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## Torontonian elected to BBYO International Board

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LONG BRANCH, NJ – When Grade 11 student Josh Harendorf arrived at the hotel where the B'nai Brith Youth Organization's (BBYO) annual International Convention (IC) took place on Feb. 11, he was in the midst of serving a second term as the Regional Aleph Godol (President) of Lake Ontario Region (LOR). When he returned to Toronto five days later, Harendorf did so as the newly elected Grand Aleph Mazkir (Secretary-Treasurer) of the BBYO International Board.

"When Grand Aleph Godol (International President) Evan Herron announced that I was elected, I found it kind of surreal. It was the end result of everything that I put in during my time in BBYO so far. All that effort came down to this moment and I'm really happy about it," he told the *Jewish Tribune*.

A student at Thornhill's Westmount Collegiate Institute, Harendorf joined BBYO three-and-a-half years ago. He became the president of a chapter he helped revive and attended three BBYO international summer leadership programs. He took all of the knowledge and lessons he learned from those programs to help make Lake Ontario Region a better region.

"Things are starting to improve and I'm happy the way things are turning out," he said. "It's still a building process for LOR's growth, but there are a lot of great things happening and a lot of potential leadership there.

"We may not be the largest region in the order, but I believe LOR has what it takes to be one of the top regions in BBYO."

After he is officially installed as Grand Aleph Mazkir this summer, Harendorf has two major goals during his term on the International Board involving communication and fundraising.

"I would like to have regular region-to-region communication, especially conference calls between members of the International Board and their regional counterparts to listen to and solve their problems, because they will open up more if they see that their peers are going through the same situations," he said.

"In regards to ISF (International Service Fund, BBYO's fundraising arm), I believe that fundraising should be more personable," he said. "Chapters and regions should fundraise for charities that they feel best represent what they believe in. They should attend those charities' events, talk to the people involved and see the faces of the people they are trying to help."

Harendorf, who will also in his capacity as Grand Aleph Mazkir coordinate BBYO's International Leadership Training Conference (ILTC) summer program in 2010, is looking forward to the challenges the 2009-2010 program will bring him as a member of the BBYO International Board.

"I'm very excited; it's everything that I signed up to do nearly four years ago. I'm looking forward to it," he said.

Harendorf was part of a 10-member delegation from Lake Ontario Region to BBYO International Convention, which took place from Feb. 12-16 in Long Branch, a city on the New Jersey Shore. More than 750 teenagers from the United States, Canada, Israel, the United Kingdom and Bulgaria were in attendance, which made it the largest International Convention in the organization's 85-year history.

Entitled 'The Future is Now,' the convention was dedicated to having BBYO's 26,000 members make a difference through service in their community and their world. A major community service program initiative was officially launched at IC. Called 'Stand Up: A Campaign to



Lake Ontario Region delegation with Mark Charendoff (centre) a former member of BBYO in Toronto, who was this year's recipient of the AZA Alumnus of the Year Award, which was given to him at BBYO's International Convention in Long Branch, NJ.

End Poverty,' the participants were taught how to program, organize and get themselves involved in activities that emphasized social and economic justice. They also signed 'Stand Up' pledge forms, which spelled out their commitment to stand up for people in need.

Other IC programming included a Day of Learning on Shabbat, which included 26 varied learning sessions and multiple prayer services; a shuk, where many of the participating regions sold their assorted regional merchandise as a means of fundraising; and the election of the 2009-2010 International Board.

Also, former Toronto BBYO member and Lake Ontario Region President Mark Charendoff was bestowed with the 2009 AZA Alumnus of the Year Award at IC.

A native of Toronto, Charendoff served as vice-

president of the Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies, and helped establish the Birthright Israel program. He is currently a member of the International BBYO Board of Directors and is President of the Jewish Funders Network (JFN), where he works with a number of Jewish organizations and foundations. He now lives in New York City.



Lake Ontario Region president (and newly elected international Grand Aleph Mazkir) Josh Harendorf (right) is pictured with his regional co-president Kelly Indarjit.