfect environment for us to grow.

Since the workshop wrapped up, I've been putting the finishing touches on a new set, and I'm spending more time out at the clubs to keep expanding my network and immersing myself into the local music community. **For anyone looking to dive into the music scene, improve their skills, or just find their crowd, the RRIS DJ Workshop is an absolute must.**



TAMIR SELA
ISRAEL
BA ECON., ENTREP. & DATA
SCIENCE



ART WORKSHOP



This year, I had the privilege of taking part in a six-session art workshop that turned out to be far more than I expected. While I was initially looking for an activity that can be just for me, what I ended up experiencing was much deeper. Each meeting introduced a new theme or technique from the fundamentals of color and composition to more expressive, intuitive approaches, giving us a rich and layered journey through the world of visual art.

What made this experience truly special was the **sense of discovery** it encouraged. Rather than following a single style or formula, we were guided to explore a wide range of artistic expressions until something clicked — until we each found our own voice. That process of experimentation felt both freeing and revealing. It wasn't just about learning to paint; it was about learning how we see, how we feel, and how we naturally want to express ourselves on a canvas.



I left the workshop with real tools I can carry into my ongoing practice – ways of approaching a blank canvas and methods for staying curious and experimental. But perhaps more than that, **I left with a deeper connection to art as a language, and a better understanding of my own creative identity.**



AVITAL RADOSHER
ISRAEL
PHD BRAIN COGNITION &
TECHNOLOGY



AMBASSADORS' CLUB

The Ambassadors' Club Speaker Series is a program that brings experienced diplomats, analysts, and educators to the Reichman University campus to discuss some of the most pressing issues affecting Israel and the Middle East today.

Throughout the sessions, we heard from many respectable and impressive figures. Former Israeli Ambassador to the UK, Mark Regev who offered insights on how conflicts are not only fought on the battlefield but also through the narratives presented in global media. Former US Ambassador to Costa Rica, Fitzgerald Haney strongly emphasized how **communication, dialogue, and understanding different perspectives** are essential skills not only for diplomacy but also for academic and professional life.

Whether the lecture was given by Beni Sabti discussing Iranian-Israeli relations, Noah Shufutinsky discussing the history and legality in the West Bank, or Auschere Scheiner who helped us understand Gaza and the Iron Swords War, we learned how past decisions continue to influence today's political and security realities. As someone who lives in Jerusalem, the Jerusalem Security Tour led by Dani Tirza was especially

important to me. Even though I am familiar with the city, I gained new perspectives while visiting places I have known for years. Learning new information from individuals who worked directly on the strategy, planning and implementation of this security project made the experience even more insightful. For me personally, the Ambassadors' Club Speaker Series was more than just a set of lectures. This program offers something that traditional lectures often cannot, which is **direct engagement with people who have actually worked within the world of diplomacy, policy, and international affairs.**

Overall, the series created a unique platform for Reichman University students, regardless of their study track, to explore international relations beyond the classroom.



FADI MOGHRABI
ISRAEL
BA GOVERNMENT



TALK ISRAEL

CONTENT SHAPERS MASTERCLASS

Before taking part in the TalkIsrael Content Shapers Masterclass, I had very little experience with social media, filming, or communicating on camera in general. During the program, I was provided with tools that can be applied in different contexts, such as business, organizational, or even community platforms. While one of the main goals of this workshop was to learn how storytelling and content creation can shape how people see Israel in a natural and authentic way, I quickly realized that these tools can be implemented in many other aspects of life as well.

Beyond the skills provided to me by this program, I met people from different countries, studying different degrees, and with different interests. What initially tied us all together was our shared love for Israel – something that created a supportive and inspiring environment.



The guidance throughout the program, especially through our mentor Dor Lev (Femenistit on Instagram – check her out!) had a meaningful impact on the group. During the course of this program, we also learned from experts in areas such as body language, speaking on camera, photography, editing, acting, content strategy, and storytelling.

As someone who was born and raised in Israel, I knew that studying in the RRIS would provide me with opportunities that I would not be able to find anywhere else. **I am grateful for this experience and believe the tools I received will allow me to influence how people see Israel in different ways in the future.**



YARIN MIRON
ISRAEL
BA BUSINESS &
ENTREPRENEURSHIP



CELEBRATING PURIM DURING DIFFICULT TIMES

During difficult times, the importance of community becomes clearer than ever.

