



WRJ Or Ami Award Winners 2015

April 2013–April 2015

Established in 1973, the WRJ Or Ami “Light of My People” Award recognizes exemplary social justice, community service, and educational programming that serves as a model for other WRJ Districts and sisterhoods. The awards, listed below, are given biennially and coincide with [WRJ’s Assembly](#). [Gold](#), [Silver](#), and [Bronze](#) awards were given to six projects each; 28 projects received [honorable mentions](#).

Gold

Communicating about Mental Illness: One on One and One on Many

[Women of Isaiah](#), Lafayette, CA

[Beth Am Women](#), Los Altos Hills, CA

WOI and BAW partnered on a grant to develop and distribute communication tools to address the challenges of mental illness in their community, including a facilitator guide to launch support groups in their congregations for the mentally ill and a brochure for visiting the mentally ill.

Dinner for New Moms

[Sisterhood of Temple Emanu-El](#), Dallas, TX

Dinner for New Moms is a program designed to provide a warm Shabbat dinner to families with a new little one in the house. The program has fostered community among the WRJ members arranging and cooking the meals, and introduced WRJ to many new families.

Greenbriar Project

[Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation Sisterhood](#), Indianapolis, IN

The sisterhood teamed up with a local public at-risk elementary school to provide food and books. They have provided each of the 90 students with hunger issues with take home bags filled with nonperishable food for three holiday breaks. All 800 students received a book.

Jewish-Arab Coexistence Seminar

[Kehillat Birkat Shalom](#), Gezer, Israel

Birkat Shalom is a microcosm of Israeli society and knows that healthy, open, tolerant society

benefits all. Jewish and Arab women gather in a safe space to discuss their experiences and emotions and work together to build a caring community and mutual understanding.

Supporting Women in Need: A WRJ Midwest District Initiative to Commemorate 100 Years of Women of Reform Judaism

[WRJ Midwest District](#), IA, IL, Northwest IN, MN, ND, SD, and WI

WRJ Midwest District sisterhoods partnered with local charities benefiting women as a way of celebrating WRJ's Centennial. Our women raised awareness and strengthened their connections to their communities by gathering donations, raising funds, and donating hours, with a focus on the number 100, to benefit their partner organizations.

Venetia Valley Elementary School Mother's Day Surprise

[Congregation Rodef Sholom Sisterhood](#), San Rafael, CA

The elementary school across the street from their temple primarily serves immigrant Latino children, whose parents struggle economically and live in fear of deportation. The sisterhood partnered with the students, parents, and staff to create a happy Mother's Day for their moms.

Silver

A Community Conversation About Death and Dying

[Temple Sholom Sisterhood](#), Vancouver, BC, Canada

A Community Conversation about Death and Dying was a program designed to gather the community to explore and discuss various aspects of the process of death and dying with a panel of knowledgeable speakers.

Adopt-a-School

[Temple Israel Sisterhood](#), Memphis, TN

For more than 30 years Temple Israel Sisterhood has sponsored programs for the children at the Colonial School Vision Camp. They treat visually impaired children to three or four days of activities every June, including bowling, skating, visiting the Children's Museum or IMAX Theater, a soccer clinic, carnivals, and more.

Building Bridges

[Women of Scarsdale Synagogue Temples Tremont and Emanu-El](#), Scarsdale, NY

Through knowledge, fear and hatred can be eliminated. With that in mind, sisterhood members and friends visited several local houses of worship. The clergy of each place enlightened them about their faith while also recognizing similarities with Judaism. This experience helped to foster understanding, acceptance, and respect for others.

"Let Our People Go": Human Trafficking Educational and Social Action Series

Congregation Ahavath Chesed Sisterhood, Jacksonville, FL

The series educated the Northeast Florida interfaith community about human trafficking and encouraged action to combat this crime. By using print, social media outreach, two community-wide programs, and a social action component, funds were raised for a grassroots organization to help survivors learn viable skills to survive and thrive.

Network PDX

Women of Reform Judaism Beth Israel Sisterhood, Portland, OR

In order to address the challenges facing congregants as they navigate the changing landscape of employment, the sisterhood invited members, leaders in their fields, to help other members build a bridge to the professional world. New professional and personal connections, as well as a greater sense of community, were created.

Note-able Event

Temple Beth El Sisterhood, San Antonio, TX

The sisterhood hosted an event for the religious school children to create music and learn about its benefits with instructors who donated their time. They also collected donations of musical instruments for a music therapy program at the Women and Children's Shelter.

Bronze

Community Outreach Program

Temple Shalom Sisterhood, Oxford, FL

Inspired by a congregant who moved into independent living and asked the sisterhood to help bring Hanukkah traditions to her new home, the Community Outreach Committee now visits nine facilities, sharing Jewish tradition and history with Jewish and non-Jewish residents.

