

# List nowego wiceprezydenta wykonawczego Fundacji RONALDA S. LAUDERA

Dear Colleagues,

Summer is over, school has begun, and Rosh Hashana is days away. The exciting work of our Foundation continues, moving from camp season to school year without interruption.

I had the opportunity this summer to visit our family retreat and summer camp in Wisla, Poland, led by the incomparable Baruch and Dorota Cisielski with the support of our country director, Rabbi Mati Pawlak. At the suggestion of Dr. George Ban, this year Baruch and Dorota invited students from our Yeshiva in Berlin to assist with teaching, singing and spirit. I understand both from Baruch and Dorota, as well as from the Berlin participants, that this cross-border joint effort was a clear success.

I mention this at the start of the new year to encourage you to think actively how it is we can help one another be fresher, stronger, more inspired and creative, and serve our communities better. We are blessed to be part of a remarkable network built with the vision and resources of our Founder and President, Mr. Lauder, and the guidance and leadership of my predecessor and mentor, Dr. Ban. There are undoubtedly many ways in which ideas, human resources, facilities and more which we already possess can be put to excellent use by ourselves and our colleagues.

Our goal should be clear- to further develop the Foundation as a provider of outstanding general and Jewish education to Jewish children across Central and Eastern Europe, strengthening, supporting and breathing new life into the Jewish communities where we operate. In a time of limited financial resources, this further development will need to come from qualitative enhancements, creative thinking, sharing of best practices, and working together to share the resources with which we have already been blessed.

I hope to visit many of you over the coming months to talk with you both about your projects, and about how you envision helping the Foundation and the Foundation helping you.

I encourage you all to communicate actively. Do send reports, as your providing me information makes it more possible for me to pass on that information to our board and to Mr. Lauder. This, in turn, ensures that you remain in focus and receive the attention you all undoubtedly deserve. Also, respond with the same speed and enthusiasm to our requests as you would have us respond to yours.

Allow me to conclude with a brief Dvar Torah. There is a verse read in a Torah portion of several weeks ago, Eikev, with somewhat unusual diction. In the context of speaking of the land of Israel, a verse concludes that the eyes of God are on the land "Mereishit Hashana ad acharit Shana", from the beginning of the year until the end of the year. However, the precise reading of the words is rather- "from the beginning of THE year until the end of (a) year". Somehow over the course of the year, the definite article is lost. The year ceases to be THE year and becomes just a year, another year.

Some commentaries note that the Torah is hinting to a powerful lesson, most appropriate to consider before Rosh Hashana. We often begin things inspired, with the idea that this will be THE day, THE year, THE moment. And we end them in the glum recognition that not much happened. It wasn't the day or the year, but just another day or year. This is human. But it is also human to challenge ourselves and try to make this moment the definitive one.

I hope we will challenge ourselves, not only in our personal lives, but in our professional lives. Let us work together to make this not just another year, but a definitive one for the Foundation.

It is an honour and a privilege to lead the Foundation and I look forward to working with you in the new Year.

Shana Tova!

Sincerely,