



The Legacy of Hope Cohen Barnett



In January 2019, the Tampa JCCs & Federation announced the creation of the Hope Cohen Barnett Leadership Institute funded by community member Leslie J. Barnett in honor and memory of his beloved wife and mother of his children, Hope Cohen Barnett (z"l).

An endowment fund has been created at the TOP Jewish Foundation to support, in perpetuity, this prestigious program that is an outgrowth of the previously named Jewish Leadership Training Institute.

Hope, who passed away in June 2018, was truly a force of nature and a devoted member of the Tampa Jewish community, serving as the first and youngest woman president of the Tampa Jewish Federation in 1980 at the age of 30.

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She rose through the ranks by serving on many committees and holding leadership positions, including campaign chair, board secretary and Tampa's representative to the National Women's board of the North American Federation system.

Her active leadership inspired the founding of the "Hope Cohen Barnett Young Leadership Award" in 1983, an honor that recognizes and supports an outstanding young leader in the Jewish community annually.

She also served on the boards of the Tampa Jewish Community Center (before it merged with the Federation), her synagogue, Congregation Rodeph Sholom, and the State of Israel Bonds Young Leadership Committee.

In 2008, Barnett received the Jewish Federations of North America's Kipnis-Wilson/Friedland Lion of Judah Award for outstanding communal leadership.

In 1995, Hope was quoted as saying, "Being Jewish is fun. We laugh, sing, dance, and even in our period of mourning, the object is to offer comfort. We need our young people to feel the positive force that surrounds them and involves them, enriches their lives, and commits them to carry out our legacy."