

Jewish National Fund

NEGEV SOCIETY MISSION

March 23 – 27, 2014

A Journey through the Negev

Leadership

Ken Segel, *Mission Chair*

Sharon Pikus, *Mission Co-Chair*

Professional Staff

Led by Russell F. Robinson, *Chief Executive Officer*

Yael Septee Kane, *Chief Leadership Development Officer*

Itinerary is Subject to Change.



Jerusalem

Sunday March 23 • Arrival /Jerusalem

On Sunday evening, join fellow participants in Jerusalem for a special **opening dinner**. Joining as tonight's keynote speaker will be a **member of the Israeli Supreme Court**, who will discuss some of the Supreme Court's recent rulings that are shaping Israeli society (*pending confirmation*).

Overnight, David Citadel Hotel, Jerusalem



David Citadel Hotel

Monday March 24 • Negev

Following breakfast, meet with a top **Israeli journalist** who will discuss the current geo-political situation in Israel as well as international issues impacting the country today.

Afterward, instead of boarding a bus, enjoy the open air on a **Segway tour** through Jerusalem and see the city from a unique perspective.

Continue to the Knesset for a VIP tour. Enjoy a special **lunch meeting** with several Members of Knesset as well.



View from Sde Boker

Following lunch, begin the drive south to the Arava. Stop in **Sde Boker**, former home of David Ben Gurion, Israel's first Prime Minister and visionary for developing the Negev. See Ben Gurion's grave before a guest speaker will discuss Ben Gurion's vision for the Negev and the reality of the Negev today.

Continue to the **Beresheet Hotel** in Mitzpe Ramon, one of Israel's newest and most luxurious hotels overlooking the Ramon Crater. After checking in, meet the new Mayor of Mitzpe Ramon, **Roni Marom**, for a walking tour through the town. He will discuss the current social, political and economic factors shaping the town and share his vision for the future of Mitzpe Ramon as well. Afterward, return to the hotel for **dinner with the Mayor**.

Overnight, Beresheet Hotel, Mitzpe Ramon



Beresheet Hotel

Tuesday March 25 • Negev / Arava



Yahel

Following breakfast, depart the hotel for the community of **Zukim**, JNF Sapphire Society's keystone project. As the first community in the area to be based on the commerce of tourism and technology instead of agriculture, Zukim is one of the key focal points for physical and economic expansion in the Arava.



Arava Institute for Environmental Studies

Proceed to **Park Yahel**, a five-acre tourist complex and park at the entrance to Kibbutz Yahel in the Central Arava. Learn how the park is creating scores of jobs for kibbutz members and local residents, as well as impacting the Arava's economy. Enjoy **lunch** with local residents, who will share what life is like living in the Negev desert.

This afternoon, visit the **Arava Institute for Environmental Studies (AIES)**. As the leading graduate level environmental education institute in the Middle East, AIES brings Israelis, Palestinians and Jordanians together to help solve environmental challenges - not through disagreement - but through true coexistence. Meet Israeli and Palestinian **students** for a conversation on coexistence. Learn how they are crossing boundaries to create a vibrant - and more tolerant - Israel.



Timna Park

Late this afternoon continue to **Timna Valley National Park**, a site of great historical significance and a premier recreation destination for Israelis and tourists. Pass through the front gates to the chronosphere and become immersed in a fascinating 360-degree multi-media experience called the Mines of Times. Learn about ancient Egyptian and Midianite cultures dating from the time of the Exodus.



Solomon's Pillars in Timna Park

As the sun sets, see the spectacular beauty of Timna Park in the dark. Enjoy cocktails and **dinner** in the park before returning to the hotel for the evening.

Overnight, Beresheet Hotel, Mitzpe Ramon



Hot Air Balloon Ride

Wednesday March 26 • Negev / Tel Aviv

This morning choose from the following options:

Option I: Hot Air Balloon Ride over the Negev

At 5:00 am this morning, depart the hotel for a scenic hot-air balloon ride offering stunning views of the Negev at sunrise. *(Additional cost).*



Inside the Ramon Crater

Option II: Jeep ride through the Ramon Crater

Take an exciting jeep tour through the Ramon Crater and discover the colorful landscapes and hidden treasures that this natural phenomenon has to offer.

Option III: Spa Treatment at the Hotel Spa

Indulge in a spa treatment at the hotel spa and enjoy a luxurious morning filled with relaxation and rejuvenation *(additional cost).*



Spa Treatment

Option IV: Free time at the hotel

Spend the morning at leisure, relaxing at the hotel, working out at the gym, taking a dip in the pool or exploring the hotel's magnificent grounds.

After checking out of the hotel, begin the drive north toward the center of the country. Along the way, stop at a local winery for a special lunch and wine tasting.



Wine tasting and lunch

Continue to **Be'er Sheva**, the capital of the Negev. Visit the **Be'er Sheva River Park**, the centerpiece of JNF's efforts to provide a renaissance for the city and hear an update on the project's amazing progress. Meet with **Mayor Danilovich** who will share his vision for the future of Be'er Sheva and the challenges that lie ahead.

During a tour, see a few of the park's main attractions, such as the new **Abraham's Well Visitor Center**, which showcases the life of the patriarch Abraham. Afterward, proceed to the new 12,000 seat **amphitheater**, which is Israel's largest outdoor performance venue. Early this evening, enjoy **dinner** and a special **musical performance** in the amphitheater.



Be'er Sheva River Park

Continue to Tel Aviv for the remainder of the evening. Check into the new Royal Beach Hotel, Tel Aviv's newest luxury hotel located along the shores of the Mediterranean Sea.

Overnight, Royal Beach Hotel, Tel Aviv

Itinerary is Subject to Change.

Thursday March 27 • Tel Aviv /Herzliya



Planting a Tree

Following breakfast and hotel check out, proceed to **Neot Kedumim**, an eco-tourism site and “living museum” that recreates the physical setting of the Bible in all its depth and detail. Head to the **Harvey Hertz - JNF Ceremonial Tree Planting Center**, which serves as JNF’s primary planting center in Israel. Each person will have the opportunity to **plant a tree** and contribute to JNF’s ongoing afforestation efforts in Israel.

Proceed to a nearby IDF Base to meet with members of **Oketz**, the elite IDF canine unit. During an exclusive tour, learn how the dogs play an integral part in many IDF operations carried out by the most elite combat units and meet with IDF soldiers who will share their personal experiences.



Members of Oketz

Afterward, continue to the **Alexander Muss High School in Israel (AMHSI)** campus. Enjoy a tour of the campus and **lunch** as well as a panel featuring current pupils and learn more about the next generation of students and their relationship with Israel.

Proceed to the **Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya (IDC)**, Israel’s first private institution for higher education, modeled after Ivy League universities in the United States. Attend a special **speaker panel** with experts on issues of terror in the Middle East.

This evening, enjoy a special **farewell dinner** in Tel Aviv with former Israeli Ambassador to the United States and current faculty member at the prestigious IDC, **Michael Oren**. During the meal, gain a better understanding of the current events shaping Israel and the United States.



AMHSI students

Following dinner, transfer to the airport for return flights to the USA.

Overnight, En Route