

2026

Salute

TO JEWISH
EDUCATORS



★ **TRIBUTE
BOOK** ★



**Coalition for
Jewish Learning**

MILWAUKEE
JEWISH FEDERATION

Harry & Rose Samson Family JCC
Daniel M. Soref Community Hall
6255 N. Santa Monica Blvd, Whitefish Bay

Sunday, March 15, 2026

“I have learned much from my teachers, more from my colleagues, and the most from my students”

(TALMUD)

On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff of the Milwaukee Jewish Federation, we share a Mazal Tov to all the educators being honored. Thank you for building the future of our Jewish Milwaukee by nurturing and teaching our children.

Judy Coran
Board Chair

Miryam Rosenzweig
President and CEO



MILWAUKEE
JEWISH FEDERATION

The Coalition for Jewish Learning is a program of the Milwaukee Jewish Federation

Salute

TO JEWISH EDUCATORS



**Sunday, March 15, 2026
3-5 pm**

Reception And Registration

Welcome

Nicole Boico, Coalition for Jewish Learning Associate Director
Judy Coran, Milwaukee Jewish Federation Board Chair

D'var Torah

Josh Herman, Milwaukee Jewish Day School

Chai Awards

Karin Damico, Milwaukee Jewish Day School
Linsey Kimmel, Milwaukee Jewish Day School
Leah Munitz, Mequon Jewish Preschool
Lisa Vondra, Congregation Sinai
Madaline Wienke, Congregation Shalom

Lifetime Impact Award

Devorah Shmotkin, Lubavitch of Wisconsin

Teacher Impact & School Support Awards

- Supplementary Schools
- Preschools
- Day Schools

Presented by

Nicole Boico, Coalition for Jewish Learning Associate Director
Lori Fisher, Coalition for Jewish Learning Advisory Board Member
Molly Beth Kranitz, Coalition for Jewish Learning Advisory Board Member

The Shinshinim Experience

Eitan Ben Zeev & Mia Ostrovsky,
Milwaukee Jewish Federation Shinshinim

Gill Incentive For Teachers (GIFT) Award

Roger Carp, Congregation Shalom
Karin Damico, Milwaukee Jewish Day School
Mara Kleiman, Milwaukee Jewish Day School

Jerry Benjamin Inspiration Award for Informal Jewish Education

Elsie Crawford, *Repairing Together*

Levy Family CJL Jewish Educator Of The Year

Sara Perlman, Yeshiva Elementary School

Special Thanks

Lori Fisher, Coalition for Jewish Learning Advisory Board Member
Nicole Boico, Coalition for Jewish Learning Associate Director

Thank you all!

The Coalition for Jewish Learning takes great pride in the participation of the Milwaukee area Jewish schools in today's program. Special thanks are due to the educational directors of these 18 schools as their cooperation was essential and greatly appreciated.

Agudas Achim-Chabad Pelz Hebrew School	Jewish Beginnings Lubavitch Preschool
Bader Hillel Academy	Mequon Jewish Preschool
Bader Hillel High School	Milwaukee Community Hebrew School
Beth El Congregation (Sheboygan)	Milwaukee Jewish Day School
Beth Israel Ner Tamid School of Jewish Studies	Shalom Religious School
Emanu-El B'ne Jeshurun Religious School	Sinai Religious School
Emanu-El of Waukesha Religious School	Torah Academy of Milwaukee
Gan Ami Early Childhood Education	Torah Tots Preschool
JCC (Mequon & Whitefish Bay)	Yeshiva Elementary School

Special thanks to our Pre-Reception Raffle Donors!

Freshchef	Honeycomb Salon	Mosaic Catering	Tin Widow
Meal Prep	Kopps	Moshe and Debra Katz	Trader Joes
Friendship Circle	La Masa	Noa Gerassi	Waterford Wine and Spirits
Harry's Bar & Grill			

Special thanks to the Salute to Jewish Educators Planning Committee

Carrie Barbakoff	Robyn Eiseman	Molly Beth Kranitz	Abigail Stein
Nicole Boico	Noa Gerassi	Miles Roger	Karen Torem
Roger Carp	Dana Hartenstein	Heather Spencer	

CJL Advisory Board

Abigail Stein	Nadine Siegman
Brian Avner	Nicole L. Boico
Danielle Romain	Richard Paler
Dagenhardt	Roger Carp
Karen Torem	Sherry Malmon
Lori Fisher	Tziporah Altman-Shafer
Molly Beth Kranitz	

Past Chairs

Leon Cohen	Cindy Levy
Roger Carp	Sherry Malmon
Debbie Carter	Susie Rosengarten
Berkson*	Jennifer Saber
Eve Dicker Eiseman	Bonnie Shafrin
Moshe Katz	Louise Stein
Molly Beth Kranitz	Karen Torem

CJL Staff

Tziporah Altman-Shafer, VP of Jewish Communal Life and Learning	Nicole Boico, Coalition for Jewish Learning Associate Director	Dalilah Conen, Director of Teen Initiatives	Abigail Stein, Program Coordinator, Jewish Communal Life & Learning
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**of blessed memory*



Coalition for
Jewish Learning
MILWAUKEE
JEWISH FEDERATION

The Coalition for Jewish Learning (CJL), the education department of the Milwaukee Jewish Federation, promotes and advances Jewish education in the greater Milwaukee community, provides a support system for the community's institutions of Jewish learning, and forges coalitions to ensure excellence in Jewish education.

The members of the
Advisory Board

of the **Coalition**
for **Jewish Learning**

proudly honor our dedicated
teachers and volunteers.

Your generous commitment of
time, talent, and heart continues
to uplift and inspire Jewish
students across our
community.



Coalition for
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2026 Levy Family CJL Jewish Educator of the Year

ABOUT THE AWARD

Our community is blessed with superb Jewish educators and CJL wishes to highlight their contributions and thereby elevate the status of Jewish educators in Milwaukee. This annual award enables our community to show gratitude for all the time, effort and care our best educators give to their students.

