

WOMEN OF REFORM JUDAISM CENTRAL DISTRICT



**WRJ Central District
Biennial Convention**

**WRJ CENTRAL DISTRICT AWARDS PROGRAM
2014 CENTRAL DISTRICT CONVENTION
COLUMBUS, OHIO
NOVEMBER 7-9, 2014**

WRJ Central District takes great pleasure in announcing the 2012-2014 Award winners.

These Awards recognize Sisterhoods for their talent, ingenuity and commitment to the Women of Reform Judaism. Winning programs and/or projects are stimulating, resourceful and successful whether within their Sisterhoods, Temples or greater communities. We hope you will take these booklets back to your individual Sisterhoods to use already proven and successful ideas for future programming.

Awards entries in Innovative Programming and President's Award are separated by size of Sisterhoods: small (1-99 members), medium (100-299) and large (300+ members). These Awards are funded by the Central District Baker/Egelson Recognition Fund, a combination of monies from the old District 10, District 11 and funds initially endowed by Anita Baker, August Egelson and other past presidents of District 9.

This year's nominations presented thoughtful and innovative projects and inspiring people. The awards committee congratulates all the winners and the Deborah Honorees.

Many thanks to the 2012-2014 Awards Committee for all their work and dedication.

The 2012-2014 Awards Committee:

Cindy Bolokofsky – Chair

Michelle Simpson – Vice President Marketing and Communications

Sheilah Abramson-Miles – Vice President Development and Special Projects

Alida Forshaw – Jewish Family Concerns

Marci Delson – YES Fund/ World Union

2014 AWARDS CATEGORIES

District Emerging Leader Award

One Sisterhood woman from within the Central District will receive this award. A Sisterhood may nominate a woman who exemplifies the strengths and has shown the skills, abilities, and willingness to accept a leadership role in her Sisterhood, Central District, or WRJ in the recent time frame.

Innovative Programming Award

This award recognizes a Sisterhood in each of the categories of small, medium, and large for an innovative, energizing, and original program.

Applicants not receiving an award will receive an honorable mention listing in this booklet.

Deborah Honor

This award recognizes one woman from each Sisterhood who has demonstrated extraordinary service and commitment to both Sisterhood and Judaism based upon criteria established by the Sisterhood. Each woman nominated by her Sisterhood to receive the Deborah Honor will be given a Deborah certificate.

President's Award

The President's Award theme is determined by the Central District President.

This biennium, the President's award recognizes a Sisterhood in each of the categories of small, medium and large for a program or event which focused on and celebrated the WRJ Centennial.

EMERGING LEADER

JULIE FLASHNER

TEMPLE KOL AMI
WEST BLOOMFIELD, MICHIGAN

Julie Flashner had been Temple Kol Ami's office assistant when she accepted her first Sisterhood general board position as Publicity Chair for 2012-14. What a perfect position for this "younger" Sisterhood member. During these past two years, our Sisterhood has revised our constitution, completely restructured our full board and begun working on a policy manual. Julie's 21st century vision has helped chart our course. She has spontaneously brought *focus and leadership* to our restructuring meetings and she has provided tremendous input at our policy meetings.

Julie is currently beginning her term as Communications VP, a new position that she had a strong hand in designing. This position incorporates all that the term implies: Recording and Corresponding Secretary, Publicity, Historian and more. Julie will oversee a communications team and together they will fully engage our Sisterhood in the realm of social media. We are so excited!

You have not yet met Julie, but you will soon. We are confident that, through her efforts, you will hear a lot more about our small but mighty sisterhood! We hope that you strongly consider Julie for this special honor.

INNOVATIVE PROGRAMMING AWARDS

SMALL SISTERHOOD

CONGREGATION SHIR TIKVAH – TROY, MICHIGAN

“RESTORE THE BEAUTIFUL”

In September 2012, CST Sisterhood launched our Restore the Beautiful initiative in conjunction with WRJ’s Fistula Project. Little did we know how this project would grow to enrich our sisterhood and our congregation. We began with screenings of the acclaimed PBS documentary, *A Walk to Beautiful*, which chronicles the experiences of rural women in Ethiopia who travel to Addis Ababa to find relief from their devastating childbirth-related injuries. We hosted several screenings, each of which was followed by a discussion of the health and social issues facing third world women and the ways in which we can help.

