

## JEWISH FOUNDATION OF GREENSBORO FIRST QUARTER 2023



# Foundation Insider



### In Memory of Mike Berkelhammer, z"l

We are deeply saddened by the loss of Mike Berkelhammer, a pillar not only of the Foundation, but of the Jewish community and the Greensboro community. Mike was a founding board member of the Foundation, its second and longest-serving chair, and a leader until the end. I will miss him and hope to emulate Mike's ability and drive to cut straight to the heart of every issue with piercing intellect, unquestionable integrity, and unwavering commitment to the good of the Jewish community and all the organizations he helped lead. I want to share a few perspectives from a few of those privileged to work with him.

Susan R. Gutterman: *Over the past 26 years, I was extremely fortunate to have worked closely with Mike, whose vision, leadership, and support were instrumental in the growth and success of the Foundation. He leaves a legacy of leadership, dedication, and philanthropy to our community that will serve as a role model for generations to come. It has been an honor and privilege to have partnered with Mike in our shared mission to build and strengthen the Foundation to benefit Jewish organizations for ever more. I will miss Mike's thoughtful, direct and principled mentoring and leadership, and our friendship.*

Marilyn Chandler: *Mike left huge footprints behind on paths previously not paved and blazed new trails for all to follow. Mike led from the front as president of Beth David Synagogue, the Greensboro Jewish Federation, and the Foundation. And he led from behind by listening, offering sage counsel, and mentoring others. As VP of the Jewish Community Legacy Project, he worked to secure legacy plans for smaller Jewish communities—especially for cemeteries and synagogue buildings. Mike was the steward of "institutional memory" for so many of our organizations.*

Tom Sloan: *Mike's passing leaves a gaping hole in our Jewish community. Mike was an early mentor to me, and over the past 50 years, we worked together on so many community projects—sometimes from different perspectives, but we always found consensus towards our common goals. I will miss him greatly.*

Cathy Levinson: *Mike Berkelhammer—my hero in so many ways that I can articulate and so many that are just plain felt. I relied on Mike's wisdom and common sense, on his tenured perspective of the Greensboro Jewish Community, on his unabashed willingness to ask hard questions that sometimes others wanted to avoid, on his smile and ever-ready fun. Mike was my security for our efforts to build Create a Jewish Legacy. For ALL of Mike, I am grateful and heartbroken. It's hard to lose a hero.*

Jerry Pinsker: *Years ago, Mike eulogized my father, and as I read Mike's words again, I realized that he became the very model he described: "When you worked with [Mike], you wanted to help satisfy his vision. It wasn't a question of disappointing the boss. It wasn't a matter of being judged. It wasn't because of discipline. It wasn't about humiliation, nor ego, nor power. It was simply, in the face of his timeless and tireless leadership and energy and his indomitably optimistic, upbeat outlook, who dared to do less than was possible? Who dared to say, 'I don't have the time, or I haven't the energy?'"*

We will strive to honor Mike's memory and legacy now and in the future.

J. Sam Cone, Board Chair

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