The award recognizes nominees who:

1. *Have been engaged in Jewish education for a minimum of five years in Milwaukee.*
2. *Demonstrate leadership within the field of Jewish education.*
3. *Inspire students with a love for Jewish learning.*
4. *Personify the Jewish ideals of love of learning and search for knowledge.*
5. *Have contributed to the elevation of the status of Jewish educators within the Jewish community.*
6. *Engaged in the delivery of Jewish content on an ongoing basis.*

This award is sponsored by Mark and Cindy Levy, who have been dedicated to Jewish education for many years. Cindy was a long time member of the CJL advisory board. Mark and Cindy are very involved at their synagogue, Congregation Emanu-El of Waukesha. As supporters of Jewish education in Milwaukee, they wanted to elevate the status of our high quality educators in Milwaukee by funding this Jewish Educator of the Year Award. The Levy Family CJL Jewish Educator of the Year Award comes with a \$1,000 cash gift.

One with knowledge has got it all.
Nadarim 41a

**MAZAL TOV to
NADINE SIEGMAN
for receiving the Teacher
Impact Award this year!**



CONGREGATION
**BETH ISRAEL
NER TAMID**

2026 Levy Family CJL Jewish Educator of the Year

Sara Perlman

Yeshiva Elementary School

Sara is a native of Milwaukee and a graduate of the very school she teaches at! She is the beloved Limudei Kodesh Morah in the 5th grade at Yeshiva Elementary School, and has been for 20 years. She is known for her passion, dedication, and creativity, and embraces the challenge of keeping things fresh and exciting, regardless of how many times she has taught the material. Her students become her children for the year, striving to give each one what she needs to succeed, with love and attention. After graduating from Yeshiva Elementary School, Sara attended Hanna Sacks Bais Yaakov High School of Chicago, and then continued her studies for three years at the Jewish Teachers Training College in Gateshead, England. Upon her return, she started teaching and has been ever since! Sara and her



husband, Dovid, are blessed with 8 children, 4 sons and 4 daughters, and if you ask her, Sara will tell you she is a “stay-at-home mom who works on the side.” Sara is one of those people who has been gifted more than 24 hours in a day (#midnighter) and uses every minute to its fullest.

Former Levy Family CJL Jewish Educator of the Year winners: Page 26

**Mazel Tov Erica
Fishbach on your well
deserved award!**

*From Caren and
Donald Bass*

**MAZEL TOV to all of
our Jewish educators!**

*Sherry & Norm Malmor
Rick & Leslie Pater*

2026 CJL Lifetime Impact Award

Devorah Shmotkin

Lubavitch of Wisconsin

In 1968, the Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, OBM, appointed Rabbi Yisroel and Devorah Shmotkin as Chabad-Lubavitch Shluchim to Wisconsin. With faith, dedication, and purpose, they established Lubavitch of Wisconsin, serving the spiritual, educational, and communal needs of Jews statewide.

From the outset, Devorah devoted herself to education. She taught Judaics at Hillel Academy, Milwaukee's first Jewish day school, from 1968 to 1987, where students experienced Torah and Yiddishkeit as living, joyful values. In 1972, she founded Lubavitch Nursery, now Jewish Beginnings Lubavitch Preschool, and became its director in 1987. Under her leadership, it grew into a premier early childhood center known for warmth and excellence.

Recognizing that Jewish growth extends beyond childhood, Devorah created dynamic adult education programs that continue to inspire learners today. In 2004, she became principal



of Hillel Academy during a critical period of revitalization, rebuilding and strengthening the school through vision and high standards.

Today, as Dean of Education for Lubavitch of Wisconsin, she mentors faculty and guides educational vision while teaching at Bader Hillel High. Her impact spans nearly six decades and thousands of lives. Devorah is the proud mother and grandmother to many children and grandchildren, who now serve Jewish communities across the United States and Israel.

Former CJL Lifetime Impact Award winners: Page 26

ABOUT THE AWARD

The Coalition for Jewish Learning recognizes a member of the Milwaukee Jewish Community with a Lifetime Impact Award. This award is given to someone who has dedicated his or her life to improving Jewish Education. People receiving this award have contributed to Jewish education throughout many decades of work.

2026 Jerry Benjamin Inspiration Award for Informal Education

Elsie Crawford

Repairing Together

Elsie is the founder and visionary beyond Repairing Together. She is a native of the Netherlands where she earned a degree in Spanish-Dutch translation/interpretation. Prior to immigrating to the United States, Elsie worked for the Dutch Library Association co-developing literacy programs for new immigrants and young adults with learning disabilities. She also worked as a lobbyist with the European Commission on Culture on legislation for European libraries, documentation centers and universities and she worked at the Israeli Embassy in the Hague. Elsie is fluent in Dutch, English, French, Spanish, Hebrew and German. She worked for 9 years at the Milwaukee Jewish Federation managing cultural relationships and



delegations between Milwaukee and Israel in the P2G program. Elsie started the Repairing Together project being an alum parent of MJDS, worried that the obvious racial disparities and inequity in society would imprint on young students instead of teaching them openness, curiosity towards others, acceptance and friendships.

Former Inspiration Award for Formal Education winners: Page 26

ABOUT THE AWARD

The Coalition for Jewish Learning recognizes that important Jewish education also happens in INFORMAL settings. Informal education includes camps, youth groups, art programs, environmental education, Jewish travel programs, and all other types of Jewish education happening outside of a classroom environment. This award is named after Jerry Benjamin, past president of the Milwaukee Jewish Federation, co-founder of CAJE, the Coalition for the Advancement of Jewish Education. This award is a tribute to his passion about Jewish education.

2026 Gill Incentive for Teachers (GIFT) Award

ABOUT THE AWARD

The Gill Incentive for Teachers (GIFT) is an award designed to stimulate and encourage teachers to translate their unique educational ideas and initiatives into effective classroom projects. This award is for a project completed during the current school year in one of these areas:

- *School/classroom culture*
- *Teaching/learning materials*
- *Creative lessons*
- *Enrichment activities, including special one-time class/school projects*

Former Gill Award winners: Page 26



MAZAL TOV!

Susan Linton
Teacher Impact Award

Kayla Shapiro
School Support Award

Thank you Susan & Kayla for your hard work and dedication to the students of Milwaukee Community Hebrew School.

Your impact will last for generations.

