



# MOUNT SINAI COLLEGE

CREATING LEARNERS FOR 40 YEARS

March 2021 ■ [www.mountsinai.nsw.edu.au](http://www.mountsinai.nsw.edu.au)

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# YEARS OF MOUNT SINAI COLLEGE CONNECT B'YACHAD



@Mount Sinai College Community



@Mount Sinai College Sydney



@mountsinaicollege



Distinguished School

Recognised by Apple as a distinguished school for innovation, leadership and educational excellence.



Stronger together. Now more than ever.

JCA Member Organisation



1997: School Photo

Since 1981- from when our first 14 students walked through the doors of their classroom located in Maroubra Synagogue - it has been a journey filled with memories, incredible connections and community moments. Mount Sinai College was quickly established as a school where educational experiences for children were valued alongside a strong Jewish ethos. Our unique reputation is exemplified through our long-standing teachers, staff and proud alumni. As a team, we will ensure that the Mount Sinai College family continues to flourish for generations to come.



As we continue to honour our school traditions (Year 6 Bat Mitzvah program, Siddur presentation, Crossland's Adventure camp and Israeli Dancing) and embrace our newer community events (Showfest, Book Week, and World Peace Games) it's not hard to see why we stand out!



1995: Crossland's Adventure Camp



1991: Mount Sinai College 10th anniversary celebration



1993: Yom Ha'atzmaut with Rabbi Perez and Harry Taibel (former principal)



1987 & 1988: Siddur Presentation

### Principals

- SANDRA MOLLOY ■ 1981 - 1984
- JOHN DAVIES ■ 1985 - 1985
- GREGORY ROSS ■ 1986 - 1989
- HARRY TAIBEL ■ 1990 - 2002
- PHILIP ROBERTS ■ 2003 -

### Presidents

- MR P. PHILIPPSOHN ■ 1980 - 1984
- MR S. P. NEMES ■ 1985 - 1988
- DR B. E TUCH ■ 1988 - 1992
- MR I. G. LEVI ■ 1992 - 1996
- MR P. SYMONDS ■ 1996 - 2001
- MR A. DI VEROLI ■ 2001 - 2005
- MR S. SEIDMAN ■ 2005 - 2008
- MR P. MAISEL ■ 2008 - 2010
- MR T. SNOYMAN ■ 2010 - 2013
- MR. T. GREENSTEIN ■ 2013 - 2019
- MR. A. BERMAN ■ 2019 -

### Life Governors

- PETER PHILIPPSOHN OAM
- STEVEN NEMES OAM
- BERNIE TUCH
- IAN LEVI
- PHILLIP SYMONDS
- ALEX DI VEROLI
- STEVE SEIDMAN
- PHILIP MAISEL
- TONY SNOYMAN



On the 28th of January 1981, Mount Sinai College welcomed its first 14 students. Forty years later on this same date, the school year begins with an inclusive and thriving community.



New Preparatory Playground



Our brand-new Preparatory playground opened at the beginning of March and was spearheaded by the building committee of the board.



Pesach is the most commonly observed Jewish Holiday that brings together ALL Jews from around the world. Whether you are Australian, South African, European, Israeli or American, we join over the seder table for 2 nights to tell our children the story of our emancipation, and hear them sing wholeheartedly the Manishtana. It is in those specific moments where we come together, honour our traditions and share a sense of warmth with our family and friends, that the true strength of our Jewish identity is evident.

The theme of this B'yachad is Mount Sinai College's proud celebration of our 40th year as a school and community. From our humble beginnings in 1981, with just 14 students, we've pursued a vision to build an excellent educational institution and a close-knit community that now numbers close to 350 students. We are a school that prides itself on producing down to earth, grounded and well-rounded community mensches, who go forth and continue their schooling path with determination and a solid foundation.

As we like to say, Mount Sinai College kids don't blend in, they stand out. And in keeping with this, we wanted to take a moment as a community board to reflect on how exactly Mount Sinai stands out, 40 years later.