Our project consisted of a fundraising campaign to raise money to support women who need the life-changing and often life-saving surgery depicted in the film. In addition, we worked to assemble clean birthing kits to be distributed to women in rural settings to help prevent childbirth related injury and illness. One of the most inspiring aspects of the project was getting our congregation’s teens involved. They viewed the film and worked to assemble birthing kits as part of their religious school tikkun olam experience. One of our young congregants adopted *Restore the Beautiful* as her Bat Mitzvah project, collecting funds and items for birthing kits and attending sisterhood meetings to help assemble the kits.

In addition to collecting donations at the video screenings, we held a “virtual tea party” and invited our members to donate to the cause. We also designated half of the proceeds from our Family Fun Day Carnival and Silent Auction for the project, raising over \$600.00. In just under a year, we raised enough money to fund life-altering surgery for three women and sent two large cartons of birthing kits to be forwarded to women in need. In addition, we attracted a number of new members who were excited by this project and came to appreciate what sisterhood has to offer. The project raised awareness, brought together diverse groups within the congregation, created a bridge between our Sisterhood and WRJ and enables us to help women a world away.

MEDIUM SISTERHOOD

THE TEMPLE – TIFERETH ISRAEL WOMEN’S ASSOCIATION BEACHWOOD, OHIO

“THE POWER OF YET”

The Temple Women’s Association (TWA) of The Temple-Tifereth Israel Sisterhood’s program “The Power of Yet” was held on March 17, 2013 at the Executive Caterers at Landerhaven. Head master of Laurel School, Ann V. Klotz was invited to be the luncheon speaker. Klotz spoke about “The Power of Yet,” sharing its meaning. “YET” is just one little word, but it has the power to do incredible things. Her theme was empowering and inspiring women and girls to be the best they can be. She engaged their inquiring questions.

The goal for this special intergenerational program committee, headed by Leslye Arian and Lynn Millet, was to outreach to new TWA members to connect and engage with women and girls of all generations. The co-chairs added an advocacy component (women’s empowerment) to give a higher purpose to the event and reinforce the concept of bringing women and girls together. A large committee was created to fulfill the mission of sisterhood. Twenty-two women and girls were involved, all members of the Temple and many non-board members of TWA. About 30 young women and teens attended. The evenly age group distribution ranged from 11 to 92. The total attendance was 86, one of the largest attendances for a midyear TWA program.

The Mother/Daughter Hostesses Committee highlighted the intergenerational theme with five pairs of mothers and daughters greeting each person upon arrival. Reaching out to more than 40 mothers and teens was successful, inspiring them to bring other family members and friends. We also reached out to several temple groups, the senior Temple Chai Lifers, the Temple Young Associates, the TWA and temple general membership. Two attending rabbis were also involved in the program. Rabbi Stacy Schlein led the Motzi and Rabbi Rosie Haim gave the closing Benediction.

In keeping with the desire to include and support many aspects of the community, attendees were asked to donate arts and crafts supplies to help the JFSA Women’s Empowerment Group and Children’s Art therapy Program of the Hebrew Shelter Home. TWA board members provided initial support donating new arts and craft supplies. Guests attending the luncheon came loaded with wonderful art supplies, journals, music CD’s, etc. for all ages. Donations were accepted at the door by the hostesses who then filled the centerpiece boxes on the luncheon tables. To improve the awareness of the donation organizations, the registration table had literature about JFSA and Hebrew Shelter Home. In addition there were information cards about the shelter at each place setting. The Sisterhood collected 25 boxes of donated items which were delivered to JFSA. They were happily amazed by the quantity and quality of our donations. Our TWA also donated \$100.00 to Laurel School in honor of Ann V. Klotz.

The publicity for “The Power of Yet” program was distributed by email and placed at the front desk of the temple as well as on the newly created Facebook event page and in monthly temple newsletters. Emphasis on the event invitation was for “tweens and up,” intergenerational, and supporting women and children of the Hebrew Shelter Home with a Help fill the centerpieces, and a description of the Shelter home.