2026 Gill Incentive for Teachers (GIFT) Award

Roger Carp

Congregation Shalom

Roger has had the pleasure and privilege of teaching in the Religious School at Congregation Shalom for the past 32 years, working with students in every grade from fifth through ninth. During his career, he has taught Jewish ethics, history, holidays, and life-cycle events, along with Torah and Prophets to adults. A native of southern California, Roger moved to Milwaukee after graduating from Duke University and earning a doctorate in American history at the University of North Carolina. He later added a master's degree in Judaic



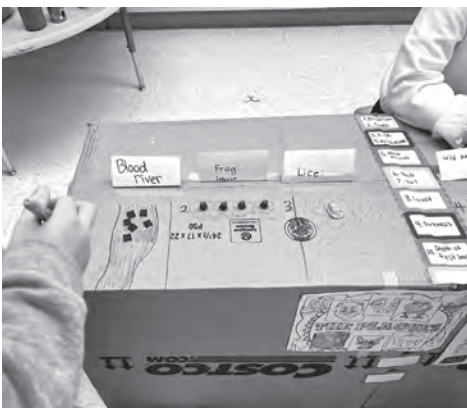
Studies from Spertus Institute. Besides teaching, he has served as a member and chair of the Advisory Board of the Milwaukee Association for Jewish Education and its successor, the Coalition for Jewish Learning. A recipient of many Gill Awards for creative teaching and a graduate of the BINAH program at CJL, he knows well how

this agency of the Milwaukee Jewish Federation benefits our community. Roger, a proud dad, stepfather, and grandpa, lives in Mequon with his wife, Debbie Recht.

*Helping students learn about Pesach and archaeology was the goal of this project in my fifth grade class at Congregation Shalom. **Fifth Grade Archaeologists Uncover World's Oldest Haggadah and Create a Museum for it!** Students studied the Haggadah before creating one of their own, which they pretended was actually 3,000 years old and had been buried in the desert during the Israelites' exodus from Egypt. Students uncovered pages from this lost Haggadah as well as scattered artifacts relating to the Ten Plagues and Seders of long ago. They worked as archaeologists to organize their artifacts to see how they told the story of Pesach. Finally, they arranged the relics as a museum exhibit, completed with placards and other forms of explanation, to teach younger grades about Pesach—its rituals, history, and foods.*

Roger

*Fifth Grade Archaeologists Uncover
World's Oldest Haggadah and
Create a Museum for it!*



Karin & Mara

*Esther and Rosa Parks:
The Hero in Me – Finding
My Inner Courage*



2026 Gill Incentive for Teachers (GIFT) Award

Karin Damico

Milwaukee Jewish Day School

Karin Damico grew up in Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin, and earned her degree in education from Miami University in Ohio. She has dedicated her career to elementary education, spending 18 years at Milwaukee Jewish Day School, where she has taught first, second, and third grade students. Known for her commitment to nurturing young learners and fostering a love of learning, Karin has built strong connections with students and families throughout her years in the classroom. She lives in Mequon, Wisconsin, with her husband and their two sons.



Mara Kleiman

Milwaukee Jewish Day School

Mara Kleiman is the Director of Jewish Life and Learning at Milwaukee Jewish Day School. She is passionate about designing student-centered Jewish learning experiences that connect texts, ideas, and traditions with students' identities and lived experiences. Her work is deeply rooted in inquiry-driven pedagogy, text-based learning, and a love for the role of music in cultivating meaningful Jewish life and community. She lives in Glendale, Wisconsin with her husband, 3 young children and fluffy dog.



Esther and Rosa Parks: The Hero in Me – Finding My Inner Courage was a Jewish Family Education program at Milwaukee Jewish Day School for second-grade students and a special adult guest. Together, families explored selected text from the Tanakh related to Esther, alongside a meaningful quote from Rosa Parks and a discussion of her impact on the world. Participants then examined a series of quotes and worked collaboratively to determine whether each reflected the voice of Esther, Rosa Parks, or potentially both.

Following these discussions, each child, with the support of their adult partner, selected an inspirational quote that resonated personally and reflected the courage to stand up for what they believe in. Students decorated a wooden mirror frame, and their chosen quote will be engraved onto the mirror – serving as a lasting reminder that when they look at their reflection, they can see themselves as capable of bravery, strength, and moral leadership.

MAZEL TOV, SARA!

We are so proud of you with this wonderful honor and recognition of your teaching skills, and heartfelt connections to all your students. You present activities that clarify and enhance each subject, recognizing your students' special skills, as well as their challenges, to bring success, and feelings of self-confidence to all. You are an advocate for them when necessary, oftentimes above and beyond what others might do. It's exciting to see how you and your students continue to keep these connections even as they move on in their lives.

With Love, Daddy & Mommy

"I have learned much from my teachers, and even more from my friends [colleagues], but from my students I have learned more than from all of them."

— Babylonian Talmud, Ta'anit 7a

May we humbly suggest that from our sister, we may have learned the most. You are a role model and an inspiration, may it continue until 120!

Love always and forever

David & Stacey • Danya & Dovie

Marni & Yosef • Aaron & Sarak

Shiffy & Simcha • Aliza & Seth

Yaakov & Bri



2026 Teacher Impact & School Support Awards



ABOUT THE AWARD

Teacher Impact Award — This award honors a teacher who has made a unique and meaningful impact in their school community. Unlike a “Best Teacher” award, this recognition celebrates a teacher’s exceptional contributions in areas such as mentoring, innovation, supporting others, or any other distinctive way they have gone above and beyond in their role.

School Support Award — This award is presented to a non-teacher—such as an administrator, staff member, volunteer, or aide—who has made a significant and positive contribution to the school community. It recognizes their exceptional dedication and the unique impact they have had in supporting and enriching the school experience.

The recipients of these awards were chosen by each school. The Coalition for Jewish Learning expresses its appreciation for the extraordinary support that these individuals give to Jewish education.

BADER HILLEL ACADEMY

Ellie Retzke

TEACHER IMPACT AWARD

In recognition of her outstanding dedication and passion for teaching, she engages every student, connects personally with each child, and explains concepts in ways that are easy to understand. She motivates and supports her students, fostering both understanding and a love of learning.