The recent completion of our stage 1 and 2 campus renovations, who led by past president Tim Greenstein and current president Anthony Berman, has set-up the foundations for a world-class campus, which boasts recognition of winning the Australasian award 'The Learning Environment Australasian awards 2020.'

We have evolved from one classroom in the back of the Maroubra shule to what we have today - a two-stream school from Prep - Year 6 and extending our ELC to now welcome 2-year old's.

We are guided by exceptional educators, all of whom are certified Apple badge trained in an Apple Distinguished School who know how to use technology for better educational outcomes like no other. This has been the key difference at Mount Sinai - dedicated staff who are well prepared after years of professional learning to work in these new ways and dynamic spaces.

Mount Sinai continues to enjoy a warm and collaborative relationship with Maroubra Synagogue and trust this will continue to go from strength to strength, especially when restrictions ease and we can truly celebrate future chaggim the best way we know how - with great ruach!

We also want to thank the JCA and its outgoing President, Stephen Chipkin, new President Ian Sandler and CEO Alan Hassin, for their continued support of the College. The work of the JCA is vital to many organisations in our community and so we thank them, now more than ever, for their ongoing support and continued care to ensure we remain a thriving and prosperous community.

Wishing you and your families a Chag Sameach over the pesach break.

MSC Board 2021



1986 & 1989: The Mount Sinai College Board



2021: Phil Roberts



1999: Phil Roberts

Our College opened 40 years ago and there is no denying it took resolve and courage for all those concerned to start a school. Life Governor, Peter Philipsohn, along with a group of interested parents (including a very supportive Rabbi Freilich), drove the initiative tenaciously as there was no room in 1981 at Moriah to accommodate the children who wanted a Jewish education.

Rachel Schwartz (nee Ely), one of our founding students who works at the College today, started

school with 13 others in 1981 - the year Ronald Regan was sworn in as US President and Malcom Fraser was Prime Minister. Rachel's mother, Myree – founding parent, longstanding secretary and enrolments officer - may well have taken her family to see 'Raiders of the Lost Ark' that year during the holidays.

1981 - the year cricket captain, Greg Chappell, scored 204 against India and the year Prince Charles and Diana were married (we outlasted that one!) and yet, all of this is eclipsed as far as I am concerned by the opening of a small Jewish school of 14 kids in Maroubra on the grounds of the Maroubra Synagogue.

For a decade after, the College had a quasi-kibbutzim feel to it as families toiled to help the emerging Jewish school take root. What the school lacked in formal facilities at the time, it made up for in endeavour, a unique sense of community, a deep affection and respect for its Jewish foundations and a genuine focus of the needs of each child. Living within our means and eschewing any form of extravagance or excess became the overarching unofficial credos.

We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future, (Roosevelt, 1940) is a perspective that seems as relevant today as it was then. In 2021, we refer to Learners for Life – alluding to the ways in which we prepare our students for their futures, not our past, in teaching them not just what to think but how to think.

Characteristically, the seeds of innovation were sown early and even today, the College's ability to adapt and evolve has distinguished us notably. In 1981, IBM may have introduced its first personal computer and the first CD player may have come to market but before long, Mount Sinai was adopting Apple2E computers across the school and in the early 1990's integrating SimCity into our curriculum. In 2021, we are one of a small number of Apple Distinguished Schools worldwide and we are still renowned for our innovation and ability to find in each child a potential they themselves often fail to recognise.

We have designated Sunday, 15 August, as our 40th celebration date - the day to bring together all of those, past and present, who have an abiding respect and appreciation for Mount Sinai College. After a 2020 year of restrictions and limitations, we hope we will be in a position to come together, enjoy the company of many and celebrate the achievements of a school that has consistently punched above its weight and that enjoys the unconditional support of the community.

Many of my colleagues have a long history at Mount Sinai. Like our own 7Up series, we have seen the child become the man/woman. And I am yet to see the child who has become the adult and mensch who has not succeeded in his/her way and I proudly attribute the role we played in part to that development.