On February 28th, 2026, we all woke up to sirens. It's funny how as students we simultaneously began to worry about our upcoming exam and the parties we had planned for Purim (I won't specify which one was the priority).



As the war continued to impact daily life across Israel, Reichman University and the RRIS made many efforts to support students on campus by creating opportunities to connect, spend time together, and maintain a sense of normal life. From the beginning, RRIS Campus Life and JLIC, two organizations that play an active role in our student life, decided to organize several activities aimed at helping students feel more at home during this challenging time. With many students dealing with stress, uncertainty, and distance from family, these events were meant to bring people together and strengthen the sense of community on campus.

One of the activities organized was a communal reading of the Megillah. Just a few days into the war, students gathered together on campus to listen to the story of Purim and spend time with friends and classmates. Events like this gave students the chance to take a break from the difficult news and daily stress, and instead participate in something meaningful and familiar. Another initiative organized by Campus Life and JLIC was the preparation and distribution of Mishloach Manot, traditional gift baskets filled with food and treats. While it may seem like a small gesture, **receiving these gifts helped lift students' spirits and brought a sense of warmth to the community.** 

For many students, especially those studying far from their families, these moments helped create the feeling of celebrating together at home. During a time when the situation in the country can feel overwhelming, **simple acts of kindness and community support** can make a big difference. While these initiatives may seem simple, they have had a meaningful impact on students. Being able to gather, share traditions, and support one another helps create a sense of stability during an uncertain time.

Through the efforts of Campus Life and JLIC, Reichman University has shown how important it is to support students not only academically, but also emotionally and socially. By organizing events that bring people together, the university continues to strengthen the sense of community that makes the campus feel like **home**, even during difficult moments.



JOSEPH MOLKO
PANAMA
BA BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION





See you there
next year!



ZIKARON BASALON

Growing up in Argentina, Yom HaShoah was a date on the calendar marked by solemnity and community gatherings. We wore our white shirts, we lit candles, and we remembered the names. But when the ceremony ended and I stepped out onto the streets of Buenos Aires, the world was still moving at its usual frantic pace. The weight of the tragedy was something we carried privately as a Jewish community abroad. It wasn't until I moved to Israel that I understood what it meant for a nation's heart to stop beating in unison. When the siren begins its long, piercing ascent, the world doesn't just go quiet; it freezes. In those two minutes, the mundane weight of the day, the emails, the errands, the noise – all simply evaporates. **You are left with nothing but the memory of those who were lost.**

I find myself thinking about the immense worth of those lives; they aren't just statistics in a history book, but the very foundation of our resilience. We remember them for their struggles, for the worlds they built that were torn down, and in this silence, a profound sense of gratitude washes over me.

I look around at the halted traffic and people standing in place and realize: Israel is our shield. Their memory is the reason this soil is so sacred, and their loss is the reason we can never afford to be defenseless again. This collective mourning moves from the streets into the intimacy of Zikaron BaSalon. There is a unique, heavy stillness in a room filled with people, leaning in to hear a survivor or a descendant speak. As the story unfolds, the room seems to disappear. The words begin to echo in my head, and suddenly, it feels like a movie starts playing behind my eyes. I see the cold, the fear, and the impossible choices. I feel the sharp sting of sadness, but beneath it, a restless urge to act.

This year we had the honor of hearing from **Yoram Teichner** who shared the brave story of his parents – two Holocaust survivors who through resilience and strength, battled through the horrors of concentration camps and finally made their way to Israel. They married, had children, and lived to see grandchildren as well as great-grandchildren. This is not just an example of Zionism or perseverance. This is victory. **As a nation, we have a duty to ensure these memories stay loud.**



Now, more than ever, Zikaron BaSalon is not just about the past; it is a vital reminder of why we are here, why we have a state, and why 'Never Again' must be a promise kept by every generation.

GALIT BEZ
ARGENTINA
BA GOVERNMENT



YOM HASHOAH

HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY

FROM DESTRUCTION TO REBIRTH

Once a year at 10:00 in Israel, the country stops to remember. Cars pull over on highways, pedestrians freeze mid-step, and a long, mournful siren cuts through the air. This time not to warn of incoming missiles, but to summon a nation into silence. For two minutes, the Jewish state stands still, holding the weight of six million souls.