Selena Cordes

SCHOOL SUPPORT AWARD

In recognition of her indispensable role at BHA, simply put, no Selena, no BHA. She keeps everything running smoothly, supports staff and students with love, and does it all with unwavering dedication and care.



2026 Teacher Impact & School Support Awards



BADER HILLEL HIGH

Dr. Susan Bornstein-Forst *TEACHER IMPACT AWARD*

In recognition of Dr. Bornstein Forst's deep and meaningful contributions to our school community, she is deeply deserving of this recognition. Throughout her work, she has not only shaped the academic growth of our students, but also modeled unwavering dedication and integrity.

Ilana Bassman *SCHOOL SUPPORT AWARD*

In recognition of Ilana's deep commitment to student success and her unwavering dedication to helping every learner thrive, she is passionate about making learning accessible to diverse learners and about supporting teachers in presenting lessons that truly meet the needs of their students.

CONGREGATION BETH ISRAEL NER TAMID SCHOOL OF JEWISH STUDIES

Nadine Siegman *TEACHER IMPACT AWARD*

In recognition of Nadine's dedication to being an amazing teacher to her wonderful students, she has worked so hard to make her classroom such a warm and nurturing environment to be a part of.





2026 Teacher Impact & School Support Awards



CONGREGATION EMANU-EL B'NE JESHURUN

Sarah Yonas

TEACHER IMPACT AWARD

In recognition of Sarah's exceptional ability to make her lessons meaningful and relevant to her students' lives, she creates a positive and engaging environment where every student can thrive.

Kelley Wichman

SCHOOL SUPPORT AWARD

In recognition of Kelley's exceptional dedication to ensuring that teachers have everything they need and that supplies are thoughtfully managed, she does it all with a smile, creating a warm and welcoming environment for our entire community.

CONGREGATION EMANU-EL OF WAUKESHA

Shirley Forer

TEACHER IMPACT AWARD

In recognition of Shirley's can do attitude in supporting our children in religious school, she approaches every challenge with positivity, dedication, and care.





2026 Teacher Impact & School Support Awards



CONGREGATION SHALOM

Jack Redfern

TEACHER IMPACT AWARD

In recognition of his outstanding contributions to Congregation Shalom in the classroom and in support of the overall running of the school, Jack has gone above and beyond to help make our school successful.

Missy Meier

SCHOOL SUPPORT AWARD

In recognition of all the care and dedication she brings to the food she cooks and prepares for our school, as our in-house chef, Missy makes challah for our classes each week, prepares meals for family education programs, and creates delicious community Shabbat dinners each month.

CONGREGATION SINAI YOUTH EDUCATION PROGRAM

Shlomit Germanski

TEACHER IMPACT AWARD

In recognition of Shlomit's contributions as a long time teacher of Hebrew and Judaica, as well as the overall coordinator of our Hebrew program.

Sarah Siegel

SCHOOL SUPPORT AWARD

In recognition of Sarah's essential, invaluable, and miraculous contributions to every aspect of our youth education program.



2026 Teacher Impact & School Support Awards



GAN AMI EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION • WHITEFISH BAY

Jennifer Halaska *TEACHER IMPACT AWARD*

In recognition of Jennifer's true professionalism and her embodiment of excellence in early childhood education, she is a mensch and a beautiful example for our entire community. Jennifer is loved by her students, parents, and the entire school community here at Gan Ami.

Melissa Spanjar *SCHOOL SUPPORT AWARD*

In recognition of Melissa's loving dedication as a beloved infant educator, she faithfully supports other classrooms each year while patiently awaiting her group of incoming babies. Melissa is a true gift to our school community.

GAN AMI EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION • MEQUON

Isabella Roberts *TEACHER IMPACT AWARD*

In recognition of Isabella's dedication to nurturing the growth and development of young minds at the Linda and Fred Wein Family Center for Gan Ami Early Childhood Education in Mequon.

Brett Engel *SCHOOL SUPPORT AWARD*

In recognition of Brett's care, flexibility, and unwavering support of all classrooms, ensuring a strong and connected early childhood community at the Linda and Fred Wein Family Center for Gan Ami Early Childhood Education in Mequon.



2026 Teacher Impact & School Support Awards



JEWISH BEGINNINGS LUBAVITCH PRESCHOOL

Erica Fishbach
TEACHER IMPACT AWARD

In recognition of Erica’s unwavering dedication and heartfelt commitment, she gives her time, energy, and leadership with generosity and care. Her passion and vision uplift our school and community, leaving a lasting and meaningful impact.

Abby Bar-Lev Wiley
SCHOOL SUPPORT AWARD

In recognition of Abby’s dedicated service as President and board member, leading our school with vision, care, and responsibility, her commitment to both the school and the wider community makes a lasting and meaningful impact.

MEQUON JEWISH PRESCHOOL

Bria Studelska
TEACHER IMPACT AWARD

In recognition of Bria’s devoted service as a K2 teacher whose care extends far beyond her classroom to the entire MJP community, she sees the whole school as her responsibility and cares deeply about every child. Bria goes out of her way to handle countless details so that teachers and children can thrive in a warm and welcoming environment.

Dr. Marc Eiseman
SCHOOL SUPPORT AWARD

In recognition of the quiet dedication that helps a school truly thrive, Dr. Marc Eiseman has been a cherished part of the MJP community for nearly 25 years, first as a parent and continuing as a visionary and steadfast supporter. As our trusted medical consultant, Marc thoughtfully guides our school, helping to keep our community healthy, safe, and thriving.



2026 Teacher Impact & School Support Awards



MILWAUKEE COMMUNITY HEBREW SCHOOL

Susan Linton

TEACHER IMPACT AWARD

In recognition of Sara's dedication and kindness in fostering a positive and enriching learning environment, inspiring students through her commitment and passion.

Kayla Schapiro

SCHOOL SUPPORT AWARD

In recognition of Kayla's creativity and dedication, and the countless hours she pours into preparing for Hebrew school, she brings each lesson to life with care and imagination. Through her commitment to giving every student a meaningful and vibrant Jewish experience, she truly embodies the heart of our shared mission.

MILWAUKEE JEWISH DAY SCHOOL

Jody Lansing

TEACHER IMPACT AWARD

In recognition of Jody's many years of commitment, innovation, and enthusiasm, inspiring excitement in our senior kindergarten students as they begin their Jewish educational journey.