Here's to another 40 years of adaptation and a continuing commitment to academic excellence and instilling values based on Jewish knowledge and heritage.

**Phil Roberts,**  
College Principal

## A conversation you MUST have with your kids

### WHO AM I?

It's perhaps the most powerful conversation in the Torah. Moshe has just been thrust into limelight and given the momentous task of confronting Pharaoh to redeem the Jews. You can imagine the fear that must have been pulsating through Moshe's veins at that very moment. His first response to Hashem is this: "Mi anochi", "Who am I" that I should confront Pharaoh. He tries to get out of it. He looks for excuses. He tries to find someone else more capable. He doubted himself.

Hashem then reassured Moshe by telling him not to worry. "For I will be with you and this will be a sign that I was the one who sent you". In other words, Hashem calmed Moshe's nerves by telling him not to be scared because you are a messenger. My messenger. As a messenger you will never be alone. You will never be small and ordinary. Because I am with you, you, in essence, are like ME.

I believe this conversation has become the blueprint for all future generations and must become a central topic for us to discuss and internalise at our Seder tables. It is the key to the entire exodus and the secret to experiencing true liberation.

Each one of us has those things in life that keep us confined, enslaved and restricted. We each live in our own Egypt," in our own "meitzar," our own restrictive places. We must deal with insecurity, shame, envy, fear, resentment, pain, grief, heartaches, stress, mental challenges, addictions, cravings, inclinations and thoughts that keep us down, angry, moody, and hold us in chains. We can't soar to the heavens and be free, because of the various "pekelach" that we all carry.

### HOW DO WE LEAVE EGYPT? HOW DO WE SET OURSELVES FREE?

By realising who we are what our power is. We must never make ourselves as victims in our own eyes. Rather we must see ourselves as Divine ambassadors to bring light to those difficult places in life and to bring out the best within every person that we meet.

As we sit around the Seder tables with our children this year, let's ask ourselves if we are empowering our children with this message. Are we ensuring that our children know how to answer this question: "Who am I" and know their own inner worth?

Wishing you all a joyous and liberating Pesach,  
**Rabbi Yossi Friedman**



Rabbi Yossi Friedman





Photo credit:  
Ofer Levy

For the past year since March 2020, our campus has been parent-free for communal events due to COVID-19. Purim 2021 was the first event that parents were allowed to celebrate with us and enjoy this Chag.



Photo credit: Ofer Levy



In the lead up to Pesach, our students have been reading and singing the songs in the Haggadah every morning during prayers in addition to their in-class learning and activities for Pesach.



Our children were immersed at the end of last year as they got to explore various technology driven activities such as building and coding DIY musical instruments, coding robots to make words from light, fly Augmented Reality rockets in their classroom and learn about the new Lego Robotics (purchased from our PA fundraising!).



ELC and Preparatory Shabbat

Year 2 'Our Big Collaboration' Project



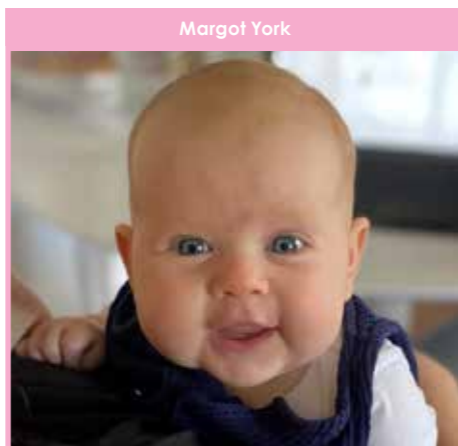
Every Friday, our ELC and Preparatory students learn about the meaning and importance of Shabbat. The children come together to light shabbat candles, recite Kiddush, eat and bake challah and sing shabbat songs.



