

Salute to Jewish Educators *by Roger Carp*

The annual **Salute to Jewish Educators** took place on Sunday afternoon, March 11. CJL Jewish Education Community Planner Tzipi Altman-Shafer, Advisory Board Chair Roger Carp, and Chair-Elect Leon Cohen presided over the festivities. The event, held at the Harry & Rose Samson Family JCC, honored excellence, innovation, compassion, lifetime impact, and commitment in local formal and informal Jewish education.

The next Salute to Jewish Educators will be March 3, 2019. Please plan to attend.



CJL Grinspoon Jewish Educator of the Year

The highlight of the gala event was the recognition of **Ellie Gettinger** as the **CJL Grinspoon Educator of the Year**. The more than 200 Jewish educators and family members, clergy, and students in attendance paid tribute to their distinguished and beloved colleague. Ellie, who now serves as Education Director of the Jewish Museum Milwaukee, a program of the Milwaukee Jewish Federation, has been overseeing its various educational programs since 2007. During her tenure, she has reached out to the entire community, developing a host of innovative and exciting exhibits on topics ranging from Jewish immigration to the Holocaust to the civil rights movement in our city.



Inspiration Award

The newest among the awards presented at the event went to **Rabbi Avremi Schapiro**, who serves as Executive Director of the Youth Division for Lubavitch of Wisconsin. He was presented with the Inspiration Award for Informal Education in recognition of programs he has launched and overseen at Camp Gan Israel, CTeen Milwaukee, Mitzvah Corps, and Milwaukee Community Hebrew School.



Mitzvah Award

Rona Wolfe of the Milwaukee Jewish Day School received the **Rabbi Emanuel and Deborah Lifshutz Mitzvah Award** for conceiving of and launching what she called, "Junior Kindergarten Kindness Collection Project." Her students made a big box they went on to fill with personal hygiene items and clothing for children in need as their way of engaging in *tikkun olam* and thereby repairing the world.



Chai Award

A powerful commitment to Jewish teaching, whether in congregational or day schools or various informal settings, inspires long careers. **Deborah Braatz** (at right) who has participated in Jewish education for 18 years, received a Chai Award. **Lori Katz** (at left), whose career spans 36 years, was honored with a Double Chai Award.



GIFT Award

Three dedicated and forward-thinking educators were honored with **Gill Incentive for Teachers (GIFT) Awards** for outstanding projects demonstrating novel and meaningful teaching plans and principles: **Leah Emmer** and **Chaya Mann** of Bader Hillel Academy ("Climbing Har Sinai Program") and **Yael Stein** of Congregation Beth Israel Ner Tamid ("Propaganda Yesterday and Today").



Lifetime Impact Award

Certain individuals manage to have an enormously positive effect on Jewish education in Milwaukee over the course of their lifetime, influencing local institutions, programs, and classes while working beyond the confines of a school or other institution. Such a person is **Jerry Benjamin**, who was honored with the Lifetime Impact Award. Besides having served as president of the Milwaukee Jewish Federation, Jerry helped establish what became the Coalition for the Advancement of Jewish Education (CAJE), which has profoundly changed how Jewish values, beliefs, rituals, history, and texts have been taught in our community.

Their names, along with those of educators and supporters provided by a host of local institutions, brightened the annual tribute book, which was sponsored by advocates of Jewish education in Milwaukee and its many outlying communities.