Lisa Kulakow

SCHOOL SUPPORT AWARD

In recognition of Lisa's exceptional organization, creativity, eye for beauty and detail, and her continued commitment to enriching the MJDS experience for families and staff.



2026 Teacher Impact & School Support Awards



PELZ HEBREW SCHOOL

Chana Rapoport

TEACHER IMPACT AWARD

In recognition of Chana's dedication and commitment to the children at our Hebrew school, she brings so much joy and excitement to all that she does.

Chana Sasonkin

SCHOOL SUPPORT AWARD

In recognition of Chana's dedication and commitment to the children at our school, she helps and guides them with joy and excitement each and every day.

TORAH ACADEMY OF MILWAUKEE

Rabbi Yosef Schluskel

TEACHER IMPACT AWARD

In recognition of Rabbi Schluskel's many years of dedicated service teaching Jewish Law to TAM students, his knowledge, clarity, understanding, and experience are truly exceptional. Rabbi Schluskel is always available to answer questions in Jewish law and is frequently called upon outside of school hours, reflecting his unwavering commitment to his students and our community.

Dr. Mary Duarte

SCHOOL SUPPORT AWARD

In recognition of Dr. Duarte's outstanding leadership as TAM's Director of Secular Studies and her excellence as a history instructor, she went far beyond expectations in preparing for TAM's accreditation re-evaluation and will be appreciated for years to come for her extraordinary effort and dedication.



2026 Teacher Impact & School Support Awards



TORAH TOTS PRESCHOOL

India Pretorius
TEACHER IMPACT AWARD

In recognition of Morah India's cherished presence at Torah Tots and her role as a steady and trusted figure in the lives of our children, she brings the warmth and pride of a devoted auntie to all that she does. She prepares engaging educational opportunities, nurtures each child's growth, and proudly celebrates their accomplishments. Each day, she creates a caring and loving environment for every child in her care.

Dr. Diane McGeen
SCHOOL SUPPORT AWARD

In recognition of Diane's unwavering championship of Torah Tots Preschool from its very onset, her dedication, talent, wisdom, and tireless support have been essential in bringing it to life and helping it truly thrive. There is truly nobody like her!

YESHIVA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Sara Rennieke
TEACHER IMPACT AWARD

In recognition of Sara's dedicated service to YES since 2011, her flexibility and perseverance have guided her through transitions from middle school to fourth grade and then to second grade in order to meet YES's changing needs. Each day, she brings enthusiasm, innovation, and grit to her students.

Aaron Heffernan
SCHOOL SUPPORT AWARD

In recognition of Aaron's amazing job of teaching children social and emotional skills in group settings as well as with individual students. His expertise, skill and professionalism are matched only by his warmth!

2026 Chai Awards

ABOUT THE AWARDS

In addition to recognizing the experience of all our teachers, it is the tradition in Milwaukee to recognize teachers who have been working in Jewish Education for 18 and 36 years.

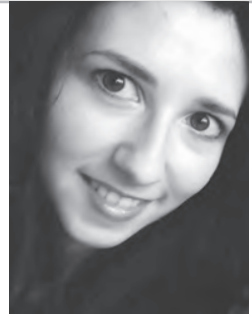
CHAI



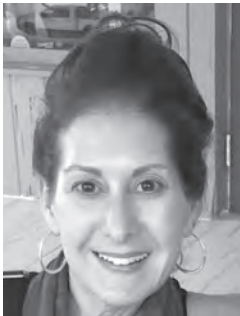
Karin Damico
*Milwaukee Jewish
Day School*



Linsey Kimmel
*Milwaukee Jewish
Day School*



Leah Munitz
*Mequon Jewish
Preschool*



Lisa Vondra
*Congregation
Sinai*



**Madaline
Wienke**
*Congregation
Shalom*

Mazal Tov



Devorah Shmotkin On Your Lifetime Impact Award

For decades, Devorah has nurtured young minds, inspired Jewish pride, and built foundations that last a lifetime. Her dedication, leadership, and heart have shaped our schools and strengthened the entire Jewish community.

Her influence lives on in every confident student, every grateful parent, and every educator she has mentored.

Thank you so much for having the vision that has made JB, BHA, and BHH the premier Jewish educational institutions they are today.

With deep appreciation and admiration,
we celebrate your extraordinary impact.

*Jewish Beginnings Lubavitch Preschool
Bader Hillel Academy
Bader Hillel High*



Mazal Tov to all our wonderful educators!

Educator of the Year • Past Awardees

1982	Ateret Cohn*	1997	Adina Altshull	2012	Dr. Sherry Blumberg
1983	Miriam Ben Shemuel*	1998	Tamar Loewenberg	2013	Rabbi Yosef Perlman
1984	Elaine Sanderson*	1999	Dr. Larry Hurwitz*	2014	Karen Torem & Tzipi Altman-Shafer
1985	Merzy Eisenberg	2000	Rabbi Shabse Werther	2015	Sara Minash
1986	Rabbi Nachman Levine	2001	Rabbi Raphael Wachsmann*	2016	Mishy Pittleman & Susie Rosengarten
1987	Michael Fefferman	2002	George Strick	2017	Marsha Fensin*
1988	Stisha Steigman	2003	Cindy Cooper	2018	Ellie Gettinger
1989	Eve Joan Zucker	2004	Marge Eiseman	2019	Debbie Silberman*
1990	Laura Greene	2006	Leah Robbins	2020	Yael Gal-Ben-Yitzchak
1991	Bess Mendelsohn*	2007	Aimee Bachar	2022	Rivkie Spalter
1992	Cantor Karen Berman	2008	Sharon Cohen	2023	Marilyn Franklin
1993	Michael Morgan	2009	Wendy Cohen	2024	Chava Edelman*
1994	Simon Kops*	2010	Jody Margolis	2025	Roger Carp
1995	Harriet Bocksbaum	2011	Samara Sofian		
1996	Devorah Shmotkin				

CJL Lifetime Impact • Past Awardees

2015	Eve Joan Zucker	2019	Rabbi Nachman Levine	2023	Dr. Sherry Blumberg
2016	Elaine Sanderson*	2020	Dr. Steven Baruch	2024	Cantor Karen Berman
2017	Marsha Fensin*	2022	Dr. Doris Shneidman	2025	Merzy Eisenberg
2018	Jerry Benjamin*				

**of blessed memory*



Coalition for
Jewish Learning
MILWAUKEE
JEWISH FEDERATION

PROGRAMS OF THE COALITION FOR JEWISH LEARNING

LOMED (Learning Opportunities for Milwaukee Educators)

Professional development classes for teachers in all our Jewish schools. Teachers can earn a \$300 stipend each year for participation.