Little Black Dress: Fashion Show Through the Ages

Women of Emanu-El, Milwaukee, WI

The sisterhood hosted a vintage fashion show of LBD's and a silent auction of donated jewelry, and served hors d'oeuvres. This community event kicked it up a notch by serving a signature cocktail and wine, and encouraging attendees to wear a LBD. The runway show was produced by Goodwill Industries of SE Wisconsin.

Sisterhood Interfaith Chai Tea

Congregation Beth Israel Sisterhood, Austin, TX

After 10 years of doing a Chai Tea and watching participation dwindle, the sisterhood decided to make it interfaith and asked women to be table captains and invite friends from many different faiths. They hosted a speaker, as well as music and dancing, and raised money for the YES Fund.

Temple Chai Sisterhood Opens Doors - Accessible Door Installation Project

[Temple Chai Sisterhood](#), Long Grove, IL

Working with temple staff, the Inclusion Committee, and the Building Committee, Temple Chai Sisterhood funded the installation of handicapped accessible doors for the front entrance of our building and the handicapped bathroom. The doors were dedicated by our Senior Rabbi as part of the congregational sisterhood Shabbat.

Vashti's Banquet

[Women of North Shore Congregation Israel](#), Glencoe, IL

WNSCI celebrated Purim with a Persian feast, fun activities, and a Shushan Bazaar for women and their daughters in the synagogue. This first-ever event grew from the life experience of one of our members, an Iranian immigrant from Hamadan, the supposed resting place of Queen Esther.

WOTS Intergenerational Seder

[Women of Temple Sinai](#), Pittsburgh, PA

The sisterhood hosted an intergenerational Seder with their own Haggadah for the young women of the religious school. The sisterhood shared the rituals of a traditional Seder while discussing sisterhood, women's empowerment and leadership, and the value of Judaism with the young women.

Honorable Mentions

2015 TBI Sisterhood Women's Seder

[Temple Beth Israel Sisterhood](#), Skokie, IL

Becoming a Bat Mitzvah

[Women of Reform Judaism Beth Israel Sisterhood](#), Portland, OR

Blessing Bags for Shelter Residents

[Temple Emanu-el Sisterhood](#), San Jose, CA

Collector's Closet

[Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation Sisterhood](#), Indianapolis, IN

CommUnity Building: Shalach Manot Project

[Temple Chai Sisterhood](#), Long Grove, IL

Create a Cuddly

[Temple Beth El Sisterhood](#), San Antonio, TX

Dallas-Area 2015 Intra-Faith Sisterhood Luncheon

[Adat Chaverim Sisterhood](#), Plano, TX

Day of Service Project

[Congregation Beth Israel Sisterhood](#), West Hartford, CT

Extreme Home Makeover (Heading Home Up & Out)

[Temple Shalom of Newton Sisterhood](#), Newton, MA

Holy Nosh: Jewish Holiday Recipes and Nibbles

[Temple Emanu-el Sisterhood](#), Tuscaloosa, AL

In Our Own Voice

[Temple Beth Israel Sisterhood](#), Skokie, IL

Jewish Communities Around the World

[Holy Blossom Temple Sisterhood](#), Toronto, ON, Canada

Kentucky Racetrack Chaplaincy at Churchill Downs

[Women of Temple Shalom Sisterhood](#), Louisville, KY

Knitting without Borders

[WRJ Atlantic District](#), NJ, PA (except Erie), and Wheeling and Morgantown, WV

Linkin' Hearts in Lincoln's Heartland

[WRJ Midwest District](#), IA, IL, Northwest IN, MN, NE, ND, SD, and WI

Making Meaningful Women's Tallitot for the Synagogue

[Women of North Shore Congregation Israel](#), Glencoe, IL

Miss Representation

[Women of Reform Judaism Beth Israel Sisterhood](#), Portland, OR

Sarah's Circle Tea

[Temple Beth Israel Sisterhood](#), Skokie, IL

Sisterhood Caring Corps

[Isaac M. Wise Temple Sisterhood](#), Cincinnati, OH

Sisterhood Passover Celebration

[Congregation Schaarai Zedek Sisterhood](#), Tampa, FL

Sisters in the Sukkah

[Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation Sisterhood](#), Indianapolis, IN

SPA...ahh!

[Temple Israel Sisterhood](#), Memphis, TN

TBE 140 - Congregational Pilgrimage and Picnic

[Temple Beth El Sisterhood](#), San Antonio, TX

The History of Sisterhood Temple Beth Israel

[Temple Beth Israel Sisterhood](#), Skokie, IL

Torah Talk

[Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation Sisterhood](#), Indianapolis, IN

Tu BiSh'vat Seder

[Temple Bat Yahm Sisterhood](#), Newport Beach, CA

Women Helping Women in Need

[Women of North Shore Congregation Israel](#), Glencoe, IL

WRJ Midwest District Kallah: The Art of Being Jewish

[WRJ Midwest District](#), IA, IL, Northwest IN, MN, NE, ND, SD, and WI