

KAVOD LUNCHEON

WRJ MIDWEST DISTRICT CONVENTION HONORS AND RECOGNITION

Rhoda Hauptman Memorial Award for Excellence

Woman of Valor Awards



**Saturday, October 20, 2018
11th of Cheshvan, 5779**

**Sandi Firsell, Cheryl Stern,
Linn Ullenbrauck and Judy Wexler
Convention Co-Chairs**

Sarah Acker, Local Arrangements Chair



Hyatt Regency Milwaukee, Milwaukee, Wisconsin



✠ A woman of valor, who can find? 📖 Her worth is far above
jewels 📖 The heart of her husband trusts in her 📖 And nothing
shall he lack 📖 She renders him good and not evil 📖 All the days
of her life 📖 She opens her hand to the needy 📖 And extends
her hand to the poor 📖 She is robed in strength and dignity
📖 And cheerfully 📖 faces whatever may come 📖 She opens her
mouth with wisdom 📖 Her tongue is guided by kindness 📖 She



tends to the affairs of her household 📖 And eats not the bread of
idleness 📖 Her children come forward and bless her 📖 Her
husband too and he praises her 📖 Many women have done
superbly 📖 But you surpass them all 📖 Charm is deceitful and
beauty is vain 📖 But a God-fearing woman is much to be praised
📖 Place before her the fruit of her hands 📖 Wherever people
gather, her deeds speak her praise.

The Woman of Valor logo artwork on our cover and elsewhere was designed by Jackie Olenick, www.jackieolenickart.com. The Convention logo artwork was created by Laura Bolter Design, and the painting is entitled "Gilded Tree of Life". Many thanks to both Jackie and Laura for sharing their beautiful designs.



PROGRAM

Janet Buckstein, WRJ Midwest District
President, presiding

Lorri Fishman, Sisterhood Temple Beth Israel,
Luncheon Chair

RHODA HAUPTMAN MEMORIAL AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE

Awards presented by Judy Lohr-Safcik, Chair

WOMAN OF VALOR AWARDS

Awards presented by Penny Shnay, Chair



WOMEN OF REFORM JUDAISM
stronger together



The **Rhoda Hauptman Memorial Award for Excellence** was created to honor the memory of Rhoda Hauptman^z¹, the first president of the Midwest Federation of Temple Sisterhoods (MFTS), now known as Women of Reform Judaism Midwest District. Rhoda served as president from 1956 to 1959.

The award is designed to acknowledge and publicize the accomplishments and achievements of individual sisterhoods and women's groups within our district. The outstanding award winners and honorable mentions that are featured in this booklet will offer ideas and spark the creation of other innovative programs.

The Awards have been separated into 6 different categories:

- Membership Programming
- Membership Engagement
- Social Action, Interfaith
- Social Action, Community Involvement
- Fundraising
- WRJ Projects

Mazel Tov to all our winners and honorable mentions!

The Rhoda Hauptman committee congratulates all of our entrants for their programming suggestions. We appreciate the sisterhoods/women's groups taking the time to submit their entries. We hope that you will read through these program submissions and ask those listed for further information. Please attend the workshop session immediately following the luncheon to hear more about the 1st Place winning programs.

Judy Lohr-Safcik, Chair

Carol Berger

Marlen Frost

Peggy Kipp

Nikki Levin

Membership Programming

1st Place

Silk Scarf Decorating

Beth El Sisterhood, Munster, IN

This silk scarf decorating program provided an opportunity for our sisterhood members to get together and enjoy doing a craft, and to include those that had no crafting ability. Everyone was provided with two silk scarves to decorate with Sharpies. We put the scarves into individual plastic sandwich bags with rubbing alcohol, and we rubbed the alcohol around in the bag. This smeared the ink all over the scarves, creating some beautiful designs.

The program was open to all, including sisterhood members and friends from other Temples; it was multigenerational in that grandmothers, mothers, aunts, and children all participated. We had preschool and school-aged children attending to make scarves for their mothers and grandmothers (for Mother's Day). We also had women making scarves for themselves or as gifts. Each person paid \$15 to attend, which entitled her to two silk scarves. Refreshments were supplied by the sisterhood. The only other expenses were for Sharpies, sandwich bags and rubbing alcohol.

