



Middle Division mock election participants

Election Day at Yeshivah of Flatbush

Students Learn the Importance of Voting

Faith Edeson

On Election Day 2012, Yeshivah of Flatbush students learned about one of the greatest freedoms we have in the United States—the right to vote. From a young age our students are taught about the importance of voting and how it is their civic duty to vote. They're taught that even the youngest among us have opinions that count.

Middle division and high school students each had assemblies that helped inform them about issues that were at the forefront of the election.

The AP Political Science class, taught by Ms. Shelly Kaplowitz, worked diligently to coordinate a



AP Political Science students Miriam Einhorn and Sharon Grossman debate as Governor Romney and President Obama

YOF Elections...

Continued from page 144

mock debate and election. Students researched the candidates' views and watched the presidential debates so they knew the candidates' stances on all issues inside and out. The class put up campaign posters all over school to familiarize their classmates with each candidate.

Then, on November 6th, they gathered to debate in the Beit Midrash, while the event was being live streamed into every other classroom. Opening remarks were made by students Sharon Grossman and Miriam Einhorn, respectively, representing President Barak Obama and Governor Mitt Romney.

The candidates were then asked questions prepared by Isabel Fattal and Andrew Hersh, members of The Phoenix, the High School's online newspaper. The candidates responded as if they themselves were Romney and Obama with factual information about the issues in question. Topics that were addressed were health care and the economy. The candidates spoke with confidence and conviction, each giving proof to support their statements and counter arguments to trap their opponent. Following the questions from The Phoenix, the floor was opened for the audience to ask questions.

Students asked about the candidates' various campaign promises and policies. In their closing remarks, the candidates made it known that they would be available throughout the day for questions.

Polls were held during lunch in the lunch room, and at the end of the day in the lobby, heightening the excitement and mirroring a real campaign experience. It was good practice for the students who in a few years will be able to vote in real elections.



Middle Division also held a mock election on Election Day but with a creative spin. The election program was coordinated by Mrs. Marilyn Richter and Mrs. Ellen Pearlman. Instead of having the students vote for Democrats or Republicans, two entirely new parties were created, the Yellow Party and the Orange Party. Those parties then answered questions based on the major issues facing society today, basing their responses on those of the Republican and Democratic parties without telling the students which was which. After each issue was presented, the students voted on which party they agreed with more. After counting the votes, the Orange Party was declared the winner.

Lower Division was fully involved in the election spirit too, with individual in-class programs. Each class learned about the importance of voting and the different parties and candidates as well as how the election process works. Each teacher put his/her own spin on the election; some classes voted on who they would have as president of the



United States while others held their own class elections with students running for class president.

The kids enjoyed casting their ballots in mock voting booths and eagerly anticipated the day when they could vote in a real presidential election.

At the Yeshivah of Flatbush it is never too early to think about being a good citizen, which is why early childhood students also got to vote. Having voted in class the previous week on their favorite snacks and colors, the day came for them to vote in a "real" election. The children hurried to the voting booths that were set up with ballot boxes to vote for either President Obama or Governor Romney. After voting for their chosen candidates each child received a sticker saying "I Voted." After tallying the votes the results were in—Mitt Romney was the winner!

Election Day taught everybody at the Yeshivah of Flatbush how important it is to take a stand and make their voices heard. □