This is Yom HaShoah – Holocaust Remembrance Day, and to understand why it exists, you have to understand the story it was built to carry.

The State of Israel was not simply established despite the Holocaust. It emerged, in very large part, because of it. The Zionist movement had argued for decades that Jews needed a homeland of their own. Statehood in 1948 was, among other things, the world's belated answer to what the Holocaust had exposed.

At this year's state ceremony at Yad Vashem, President Isaac Herzog acknowledged that Israel's national commemorations had arrived, once again, in a time of war. "Our people chose not merely to survive," Herzog said, "but to grow, to create, to rebuild, a home that rests on that same spirit of family." Herzog spoke of visiting the shiva of Asaf Cafri, a 26-year-old IDF reservist killed in Gaza. At the shiva house, he met Cafri's great-grandmother, Magda Baratz, a woman who had survived Auschwitz, outlived her parents and brother, endured death marches, and lived long enough to see her great-grandson serve in a Jewish army. In that one family, sitting together in grief, the entire arc of modern Jewish history was present in the room.

Around the world, the day is marked in ways which are both large in action but also deeply personal. In Poland, thousands walk the tracks from Auschwitz to Birkenau in the March of the Living, led this year by fifty Holocaust survivors. In Washington, London, and Toronto, communities gather to read names aloud, light candles, and listen to testimony. In living rooms across Israel, the Zikaron Basalon initiative brings survivors into small, quiet home gatherings, sitting across from young Israelis who were **born into a world the survivors made possible**.

That closeness matters now more than it ever has. As the last survivors age, the Holocaust faces the danger every historical atrocity eventually faces: becoming a fact rather than a feeling, a figure rather than a face. Yom HaShoah exists precisely to resist that. The siren that stops a country is not ritual for its own sake. It is a refusal. **A refusal to let memory shrink into footnote, to let six million individual lives dissolve into a single statistic.**



EMMANUELLE EDELSTEIN
BELGIUM
BA ECONOMICS, ENTREP
& DATA SCIENCE



NOA SZAFRAN
BELGIUM
BA COMPUTER SCIENCE





MEMORIAL DAYS SHABBAT DINNER



Like many students at the RRIS, I came here searching not only for an academic education, but also for a community and a deeper understanding of my place within Israeli society and the Jewish world. I was born in Israel but I was raised in Miami far from my homeland, and at 18 years old I returned home to serve as a lone soldier in the IDF.

This year I had the privilege of participating in Reichman University's 16th Delegation to Poland. Like many who have gone before me, I expected the journey to teach me about history. What I did not expect was how deeply it would challenge and shape my understanding of identity, memory, and responsibility.

Growing up outside of Israel, Shabbat dinner was one of the central expressions of my Jewish identity. Even when Judaism was not always present in every aspect of daily life, Friday night was different. For a few hours, the world seemed to stop. Shabbat represented comfort, family, and belonging. It was a weekly reminder of who we were and what connected us.

That is why the RRIS Memorial Day Shabbat Dinner carried such profound meaning for me. Between the two memorial days of Yom HaShoah and Yom HaZikaron, the Shabbat dinner offered something unique: a moment to once again feel grounded. It gave us the opportunity to come together not only as students, but as a community. Surrounded by friends from the delegation, people with whom I had shared one of the most meaningful weeks of my life, I felt an embrace I did not know I needed. **These two days are pillars of the Israeli experience. Days when the country collectively pauses to remember unimaginable loss, sacrifice, resilience, and survival.** They are filled with grief, confusion, anger, and reflection, but also with an immense sense of pride in the fact that the Jewish people and the State of Israel continue to stand despite everything we have endured.

There is a Hebrew word that I find myself returning to again and again: "shlichut" – a sense of mission. Poland taught me that remembering is not enough; memory carries responsibility. We each have a role in preserving stories, strengthening our communities, and shaping the future. The Shabbat dinner reminded me of that responsibility. It connected the lessons of the past with the realities of the present and the hopes we hold for the future. It reminded me that Jewish identity is not defined only by tragedy or remembrance, but also by community, continuity, and the decision to keep moving forward and upwards.