BINAH (Building Inquiry-based Network through Hevruta)

a yearlong intensive cohort learning program for teachers.

Teen Philanthropy

A community-wide program that engages Jewish teens in a communal giving and learning effort to achieve our goal of Tikkun Olam, “repairing the world.”

School Census

Annual school census to track the population getting a Jewish education in Milwaukee.

Salute to Jewish Educators

Annual event to celebrate all our local educators.

One Happy Camper

Supporting first time campers from Milwaukee at Jewish overnight camps nationwide. (Funded by the Jewish Community Foundation)

Monthly Newsletter

Providing Jewish and educational resources for the community.

Jerry Benjamin Inspiration Award for Informal Education • Past Awardees

2016	Lenny Kass	2019	Rachael Badt	2023	Toni Davison Levenberg
2017	Joshua Richman	2020	Debbie Intravaia	2024	Rabbi Dov Ber Smith
2018	Rabbi Avremi Schapiro	2022	Dalilah Bernier	2025	Levi Stein

Past Gill Incentive for Teachers (GIFT) Awardees

1991	Monica Cohen & Deb Hacker, <i>Congregation Emanu-El of Waukesha</i> ; Henri Zvi Deutsch, <i>Congregation Anshai Lebowitz</i>	2008	Dr. Sherry Blumberg, <i>Congregation Sinai</i> and Nadine Siegman <i>Congregation Sinai & Congregation Emanu-El B'ne Jeshurun</i> and Jennifer Saber, <i>Congregations Shalom & Sinai</i>
1992	Laura Greene & Bonnie Shafrin, <i>Congregation Shalom</i> ; Simon Kops*, <i>Congregation Emanu-El B'ne Jeshurun</i>	2009	Roger Carp, <i>Congregation Shalom</i> (First Place) and Laura Greene, <i>Congregation Shalom</i> (Second Place)
1993	Rabbi David Brusin, <i>Milwaukee Jewish Day School</i> ; Susan Conn, <i>Beth El Ner Tamid Synagogue</i> ; Susan Atlas, <i>Congregation Emanu-El of Waukesha</i>	2010	Tzipi Altman-Shafer, <i>Milwaukee Jewish Day School</i> and Cantor Marsha Fensin, <i>Congregation Emanu-El of Waukesha</i>
1994	Sheryl Selby, <i>Jewish Community Center Early Childhood Department</i> ; Nadine Siegman, <i>Congregation Shalom</i> ; Rivkie Spalter, <i>Hillel Academy</i>	2011	Lori Fisher, <i>Congregation Emanu-El of Waukesha</i>
1995	Laura Greene, <i>Congregation Shalom</i> ; Nina Taus, <i>Milwaukee Jewish Day School</i>	2012	Jennifer Saber, <i>Congregation Shalom</i>
1996	Rabbi Yacob Gil, <i>Hillel Academy</i> ; Carol Ross, <i>Congregation Shalom</i> ; Liza Wiemer, <i>Congregation Beth Israel</i>	2013	Roger Carp, <i>Congregation Shalom</i>
1997	Roger Carp, <i>Congregation Shalom</i> ; Kate Mann, <i>Congregation Sinai</i>	2014	Rabbi Shari Shamah, <i>Gan Ami</i>
1998	Terri Beaulieu, Harriet Bocksenaum & Judith Ross*, <i>Jewish Family Services Child Development Center</i> ; Nadine Siegman, <i>Congregation Shalom</i>	2015	Gilah Saltzman, Ahuva Jarcaig, Karen Torem, Miriam Leff, Rabbi Hersch Hiller, <i>Yeshiva Elementary School</i>
1999	Cindy Cooper, <i>Congregation Sinai</i>	2016	Bader Hillel Academy Teachers
2000	Liza Wiemer, <i>Congregation Beth Israel</i> ; Yoel Turgeman, <i>Hillel Academy</i>	2017	Diane Boland, <i>Congregation Beth Israel Ner Tamid</i> ; Yonina Schluskel, <i>Torah Academy of Milwaukee</i>
2001	Therese Dorfman, <i>Congregation Emanu-El of Waukesha</i>	2018	Leah Emmer & Chaya Mann, <i>Bader Hillel Academy</i> ; and Yael Stein, <i>Congregation Beth Israel Ner Tamid</i>
2002	Roger Carp, <i>Congregation Shalom</i>	2019	<i>The Mequon Jewish Preschool Team</i> : Rivkie Spalter, Rabbi Shalom Ber Munitz, Kreinie Tiefenbrun, and consultant Dr. Naama Zoran
2003	Tzipi Altman-Shafer, <i>Milwaukee Jewish Day School</i> and Chavah Kintis, <i>Congregation Shalom</i>	2020	Jodie Honigman, <i>Milwaukee Jewish Day School</i> ; Sherry Miller and Tamara Miller, <i>Congregation Emanu-El B'ne Jeshurun</i>
2004	Nadine Siegman, <i>Congregation Shalom</i> and Judy Slyper, <i>Hillel Academy</i>	2022	Roger Carp, <i>Congregation Shalom</i>
2005	Robin Boroda, <i>Hillel Academy</i> and Mary Beaumont-Wishne, <i>Yeshiva Elementary School</i>	2023	Stephanie Brauner, <i>Bader Hillel Academy</i> ; Leah Stein, <i>Friendship Circle</i> ; Moria Lehman, <i>Milwaukee Jewish Day School</i>
2006	Beth Goldstein, <i>Congregation Sinai</i> and Martin Gutnik, <i>Hillel Academy</i>	2024	Cindy Cooper, <i>Congregation Sinai</i> ; Yonina Schluskel, Mara Kleiman and Bobbie Ehrlich, <i>Milwaukee Jewish Day School</i>
2007	Beth Goldstein, <i>Congregation Sinai</i> and Jennifer Saber, <i>JCC Parenting Center</i>	2025	Anthony Nash, <i>Gan Ami Early Childhood Education</i> ; Carrie Barakoff, <i>Congregation Emanu-El of Waukesha</i>
			*Of blessed memory.