Our successful program created an intergenerational, all-inclusive program with young female students, young adults and seniors. The special spirit felt inspired members of the committee and attendees to become more involved in our TWA. One co-chair and several committee members have joined the board for the next two years. “LDor VDor” the generations of women who together bond in friendship and understanding can become a cohesive community, a Sisterhood, of support and involvement in our Temple.

LARGE SISTERHOOD

TEMPLE ISRAEL – WEST BLOOMFIELD, MICHIGAN

SPRING INTO SISTERHOOD

One evening, in late March, as we all waited anxiously for the snow to melt and the temperatures to rise, we invited our Sisterhood to a new event called, Spring into Sisterhood. We asked a local chef to come and do a cooking demonstration for us. She showed us a few different ideas for the main course and some side dishes. She made enough for us to have a lovely dinner topped off with marvelous desserts that our Sisterhood members baked and contributed.

Our real “main attraction,” however, was our Sisterhood! We invited new members (women who had become new members within the last year) to come as our guests free of charge. We began the evening with a glass of wine and an exciting game of Purse Scavenger Hunt. Everybody laughed and really enjoyed searching through their own purses and seeing what everybody else carries around! Each of our Vice Presidents took between one and three minutes to describe what her committees do and what events were coming up and how everybody could get involved. We prepared beautiful 8.5” X 11” colorful books that included descriptions of our ongoing programs, lists of pertinent names and phone numbers for particular events, and other pertinent information to make this a very useful handbook. We also included a coupon to be used in our gift shop, or for a program. So, after an evening of schmoozing, playing, and learning, each woman left with her own Book of Sisterhood.

PROGRAMMING HONORABLE MENTION

THE VALLEY TEMPLE – CINCINNATI, OHIO

For years The Valley Temple Sisterhood has met once a month on Sunday mornings during the religious school year, Sept. - May, and time frame of 10-12. The meetings have been going along just fine and this has been a super way to attract young mothers.

This year in looking at the two hour meeting time we felt we could be a bit more productive. We shortened the meeting time to one hour. The agenda covers everything it did previously, A-Z, opening prayer, thank yous, all departments, new/old business, etc. The discussion is much more business efficient and, zip...done. However, we do not lose the second hour of the program. That we now use for committee and planning meetings, and can be open for programming a speaker or other event. It has even allowed time for socializing. This new format has been met with overwhelming success and happiness. It has eliminated some bogged down discussions and more importantly, busy women don't have to schedule additional time in their hectic family and work week to meet with their committee. Their projects and goals are being completed face to face with email/phone follow up. One woman said she would now attend, and wasn't coming because she didn't like the long meetings.

To add to our fun and excitement, we offered the possibility of a summer meeting. We actually published two dates, with pot luck brunch. The first meeting had a very large attendance and with members we hadn't seen in a while. The second meeting is in August and the chatter has been very positive and the attendance is sounding very high. It has been astounding that these women were willing to come in for a meeting or two over the summer. The dedication and willingness to try new ideas and programs, shows the energy and excitement that abounds in our Sisterhood.

“HAVDALAH HOEDOWN”

INDIANAPOLIS HEBREW CONGREGATION – INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

The Temple Sisterhood of Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation hosted its first co-ed event in years: The Havdalah Hoedown at G.U.C.I. Corral (Goldman Union Camp). Almost 200 adults “gussied-up” in their western wear to enjoy libations from our “saloon” manned by IHC Brotherhood and mingled before we started our beautiful Havdalah service led by our Senior Rabbi and Cantor. After Havdalah, we chowed-down on a delicious chuck wagon BBQ dinner and then we square danced. Some sauntered out to the bonfire to enjoy s’mores, and the bonfire. The atmosphere was festive due to the red checkered tablecloths, cowboy hats, dancing, and spiced rum drinks, beer and wine from the saloon. This event appealed to a variety of members (and some guests) in all age groups and we had about 30 of our young adults attending. As with many of our programs, we co-branded programming with religious living for the Havdalah service and with social action for our request for school supplies as our Tikkun Olam element. We distributed these school supplies to the Coburn Place which houses women and children who are victims of domestic violence. Combining the Havdalah service with the social event and adding a social action component made for not only a very fun evening but also it was a great way to give back to our community at large.