This coming year, I will have the privilege of serving as the student coordinator of Reichman University's 17th Delegation to Poland. Even before the journey begins, I can already say that it will be one of the greatest honors of my life.

If my experience taught me anything, it is that the delegation does not end when the plane lands back in Israel, as the delegation's impact continues long afterward.



RACHEL ESKANDRY
USA
BA GOVERNMENT



YOM HAZIKARON TO YOM HA'ATZMAUT

A JOURNEY FROM COLLECTIVE GRIEF TO NATIONAL CELEBRATION

Yom HaZikaron, Israel's Memorial Day, is dedicated to honoring fallen soldiers and victims of terrorism. In Israel, remembering the fallen holds a deeply personal feeling, as remembrance is not distant or abstract – almost everyone knows someone who fell in defense of our nation. Grief is shared, collective and present.

Yom HaZikaron reflects something essential about Israeli and Jewish identity: the understanding that behind the existence of a country are real people and real sacrifices. It is a day filled with pain, but also with unity. The siren, the ceremonies, and the stories remind us that remembrance is an integral part of life here.

Nico: "On this day, I also remember someone. Yogev Pazy, who fell on November 17th, 2024, while fighting in Gaza. Yogev and I went together to a Jewish summer camp in Wisconsin where I got to know the kind of person he truly was. He was full of energy and life, always trying to help others and make people smile. Yogev will forever inspire me to live the way he so beautifully embodied: to love, to find joy, to listen, and to forgive."

As Yom Hazikaron comes to an end, a unique and emotional transition takes place. The country moves directly into Yom Ha'Atzmaut – Israel's Independence Day, a day of celebration and joy.

This shift from grief to happiness may seem sudden, but it carries a powerful meaning. It reminds us of all those who fought and sacrificed so that we could live here today.

In Israel, these two days are inseparable. The memory of destruction and the celebration of rebirth are not two separate things, but the same story told in two parts. The pain of loss and the joy of independence exist side by side, shaping the identity of the country and its people. Remembrance is not only about looking back, but also about carrying those memories forward, into the life that continues.



NOA FIDEL
ARGENTINA
BA COMMUNICATIONS



NICO NASSIRI
USA
BA BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION





What great memories!



IDOL LIVE

REDISCOVERING MY LOVE FOR PERFORMING

When I decided to audition for Idol Live, I wasn't just signing up to perform; I was reconnecting with a part of myself that I had put aside for a long time. Singing has always been one of my biggest passions, but somewhere along the way I stopped making space for it. The RUNI Idol Live event gave me the perfect reason to come back to something I truly love.



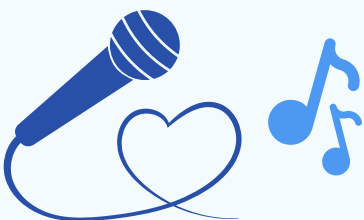
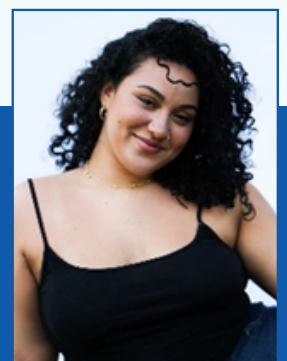
The entire experience leading up to the performance was so much fun. It was exciting to have something to work toward, to practice regularly, and to immerse myself in music again. I found myself looking forward to rehearsing and felt myself improving with every practice. More than anything, it reminded me how much I missed singing and how fulfilled it makes me feel.



The night of the event felt completely different. Standing backstage, I was experiencing every emotion at once: excitement, anticipation, and a lot of anxiety. As soon as I stepped onto the stage, though, those feelings started to fade. Once the music began, I was able to focus on what I was there to do: enjoy the moment and share something I love with the audience.

Looking back, Idol Live was much more than a performance. **It gave me the chance to reconnect with a passion that had been sitting on the sidelines for years** and reminded me why music has always been such an important part of my life. I am so grateful that the RRIS offers opportunities like Idol Live because it gave me a chance to reconnect with a passion I had set aside for far too long.

NAAMA TEITEL
USA
BA COMMUNICATIONS



3RD YEAR RECANATI GALA

It's pretty crazy to think I'm done with my degree. So much has happened during this time, that I truly can't believe I'm actually done. From the summer prep course to our final event until our graduation ceremony – the 3rd year Recanati Gala, a lot has happened; In my personal life, at Reichman University, and in the country.

