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**RABBI HASKEL LOOKSTEIN TO BE GRAND MARSHAL OF THE 53rd
ANNUAL CELEBRATE ISRAEL PARADE
WITH TIKI BARBER, NIR BARKAT, JAMIE GELLER, AND HAIM
GOZALI AS HONORARY GRAND MARSHALS**

Performers also Announced for 2017 Parade

NEW YORK, N.Y. – May 9, 2017 - The Jewish Community Relations Council of New York (JCRC-NY) today announced that **Rabbi Haskel Lookstein** will lead the 2017 Celebrate Israel Parade as Grand Marshal up Fifth Avenue on Sunday, June 4 in front of hundreds of thousands of spectators. Joining him as Honorary Grand Marshals will be former New York Giants running back **Tiki Barber**, celebrity chef and Jewish lifestyle expert **Jamie Geller**, mixed martial arts (MMA) fighter **Haim Gozali** and the Mayor of Jerusalem **Nir Barkat**.

The Parade is the largest public event celebrating Israel in the world highlighting Israel's rich heritage, vibrant culture, and the positive impact the Jewish and democratic state of Israel has on the lives of people around the world.

Rabbi Haskel Lookstein, now Emeritus, has been the Rabbi of Congregation Kehilath Jeshurun since 1958 and Principal, now Emeritus, of the Ramaz School since 1966. He is the Joseph H. Lookstein Professor of Homiletics at Yeshiva University and serves as a Vice President of the Beth Din of America. He is a past-President of the New York Board of Rabbis, Chairman of the National Rabbinic Cabinet of UJA-Federation of New York and President of the Synagogue Council of America and a past Commissioner of the New York City Human Rights Commission.

Tiki Barber, is a 1997 graduate of the University of Virginia's McIntire School of Commerce (Phi Eta Sigma Honor Society), with a concentration in Management Information Systems. At UVA, Tiki excelled both academically and athletically - football and track and field. He left the Cavaliers as their all-time leading rusher and began a 10 year NFL career with the New York Football Giants.

Tiki Barber joined Marshall Faulk and Marcus Allen as the only players in NFL history with at least 10,000 yards rushing and 5,000 yards receiving in a career. In January of 2011, Tiki was

inducted into the Virginia Sports Hall of Fame, located in Portsmouth, VA. Tiki serves as co-host of CBS Sports Radio's national afternoon show, Tiki & Tierney, which is also simulcast on CBS Sports Network. He is also an entrepreneur, co-founding Thuzio, Inc, the world's most comprehensive software and service solution for talent procurement.

Nir Barkat, has served as Mayor of Jerusalem since 2008, inspiring Jerusalemites with his vision to leverage the city's competitive advantages to transform Israel's capital into an international leader in business, culture, and innovation. His record of closing economic gaps in the city's education system, driving tourism to the city, and enhancing the city's cultural landscape all served as the basis for his re-election for a second term in 2013. Mayor Barkat's marked successes in his public service are rooted in his previous work as a tech entrepreneur. In 1988, Mayor Barkat co-founded BRM Technologies, a pioneering software house and later venture capital firm that developed and marketed ground-breaking anti-virus software now standard on personal computers throughout the world. He has brought his business acumen and entrepreneurial approach to City Hall, fostering a municipal culture dedicated to constant innovation and swift execution.

Jamie Geller, known as the "Jewish Rachael Ray," is the Founder and CEO of Kosher Network International (KNI), publisher of JOYofKOSHER.com and the award-winning Jamie Geller's JOY of KOSHER magazine. She is also host of the Chanukah Cooking Special with Jamie Geller on PBS and Create TV. Jamie is a regular on the national television and Martha Stewart Living Radio, and has been featured in Forbes, Family Circle, Cosmopolitan and the Chicago Tribune among many others. After graduating magna cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa from New York University in just three years, Jamie enjoyed an illustrious career as an award-winning TV producer and marketing executive for HBO, CNN and FOOD NETWORK.

Haim Gozali, is an Israeli born and raised MMA fighter, who started his Martial Arts training at the age of 6 with Karate until he enrolled in the IDF for his military service in Israel. After completing his service he trained Muay Thai for a few years and in 1997 he discovered BJJ in NYC where he started training under the legendary Renzo Gracie. He ultimately got his black belt from Renzo in 2004 and is currently a 3rd-degree BJJ Black Belt, the highest ranked Israeli in the world. His MMA career began in 1998 and holds a 7-3 record facing standout opponents such as Carlos Newton and current UFC Middleweight contender Ronaldo "Jacare" Souza. On June 24th, 2017, Gozali will be the first Israeli to ever fight MMA in the most famous arena in the world - Madison Square Garden. He'll be facing Ryan Couture, son of the legendary Randy Couture.

