

Sasha Weisz Legacy Endowment Fund

Sasha Weisz feels blessed. Blessed to have been raised in a loving home by her parents Rosie and Allen Swaye, who raised Sasha and her three older brothers to be kind, charitable, and to treat people from all backgrounds with respect.

Sasha's mother Rosie was one of nine children born to Solomon and Annie Wright, Jewish immigrants from Belarus. Sasha remembers her grandparents' home being filled with their children's friends and lots of Yiddishkeit. Her grandfather, Solomon, was in the produce business and a pillar of Beth Jacob Synagogue.

From her father, Sasha learned the value of a strong work ethic, while her mother modeled what it meant to be a woman utterly devoted to her family. Rosie Swaye was widely respected by her peers. She encouraged the ladies at her weekly canasta card games to put money in the kitty after every game, money which would eventually be used to purchase two large brass menorahs, which still grace the front of Beth Jacob's main sanctuary.

"Both my parents were strong believers in education, and whenever they could, they provided us with the opportunities to broaden our horizons. When I was 16, they sent me on my first trip to Israel. The visit made a huge impression on me."

Sasha met her husband Tom in high school. The two wed shortly after Sasha became a registered nurse and Tom graduated at the top of his law school class at the University of Toronto. The newlyweds set up home in Toronto, before moving to Boston for a year after Tom was accepted into a post-graduate law program at Harvard University. Eventually they moved back to the Hamilton area after Tom joined his father, Arthur, in the family business Effort Trust.

Tom and Sasha have been extremely supportive and intimately involved in a multitude of Jewish causes. They've also been leaders in the general Hamilton community, where Tom sits on a number of boards. Sasha has held leadership roles at Temple Anshe Sholom, State of Israel Bonds, the Jewish National Fund and the Hamilton Jewish Federation. She is especially passionate about combatting antisemitism on university campuses and in society. Education, in her mind, is the key to fighting what she sees as a frightening increase in misinformation.

Sasha is immensely proud of her children, Eric and Danna, who are furthering the family tradition of taking leadership roles in Jewish causes, and her five grandchildren.



Most important to Sasha is keeping the community strong through excellent programming and education both within and outside the Jewish community. "I love all people," said Sasha, "but we've got to fight antisemitism and hate, which has infiltrated all our communities."

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