Our Year 2 teachers and students as part of their science unit are answering the big question of **"How is weather different, in different parts of the world?"**. Wanting to reach out to schools all around the world, they recorded a 'pitch video' which they posted onto social media and received responses from 11 schools in Israel, Ireland, UAE, USA, New Zealand and Victoria. They established the 'Our Big Collaboration' project and currently, students are gathering their own data about the weather each day - sharing it, and their considered reflections in a collaborative Keynote deck. We can't wait to see the next phase of the project, as students meet via video response and zoom to discuss their learning!

**Alumni Births**

- Simon York (1989) and wife Jemma, baby girl, Margot.
- Paul (1997) and Nicole Zines, a daughter, Abigail.
- Jaimie and Michael Wagenheim (1999), a daughter.



Margot York



Abigail Zines

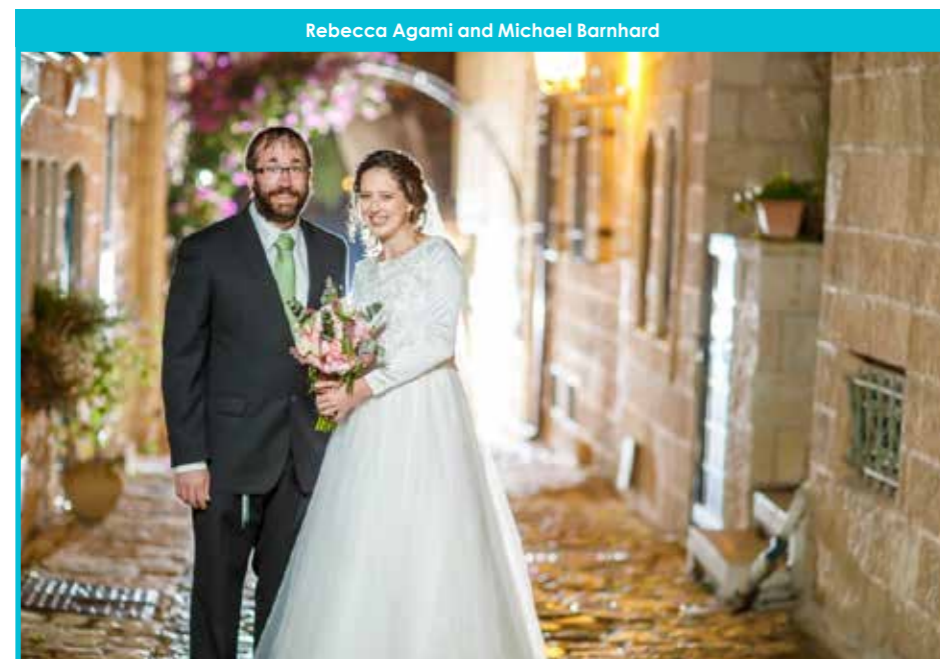
**Alumni Weddings**

- Simon Platt (2000) to Jenna Lurie.
- Daniella Oberstein (2008) to Michael Abbo.
- Anthony Glick (2006) to Megan Hosiosky.
- Rebecca Agami (1998) to Michael Barnhard (in Israel).
- Talia Wahnun (1999) to Michael Dean.
- Mark Lipson (2002) to Jordana Freeman.



Talia Wahnun and Michael Dean

**SHARE YOUR NEWS WITH US!**  
 Whether it's an engagement, wedding, birth or achievement – we'd love to know!  
**Email:**  
 reception@mountsinai.nsw.edu.au



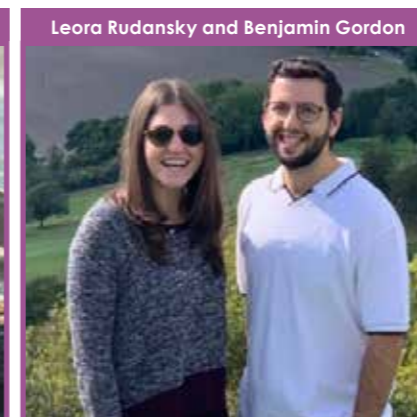
Rebecca Agami and Michael Barnhard



Daniella Oberstein and Michael Abbo



Ruth Lubrainschik and Samuel Mart



Leora Rudansky and Benjamin Gordon

**Alumni Engagements**

- Leora Rudansky (2004) to Benjamin Gordon (in London).
- Ruth Lubrainschik (2006) to Samuel Mart.