Honorable Mention

Make It and Shake It

Beth Tikvah Sisterhood, Hoffman Estates, IL

The project provided an enjoyable, creative and collaborative activity to enhance Passover, and to enhance connections and friendships among our sisterhood members. The program involved a hands-on craft project to decorate plain tambourines to be used as “Miriam’s tambourines” during the Seder. They were decorated with a collage, using magazine pictures and Modge Podge. Our member artist and crafter, Linda Holland, provided instructions and continued guidance in the technique. Our members then used these tambourines at both our Women’s Seder and their home Seders.

After the participants created their collages, the leaders collected them in pizza boxes, let them dry for several days, and sprayed them with Modge Podge sealer. Supplies/equipment included plain tambourines, Modge Podge, Modge Podge sealer, foam brushes, ribbons to decorate, magazines for pictures, decorative scrapbook papers, stencils, scissors, and pizza boxes. Our cost was approximately \$250, for twenty people. Each member who participated had a lovely piece to use at her Seder and to display in her home. This activity fostered new relationships among members as we shared supplies, agonized over creative choices, encouraged each other, and chatted.

Jewish Baking

Women of Temple Chai, Long Grove, IL

The goal of this baking program was global outreach to the entire Temple Chai community, to build a bridge between people of all ages. We hoped to pass down traditions of Jewish baking from one generation to the next, and we tried to teach the history of the items baked. We felt that the true love of good food has no age limits.

The baking events were free to the entire community, and we shared our desserts together, along with a tea party. In addition, everyone took home a batch to bake in the oven.

We wanted an ongoing program that would continue throughout the entire 2018 year, and the three dates for the program were October 22, February 18, and April 22, all of which were well attended, with 20-30 people at each event. We spent about \$500.

Mah Jongg for Beginners

Sisterhood Temple Beth Israel, Skokie, IL

Our Mah Jongg for Beginners class was intended to present a fun and interesting introductory-level mah jongg class for Sisterhood TBI members and non-members who wished to learn the game. We also hoped to build community and to interest non-members in exploring our sisterhood. About 50 people attended the class; the majority of them were new players.

Written instructions were given to each player. We assigned three inexperienced players to each table, along with an experienced player, “the Maven”. One person ran a PowerPoint presentation while the class leader described the rules and how to play, and she also answered general questions. The Maven at each table demonstrated firsthand, and answered specific questions raised by the players at her table. After the presentation was completed, there was time for the attendees to play a game.

We had sign-up sheets for ordering 2018 Mah Jongg cards (through our Judaica shop) and to help those interested in forming their own groups. Sisterhood members donated the use of their Mah Jongg sets, cards, and snack tables, and current and old Mah Jongg cards, and volunteers helped set up the room and provided snacks. A fee of \$5 for each non-member was charged.

Enthusiasm was so great that we decided to have Mah Jongg “drop-in sessions” on occasional Sunday mornings, and these have been well attended. The program was very successful in building community among our members, in helping the older members get to know newer members, and in encouraging participation in Temple life.

Membership Engagement

1st Place

Movie Night

B'nai Jehoshua Beth Elohim Sisterhood,
Deerfield, IL

Our goal was to present a free, timely program to the community, attracting both potential and existing Sisterhood members. Attendees were instructed to see the film “RBG” (about Ruth Bader Ginsburg) prior to the event, and our new Executive Director Sally Sacher was invited to facilitate the discussion. Participants were promised an evening featuring wine, cheese, and discussion, and Sally recommended the book, Sister in Law: How Sandra Day O'Connor and Ruth Bader Ginsburg Went to the Supreme Court and Changed the World, by Linda Hirshman.

The event was promoted with a flyer, temple weekly emails, and many Facebook postings. We anticipated 25-50 would attend, but we were thrilled to welcome 120. It was a multi-generational audience, including men and many non-members of Sisterhood. The success has led to two additional events: “Won’t You Be My Neighbor”, facilitated by Educational Director Emerita Sandy Robbins and religious school teachers, and “Three Identical Strangers”, facilitated by Margot Anderson, MSW. Cost for wine and a facilitator gift was minimal; refreshments were donated by board members.