Warm wishes of love and
Mazal Tov to our special honorees
Marc, Bria, and Leah



With thanks for all you do for MJP



FROM YOUR FRIENDS
AT OVATION,

mazel tov

TO THIS YEAR'S WINNERS!

ovation
communities



EMANU-EL

B'NE JESHURUN

*Jewish educators are the wise guides that
bridge our deep roots with a vibrant future.
Thank you all for leading with meaning and
showing us all what it means to truly belong.*

A special Mazel Tov to Members of our Emanu-El Community Honored Today

Teacher Impact Awards

Jody Lansing
Sarah Yonas

School Support Award

Kelley Wichman

Chai Award

Linsey Kimmel
Lisa Vondra

*Rabbi Jessica Barolsky
Cantor David Barash
Miles L. Roger, RJE
Andrew Appel
Emanu-El Lifelong Learning Committee*

**Congregation
Emanu-El of Waukesha
and the Sisterhood of
CEEW congratulates
SHIRLY FORER
on receiving the School
Support Award!
MAZAL TOV!**



Jewish Family Services celebrates all Milwaukee Jewish educators.

Honoring Aaron Heffernan for excellence in social-emotional learning and child therapy for Jewish students across Milwaukee.



www.jfsmilw.org



CONGREGATION SINAI
MEMBER OF THE UNION FOR REFORM JUDAISM

*Mazel Tov to All Our
Sinai Faculty Recipients!*

Teacher Impact Award - **Shlomit Germanski**

School Support Award - **Sarah Siegel**

Chai Award - **Lisa Vondra**

Mazel Tov to members of our Sinai community!

Teacher Impact Award Gan Ami Preschool - **Jennifer Halaska**

School Support Award Mequon Jewish Preschool - **Marc Eiseman**

**Kol HaKavod to our
dedicated Jewish
educators!**

*Congregation Beth El,
Sheboygan*

**Congratulations,
Elsie. Well deserved!**

*Milwaukee Jewish
Film Festival Screening
Committee*

**Kol HaKavod to our
dedicated community
educators! You are the
best example for our
next generation.**

—
Mazel Tov!

Sue & Rick Strait

*Mazel tov
from the Women of Shalom*

GIFT Award: **Roger Carp**

Teacher Impact: **Jack Redfern**

Chai Award: **Madaline Wienke**

School Support: **Missy Meier**

Teacher Impact (for Jewish Beginnings): **Erica Fishbach**

School Support (for Jewish Beginnings): **Abby Bar-Lev Wiley**

Kol HaKavod to all award recipients. We are so lucky to have you as a part of our community. Thank you for your dedication to Jewish education.



Mazel Tov to Our Educators

TEACHER IMPACT AWARD

Jennifer Halaska | Gan Ami-Whitefish Bay
Isabella Roberts | Gan Ami-Mequon

SCHOOL SUPPORT AWARD

Melissa Spanjar | Gan Ami-Whitefish Bay
Brett Engel | Gan Ami-Mequon

Kol HaKavod

From the Harry & Rose Samson Family JCC
Board of Directors & Family of Staff



Harry & Rose Samson Family
Jewish Community Center

Creating spaces. Building opportunities.
Inspiring Jewish moments for diverse communities.

jccmilwaukee.org



MILWAUKEE
JEWISH FEDERATION

The JCC is a partner in serving the community with the Milwaukee Jewish Federation and is a beneficiary agency of the United Way of Greater Milwaukee.



**Congrats Jack!
Very proud of you!!**

*Uncle Charles and
Aunt Sharon*

**Mazal Tov Erica! May
you go from strength
to strength.**

Toby & Mark Lukoff

**Mazel Tov to all the
wonderful Jewish
Educator honorees.
We are so blessed to
have you teaching
the next generation
in our community.**

*With gratitude,
Eileen and Glenn Graves*

Thank you to all of the teachers, staff members, and volunteers that invest so much in the Milwaukee Jewish Community. We salute all of you!

We excitedly celebrate Mrs. Sara Perlman as the CJL Levy Family Jewish Educator of the Year! Mrs. Perlman uses art, experiential methods, and project-based learning to bring Torah lessons alive for her students. The combination of her differentiated methods, her focus on Torah values, her ability to weave social emotional learning into every subject, and her care and concern creates students who are stronger, richer, and deeper Jews.

Congratulations to our Teacher Impact Awardee, Mrs. Rennicke. She brings enthusiasm, innovation, and grit to her students. Her flexibility and perseverance have enabled her to teach multiple different classes to meet YES's changing needs.

Congratulations to our School Support Awardee, Mr. Heffernan. Through a partnership with JFS, "Mr. Aaron" teaches social and emotional skills in group settings and with individual students. His expertise, skill and professionalism are matched only by his warmth!



Yeshiva Elementary School

Rabbi Shaya Baumann, *Principal*

Mrs. Laura Fischer, *Vice Principal*

Rabbi Tzvi Goldman, *Vice Principal*

Rabbi Aryeh Borsuk, *Director of Advancement*

DEVORAH SHMOTKIN
A well deserved honor!

**Your friendship, guidance
and advice through the years
has been a true blessing.**

Marilyn & Brad Shovers

**Mazel Tov! Celebrating Roger
Carp (GIFT Award), Jack Redfern
(Teacher Impact Award), and
the outstanding contributions
of Mandy Wienke and Missy
Meier. What a gift it is to
have such exceptional staff
at Congregation Shalom!**

Nancy and Jim Barnett

MAZAL TOV!

**Jerry Benjamin
Inspiration Award**



ELSIE CRAWFORD
Repairing Together
Project Director

**Gill Incentive for
Teachers**



MARA KLEIMAN & KARIN DAMICO
Esther & Rosa Parks: The Hero in
Me-Finding My Inner Courage

Teacher Impact Award



JODY LANSING
Senior Kindergarten
Teacher

School Support Award



LISA KULAKOW
Sub and Building
Coordinator

**18 Year Chai Awards:
Karin Damico and Linsey Kimmel**

LOVE YOUR MJDS FAMILY
MILWAUKEE JEWISH DAY SCHOOL



Mazal tov
Melissa!

