

February 8, 2016

Tabak fund launched to develop women leaders

The aim of the newly launched Harriet Tabak Woman of Valor Fund, say its organizers, "is to enable strong, educated, and compassionate women to strengthen their leadership skills, creating thriving Jewish life and organizations throughout Middlesex and Monmouth counties."

The fund has been established by the Tabak family, Jewish Federation in the Heart of New Jersey, and Highland Park Conservative Temple-Congregation Anshe Emeth; dozens of community members have also contributed.

Women who are in or aspire to leadership positions are encouraged to apply for a grant to underwrite the cost of attending educational, motivational, or skill-building experiences such as the annual Women's Leadership Heart to Heart Mission to Israel, the Jewish Federations of North America General Assembly, or the AIPAC conference.

To be managed by the federation, the fund is dedicated to the memory of Tabak, who was known for her devotion to her synagogue, family, and the Jewish community.



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A lifelong Highland Park resident, Tabak was a leader at HPCT-CAE — where her ties went back to her childhood — and the former Central NJ Jewish Home for the Aged in Somerset. A life member of the board of the former Jewish Federation of Greater Middlesex County, Tabak was an Emerald Lion of Judah and served on its Women's Philanthropy board, spearheading numerous programs over the years. She was also a life member of Hadassah and a member of the foundation board of the Oscar and Ella Wilf Campus for Senior Living. She died in November 2012.

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The fund, said federation executive vice president Susan Antman, "is a meaningful tribute to Harriet, who was a life-long advocate for including all women — regardless of their affiliation — in Jewish life. She was a dedicated volunteer whose love for family and everything Jewish left an indelible impression on everyone she came into contact with."

The fund "will inspire women in our community to continue her legacy of making our Jewish world a better place," said Antman.

Candidates will be required to write an essay of up to 500 words explaining why they want to take part in an opportunity to develop their leadership skills. Upon completion of the opportunity, grantees will be required to share what they learned with the Jewish community through a story for publication in the Jewish media and presentation at a federation women's event.

"Our beloved Harriet taught us all by her example how important a caring and strong Jewish community is through her concern about others, Israel, and Jews throughout the world," said her husband, Joseph. "Through this fund, it is our hope that Harriet's legacy of love for the Jewish people and recognition of the power of Jewish women will continue."

Community members are asked to consider making a gift to the fund "to ensure that Jewish women leaders in our community gain the skills and confidence to help them continue to build a better, stronger Jewish community for today and for our future," said Antman.

Make gifts for the Harriet Tabak Woman of Valor Fund payable to the Jewish Federation in the Heart of NJ, 230 Old Bridge Turnpike, South River, NJ 08882. To apply for a grant, contact Meryl Harris at the federation at 732-588-1810 or go to jewishheartnj.org/tabak.