

2020 SHEM TOV AWARDS 5780



2020 CECE SCHREIBER VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP AWARD | SANDRA MORRIS

As the only person who has received the Shem Tov award for three different organizations, Sandy Morris epitomizes the expression, “Give a busy person something to do, and you know it will get done!” Sandy was honoured by Beth Tikvah, Shalom Village and the Hamilton Jewish Federation. Sandy began volunteering in the early 1960s with the United Jewish Appeal and Hadassah WIZO. Over the last several years she’s been a stalwart volunteer with Beth Jacob Synagogue, Shalom Village, Beth Tikvah, and the Hamilton Jewish Federation. As a Beth Tikvah board member and a dedicated member of Federation’s Special Needs Action Project Committee, Sandy has championed the rights of special needs children and advocated for caregiver support. Sandy has been an invaluable member of the Community Campaign Cabinet for decades and is always willing to step up and be involved with the planning and canvassing.

“My parents were always active in their community, so I knew that I would follow them. Volunteering for me has two benefits. First, there are many organizations that need your assistance, and the thrill inside when your direct aid makes a difference is awesome. Secondly, you meet many different people whose paths you’ve never crossed, and they become your friends. Everyone has the common goal to help their community flourish”.



2020 PRESIDENT'S AWARD SUSAN AND PAUL ROTH

The President’s Award is presented to those who have shown exemplary, longstanding volunteer service to the Hamilton Jewish Federation. Federation president, Jacki Levin, is recognizing Susan and Paul Roth who have given selflessly of their time and wisdom over many years to ensure that Jewish life thrives in our city.

Paul served on the Federation board for many years, chairing a UJA Campaign and played an essential role on several committees, including Federation’s Allocation Committee.

In her role as chair of Hamilton Jewish Family Services (HJFS) for many years, Susan inspired staff and board members to dedicate themselves to the well-being of low income seniors, Holocaust survivors, and our community’s most vulnerable members. Susan’s leadership was instrumental in bringing in a new executive director to the agency and introducing new and innovative programming. She has been an important part of the community’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, as Hamilton Jewish Family Services leads the way in ensuring that the most vulnerable in our community are not forgotten.

Both Susan and Paul have been inducted into Hamilton’s Book of Life. They have worked hard to build our community and ensure its future, and they are clearly deserving of the President’s Award.

SHEM TOV AWARDS RECIPIENTS

JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY | ANNETTE RICHARDSON

Annette is a kind and generous person and JGSH is proud to nominate her for the 2020 Shem Tov Award. Elected to our board in 2016, she is now our treasurer. Annette has enormous energy and many ideas that regularly brighten our discussions. Her skills as a hostess, cook and facilitator have made our social gatherings something everyone looks forward to.

"JGSH is a group of people with unique family histories. Genealogy is my life-long hobby/passion therefore I am happy to be a member. This group and its diversity continues to educate me. I am honoured to be to be recognized for this award."

TEMPLE ANSHE SHOLOM | VIRGINIA MENDES DA COSTA

No one exemplifies commitment, involvement and generosity of spirit at TAS like Virginia. Last year, Virginia retired from five years of service as Temple president after leading our congregation through significant and challenging developments. Virginia has been involved in virtually every aspect of congregational life, while running a successful law practise and maintaining a wonderful family. Temple Anshe Sholom is deeply indebted to Virginia and are proud to honour her with the Shem Tov award.

"Giving back to the community has always been a vital part of my life. I have been an active in leadership of Temple Anshe Sholom and the Jewish Community Centre within the Jewish community to ensure the future of the larger Jewish community for future generations. I believe it is crucial to lead by example and not only by word."

JEWISH NATIONAL FUND | MARK LEVITT

JNF is pleased to nominate Mark Levitt for a Shem Tov award. We would be hard-pressed to recall an event or board meeting at which Mark does not step up with a supportive and compassionate attitude. No task is too menial.