The Havdalah Hoedown was so fun and well attended we had a second annual Hoedown in the fall of 2013, and we added Hayrides to the mix. And there will be a Havdalah Hoedown, Family Style in October of 2014.

“A LOOK BACK TO LOOK FORWARD”

INDIANAPOLIS HEBREW CONGREGATION – INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

On Sunday May 19th the Temple Sisterhood of the Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation of Indianapolis, Indiana members dressed in their favorite vintage clothing for lunch, tea, and shopping at one of Indianapolis’ oldest and most magnificent homes, The Propylaeum, for our spring general meeting. The Propylaeum, a club for Indianapolis-area women is a cornerstone of Indianapolis history. The Propylaeum was founded in 1888 and its mission today is “to emphasize a sense of civic responsibility and community services; to foster the love of literature, music, science and the fine arts: to provide women a social and cultural center”.

Upon arrival, everyone was greeted with a vintage libation and beautiful white gloves. Sisterhood members could then tour the historic home at their leisure. Our featured guest speaker, Ken Turchi a renowned author, spoke to us regarding the iconic LS Ayres & Company and its famous Tea Room (LS Ayres was established in the 1900’s and became the most beloved department stores in Indianapolis).

“MIDRASH & MARGARITAS”

TEMPLE EMANU EL – ORANGE VALLEY, OHIO

Our sisterhood implemented a program we titled “Midrash and Margaritas”, which takes place bi-monthly at members’ residences. Although we’re pretty light with the margaritas, and other such cocktails, we’re very strong with the Midrash portion. Our temple educator, Kate Milgrom, facilitates the discussions, which always focus on women in the Midrash. This program has proved to be successful with regularly high attendance, ranging from approximately eight to 15 women, and the conversation is always lively and interesting.

“A SISTERHOOD HARVEST/ SUKKOT CELEBRATION” TEMPLE KOL AMI – WEST BLOOMFIELD, MICHIGAN

Temple Kol Ami Sisterhood’s opening fall program was held on September 23, 2013. We included some traditions and spiritual elements as well as traditional foods (of course!). Our focus was *what we can do to make this festival memorable to Sisterhood members – remembering that most attendees no longer have children or even a sukkah at their homes.*

This is what we ended up doing:

- Centerpieces were cornucopias – a symbol of harvest and plenty. They were simple ones made out of brown paper. We filled them with apples, berries, leaves and gourds.
- We had refreshments that were traditional fall foods – apple bread, harvest based (zucchini, carrot, etc.) – all “stuffed.” People on the Sisterhood general board brought the food for everyone to taste, along with the recipe.
- Our cantorial soloist, Tiffany Green, put together a wonderful packet and program for us. She shared one of the traditions of Sukkot: inviting certain biblical guests into the sukkah. Along with “real” guests, religiously observant Jews also welcome seven heaven guests – the *ushpizin*, namely, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joseph, & David.
- Tiffany led us in a discussion of Sukkot from a feminine standpoint. She explained how the tradition of inviting guests has changed and grown. We discussed inviting Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, Esther, Deborah and Miriam. We talked about the traditional *ushpizin*, combining the men and women and we talked about how they have meaning for us today. We also thought about whom we may want to invite into our own personal sukkahs or homes.
- We concluded the evening in our temple’s sukkah with a song, a prayer, some explanation and (of course) a shaking of the lulav and etrog,

All in all, it was a wonderful way to combine our usual cooking program with tradition and meaning to all of us as Reform Jewish women. We left feeling more connected, which is a very good thing!