As I look back at my degree, I couldn't be happier with my decision to study at the RRIS. With the outbreak of October 7th and the ensuing war, the RRIS has consistently gone above my expectations for how well they cared about me and my studies. With two injuries, a delegation to Poland, and getting married, it's safe to say I had a personal roller coaster these last three years. But overall, my time studying at the RRIS was the steadiest thing I had, thanks in part to the support group set in place by the university.



This degree taught me the knowledge and technical skills I wanted, but it will always be tied to more than just that. **Due to the time in history we lived in while I was studying, the events of this time are woven into my memory of the degree.** In addition to the knowledge and technical skills, I learned a lot about resilience and trusting a long grueling process.

The whole degree essentially came to a close with the 3rd year Recanati Gala, and I was chosen to be the student speaker in front of the graduating class.

To share my story and be an example of what the RRIS class of 2026 is, is a true honor. I hope to take forward in life everything I learned during my time at Reichman University, in the classroom and outside of it. **I know this degree set me up for success, now it's time to go out and succeed.**

AVIV HAREL
USA
BA ECON, ENTREP & DATA
SCIENCE



A STUDENT IN ISRAEL SINCE OCTOBER 2023

When I first decided to study in Israel, I imagined a very different beginning to my university experience. I am from Venezuela, and choosing to move across the world to study at the International School at Reichman University already felt like a huge step. I was excited to start this new chapter, meet people from different cultures, and experience life in a country I had always felt connected to. Then, my plans changed in a way I never expected.

I was supposed to start my first semester in October, but then October 7th struck the nation. Instead of arriving on campus with my new classmates, I found myself watching everything unfold from Venezuela. It was a strange and difficult moment, a mix of confusion, fear, uncertainty, and frustration. I had spent months preparing for this new chapter of my life, and suddenly everything was on hold. For a while, I didn't even know if I would be able to come at all.

Finally, I arrived in January. **Coming to Israel during a time of war is not something most students imagine when they think about studying abroad.** From the moment I arrived, it was clear that this experience would be different from what I had originally imagined. At the same time, being here during such a complicated period has shaped my university experience in ways I never imagined.

One of the things that has made this experience so special is the people. **At the RRIS, you meet students from all over the world, each bringing different cultures, perspectives, and stories.** Being far from home has created a unique bond between me and my friends, so it doesn't take long before friends feel more like family.



Living and studying here during these challenging years has also meant being exposed to a reality that most students around the world don't experience. There are moments when the news feels overwhelming, and sirens interrupt what would otherwise be a normal routine. At the same time, I have seen an incredible sense of solidarity among people here. Friends check in on each other, communities come together, and there is a strong feeling that everyone is looking out for one another.

Being part of this environment has changed me in many ways. Living through such an intense and uncertain period of time while continuing to study, build friendships, and create a life here has pushed me to grow a lot as a person. It has made me more resilient and more aware of the strength people can find, especially in difficult situations. That sense of resilience and solidarity is something I truly admire about Israel.



Looking back, my university experience has been completely unpredictable but also incredibly meaningful. I will soon be finishing this chapter of my life, and one of the most valuable lessons I have learned is that even in uncertain times, some of the most meaningful experiences come from choosing to be here and making the most of it.



SARIT FOGEL
VENEZUELA
BA COMMUNICATIONS





RRIS PEER COUNSELOR

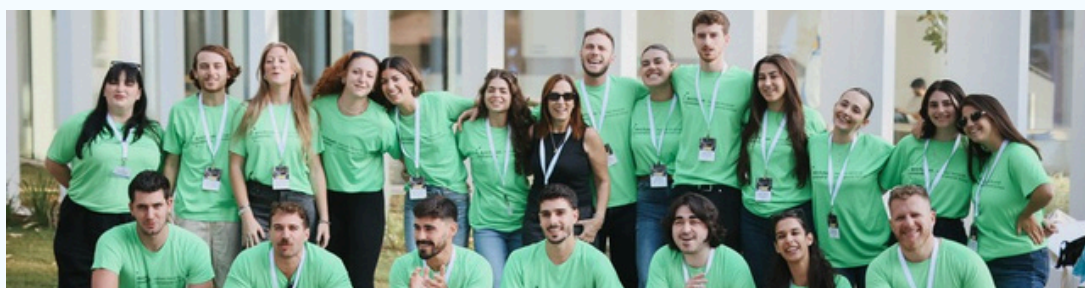
I had the privilege of being part of this year's group of RRIS Peer Counselors, and it's something that I not only had the honor of doing, but it also gave me the chance to learn and grow. Being an international student myself, I understand what it's like to be in a foreign country, to start studying, and to find your own community and sense of belonging. **That's what inspired me to become a counselor in the first place.**

