

## **Tikkun Olam – NSTE Annual Report 2019**

Reflecting the contribution of many people over 15 years since NSTE's Jews for Social Action (JSA) was established, several of JSA'S programs and individuals were recognised by external organizations during 2019.

The Asylum Seekers Centre (ASC) nominated JSA for a team award in the NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards. Through JSA, teams of volunteers have provided and served lunches almost every Tuesday at the Asylum Seekers Centre (ASC) since 2005.

JSA's Early Support Aboriginal Literacy Project provides literacy tutoring to indigenous primary school students. Since 2005 our volunteer tutors have supported over 50 children at 21 primary schools in the Northern Sydney region. This program was acknowledged during the year by the Metropolitan North Aboriginal Education Consultative Group.

Volunteer tutors also provided homework support for Aboriginal girls, who live at Biala Hostel in Allambie Heights during school terms and attend high school in Sydney.

JSA's 12<sup>th</sup> *Aboriginal Experience* presented Karen Smith, Education Officer from the Aboriginal Heritage Office, speaking about monitoring and managing local Aboriginal sites to ensure their preservation and protection.

Consignments of *Australian Geographic* magazines and knitted dolls were sent to ten Aboriginal community schools in remote areas, receiving warm letters of appreciation from the teachers.

Willoughby City Council acknowledged our long-running Scotts Creek CreekCare program honouring team leader, John Balint with the Golden Trowel Award for 2019.

To encourage young people to get involved in *tikkun olam*, the *b'nei mitzvah* class of 2019 was introduced to *Kiva*, a program of micro loans to those in need globally.

*Mitzvah* Day 2019 involved the NSTE community donating and wrapping gifts, making bracelets and sorting clothes to be distributed to those in need, with cards written by *Meah* students. Young teens made soup for those in need at Shavuot and as part of *Mitzvah* Day.

Through the *Livracha* program our community shared the blessings of Festivals with WEAVE in South Sydney (*Purim*), Salvation Army Youth Support Program (*Pesach*), a local women's shelter (*Shavuot*), Asylum Seekers Centre (*Chanukah*) and FoodBank NSW (High Holy Days).

As part of the *I Speak my Mind* series, Dr Carly Copolov, Multicultural Health Program Officer – Refugee Communities, NSW Health and Hayat Akbari, a Hazara refugee gave inspiring talks about the challenges faced by refugees.

JSA also joined with others to improve inclusion and access at NSTE.

Thank you to those in Jews for Social Action (JSA) and the NSTE community who organised and participated in our social justice programs during 2019.

**Julia Selby**  
**Chair, Jews for Social Action**