Honorable Mention

Jewish Identity Project

Congregation Emanu-El of Waukesha
Sisterhood, Waukesha, WI

The Jewish Identity Project was created for students in our Religious School. It focused on connecting students with their Jewish heritage, which is so important, as our students live in areas that have few Jewish families. Andi Patz, an artist and art therapist, became a co-chair of the Youth Education Committee (YEC), and she had a vision to marry an important religious school topic with a high-quality art project. Working with Sisterhood co-president Cindy Levy, Andi submitted a grant proposal which was accepted by the Sisterhood. According to Cindy, the Sisterhood welcomed the ability to work with others to “develop programs which will benefit the congregation.”

As coordinator, Andi worked with Cantor Martin, Religious School teachers, and parent volunteers, as well as Cindy. Through the project, our youth talked with parents and other family members regarding their Jewish past, including rituals, traditions and cultural ties. The highlight of the experience used the arts through a mask-making project to identify the concept of Judaism and its meaning to each child, and the students wrote about the experiences. Total budget was \$250.

Social Action, Interfaith

1st Place

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Event

Women of North Shore Congregation Israel,
Glencoe, IL

The goal of this January 2018 event was to engage with our interfaith partner, Stone Temple Baptist Church, in a celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr., at their church in Lawndale. WNSCI arranged to bring a group of 25 sisterhood members and other NSCI congregants to the Lawndale congregation, where we were able to tour the historic Temple. During the service, which lasted approximately 2 hours, there were speeches by Temple leaders and Chicago dignitaries. Our Cantor, David Goldstein, led the congregation in “Let My People Go.”

Once the service was complete, we participated in the Temple Youth Group’s Day of Service and were able to meet the congregants, some of whom we had met at NSCI the previous Friday night. Some of our participants made donations to the Temple. The event was inspired by an exchange between our senior Rabbi, Wendi Geffen, who has had a friendship with Bishop Derrick Fitzpatrick of Stone Temple Baptist Church for several years. Each attendee paid \$18; there was no budget. The event was meaningful to all who attended, men and women, a variety of ages. The plan is to continue these exchanges.

Honorable Mention

A Two-Part Interfaith Experience

**B'nai Jehoshua Beth Elohim Sisterhood,
Deerfield, IL**

The purpose of these events was to explore positive interactions between different cultural and religious groups. The whole set of experiences was predicated on the need for us to share space with the church that was buying our former building, while our new building was under construction; during this time our communities developed a mutual understanding and respect. We wanted to see this relationship strengthened by initiating a social and spiritual interaction.

On March 8, 2017, three generations of BJBE members reunited at the building where they worshipped, received their Jewish education, and celebrated life cycle events for a span of 44 years, from 1965-2009. Congregants reminisced about places in the building that were most meaningful to them. Then, on March 14, 2018, the BJBE community hosted the congregants of The Holy Apostolic Church under the guidance of Rabbi Karyn Kedar and our Sisterhood. Rabbi Kedar led the tour of the synagogue, sharing parts of our building that have deep spiritual meaning. After the tour, the two groups spoke of future programs involving spiritual discussions and perhaps joint social action projects. The entire budget was \$70, for a gift of a silver Kiddush cup for the church. The events bound our two religious communities together as we found, among other things, that the values and rituals of both groups have great similarities.

Social Action, Community Involvement

1st Place

Tikkun Olam Purim Crib Project

Congregation Emanu-El of Waukesha
Sisterhood, Waukesha, WI

The purpose of this project was to teach Tikkun Olam to the preteens in our Religious School, while providing donations of pajamas to the Hope Center, a Waukesha County organization which helps those in need. Many children have little choice but to sleep in their clothes and the greatest need for PJ's is in the winter months. February was a perfect time to purchase them as they were on sale at most stores. A portable crib was placed in the foyer for the collection, and it was decorated by the sixth and seventh grade class. It was made available for people to drop off pajamas up to size 14. All donations were delivered to the Hope Center for distribution for those in need throughout Waukesha County. The project was a total success. The Hope House coffers were filled to overflowing with pajamas to be distributed, and the preteens saw Tikkun Olam at work.

Honorable Mention

LuLaRoe Fashion Show Benefitting Breast Cancer and the BRCA Gene

Temple Beth El Sisterhood, Munster, IN

The purpose of this program was to raise money and awareness of the BRCA gene. We held a fashion show where members wore clothing from LuLaRoe by Jenny and Flo. An entrance fee was charged which went to Penn Medical Development, along with a percent of the sales. We held the program October 15, 2017, during Breast Cancer Awareness month. There was no needed budget. We raised \$515 for Breast Cancer research. We made money for our cause, while bringing awareness to our community.