"JNF volunteers and staff inspire me to want to be part of something larger and to give back. My parents, who volunteered in both the Jewish and the greater community, set an example that I have always tried to emulate.. My wife, Sheila and I are both very active volunteers in many organizations. I am very happy that this tradition continues with my sons who have volunteered with me over the years"

SHALOM VILLAGE | ENID AARON

Enid is truly an amazing volunteer and Shalom Village is delighted to recognize her by nominating her for a Shem Tov award. Enid volunteered every week in the Club Fitness Centre, interacting with people from diverse backgrounds and abilities. Enid deals with everyone with care and compassion. She has an exceptional ability to communicate and connect on a personal level with participants. Enid is also a constant presence at our Hustle4Health fundraiser, assisting and cheering residents along the race course, and enriching residents' sense of purpose.

"Volunteering in the Club, and assisting motivated community members and residents is such a rewarding experience each and every week. It's a joy to witness the smiles and improvements in fitness levels and to play a role in enhancing quality of life."

JEWISH SOCIAL SERVICES | AGY FERDINAND

Agy's enthusiasm, kindness, and willingness to go above and beyond make a tremendous difference to everyone at HJFS. She is noted for her kindness and for supporting newcomers to the Hamilton Jewish community. She has volunteered for our Memory Cafe, ESL Language Circle, Kosher Wine Tasting Night, and more. We are lucky to have Agy as part of the family at HJFS. Fluent in Spanish, English, Hungarian, and Romanian, Agy is the proud mother of three daughters who are all actively involved in Jewish leadership roles in Hamilton, Toronto, and Panama.

"When I immigrated to Canada in 2014, I started volunteering in the community. I began at Shalom Village and ended up at HJFS. Last year, I became a Canadian citizen, and at my swearing in ceremony, the judge said, 'Volunteering is a very Canadian thing to do.' She encouraged us to do this. I felt proud to be a new Canadian, and to be a volunteer in the community."

NA'AMAT HAMILTON | LAURA LUDWIN

Laura Ludwin, longtime member of Na'amat Hamilton, has generously hosted Na'amat meetings at her home for years, and has been a steadfast volunteer at our fundraising events. From coordinating and tracking our ticket sales, for our Author Luncheon, to preparing the food, doing pickups and dropoffs, setting up the room, selling door prizes, the room set up, Laura's many contributions cannot be underestimated. Laura has a huge social conscience who has worked tirelessly on behalf of the marginalized members of the general Hamilton community, and on a global level through her involvement in UNICEF.

"I was very lucky to not have to work full time and to be able to use my time to do things for other people."

MCMASTER HILLEL | JOSH ARBESS

Throughout the last year, Josh served as president of McMaster Hillel, managing a 20-person executive and being the face of Hillel for the campus and the McMaster Jewish community. Josh has a strong commitment to community and to Jewish life on campus and led the Jewish community at McMaster with much strength and determination.

"Giving back to the community is the natural thing to do. You get to connect with other people in the community, and see the impact that you make in real-time. McMaster Hillel has been a Jewish home for me on campus, and I am honoured to give back to it and hope to allow it to do the same for others."

BETH JACOB SYNAGOGUE | BRENDA BURJAW

Brenda Burjaw serves on the Beth Jacob Synagogue executive committee as treasurer, but her contributions are so much deeper. In addition to working tirelessly to balance our budget, negotiate supplier contracts, and develop exciting and effective events, Brenda embodies an infectious enthusiasm for teamwork and community engagement. Brenda's family has been integral to our congregation for generations, and her personal involvement began at our Hebrew School with Fay Schmerling and Gloria Silverman. Brenda and her daughter, Rebekah volunteer at fundraisers, purchase school supplies for students in need, and, during COVID-19, have sewn hundreds of masks for essential workers, friends, and family.

"My parents and grandparents taught me the importance of giving back to the Jewish community so that our faith can be available for generations to come. Giving is not a onetime action. It needs to be a way of life."