“A WOMEN’S SEDER” INDIANAPOLIS HEBREW CONGREGATION – INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

This event was perhaps the pinnacle of the year as we debuted Temple Sisterhood of Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation’s first annual “A Women’s Seder,” a joint effort between programming, religious living and social action. This event truly was an evening of collaboration, celebration, and community. Over 160 women enjoyed a very creative and fun Seder from the woman’s point of view. This Seder showcased our amazing women clergy, Assistant Rabbi Nadia Siritsky and Cantor Janice Roger, along with the music of our Rabbi’s wife, Tami Krichiver. This event was open to the community and was attended by not only IHC members but also many women from other congregations, daughters, mothers, sisters and friends throughout the area.

The evening was kicked off with Miriam Martinis as we mingled before we entered our lovely room which was magically illuminated with candles, with jewel toned raw silks draping the beautifully set tables. Each table was named for a Woman’s biblical character. Israeli music played between courses and lovely songs were sung by our Rabbi’s wife, Tami Krichiver. We had maracas at each person’s place setting, so they could play along. The music was so inspiring that, at times between courses, women danced around the tables.

Our Sisterhood president, Sonja Kantor, wrote a Hagaddah with references from a woman's perspective. In addition, we had a non-traditional Seder plate to represent women and the issues that are important to women today.

Middle Eastern food was served which added to the diversity of the evening.

As with most of our events, we asked our women to bring women's products to be donated to Popsie's Pantry, our local Jewish based Food Pantry, and prom dresses and accessories to be donated to Riley Children's Hospital for their annual Riley Cancer Prom as our Tikkun Olam projects.

Not only did we "show-off" our brilliant female clergy, and outstanding Sisterhood, we brought together women of many religions, ages and Sisterhoods.

This event is a huge undertaking and we had many Sisterhood members help do food and drink prep, room and table set up and clean-up, again helping us build community before and after the event. This spectacular event is now an annual program due to its popularity. We repeated the event in March 2014 with an astonishing 160 women in attendance. Our third Women's Seder is scheduled for March 2015.

Our President, Sonja Kantor spoke about the importance of our Sisterhood and our impressive past and a look to our future.

After Ken spoke, it was time for a fabulous "old time tea" and lunch which was served on tables set with gorgeous linens and silver platters. Each person had a different and very beautiful china tea cup.

When the lunch was over prizes were awarded for the best hat, best dress, and the overall best outfit. Then we were on to the shopping. We invited sisterhood members to sell and promote their arts, crafts, jewelry and other wares. Additionally, we drew our winners for our annual "That's The Ticket" raffle fundraiser.

It was a very lively afternoon where we were encouraged to go back in time and fun was had by all.

"WOMEN'S HEALTH"

INDIANAPOLIS HEBREW CONGREGATION – INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

Temple Sisterhood of Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation decided to focus on Women's Health at our Fall Annual General Membership Meeting. This delightful evening began with cocktails, canapés, and conversation followed by a brief Sisterhood meeting with the highlight of the program featuring an informative, honest and open program.

Julie Schnieders, WHNP, RN, is the woman behind the St. Vincent Hospital Health Advice line, she is one of Indianapolis' most visible and popular women's health nurse practitioners and is the face for the hospital's Women's Health Services. Julie spoke to us about preventative screenings (and recent changes) as well as managing menopause and our overall health related topics. She gave us real facts about the increased incidence of breast cancer in Jewish women, which was informative to us all!

After speaking, Julie opened up the floor for questions regarding any and all areas of women's health. What ensued was absolutely amazing. The women in attendance opened up, and instead of asking the typical guarded questions, began asking very real and personal questions, answers to which everyone benefitted from. The conversation lasted well into the night and so many of us (young and old) gained invaluable information about our current health and our future health.

As with most of our programs, we had a Tikkun Olam project....we asked our members to bring new women's undergarments. We offered these items in our "undergarment boutique" at our annual Valentine's Day of Pampering at the Julian Center for victims of Domestic Violence.

It was another successful program with over 120 in attendance!

"SOUPER BOWL SHABBAT"

INDIANAPOLIS HEBREW CONGREGATION – INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

In January 2013, the Temple Sisterhood of Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation debuted its first annual Chili Throwdown. It was so popular, we decided to try the same format with a soup competition for an event we called Souper Bowl Shabbat, which occurred the weekend before Super Bowl Sunday. This event was another cooperative effort between Sisterhood, IHC Brotherhood and IHC's Connections Committee with members from each group helping with the planning. It was a "soup off" contest held after Shabbat services. The purpose of the event was to bring together many groups to the temple to both celebrate Shabbat and build community and to raise money for a local food rescue organization, Second Helpings.

