

ORT Celebrates 140 Years of Empowering People through Education

NEW YORK, NY, February 20, 2020—Within the Jewish communal landscape, few organizations have been able to remain relevant for more than a century, yet ORT proudly celebrates its 140th anniversary this year. Attributing its longevity to a unique ability to impart marketable skills and provide innovative technological training to communities that need it the most, ORT has positioned itself as an unparalleled force in educational empowerment for 140 years.

Today, ORT's global educational network driven by Jewish values propels 300,000 people in more than 30 countries to develop meaningful careers and lead fulfilling, independent lives. ORT's 140th anniversary will be marked globally in North and South America, Europe and the former Soviet Union, Africa, Israel and Asia.

In May, the 2020 General Assembly – ORT's quadrennial international gathering – will take place in Jerusalem where hundreds of ORT friends and supporters will participate in visits to ORT schools and facilities in the north and south of Israel, select the organization's new lay leaders, and establish strategic goals for the next four years. More than 200 delegates will hear from leading speakers in the fields of education and politics, meet ORT students, and join a series of celebrations to mark the milestone event.

In the lead up to the 2020 General Assembly, a delegation of supporters from the United States will travel to Israel with ORT America. Participants will experience first-hand ORT's transformative programs that are bridging the educational gap between Israel's center and its periphery.

"The carefully curated itinerary provides a glimpse into ORT's role in helping to propel the Start-up Nation, and ensuring that all of Israel's citizens, whatever their socio-economic background, have access to the best educational opportunities possible. The behind-the-scenes tours will pay homage to ORT's past, celebrate the present and look toward the future," said Barbara Birch, ORT America President and CEO.

Additional anniversary highlights include a documentary style film examining ORT throughout its 140-year history, celebrations in ORT schools worldwide, and an awards ceremony for outstanding students at ORT's quadrennial General Assembly. ORT will also publish a book of quotes and stories from students, alumni, teachers and global figures– showcasing the impact the organization has had over 140 years. A video campaign, *Faces over 140 Years*, will feature the stories of those whose lives have been changed by ORT's educational programs.

"For 140 years, ORT has been transforming lives through education and our mission and values have never changed. From teaching 19th century Russian Jews essential trades and professions, we have evolved to provide 21st century skills to empower

people and strengthen communities,” said Avi Ganon, World ORT Director General and CEO. “What makes ORT special is our mission and emphasis on the importance of empowering the next generation to take control of their own future.”

About ORT America

ORT America is the leading fundraising organization for World ORT, whose global educational network, schools, colleges, and international programs propel more than 300,000 people in more than 30 countries to develop careers and lead fulfilling, independent lives. With generous support from our donors, ORT’s schools and programs reach underserved students by bridging the gap between aptitude and opportunity, as we work to expand knowledge, build autonomy, and strengthen Jewish identity. ORT America is headquartered in New York, with regional offices in California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Michigan, and Ohio. For more information, please visit www.ortamerica.org.

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