

ROBERTA STETSON AND YAIRA SINGER TO RECEIVE SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL

THE OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CONGREGATION ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT THE SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL JUDITH KAUFMAN HURWICH KETER TORAH AWARD WILL BE PRESENTED TO ROBERTA STETSON AND YAIRA SINGER ON THE SECOND DAY OF SHAVUOT, JUNE 18, 2019. THE PRACTICE OF CONFERRING SUCH AN AWARD IS TO APPROPRIATELY RECOGNIZE WOMEN IN OUR CONGREGATION ON THE HOLIDAY WHEN WE CELEBRATE THE LIVES OF TWO GREAT JEWISH HEROINES, NAOMI AND RUTH. IT OFFERS US AN OPPORTUNITY, AS PART OF A RELIGIOUS CEREMONY, TO EXPRESS OUR APPRECIATION FOR THE SERVICES RENDERED TO OUR COMMUNITY BY WOMEN.



ROBERTA STETSON

FOR MANY YEARS ROBERTA AND HER HUSBAND CURT WERE LOOKING FOR A RELIGIOUS HOME. ALMOST 15 YEARS AGO SHE FOUND HERSELF TRAVELING WEST ALONG 85TH STREET RATHER THAN USING HER CUSTOMARY 86TH STREET CROSSING. A TAPED SIGN ON A LAMP POLE ANNOUNCED “SHABBAT SERVICES, NO HEBREW NECESSARY... CONGREGATION KEHILATH JESHURUN.” DIRECTED TO THE LOBBY NOTICE DISPLAY BY THE SECURITY DESK, ROBERTA GATHERED THE NECESSARY INFORMATION ABOUT SHABBAT BEGINNERS SERVICES. ARRIVING 9:15 A.M., SHE MET GEORGE ROHR, WHOSE WARMTH AND SUPPORT HELPED

guide this “learner” through the service. At Kiddush, Roberta found herself warmly welcomed by two KJB members, still her friends today. So began a much longed-for religious journey and membership in our beloved congregation, CKJ.

Roberta grew up in a community of like-minded Jewish people and values. Families looked out for each other and shared and celebrated life cycles together. She is grateful to her mother and father for being nurturing role models who filled their home with kindness and the tastes of Jewish tradition. Neighbors of different backgrounds were treated with respect and welcomed. Her life is filled with memories of a commitment to Jewish life and a passion for everything Jewish, as it remains today.

A former educator in the Southeast Bronx and Assistant Principal in

Washington Heights, Roberta had the opportunity to act on her early upbringing of tolerance and respect for all people to educate immigrant populations.

Active in cultural and community affairs, she served on the co-op board of directors of her building, as Vice President of Member Services for the New York City Opera Guild, and numerous professional and community agencies.

Passionate about everything related to Judaism, Roberta and Curt are committed to welcoming new members to our community and supporting beginners new to Judaism by sharing the beauty of Shabbat and holidays in their home. They embrace, support, and augment KJ’s curriculum with one-on-one hands-on experience/learning using their home as a framework “lab” on setting up a kosher home, preparing for Shabbat, washing vegetables, celebrating

holidays, living a Jewish life and so much more. They open up their home to host and celebrate Sheva Brachot, Shabbat Kallah, holiday celebrations, event planning meetings and learning groups. New Jews celebrate their first Shabbat at the Stetsons. Roberta escorts them to the Mikveh...accompanying them from beginning to beginning!

Roberta is a former KJ Trustee, active in the Sisterhood, serving as its co-Vice President and New Members’ Welcome Committee, and Event Chairperson, and active in the Beginners’/Intermediate Minyan.

With affection and a deep sense of gratitude, Roberta and Curt thank the KJ community for its inspiration, learning opportunities and values and for providing a religious and spiritual home.

