

# THE SERLING INSTITUTE SUMMER PROGRAM AT HEBREW UNIVERSITY

In July 2019, twelve MSU students took part in the MSU Serling Institute Summer Program at Hebrew University. Students took two courses: "The Emergence of the Modern State of Israel," taught by David Mendelsson (Lecturer, Rothberg International School, Hebrew University), and "Immigration and Cultural Diversity in Israel," taught by Yore Kedem (Assistant Professor of Hebrew, Department of Linguistics and Languages, MSU). They attended lectures, heard guest speakers and went on several field trips.



On the Beach in Ashdod

For Professor Mendelsson's class, students went to Tel Aviv to see where many of the events of early Zionism occurred. With Professor Kedem they went to Wadi Ara, observed the physical and human geography of the area and met Dr. Ibrahim Yehia - Director of the Triangle Research and Development Center in Kafar Qara. From Dr. Yehia students heard about the research conducted by Arab-Israeli scientists to benefit their community, and about his life as a Palestinian citizen of Israel. Students also went on a field trip to Ashdod and Rehovot, where they learned about the history of Ashdod and met a neuroscientist who immigrated to Israel from the US. Students commented about the way the two courses coalesced to help them have a more robust understanding of Israel and their experiences. As Jewish Studies Minor Max Efros (Senior, James Madison College) reflected: "Adjusting my worldview to a non-American point of view was difficult, but I can honestly say that my trip to Israel has given me invaluable experiences and has altered my perceptions of the world around me. I feel that my opinions are more informed and I'm glad I was able to interact with people from another society."

Another Jewish Studies Minor, Jake Rubin (Junior, Residential College in the Arts and Humanities)



Triangle R&D Center, Kafr Qara

commented: "In my brief experience in Israel I experienced a previously unseen connection to my Jewish roots. Some of my personal highlights include visiting the Western Wall, going to the Dead Sea, going to Yad Vashem, and diving in headfirst with the food and culture. Overall, from the experience I am taking a deeper appreciation of what it means to be Jewish as well as a greater understanding of Israel as a whole. I truly had an amazing time in and outside the classroom. I am so thankful that Michigan State and the Serling Institute offered this wonderful study abroad experience."



Jerusalem pedestrian street



Jerusalem Landscape