**Alumni and Community News**

- Oscar Peer (2018) has published a book 'Oscarisms'.



Oscar Peer

**Teacher Alumni**



**HANNAH JACOBS (Maiden Name: Apfelbaum)**

It was very surreal at first, joining MSC as a teacher after being a student. It's such a warm environment to be working in and even though I was a student here a long time ago, it's still so familiar. It's also very strange to be teaching in my old Year 6 classroom which still looks very similar to when I was a student! I was very lucky to get the job straight after teaching in London and feel fortunate everyday to be working with such excellent teachers. I learn from them everyday and hope that I can give my students the same enjoyable learning experience that I was fortunate to have as a student here. The MSC Soiree was the very first time I sang in front of an audience. I was in Year 5 or 6 at the time and no one, not even my parents knew I could sing. After that, Elana Shatari cast me as Charlie in Charlie and the Chocolate Factory and the rest was history! I'm lucky enough to be part of the teachers and students Rock Band now at MSC. That was probably my fondest moment of MSC that will stick with me forever.

**MICHELLE SHMAILOV**

The transition from being a MSC student to a teacher feels like 'coming home.' Our community always says, "there's something special about a MSC student," and now as a teacher, this resonates with me more than ever. It's been an incredible and nostalgic journey. My Hebrew and Jewish studies teachers from when I was a student - Morah Osnat and Morah Ruthie are now my close colleagues as I continue to learn from them in different ways. One of my fondest memories as a student was Israeli dancing with Morah Pleshet and now it is my responsibility to continue and pass down this tradition. MSC is a tight-knit community, and I am blessed to be part of it.



As we reflect on our past 40 years, we reached out to some of our School Captains throughout the decades. We asked our School Captain Alumni:

- What is your fondest memory of Mount Sinai College?
- What has Mount Sinai College imparted on you?



**1986**  
**RACHEL SCHWARTZ (Maiden Name: Ely)**

Given we were a very small school at the time, every student needed to participate in everything. We had no choice but to compete in every stroke in the 5M swimming carnivals to make up the required numbers, all of the girls were in the Netball team and I think the whole school formed the choir. We didn't know any differently than to give everything a go. I think I may have almost drowned trying to finish a 50m butterfly race having never swum it before, but I do have fond memories of all of these opportunities and the 'can-do' spirit we gave to them.

Mount Sinai has been an extension of my family and the heart of my family's community. Among many things, we were taught the importance of contribution and connection. The school still lives by these values and I feel very lucky that they were a fundamental part of my schooling.

**1994**  
**ILAN PEREZ**

Other than being school captain, funnily enough one of my fondest memories was running canteen every Friday with the year 6 charity committee. I remember taking turns to buy the supplies. We had such fun inside the kitchen, and we learnt about selling (not that it was so hard). We learnt about teamwork. We learnt about compassion, through giving little discounts when the right amount of money wasn't presented. Such a simple job taught so much.

MSC imparted what it means to be a "mench". It was never about being the best, or being the smartest. I was about being a good person. Having morals and ethics like always being kind, good and friendly. Being inclusive and not exclusive. I have heard over the years that parents and teachers outside of the school circle can tell a MSC student by the way they act. That is a testament to the quality of founders, teachers and fellow students.



**1996**  
**STEFANIE SCHWARTZ (Maiden Name: Symonds)**

My favourite memories were those that embody the community feel that Mount Sinai is so famous for. I vividly remember school camps, lip syncing in the talent night, the school Batmitzvah, Pesach Seders, weekly choir, Israeli dancing performances and the much-anticipated finale routine always choreographed by Rozanna Pleshet, the weekly 'run' and inter school sport.