However, I was still surprised by how much I learned throughout the role, especially when it came to connecting with all kinds of different students and understanding the responsibility that comes with taking on this role.

The best part of it all was definitely my students and my team of fellow counselors. My students each brought something unique to the group. They were all so different from one another, yet they all shared the same goal of studying in Israel. My fellow counselors also became some of the people I'm closest to. It isn't easy to compromise your summer and take on so much responsibility for supporting students who have come from abroad. But with co-counselors like I had, and with students who were so incredible in their own ways, it was worth it twenty times over.

I've learned so much from this experience, and I feel incredibly grateful for the people I got to share it with. Seeing my students continue to strive for more makes me incredibly proud. To me, that's one of the biggest signs of success in the role. I didn't just want them to start their degree knowing how to get around campus or learn how to navigate the university website.

I wanted them to make friends, build connections, explore Israel, and keep looking for new opportunities. Seeing my students become class representatives, or counselors for the next group of first-year students, and even heads of clubs around campus makes me unbelievably proud.



“Watching them grow and become leaders themselves has been one of the most rewarding parts of this entire experience.”

SHAINDY STAMLER
USA
BA COMMUNICATIONS



BUDDY PROGRAM

There's a particular kind of quiet that follows someone back from reserve duty. One week they're somewhere else entirely, shouldering something most of us can barely imagine. The next, they're sitting two seats away from you in a lecture, trying to catch up on weeks of material before finals. That shift, from one world to another, is not a small thing. And yet somehow campus keeps moving at its usual pace, loud and fast and full, and you're expected to slot back into it like you never left.

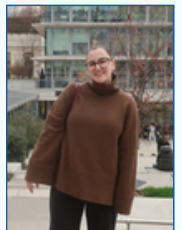
The Buddy Program at the RRIS exists exactly for that moment. **It connects returning reservists with student tutors** for free, one-on-one academic support, matched to the specific courses they need help with. No group sessions, no generic advice, just one person sitting with another and working through the material together at whatever pace makes sense.

I signed up to be a buddy because I've always liked explaining things. Helping classmates understand material is something I've naturally gravitated toward over the years, in study groups, before exams, in the margins of a long library afternoon. So when I heard about this program, it felt like a way to channel that more intentionally, in a context where it might actually mean something a bit more than usual.

Living in Israel in-and-out of wars makes you want to find the place where you can actually be useful, however small that place turns out to be. For me, right now, it's this. It's just showing up and explaining things, and somehow that feels like exactly the right thing to be doing.



DANA DAGAN
USA
BA GOVERNMENT



BA TUTORING

One of the best decisions I've made throughout my degree was becoming a tutor in the RRIS BA Tutoring Program. As someone who has genuinely loved many of my courses, I've had the opportunity to **pass that knowledge on and support other students.** I wanted to become a tutor because I know how overwhelming university can feel at times, and I hoped to be the kind of support system that helps students feel more capable and confident in themselves.

One of my favorite subjects to tutor is statistics, a course that many Government students tend to find it particularly challenging. Students often come in feeling intimidated and unsure of themselves, convinced they simply "aren't good" at it. What I find most rewarding is watching that mindset shift, seeing a student suddenly understand a concept, solve a problem correctly, and feel that sense of relief and accomplishment. Then, after many sessions and hard work, there is no better feeling than receiving that WhatsApp message from the student sharing their success on an exam and knowing that my support helped them get there.