Contestants could enter soup in 5 different categories- beef, chicken, veggie, matzah ball and kids. Our Brotherhood was there to receive the entries and to set up the contest area so that all entries could be blind tasted. Everyone was able to sample the soups in one or all categories and then vote for their favorites. The ballots were tallied and prizes were awarded in each category.

While the contest was going on everyone could enjoy a full dinner lovingly prepared and served by Sisterhood. An old time favorite by everyone; grilled cheese sandwiches & tomato soup was served, along with salad donated from Olive Garden and Sisterhood's Bennie Silver's famous delicious homemade brownies to complete the meal. Over 115 people signed up before the event- actual attendance probably closer to 130 to 140.

This event, like many of our others, paired one of our social action project with religious living and it was a wonderful, casual, and relaxing community building event. And best of all.... we raised another \$2000 with awareness for Second Helpings.

"CHILI THROWDOWN"

INDIANAPOLIS HEBREW CONGREGATION – INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

What do you get when you mix a choice of two great Shabbat Services, an inspirational guest speaker, gospel choir and a celebratory Oneg Shabbat with the First Annual Chili Throwdown and Supper for over 200 people? The answer is one fantastic evening at IHC! And that's just what was "cooked up" on Friday, January 18th, a joint program created and executed by Temple Sisterhood of Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation, who partnered with IHC Brotherhood and the IHC Connections Committee. The key ingredients of this successful evening started with Sisterhood's Social Action VP Laurie Freeman and her committee's dream of a Chili Throwdown and Supper to benefit Second Helpings. Laurie and her committee planned and executed the event with the assistance of our executive director, clergy, volunteers and unbelievable custodial staff. After Nefesh Shabbat, we needed to quickly turn the social hall over to set up for the Chili Supper and we thank everyone who stayed to help do this in record time! Before the Chili Throwdown, both Shabbat evening services joined together in the sanctuary to delight in the beautiful sounds of the gospel choir who sang before

we listened to our guest speaker, Rev. Carey A Grady, Sr., Pastor of Bethel Cathedral AME Church speak about the life of Martin Luther King. After services, everyone enjoyed the Oneg Shabbat hosted by Sisterhood. Those who were staying for the Chili Throwdown were first able to sample and judge our Chili Chefs' creations, then dine on salad, cornbread, chili and desserts, all lovingly prepared by Sisterhood.

What was our "recipe for success"?

- The (16) Chili Chefs who submitted their chili and recipes to compete in 4 Categories: Beef, Chicken, Vegetarian and Hot & Spicy.
- Our (5) Chili Throwdown Winners
- Everyone who paid to come to the event. And to Sisterhood, Brotherhood and the Connections Committee for underwriting the expenses of the evening so that all money collected was able to go to Second Helpings. We are proud to report that over \$2000 was raised for Second Helpings who feeds the hungry through their food rescue and culinary training program, along with the donation of the centerpiece ingredients of pasta and sauce.
- Our (10) Sisterhood Chili & Cornbread Cooks led fearlessly by our Membership Co-VP's
- Our (30) Sisterhood Members who helped set up, run the Chili Throwdown and clean-up
- Sisterhood's Bennie Silver who single-handedly baked, cut and plated over 500 beautiful and delicious brownies and bars for our dessert table.
- Brotherhood & the Connections Committee for their assistance with the room set-up and Chili Throwdown tasting and for splitting the expenses.

As with many of our Sisterhood programs, we combined programming with social action and religious living for one incredible night at our synagogue.

"TORAH TALK"

INDIANAPOLIS HEBREW CONGREGATION – INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

Through surveys and interest forms, Temple Sisterhood of Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation quickly realized that more and more of our members were interested in Torah Study and Spirituality with a desire for on-going education. We approached our Senior Rabbi, Brett Krichiver who was delighted to create a program we now call Torah Talk, which started two years ago.