Bernie's Book Bank

Women of Temple Chai, Long Grove, IL

Our goal was to donate gently used books as well as our time, to help underprivileged children in the area gain books. This social action opportunity was advertised through social media, in attempts to involve and engage some of our newer and younger congregants. We emphasized that this activity was open to all ages and that the person need not be a congregant to participate. Those attending were encouraged to bring children, spouses, parents, grandparents, friends and neighbors.

Bernie's Book Bank sources, processes and distributes quality children's books, to significantly increase book ownership among at-risk infants, toddlers and school-aged children throughout Chicagoland. Two out of three low-income children have no books of their own. Bernie's Book Bank is Chicago's largest provider of quality children's books. The organization works to give children 12 books per year for 12 years. One of our members volunteered with the book bank, and saw the opportunity for our congregation and Sisterhood to help the community. As a result, our congregants brought approximately 50 gently used books, and they spent two hours sorting and putting stickers on books for underprivileged children in our area.

Pink Shabbat & Pink Oneg

Sisterhood Temple Beth Israel, Skokie, IL

We hosted our first Pink Shabbat on Friday, October 13, 2017, in conjunction with the organization Sharasheret, which is an American not-for-profit organization, intended to support young Jewish women with breast cancer or a genetic predisposition to it. They were able to provide materials to us as well as a giveaway to hand out to those who attended. The purpose was to further educate our community about breast and ovarian cancer. We worked closely with the Director of Education, and by doing so, we knew we had the complete support of the Temple staff.

Our Shabbat service included a guest speaker from the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center, where she is a Breast Cancer Nurse Navigator. We also invited a congregant to share her own personal story of going through breast cancer. This was very moving, as she had for the most part been private about her situation before that evening. Men came in their pink shirts, and women came in pink blouses or tops. The evening ended with a fabulous Pink Oneg, including a Pink candy bar. We provided goody bags and told everyone to load up on treats. The cost of the event was minimal, as our Sisterhood members baked pink goodies, and most of the candy was donated for the candy bar. It was a very moving Shabbat, and as a result, we have decided to make this an annual event.

Fundraising

1st Place

Not Your Grandma's BINGO and Not Your Grandma's BINGO—The Sequel

Sisterhood Temple Beth Israel, Skokie, IL

Our 2017 Spring Fundraiser, “Not Your Grandma’s Bingo,” offered a new twist on the traditional game, substituting pop culture for standard numbers. The game was similar to Trivial Pursuit. The categories were Sports Figures, Famous Jews, Chicagoland, Food, Oscars, Broadway Tunes, TV Theme Songs, and Jukebox Hits. Entry was \$25 per person, which included two cards, appetizers, wine and desserts. Angels helped underwrite the event. The event grossed \$2204, and net profits were \$1910. Because of the success of the event, it was tweaked and repeated in 2018. A new category was added, Jews Who Rock—Jewish rock singers. We had net profits of \$1740.44 the second year. Our total budget was \$220.

Honorable Mention

Birthday Wishes

B'rith Sholom Sisterhood, Springfield, IL

The purpose of this project was to commemorate birthdays of Temple B'rith Sholom members, while financially supporting our Sisterhood. One of our members heard of this idea at a meeting and proposed it. We published a list of people who had birthdays each month—adults and children, alike—and people indicated the names of those to whom they wanted to send cards. We purchased the Tree of Life cards from WRJ, and thus fulfilled part of our YES fund obligation. Our only expenses, besides purchasing the cards, were printing and postage. The result: Everyone loved receiving the birthday cards, and the Sisterhood made approximately \$2500.

Theater Parties

Women of Shir Tikvah, Homewood, IL

The purpose of this program was to have fun enjoying current Broadway productions and revivals of Broadway productions, while raising money for the Sisterhood. We had been offering theater tickets at group rates since 2017, and we realized if we added a couple dollars to each ticket, we could benefit the Sisterhood also. We have seen productions such as “Beautiful,” “Hamilton,” and “War Paint” in downtown Chicago. We have also seen productions at Drury Lane Oak Brook and Munster’s Theater at the Center. Various groups, including spouses, friends and friends from other WRJ sisterhoods, have attended a half dozen or more shows. We usually have dinner before or afterwards, depending on the time of the production. So far, we have earned \$500 to add to our Sisterhood budget.

