

PRESS RELEASE

IMMEDIATE RELEASE - MAY 24TH, 2017

FOXMAN TORAH INSTITUTE (FTI) received a visit from former mayor, philanthropist and businessman Bernie Platt. The only Jewish High School in South Jersey was impressed and inspired.

Cherry Hill, N.J. May 24th, 2017

On Tuesday, May 23rd Mr. Bernie Platt gave a surprise visit to Foxman Torah Institute in Cherry Hill, NJ. Mr. Platt clearly impressed upon the high school students, beis midrash boys and the faculty what it means to be a true *Baal Chesed and Baal Tzedakah*. Mr. Platt is known for having been the mayor of Cherry Hill, NJ, twice, and his unconditional tzedakah (charity) giving and leading or assisting many Jewish and communal organizations, political contributions and business successes.

The boys and faculty were hanging onto his every word as he spoke humbly of his journey through life, starting off as a young orphan without any money. While he was not privy to any luxuries, he was clearly given the gift of moral and social obligation from his parents starting from an early age. After scraping together enough money together to make it through college, he landed a funeral home job in his early years and worked tirelessly in that field and now is owns a very successful and well known funeral home. Platt Memorial Chapels is recognized for its superior standards in Jewish burials.

His dedication for the Jewish people and position as Mayor of Cherry Hill put him in the forefront for making a real Kiddush Hashem (sanctification of G-d's name). Mr. Platt fielded many questions from the crowd, such as "How can you give charity without strings attached"? Mr. Platt responded "that it's not really giving if you have strings attached, then you're getting". He

funded numerous endowments to local Jewish Day Schools in the Cherry Hill area, despite ironically being raised with very little Jewish education. He was truly an inspiration to FTI. The FTI students learned from Mr. Platt, that it's never too late to connect to your Judaism...he only had his "bar-mitzvah" when he was 33 years old.

As many of the students of the Yeshiva are preparing to continue on to college or in Yeshiva, having role models like Mr. Platt gives them a glimpse into what it's like to persevere and stay the course in life and ultimately taste true success. FTI's Rosh Yeshiva, Rabbi Yisrael Davidowitz who invited Mr. Platt to the Yeshiva, was thrilled that the boys had the opportunity to meet and hear from Mr. Platt, and see how much one person can accomplish if he lives life with a commitment and drive to help others and what it means to be a real mensch.