Tutoring has shown me that with the right guidance and support, even the most difficult subjects can become manageable, and dare I say, even enjoyable. **Being part of that process and helping students build both their skills and their confidence has been one of the most impactful and fulfilling parts of my academic experience.**



EMMANUELLE EDELSTEIN
BELGIUM
BA ECONOMICS, ENTREPRENEURSHIP & DATA SCIENCE



TAZUZ EVENTS



Moving to Israel was a major turning point in my life. I decided to leave behind the life I knew in Montreal in order to step out of my comfort zone, grow as a person, meet new people, and embrace a completely new environment. Since beginning my journey at the RRIS, my experience has been incredibly meaningful. Studying Psychology has taught me so much, not only about others, but also about myself. It has deepened my interest in the powerful connection between the mind and body, which naturally strengthened my passion for Pilates.

A year before moving to Israel, I became a certified Pilates instructor. Although teaching was already something I loved, it was difficult at first to find a space where I could truly put my skills into practice. One of the things the RRIS has shown me is that there are so many opportunities for students to turn their passions into something meaningful and share them with others. When Tazuz reached out to ask if I would like to lead the Pilates tribe, I immediately said yes, even though I was nervous to begin this new journey.

From the moment I taught my first class, I realized how rewarding this experience would be. **There is something so special about creating a space where students can take a break from their busy routines, reconnect with their bodies, and enjoy movement together.** It is not only about exercise, but also about community, energy, and giving students a chance to feel stronger, more grounded, and more connected.

Leading the Pilates tribe has been one of the most fulfilling parts of my time at the RRIS. It allowed me to combine something I love with student life, while also positively contributing to campus. Being part of Tazuz has reminded me how much I can grow from saying yes to something that scares me. It has helped me build confidence, meet amazing people, and turn my passion into something that can inspire others.



ILANA BRAND
CANADA
BA PSYCHOLOGY



When I first arrived at Reichman University I knew I needed a religious outlet in my life. Judaism was always important to me, and I tend to go stir crazy when I don't have easy access to a Jewish community. I know that might sound dramatic, but as a girl who was privileged to grow up in a Modern Orthodox household and attend Jewish Day School, accessible Torah is something I took for granted until I had to search for it.

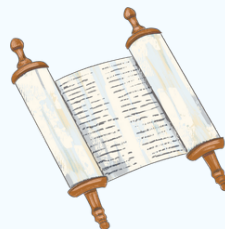
I never really understood my parents' need for a community until I graduated high school and didn't have one, and finding that community of my own has been such a blessing. I have found that community in JLIC.



During my Orientation Week at the RRIS, I made the conscious decision to sign up for the first Shabbat meal, which was held at the home of the JLIC rabbinic couple, the Gubermans. Although I consider myself outgoing, walking into a meal where I knew no one was anxiety provoking. I believe that of all the decisions I made during my first year at university, attending this Shabbat meal was the best one. Rav Elisha and Yiska Guberman greeted me with such kindness, and always go out of their way to make every single person at every meal feel welcomed and feel seen for who they are. I have such a wonderful personal connection with them, and at the same time I think everyone who participates in JLIC feels the exact same way.

A midafternoon Lunch & Learn shiur could just be a quick lesson with pizza, but instead they become exciting opportunities to meet new people, and relax in an environment I am proud to participate in. It sounds cheesy but it really isn't (just the pizza is).

Through these events, I have made such wonderful friends who share the same desire for Torah connection and community. **I really do believe that JLIC has been such a strong source of happiness in my life and has contributed so much to my experience at the RRIS.** I owe much of my success as an Olah to JLIC, and especially to the Gubermans. I really can't recommend JLIC enough, and I am so grateful to have such a wonderful community here on campus.



HANNAH FREEDMAN
USA
BA COMMUNICATIONS

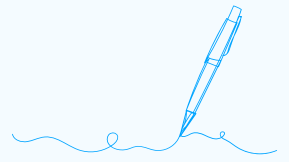




Campus Life has
something for
everyone!



EDITOR'S NOTE



Working as the Campus Life Social Media Manager this year has given me a front-row seat to so many of the moments that made this year special. From clubs and events, to trips and celebrations, and to everyday moments on campus, I had the amazing role of capturing the energy of Campus Life and sharing it with the RRIS community.

One of my favourite parts of this position was getting to meet students from all over the world and seeing how Campus Life brings people together. Behind every post, story, photo, and reel was a person or a team creating something meaningful. Whether I was attending an event, filming behind the scenes, speaking to students, or trying to capture the

perfect moment, I was constantly reminded of how much there is to experience at the RRIS.