All our love...

Dad, Rick, Jeff & Heidi,
Gary & Sherri, Mom,
David & Angela,
Rick & Deb,
Kait & Dan,
Jacob
& Mike

**Mazal Tov to Roger Carp,
Karin Damico & Mara
Kleiman for receiving
well-deserved GIFT
Awards, Mandy Wienke
for receiving the Chai
Award, Nadine Siegman
& Jack Redfern for the
Teacher Impact Award,
and Missy Meier & Abby
Bar-Lev Wiley for the
School Support Award.
Thank you for all you do!**

Felice Bruskin

Mara Kleiman - We are
so proud of you. Your
contributions to the
education of our
community's children
will last throughout their
lives, just as the education
you received formed
the foundation for
who you are today.

Love, Mom & Dad

**Mandy, through 18 years of teaching,
you have created a classroom filled with
curiosity, compassion, and connection.
You teach not only lessons, but values.
Not only content, but confidence.**

**The Chai Award honors your years
of dedication - and the countless lives
you have touched along the way.**

**Mazal Tov and thank you for all you
give to Congregation Shalom.**

*With love and gratitude,
Your fellow Congregation Shalom educators*

**“A teacher affects eternity,
they can never tell where their
influence stops.”** —Henry Adams

**Mazel Tov to everyone and thank
you for affecting eternity!**

Moshe and Debra Katz

**Mazel Tov to all Milwaukee
Jewish Educators!**

Your daily commitment to inspiring, guiding, and uplifting our students strengthens the fabric of our entire community. Thank you for all that you do.

We extend special congratulations to this year’s award recipients. Your exceptional work shines brightly, and we are privileged to honor you today.

We also express deep appreciation to our Jewish schools, whose dedication fosters spaces where children grow in their Jewish identity and become the next generation of community members and leaders.

Tziporah Altman-Shafer

ELSIE CRAWFORD, your bold vision, hard work and big heart have sparked change, lifted lives and built something extraordinary for our community. We celebrate you — and the powerful impact of Repairing Together.

With Pride and Appreciation,

FOUNDING BOARD MEMBERS:

*Nancy Kennedy Barnett,
Prina Goldfarb, Elana Kahn
and Sheryl Primakow*

BOARD CHAIR:

Jason Dropik

AND THE INCREDIBLE LEADERS OF

Repairing Together

**It is our pleasure to celebrate together
with all the dedicated educators and
volunteers being recognized by CJL.
We applaud your hard work, creativity,
and commitment to instilling in our
generations of Jewish students a deep
knowledge of our heritage and faith.**



**Thanks especially to
Mandy Wienke
Jack Redfern
and Missy Meier
for leading our community
from strength to strength.**

*Roger Carp and
Debbie Recht*

Mazel Tov to all the wonderful Jewish Educator honorees. We are so blessed to have you teaching the next generation in our community.

Sue & Allen Carneol


To our incredible Jewish educators, thank you for the care, dedication, and heart you bring to your work each day. You inspire your students and help shape the next generation in so many meaningful ways. I am so grateful to be part of your school communities—working with you is truly a joy.

Nicole Boico

**MAZAL
TOV**
to all the 2026
CJL award
winners!

**YOU
ROCK!**

from Elliot and Cantor Karen Berman



Devorah Shmotkin
Thank you for
teaching and inspiring
our children and
Milwaukee's Jewish
community!

from

Cindy and Michael Katzoff
Leah and Rabbi Nachman Levine
Terry and David Amrani
Mina and Jerry Tepper
Claudia and Doug Cohen
Peggi and Bruce Glaser

Thank you, Educators!

The Congregation Shalom community, staff, and clergy are so thankful for the educators and support team members who work hard to provide high quality education to our community!

"Revere your teacher as you revere heaven."

- Eleazar b. Shammua. Mishna: Avot, 4.12



Roger Carp - GIFT Award

Missy Meier - School Support Award

Jack Redfern - Teacher Impact Award

Mandy Wienke - Chai Award



Mazal tov to our members who received awards working at other Jewish educational institutions in Milwaukee

Abby Bar-Lev Wiley - School Support Award

Erica Fishbach - Teacher Impact Award

Kol Hakavod!



Mazel Tov!

THANK YOU FOR ALL THAT YOU DO!



ERICA FISHBACH
K4 TEACHER
TEACHER IMPACT



ABBY BAR-LEV WILEY
BOARD PRESIDENT
SCHOOL SUPPORT



Mazel Tov

ON YOUR WELL-DESERVED AWARDS!



Ellie Retzke
TEACHER IMPACT

**YOUR BHA FAMILY
APPRECIATES
YOU!**



Selena Cordes
SCHOOL SUPPORT



“THE MOST
IMPORTANT
FLAME WE EVER
IGNITE IS THE
ONE INSIDE EACH
JEWISH CHILD.”

B. Devorah Shmotkin

MAZAL TOV

*On Your
Lifetime
Impact Award!*



B. Devorah Shmotkin

Co-founder of the largest and fastest
growing Jewish network in Wisconsin

In 1968, the Rebbe appointed Rabbi Yisroel and B. Devorah Shmotkin as the emissaries to the state of Wisconsin.

Together, they founded what would become Lubavitch of Wisconsin: a dynamic organization dedicated to meeting the spiritual, educational, and communal needs of Jews across the state.

Beyond the numerous nonprofit programs and institutions that now make up the LWI umbrella, the educational foundation laid by B. Devorah Shmotkin has, on its own, touched thousands of lives. The graduates of the schools she helped build, continue to shape the future of Jewish Milwaukee and beyond.

Mazal tov, Devorah. Thank you for leading the way and for showing us that every Jewish child deserves to begin life in a place of warmth, wonder, belonging, and Jewish learning & joy.

Your Lubavitch of Wisconsin Family

Learn more about the programs and institutions
across Lubavitch of Wisconsin at chabadwi.org

Lubavitch
WISCONSIN