WRJ Projects

1st Place

Sisterhood TBI Centennial Celebration

Sisterhood Temple Beth Israel, Skokie, IL

This project began in the summer of 2017 and ended in June 2018 and was designed to commemorate the 100th birthday of the Sisterhood in a variety of ways. The goal was to make it meaningful both to Sisterhood members and Temple Beth Israel as a community. Both the Temple and the Sisterhood planned and held a series of programming and events to celebrate our 100 years. Many activities were held throughout the year, including Rosh Hashanah Reflections, development of a new Sisterhood logo, and creation of a special membership book.

One focal point was T'Fillot Nashim Centennial Weekend—January 12-14, 2018. Rabbi Marla Feldman, executive director of WRJ, was a guest for the weekend. Rabbi Feldman spoke on Friday night on WRJ and Social Justice, which was followed by an extended Oneg Shabbat, and she spoke on Saturday during the service, about Active Listening. Following services, a luncheon was held with invited WRJ District leaders. After lunch, Rabbi Feldman met with District leaders for a roundtable discussion. All activities occurred at TBI in Skokie. For many of these events, there was little or no cost. This was a successful year-long program.

A Woman of Valor

“Who can find such a worthy women whose value is far beyond jewels, rubies, and pearls and who smiles at the future?”

A Woman of Valor:

Speaks up for those who cannot speak for themselves,
for the rights of all who are destitute.

Speaks up and judges fairly;
defends the rights of the poor and needy.

Mention of A Woman of Valor, comes from Proverbs 31. In Hebrew, a “Woman of Valor” is *Eshet Chayil*. It was custom for a husband to recite the poem to his wife at the end of the week, and to be thankful for all his wife has done for him and his family throughout the past week. As Rabbi Joan Glazer Farber writes in an article on the WRJ website: “Yet as liberal Jews, we have struggled with this text. We are uncomfortable with its one-sided view of women, placing them within the limited sphere of the home, performing tasks that maintain family stability.”

The Women of Valor today are Women of Value. They are of value to their families, sisterhoods/women’s groups, congregations, communities, Judaism, and the world.

Today, they are honored and valued by the Women of Reform Judaism Midwest District and the sisterhoods/women’s groups they represent.

Barbara Bame

Reliable, Talented, Amazing



Temple Beth El Sisterhood

Munster, Indiana

Barbara has been the backbone of our sisterhood for years. For the past 20 years, she has held numerous positions. She keeps our books, she runs our kitchen, and she is just amazing!

Margaret Burka

Supportive, Committed, Wise



Women of Lakeside Highland Park, Illinois

Margaret Burka has been a member of Lakeside Congregation for Reform Judaism, and a member of Lakeside's Sisterhood (now Women of Lakeside) for 30 years. She has served as Women of Lakeside's treasurer since 2009, and she has assisted with many of the group's programs and fundraisers, including heading up the Women of Lakeside Book Group. Margaret has also been the temple librarian and has served on Lakeside's Board of Directors, as well as the Nominating Committee, the Long-Range Planning Committee, and the Religious School Committee. Singing in Lakeside's choir is another activity which Margaret enjoys. Margaret graduated with a bachelor's degree in Russian Literature from Lawrence University, and a master's degree in Library Science from the University of Chicago. She lives in Wilmette, Illinois with her husband, Mark. They have two grown daughters who celebrated their bat mitzvahs and were confirmed at Lakeside, as well as five grandchildren.

Gayle Deshong

Passionate, Organized, Confident



Temple Israel Sisterhood Minneapolis, Minnesota

Gayle takes on so many roles within Sisterhood, from co-managing the Gift Shop to chairing the Break Fast; it is hard to imagine how she does it. On top of that, she is co-chairing and helping to bring back our Mega Garage Sale. Gayle has also been instrumental in participating in and helping as needed with Kol Isha, our women's retreat, and Sisterhood Game Day. Gayle always says "Yes, I will" and "Yes, I can." We are truly grateful for all she does.

Penny Druker

Organized, Dedicated, Self-described Crazy Cat Lady



Women of Mount Zion Temple St. Paul, Minnesota

Penny is a highly valued member of our community. She has driven our annual Mount Zion Temple Garage Sale, which is our primary fundraiser and highly anticipated by the neighboring community. On average, we have raised from \$12,000-\$15,000 each year. She has also included various organizations from the surrounding community in the event. She has issued invitations to local women's shelters, Hennepin County Jail, and other organizations, to come shop for items needed by their programs or clients. Penny is a retired sergeant with the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office, and she continues her dedication to our community as a member of the Security Committee on the temple board.