This (almost) weekly program takes place on Wednesday mornings and is open to all IHC members (even men) and anyone in the community who is interested. Our "scholars" come, grab some coffee or tea and a snack, provided by weekly volunteers, then we say our blessing over Torah and the study begins.

The Rabbi (with our input) selects the topics or Talmud or Torah portion we will study and lively discussion ensues.

One of the greatest things about Torah Talk is the diversity of our group and the opportunity for us to all get to know each other, therefore helping us nurture our IHC Community. It is a direct result of listening to what our members want and fulfilling our commitment to religious living.

Sisterhood remains the sponsor of Torah Talk, we provide funding and our Torah Talk Director, Susan Moss, who works with the Rabbi on dates, keeps the group apprised of dates and our treat schedule through weekly emails.

PRESIDENT'S AWARDS

SMALL SISTERHOOD

TEMPLE KOL AMI – WEST BLOOMFIELD, MICHIGAN

Temple Kol Ami Sisterhood chose to use the WRJ Centennial Year as an opportunity to launch a new activity that we hope will continue on past 2013. We initiated a “100 Mitzvahs for 100 Years” project. We started in October at our Paid-up Membership Tea. As Centennial Ambassador, Marcia Persin brought a heart shaped box to the Tea filled with 100 cards that had “suggested” mitzvahs written on them. These were acts of kindness, good deeds, helpful gestures and things that we often already do without being asked. I walked the box around to each attendee and asked each one to pick one or two mitzvah cards from the box and do what the card said. If the person happened to pick something that she simply couldn't or did not want to do, I let her put the card back in and pick again. Everyone was instructed to email Marcia back once they performed their mitzvah. Marcia asked them to tell her what they did and how doing it made them feel. It was my hope that by the end of the 100th year we would have 100 mitzvahs done and accounted for. We plan to compile the email messages into an on-line journal for all to see. Once we have 100 we will launch year 101 and catalog even more mitzvahs.

Everyone has embraced this and Marcia is receiving Mitzvah stories and reports often. Our “from the heart of Sisterhood” 100 Mitzvahs for 100 Years is a going concern. Because our Temple and Sisterhood are so committed to social Action and doing good deeds, this project is a natural.

PRESIDENT'S AWARDS

MEDIUM SISTERHOOD

TEMPLE BETH EL – BLOOMFIELD HILLS, MICHIGAN

Temple Beth began the celebration early by hosting the Central District Convention in the Detroit area. Our sisterhood members worked tirelessly with area sisterhoods to help welcome our out of area sisters. The Central District Convention in 2012 was the kick-off. Temple Beth El was a founding temple of WRJ and we were proud to celebrate our 110th year. Standing in support of Anat Hoffman and singing the Shema with our sisters was very humbling and then meeting Anat at Convention was amazing.

Once the official year began I hosted an afternoon tea in my home to celebrate and talk about what sisterhood has meant to them over the years. At our Annual luncheon we honored Lois Freeman who has been assistant treasurer for years as well as corresponding secretary. Sisterhood showed the video of WRJ's 100 years as well as a video of Temple Beth's 110 years. It was great reminiscing about the past and looking forward to what we were going to accomplish in the future.

In March we celebrated with a special Shabbat with other Sisterhoods around the globe. Our celebration ended with four of our officers attending the Biennial Convention in San Diego allowing us to participate in the music, worship and special events of celebration.

Inspired by the year I am proud to continue the good work of women around the world as I add my name to the list of Sisterhood Presidents before me.

PRESIDENT'S AWARD HONORABLE MENTION

CONGREGATION SHIR TIKVAH

TROY, MICHIGAN

On March 1, 2013 Congregation Shir Tikvah and its Sisterhood culminated two yearlong celebrations with a wonderful Kabbalat Shabbat Service commemorating WRJ's Centennial as well as 25 years of service from our wonderful rabbi, Arnie Sleutelberg. When it became clear earlier in the year that the rabbi's celebration service would have to be held on the date originally scheduled for Sisterhood's Centennial Shabbat, it looked like a problem. However, the more we thought about it, the more it started to look like a wonderful opportunity.