Creating this magazine has been such a special way to look back on this last year. It often feels like the year went by so fast that everything feels like one big blur. Going through all the photos, memories and events, made me realise just how much happened and how many people played a part in making this year what it was.

This magazine is not only a collection of highlights, but a celebration of the people, creativity, energy, and community behind them.

As I reach the end of my degree, I find myself wishing I could go back and do it all again! Three years once felt like such a long time, but somehow they passed in the blink of an eye. Looking back, I am so grateful for every opportunity I said yes to, especially the opportunity to work with Campus Life. This role allowed me to be creative, meet incredible people, experience university life in a completely different way, and help tell the story of the RRIS.

So, to every student reading this: soak it all up! Get involved, join the club, go to the event, introduce yourself, ask questions, volunteer, try something new, and take every chance you can. Even when life feels busy, make time for the amazing experiences happening around you. These are the memories you will carry with you long after the assignments, exams, and deadlines are over. At the end of the day, that is what **Campus Life** is all about!

I feel incredibly lucky to have worked with such an amazing team. A special shoutout to Nichole and Sylvia, you guys are awesome! Thank you to everyone who contributed, participated, sang, danced, laughed, cheered, volunteered, supported us, and allowed me to capture and share your Campus Life journey. You all filled this year, and these pages, with so much joy, excitement, and meaning.

I would do it all again in a heartbeat!

**With love,
Rachel Wohlman**



RACHEL WOHLMAN
SOUTH AFRICA
BA PSYCHOLOGY
CAMPUS LIFE SOCIAL MEDIA
MANAGER



WORDS FROM THE

CAMPUS LIFE MANAGER

Hi everyone,
My name is Nichole Amar, the RRIS Campus Life Manager.

Before stepping into this role, I was exactly where many of you are today – a student at the RRIS. I completed my BA in Government, Diplomacy and Strategy, and my years here shaped me in ways I never expected. From my Orientation trip, to attending various Campus Life events and activities, and participating in different programs throughout the university, every experience added something meaningful to my journey and helped make Reichman University feel like home.

When I think back on my time as a student, what stands out most is not a single event or trip, but the people. One of the most incredible things about RRIS is the community we build together. **Students arrive from every corner of the world, bringing different cultures, perspectives, languages, and life experiences. Yet somehow, despite our differences, we find common ground.** Whether through meaningful conversations, shared meals, unforgettable trips across Israel, or simply spending time together on campus, lifelong friendships are formed in the most unexpected ways.

I knew I wanted to continue being part of something that had given me so much, while also helping to create that same experience for future generations of RRIS students. Every event I organize, every trip I plan, and every celebration hosted on campus is driven by the hope that students will create memories and friendships that stay with them long after they graduate.

Being the RRIS Campus Life Manager has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. It is a role filled with excitement, creativity, challenges, unexpected moments, and countless opportunities to connect with incredible people. It has also been a reminder that even during difficult times, the strength of our community shines brightly. Watching students support one another, celebrate together, and build a home away from home is what makes this work so meaningful.

Looking ahead towards another year, I am excited for everything that is still to come. New friendships, unforgettable events, meaningful traditions, and memories waiting to be made. Thank you for allowing me to be part of your journey. I cannot wait to continue watching this extraordinary community grow and thrive.

Love, Nichole Amar
RRIS Campus Life Manager



NICHOLE AMAR
USA
RRIS CAMPUS LIFE
MANAGER



YOU HAVE QUESTIONS? WE HAVE ANSWERS!



How do I join Campus Life Events?

- Follow [@rris_campus_life](#) on Instagram
- Keep up with the RRIS Campus Life Monthly Digital Calendar
- Read the Newsletter sent to your student email every week
- Register to the events through the links provided

Is there a way to be involved with the Campus Life team?

- **Yes!** You can become a volunteer as a way to enrich your student experience and take part in the behind the scenes of Campus Life!

What if I have an idea for a new activity?

- Stop by the Campus Life office in room O-116 (Arison-Lauder building, floor -1)
- Contact us at campuslife.rris@runi.ac.il

*** GET INVOLVED ***



Scan or click!

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Magazine Editor:
Rachel Wohlman
Campus Life Social Media Manager

Photos – RRIS collection