Sandi Firsel

Encouraging, Dedicated, Supportive



Women of Temple Chai Long Grove, Illinois

Sandi Firsel fits the description of the Woman of Valor perfectly. She is always present and willing to help on every committee. She brings friendship and caring to everyone she meets and to all of her projects. As a leader, she was a past president of our sisterhood, and continues to hold a position year after year on our sisterhood board. Sandi was a past District president of WRJ and involved in WRJ North America. She started our Lilith Magazine program, and has connected our sisterhood to many great speakers. She worked non-stop last year on updating our By-laws. Recently, she came up with the idea and executed teaching Canasta to large groups of people, which brought in money to our sisterhood. Because of Sandi, canasta is an ongoing program offered to our members. Everything she does is in support of making Women of Temple Chai the best we can possibly be. She is our Woman of Valor who constantly goes beyond, constantly offers strength and help, and works diligently, helping us look to the future to ensure that our sisterhood thrives. She deserves the title of Woman of Valor.

Mary Fisher

Reliable, Imaginative, Epicurean



Temple Beth-El Sisterhood South Bend, Indiana

Mary Fisher is truly a special Temple Beth-El Sisterhood member. Mary has been active on many levels as a Temple and Sisterhood member. She brought her talents as an elementary school teacher to our religious school and taught the pre-kindergarten class for a number of years. Upon her retirement from her career as full-time teacher, Mary joined the Sisterhood Board in 2012. She served on our Sisterhood Board two terms as Membership/Financial Secretary. She is our immediate Past President 2016 -2018, inspiring us with her dedication and enthusiasm. Mary continues to show her devotion to Sisterhood and our Temple with positions on the Board of Trustees. When she's not busy with Sisterhood and Temple volunteering, Mary is actively involved with the many activities of her grandson, Kyler. Mary's culinary skills are above and beyond, and she is known for her beautiful Challahs, delicious briskets, desserts and homemade jams! Mary is our Sisterhood member we cherish and honor.

Alese Goers

Collegial, Devoted, Innovative



Beth Tikvah Congregation Sisterhood Hoffman Estates, Illinois

Alese Goers is an invaluable, long-time Sisterhood member, who has served with distinction at both the chapter and Midwest District level. Alese has served at both levels for multiple terms. She is responsible for the Beth Tikvah Sisterhood presidential succession method, where an experienced Co-President is paired with an incoming Co-President. Alese served a third year as President in order to institute this system, which has been a great success. Although Alese is currently a member of the WRJ Midwest board, she remains active at the chapter level in a fundraising position, as well as taking a second active role as Community Service Chair this past year. We proudly submit Alese Goers as our 2018 candidate for the Woman of Valor award.

Roslyne Heimann
Classy, Compassionate, Strong



**Sisterhood Temple Beth Israel
Skokie, Illinois**

Roslyne Heimann has been devoted to the goals of WRJ, to provide Jewish women with a voice in the important roles of their lives, their synagogue, their homes, and their country. She has led our sisterhood in achieving our goals during the years she was an officer and when she served as President for 3 consecutive terms. Roz also served as VP of Welfare and Social Action, founded the Past Presidents Council, served on numerous committees, and chaired the committee that established our Time Line from the formation of our sisterhood in 1918 onward.

She always stands for what she believes is right, even if it is unpopular with other members. Roz always steps up when called upon, and she helps in countless ways.

We are honored to bestow upon Roz Heimann, Sisterhood Temple Beth Israel's Women of Valor award.

Gloria Kaiz

Kind, Compassionate, Dedicated



**B'nai Jehoshua Beth Elohim Sisterhood
Deerfield, Illinois**

'No' is not part of Gloria's vocabulary. Whatever the job, she is cheerful and gracious. Her willingness to help others always comes first, and she welcomes everyone to whatever event is going on. Gloria is always honest with you, but never hurtful, and she is a great friend to many. She is truly beautiful inside and out, and she is an asset to our community.