I think when I graduated Mount Sinai I regarded myself as incredibly lucky to have had such a fun, enjoyable, warm primary education with beautiful peers and fantastic teachers. However, as the years have passed and I have been exposed to other educational institutions (high school, university, post graduate study, my own children's educational facilities) I have come to realise even more

how much attending Mount Sinai has truly shaped the values I hold to be important for me and my family. My love of yiddishkeit and Judaism, the importance of community, being involved and helping those less fortunate. These aren't things that are taught by Mount Sinai teachers while standing at a blackboard - they are imparted onto the children by example, through a plethora of opportunities and just by the indescribable community feel of our college. I feel so lucky that my parents made the decision to start my educational journey here and that I have the opportunity to give that start to my four children as well.



**1998**  
**THOMAS BILLER**

My fondest memory of Mount Sinai would include my parting gift from Phil Roberts (Despina) who was my Year 6 teacher at the time. Other highlights include the end of year adventure camp doing the abseiling and canoeing!

The college has imparted a strong sense of community and encouragement to always be myself. The values, culture and traditions learnt from Mount Sinai continue to guide me and have proven useful many years later.

**2002**  
**DYLAIN COHEN**

One particular memory from Mount Sinai that I cherish occurred when I was in Year 5. At the end of every day, right before we went home, our teacher would read pages to us from a Roald Dahl book. On one particular occasion, as we were nearing the end of a book, I remember being so encapsulated by the story and so eager to hear how it finished that I didn't realize that the school bell had rung 20 minutes ago and that we were all going to be late for the bus back home! The passion and commitment the teacher showed was something I will always remember.

Mount Sinai instilled in me a sense of belonging. When I entered through those gates every morning, I knew I was walking into an environment that welcomed me and made me feel at home. I was at ease coming to school every day. I carry this virtue of inclusion with me today, aiming to always make those around me feel comfortable and as though they belong.



# BOOK A TOUR@ MOUNT SINAI COLLEGE

May 27, 2021

A great foundation is built  
on many things...

KIND TO OTHERS

KIND TO YOURSELF

KIND TO THE ENVIRONMENT

THE COMMUNITY KIND

THE LEARNING KIND

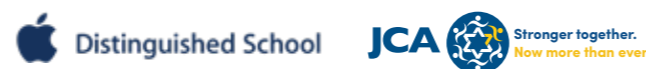
THE ACHIEVING KIND



Register: [www.mountsinai.nsw.edu.au](http://www.mountsinai.nsw.edu.au)

Preparatory - Year 6:

Morning session 9:00am - 10:30am



Thinking back today, did the founding parents of Mount Sinai College envisage a shiduch in the school?! Did our own parents envisage the impact a young and emerging school was going to have on our lives 40 years on?

Well, the match came many years later but our special school certainly shaped the people we came to be.

As a small school, there was always a sense of family and community inherent in its teachings and culture. Even as it continued to grow, the tune to which it beats remains spirited. We were instilled with a strong link to Judaism, encouraged to be curious and achieve, and provided with tools that have supported us to adulthood.

MSC is the tie that binds us. It gave us both an unbreakable foundation upon which we have built our lives. For us, there was no question where our daughters would start their schooling. We may have returned to a campus that looked vastly different, but we returned to a school that felt just like home. Between long serving teachers and many other returning alumni, the unspoken language of our past and present unites us. It is with such joy and delight to experience the continued sense of connection and values, also being passed to our girls.

It is unquestionable the positive influence our school has had on us and the special place we hold for it in our hearts. It is our great honour and true privilege to give back to our school as serving PA President and Board member. Being able to support the school as it continues to grow and thrive, and contribute to the journey our girls are taking as current students is the nachas we are lucky to experience.

The MSC journey is certainly unique to everyone who has walked through its doors.