Also marching in this year's parade will be members of the **Maccabi USA team** set to compete in the 20th World Maccabiah Games in July who will also be joined by US swimming gold medalist **Lenny Krayzelburg** and Israeli judoka bronze medalist **Arik Ze'evi**.

Performing at this year's parade are:

- **Milk & Honeys** - An Afro Hebrew NYC-based band that brings a unique and refreshing blend of Israeli music with a wide range of influences, such as Afro-beat, Ethiopian music, R&B and Funk.

- **Yarden Klayman** - a female saxophone player, one of the most prominent in the events, clubs and Deep House scene in Israel. Throughout the past year, her 'Live on DJ' performance has conquered stages, parties and events all around the world including Italy, Turkey, Greece, Germany, Azerbaijan and more. Her performance creates a unique combination between the DJ's electronic music and her live improvisation on the saxophone. Together with the finest DJs, producers and event planners in the Israeli industry, Yarden's warm sound, catchy phrases and energetic live performance has become a significant part of events and parties in Israel and abroad.
- **Six13** - driven by a mission to connect Jews around the globe with their heritage through music, anchored by a strong Jewish identity, and fueled by thumping beatbox, intricate arrangements, and soulful harmonies. Six13 is a six-man vocal band that brings an unprecedented style of Jewish music to the stage, with songs ranging from hip-hop dance tracks to rock anthems. The members of the New York City-based group sound like a full band – while using nothing but their voices. Six13 is a national phenomenon both on the internet (with over 7 million views on YouTube) and in traditional media, with numerous appearances in national television and press, and with their music songs from their six award-winning album played on mainstream radio across the globe. They have been featured on national television, in the Huffington Post, Jewish Week and Time Magazine, and have performed at the White House for President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama.
- **Avram Pengas & The Noga Group** - has been a staple of New York's downtown music scene for nearly twenty years. Greek born musical arranger, lead guitarist, and bouzouki virtuoso Avram Pengas is a versatile performer who plays popular Israeli hits, exotic Arabic melodies, pulsating Persian and Turkish rhythms, Armenian dances and traditional Yiddish songs. Born in Greece, Pengas is a skilled musical arranger, guitarist, and self-taught bouzouki virtuoso. The bouzouki is a stringed Greek instrument. He creates music that is rooted in the Mediterranean and the Middle East, and draws upon Eastern and Western musical elements. Pengas has appeared in New York at El Avram, Café Feenjon, and in 1979, opened his own nightclub, Noga, in the heart of Greenwich Village. He has performed in the off-Broadway production of Hot Klezmer, and can still be heard weekly at SoHo's Cupping Room Café.
- **Golem** - a Klezmer-rock band, returns to perform at the Parade this year. Founded by Annette Ezekiel Kogan in New York City in 2000, the band (Annette Ezekiel Kogan, Aaron Diskin, Jeremy Brown, Curtis Hasselbring, Taylor Bergren-Chrisman, Tim Monaghan) has become a leading re-interpreter and innovator of Yiddish and Eastern European music, pushing tradition forward into the 21st century. Golem will be performing on the UJA float at the Parade.
- **SOULFARM** - Founded in Israel by Grammy Award winner lead guitarist C Lanzbom and guitarist and lead singer Noah Solomon Chase, their sound has been dubbed as New American music, full melodic song writing and progressive modern arrangements. Together with drummer Ben Antelis and bassist Daniel Ori, their live shows are full of

Mediterranean flavor with captivating guitar leads, dance rhythms and strong percussion breaks.

- **Galgal Ba'Ma'agal** - is an integrated dance troupe that consists of two categories of dancers - those who sit in a wheelchair, i.e., those who are physically limited and dancers that are able to move without restriction. The troupe, consisting of men and women, was founded in 2000 and is one of the troupes under the auspices of the Department of Culture and Sport of the Herzliya Municipality. Since its inception, the director/choreographer of the troupe has been Roni Siman Tov. The dancers work together as a team to elevate the abilities of those in wheelchairs to stage impressive performances in various dance styles while strengthening and supporting the able dancers. While the choreography is adapted to the physical constraints of those less able, however, each time, with hard and strenuous work, it continually brings the dancers to new heights of achievement.

In honor of the Celebrate Israel Parade and the state of Israel, the Empire State Building will shine its world-famous tower lights blue and white on Saturday, June 3.

This year, Maimonides Medical Center is The Celebrate Israel Parade's Official Television Broadcast Partner. The parade is produced in partnership with the UJA-Federation of New York and the State of Israel.

For the latest information, please visit the Parade website at celebrateisraelny.org, follow us on Twitter [@celebrateisrael](https://twitter.com/celebrateisrael), visit our Facebook page: [Celebrate Israel Parade](https://www.facebook.com/CelebrateIsraelParade) and subscribe to our YouTube Channel: www.YouTube.com/CelebrateIsraelNY.

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