Maureen "Reenie" Kavalor

Activist, Advocate, Caring



**CEEBJ Women of Emanu-El
Milwaukee, Wisconsin**

Reenie's professional career as a physical therapist provided opportunities to work with adults and seniors with disabilities. Through this career, she developed organizational and leadership skills that have been honed by serving on committees of the American Physical Therapy Association and the Wisconsin Physical Therapy Association. Since retirement five years ago, she has become active in the Milwaukee Jewish Community. At Congregation Emanu-El B'ne Jeshurun, Reenie has led the Salinsky Program to Feed the Hungry from its inception, currently serves on the Board of Trustees, the Investment Committee, manages the Baron Museum, and recently assumed leadership of the Social Action Committee. She continues to represent Tikkun Ha-Ir, thus far for 10 years, and currently serves on the Harry & Rose Samson Family Jewish Community Center Board of Directors. She also serves on the Jewish Community Relations Council as the JCC rep. Reenie enjoys gardening, and volunteers at the Jewish Community Pantry and at a local greenhouse. Along with her husband Gary, she loves spending time with their children, Becca (Chris), Deborah (Kevin), and Jake, and grandchildren Adelyne, Ian and Elliott.

Karen Kohn

Caring, Warm, Accomplished



Women of North Shore Congregation Israel Glencoe, Illinois

Our Woman of Valor, Karen Kohn, is a caring, warm, accomplished woman who joined North Shore Congregation Israel in 1994. She has been a WRJ Midwest Camp Chair and on the Board of Governors for OSRUI. She was president of our sisterhood, the Women of North Shore Congregation Israel, and a representative on our synagogue Youth Committee. Karen is currently Gift Shop Co-Chair, was Chairperson for the Taste of Jewish NYC Trip, and she is Chairperson for our upcoming Taste of Jewish Philadelphia Trip. She serves as Chairperson of the weekly Mah Jongg games that culminate in the Annual Game Day in June. When Karen is not spending time with her 3 children, all of whom attended OSRUI and are committed to their Jewish values, and 3 beautiful grandchildren, or when she is not on a buying trip for the Gift Shop, she is a regular at Friday night Shabbat services.

Judy Lohr-Safcik

Sister, Caring, Reliable



Women of Shir Tikvah Homewood, Illinois

There is not enough space to tell all of Judy's contributions and involvement in sisterhood over the years. Just a list of the positions she has held from committee chair, to president, to current treasurer, would take pages. She has sparked and encouraged involvement of others not only in sisterhood but also in the temple itself and WRJ Midwest District, where currently she is a Co-Area Director. Now, as a member of the WRJ North American Board, we are sure her talents and commitment will be evident. Road trips to other sisterhoods, events, or just visiting have become commonplace, and she doesn't travel alone, so more sisterhood members have become involved. She embraces others as family, which exemplifies the Sister in Sisterhood.

Sandy Villa

Industrious, Creative, Organized



Congregation Emanu-El of Waukesha Sisterhood Waukesha, Wisconsin

Sandy, CEEW Sisterhood Vice President, has organized, collected, and coordinated Tikkun Olam projects for many years throughout the Waukesha community. These programs include our High Holiday food drive, which results in dozens of grocery bags for the Waukesha Food Pantry. Sandy also helps with the Purim Club Project, which collects pajamas, underwear, toiletries, and socks for the Waukesha Women's Center and Hope House. She has also coordinated social action projects for WRJ Midwest, including this Convention's collection of items for victims of human trafficking.

Julia Weinstein

Inspiring, Dedicated, Warm



University Synagogue Sisterhood Los Angeles, CA

Julia Weinstein is a member of the Women of Reform Judaism Board of Directors where she currently serves as Vice President of Programs and Education. She served previously for one term as WRJ Vice President of Advocacy and Marketing & Communications.

Julia is a past president of University Synagogue Sisterhood in Los Angeles. In the WRJ Pacific District, Julia served two terms as Vice President of Marketing & Communications. Currently, Julia is a member of the Religious Action Center Commission on Social Action where she serves on the CSA Amicus Brief Committee.

As an attorney and a member of the bars of California and New York, Julia is an experienced litigator with expertise in conflict management and resolution. Julia has over 10 years' experience in the area of marketing and communications. She is familiar with a broad range of technology software, bulk email marketing platforms, website platforms and social media apps. She is married with 2 adult children.

WRJ Midwest District is privileged to honor Julia as our
Midwest District Woman of Valor.