"In all we do, we pledge to be true, the future is in our hands"

Tova and Nathan Archie

**1984: The score and melody**

When Mount Sinai College was established in 1981, the original school song was written by Eddy Saul and played to the tune of the Mickey Mouse theme song.

By 1984, the Principal Sandra Molloy, along with parents and Board members, recognised the need to develop a new school song that better captured the essence of the College. Michael Herman, one of the original parents, (or in his words, one of the 'first fleet' of families) and a current Board member at the time, was approached and asked to record and compose the melody for the school song.

Michael knew, being a drummer himself, that the tune had to be "catchy and easy for children to remember and singalong to". It took Michael only a few minutes to write the melody and score and then record it on a tape-recorder ready to present to the Board the next day. Once the melody was completed, Cheryl Tuch and Janet Neustein wrote the lyrics that accompanied the score.

**SCHOOL SONG:**

The words to the College song used to be:

WE ARE THE CHILDREN OF MOUNT SINAI  
 WE HOLD OUR HEAD UP HIGH  
 LET'S JOIN OUR HANDS TOGETHER

TOGETHER WE UNITE AT MOUNT SINAI  
 WE HAVE A GOLDEN RULE  
 WE WORK, WE LEARN, THEN PLAY  
 WE HAVE A GOLDEN RULE  
 WE WORK, WE LEARN, THEN PLAY.

The words to this song were written by Eddy Saul for the official opening of the College in 1981.

In 1984 the tune and words were changed. Its replacement is still current. The words and score were put together by Michael Herman.

The new and current words are:

WHEN MOSEY CLIMBED UP MOUNT SINAI  
 TO BRING US HADDER'S WORD  
 STANDING UPON G-D'S HOLY MOUNT  
 THIS IS WHAT HE HEARD  
 THESE ARE MY LAWS FOR YOU TO GIVE  
 FOLLOW EVERY WORD.

ANI B'NAI ISRAEL VE TASHIDHU CHAIN  
 HA'ASEH V'NISHPA  
 ME DO AND WE NEED (repeat)

FOUNDED UPON OUR JEWISH FAITH  
 MOUNT SINAI COLLEGE STANDS  
 PROUD AND FREE  
 AUSTRALIANS ARE WE  
 WE'VE COME FROM MANY LANDS  
 IN ALL WE DO  
 WE PLEDGE TO BE TRUE  
 THE FUTURE'S IN OUR HANDS.

**1984: The school song lyrics**

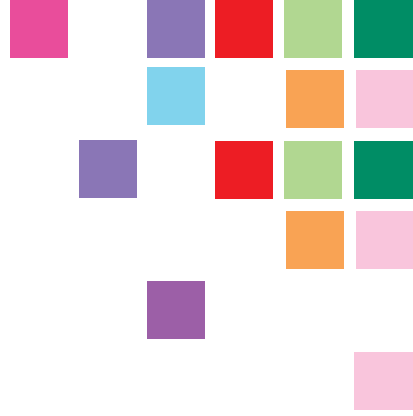
Thirty-seven years later, the Mount Sinai College school song has proven to be timeless and is still proudly sang by our community and students at weekly assemblies and all formal school events.

Michael's family connection with this song now spans three generations. It was sang by his daughter Monica (Class of 1988 and current MSC ELC teacher) and is now by his grandchildren, Adina and Lielle Norris, who are current students at the College.



The Board, Staff and Students wish you a Chag Pesach Kasher Vesame'ach.

# INVITATION



**40TH GALA EVENT**  
**15 AUGUST**  
**6 – 9 PM**

## HONOURING TRADITION, EMBRACING CHANGE

- We are* innovative.
- We are* caring.
- We are* honouring tradition.
- We are* embracing change.
- We are* celebrating 40 years.

Join us for a night of reminiscing.  
Join us on this night.



# BOOK NOW



**MOUNT SINAI COLLEGE**  
CREATING LEARNERS FOR 40 YEARS

**RSVP ESSENTIAL:**  
<https://events.humanitix.com/msc-40th-celebration>