JUDITH KAUFMAN HURWICH KETER TORAH AWARD ON SHAVUOT

THE AWARD IS NAMED IN MEMORY OF JUDITH KAUFMAN HURWICH, DAUGHTER OF RITA AND BENJAMIN KAUFMAN, OF BLESSED MEMORY, MOTHER OF OUR MEMBERS - YIBADLU L'CHAIM TOVIM - MERYL JAFFE AND ADAM HURWICH, AND GRANDMOTHER OF THREE FORMER RAMAZ STUDENTS: TALIA, LEAH, AND ZEV HURWICH. HER FAMILY CONTINUES HER TRADITION OF ASSOCIATION WITH KJ AND RAMAZ IN FOSTERING OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN TO STUDY TORAH.



YAIRA SINGER

MUCH OF YAIRA'S COMMITMENT TO KJ CAN BE TRACED BACK TO HER UPBRINGING RIGHT HERE IN THE COMMUNITY. YAIRA'S PARENTS, MIKE AND ADINA SINGER, SET A STRONG EXAMPLE OF YIDDISHKEIT IN THEIR HOME. HER UPBRINGING WAS BOUND TO KJ AND RAMAZ, WHERE SHE PARTICIPATED IN JUNIOR CONGREGATION AS A CHILD, AND HELPED LEAD YOUTH GROUPS AS A TEENAGER. AFTER EIGHT YEARS AWAY FOR COLLEGE AND GRADUATE STUDIES IN ARCHITECTURE, SHE RETURNED TO THE UPPER EAST SIDE WITH HER HUSBAND, MATTHEW BINSTOCK. AS A NEW MOM READJUSTING TO HER OLD STOMPING GROUND, SHE ASKED A FRIEND HOW

she might get involved on the Board of Keshet Young Professionals and the friend replied, "You say: Hi, I'd like to be on the Board." To her surprise, this strategy worked! Thus her community volunteering began.

After serving as president of Keshet, Yaira joined both the KJ and Ramaz Boards, and continues to participate in a variety of committees, including our search for a new Cantor. Yaira has also lent her architectural style and expertise to various KJ projects which include handrails for the Main Sanctuary, and a system of panels that addresses the *tzniut* (modesty) issue in the women's balcony.

Yaira was raised in a Yiddish-speaking home, and both she and her sister, Gealia, are now raising their children in Yiddish as well. She substitutes for Rabbi Moskowitz's Yiddish Schmoozers group, and is always looking for ways in which to highlight Yiddish, once a

mainstream unifier for Ashkenazi Jews the world over, within our community.

After travelling on one of KJ's missions to Poland, Yaira helped form a committee with multifaceted goals pertaining to Holocaust education. Among the most meaningful projects Yaira has worked on at KJ is the Holocaust Educational Center in the KJ Library. There she was able to combine her passions for architectural design and Jewish culture – specifically Pre-war Yiddish culture – to help create a monument to the survivors and victims of the Holocaust, and a resource for the community to be able to continue to learn about them. The Library was created as part of an ongoing effort to further Holocaust commemoration and education at KJ and Ramaz, and Yaira continues to participate in this committee, which helps plan programming for Yom Hashoah and Kristallnacht, among others.

Most recently, Yaira has spearheaded an effort for KJ to reduce its "carbon footprint" by eliminating plastic disposables at Kiddush and Seudah Shlishit, and composting its leftover food scraps. Stemming from a belief that our Shul should be at the forefront of our collective responsibility *Le'avda u'Leshamra*, to work and protect [our earth], Bereishit 2:7, she continues to find ways for our community to improve in caring for the environment.

Yaira and Matt see the KJ community as their partner in raising their children, Eliza, Eitan, and Talia, to have a strong Jewish identity and be active, proud members of Am Yisrael.

We honor these extraordinary women for their service to our community and to the Jewish People in general. We pray that God reward them with many years of health and happiness and with much nachas from their children. May they continue to serve as stellar examples of Jewish commitment and service to this entire community, which loves them and blesses them.