

Sylvia and Mike Berkelhammer

The Jewish Foundation of Greensboro's "Create a Jewish Legacy Project" has caused us to think about the meaning of a legacy.

All of us, if we are lucky, receive a legacy that forms the basis of who we are: our character, our personality and our values. This may simply be the legacy of love, compassion or understanding from our parents, grandparents or teachers.

For those of us that are really lucky, this legacy was translated into actions that bespoke the values and served as a basis for who we became.



Mike felt the influence of the Berkelhammer patriarch, his grandfather, Isidor Berkelhammer. Though he barely knew him, and he died when Mike was a child, the values of charity, community involvement and importance of family were passed on to his children – Mike's father and uncles – and transmitted to Mike's generation as a way of life.

Sylvia felt the influence of her hard working parents. Even though her father worked two jobs and her mother worked outside the home, Jewish life and values and traditions were stressed.

We have formed our life pattern based on these values and hopefully transmitted them through our actions, lifestyles and commitment to our children and grandchildren.

Our participation in the Create a Jewish Legacy project is another statement that those community institutions that we have worked for and supported throughout our adult lives are important to us and we feel compelled and honored to endow them to ensure they are available to future generations.

We are proud to see our children participating in like organizations and civic activities in their respective communities. This is part of our legacy to them.