ADAS ISRAEL CONGREGATION | ALLEN RAMS

The Adas Israel is proud to honour Allen Rams with a Shem Tov award. Allen's dedication to community is unrivaled. He is a visionary who is able to identify communal gaps and address critical needs. Over the years, he has spearheaded numerous causes around the community. His commitment to strengthening and securing our community on the front lines is inspiring. Together with his wife, Flora, their acts of kindness are too great to enumerate.

"I enjoy talking to people and going out of my way to engage others. Many are afraid to start up a conversation. 'Shabbat Shalom.' 'Nice to see you.' 'We've missed you. Are you feeling well?' These are words I greet people with as they come into the Adas Israel on Shabbat. They are a great start."

HAMILTON HEBREW ACADEMY | ENZA NAFTALI

The HHA feels privileged to be the beneficiary of Enza Naftali's giving spirit. Endowed with immense culinary talents, Enza is undaunted by any challenge, singlehandedly creating events for hundreds of participants with a smile on her face and an unshakable spirit. Enza embraces life with an uplifting spirit. Enza embodies all the attributes of incredible volunteer and an exceptional human being.

"The community is an extension of my family. I feel privileged to be able to give, in my own unique way, to the children of the HHA."

SHEM TOV AWARDS RECIPIENTS

HAMILTON JEWISH FEDERATION | ARLENE SINGER

Hamilton Jewish Federation is delighted to honour Arlie Singer with a 2020 Shem Tov award. As chair of Federation's Holocaust Education Committee, Arlie has become a passionate advocate of its mission and an eloquent spokesperson at the committee's many outstanding programs. Arlie is unfailingly kind, collaborative and generous with her time. Her inclusive approach makes both staff and volunteers feel that their ideas are being heard and honoured. Arlie took part in Federation's Yesod Leadership program and is always looking for opportunities to continue to grow as a leader. We congratulate Arlie on all her many accomplishments and look forward to many more years of collaboration and innovation.

"I firmly believe that it is our responsibility to take care of each other on planet Earth. We are all in this together. My interest in Holocaust education began with my dear father-in-law, who survived the Holocaust. We must not forget, and we must do everything in our power to educate so that it doesn't happen again".

JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTRE | JUDI CAPLAN

As chair of the Jewish Community Centre's inaugural Jewish Book Festival, Judi Caplan inspired a team of volunteers with her energy, enthusiasm and passion for the project. Judi's dedication to honouring the memory of her late husband, Marvin Caplan, has created an annual program from which the entire community will benefit in the years to come. Her attention to detail, love for Judaism and strong sense of community made her a pleasure to work with, and the JCC is so pleased to present Judi with this year's Shem Tov award.

"The Hamilton Jewish Community has been my home for more than 40 years. This community, its people, and its institutions have enriched and transformed my life and those of my family in ways that I could never have imagined. Volunteering in the community has been a meaningful way to attempt to repay just a small portion of what I have gained."

KEHILA HESCHEL JEWISH SCHOOL MIKE DRESSLER AND NAOMI BERNSTEIN

With great pleasure and gratitude we nominate a dynamic couple for their significant contributions to Kehila Heschel School and our community. They have two children in Kehila, with one joining in future. Naomi has given tirelessly of herself as board member, and currently, as board chair. Naomi has formed partnerships, shaped our vision, organized events, raised funds, and helped out in countless ways. Mike Dressler has served Kehila as treasurer, board chair, and head of the Finance Committee. Mike has applied his expertise, innovative ideas for fundraising, and hard work to successfully support the sustainability of our school. We thank Mike for his key role in our success!

"We feel that it is our responsibility and our job as parents to provide our children with quality Jewish education and we are prepared to dedicate ourselves to ensure that is possible. Our hope is for our children to learn the values of giving back to our community and that they too take a leadership role as they grow older."



MIKE DRESSLER AND NAOMI BERNSTEIN



ANNETTE RICHARDSON



ENID AARON



JOSH ARBESS



ARLENE SINGER



VIRGINIA MENDES DA COSTA



AGY FERDINAND



BRENDA BURJAW



JUDI CAPLAN



MARK LEVITT



LAURA LUDWIN



ALLEN RAMS



ENZA NAFTALI