The service was lovely, with Sisterhood members sharing the bimah with Rabbi Arnie and Reb Eli Cohen, a long-time friend of the rabbi and Shir Tikvah. Both men spoke eloquently of Sisterhood's pivotal role in shaping our congregation and its ongoing contributions to Shir Tikvah and the wider community. In his d'var Torah, Reb Eli compared Sisterhood to the support beams holding up the community.

Because of the auspicious nature of the occasion, the service was extraordinarily well-attended. Participants were able to view the WRJ Centennial display in the lobby, featuring the poster set highlighting WRJ's 100 years of service and accomplishment. Many commented that they had a new appreciation for sisterhood and WRJ as a result of attending the service. Sisterhood also hosted an extra-festive oneg after the service that helped the celebration continue on into the evening. What started as a scheduling glitch turned into a memorable, once in a lifetime celebration!

THE DEBORAH HONOR

BARBARA J. SMITH

OHEB SHALOM TEMPLE - SANDUSKY, OHIO

During the 40 plus years I have known and worked with Barbara through Oheb Shalom Temple activities and functions, she has displayed true leadership, cooperation, kindness and eagerness at all times. Formally trained as a teaching professional, she has continued to educate herself in the Jewish religion, traditions, history and has shown all of us the true meaning of being Jewish in her everyday life.

Barb has held every office in our small Sisterhood and has handled each position with dedication, enthusiasm and the knowledge needed to execute any and all assigned tasks – she has been a wonderful example for new Sisterhood members through the years. She is extremely creative and has added such an artistic touch to so many of our temple functions and sisterhood gatherings; we are always anxious to see her next new creation.

Barb currently serves as President of Oheb Shalom Sisterhood, a position she has held in the past. She has always been willing to step forward and take on any responsibility or assignment needed to better our temple and sisterhood.

I wholeheartedly recommend Barbara J. Smith be selected for the Deborah Honor to represent Oheb Shalom Temple in Sandusky, Ohio.

EILEEN ISENBERG

TEMPLE ISRAEL - WEST BLOOMFIELD, MICHIGAN

Eileen Isenberg is a truly deserving recipient of the Deborah Honor. Eileen has worked on most of the committees that our Sisterhood has in place and then she took her seat on the executive board. About that time, for health and personal reasons, some of our executive members needed to leave the board. When Sisterhood needed a leader, Eileen agreed to be our President. She knew how important it would be to the organization and she cautiously, but confidently, became our leader! And now, as Past President for the last several years, she has become even more invaluable. Eileen is our Y.E.S. fund liaison, the chair person for the Book Fair that our

Jewish Community Center hosts annually and, most importantly, she is a willing volunteer. She rarely says no when asked to volunteer for an activity, drive someone to a meeting, bake for an event, answer a question, or represent Sisterhood at Temple and community events. Temple Israel Sisterhood is a better group because of Eileen Isenberg.

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JENNY BROH
THE VALLEY TEMPLE - CINCINNATI, OHIO

Jenny is one of the most incredible women you would ever want to meet. Her Sisterhood support is heartfelt and followed through in so many different manners. Her experience constantly teaches all of us how to be better and stronger together. Jenny reaches out and connects to all members, she volunteers for many projects, and when asked to do more, it is always a resounding yes. Jenny has been our Membership Chair for several years and out to each member directly welcoming them to our temple and Sisterhood. Additionally, hand writes many thank you notes, every chance she gets. Our Sisterhood is very fortunate to have Jenny be such an integral, active member.

ROYALYN VERT
CONGREGATION SHAAREY ZEDEK SISTERHOOD - EAST LANSING, MICHIGAN

Royalyn is the immediate past president of Congregation Shaarey Zedek Sisterhood. She served a total of three two-year terms as president, as well as two terms as treasurer. At present, she is the Vice President for Nominating on the WRJ Central District Board.

As the current Sisterhood President, I am nominating Royalyn for the Deborah Honor not only because of her accomplishments and devotion to Sisterhood, but also because of the inspiration she has been to me. It was largely due to the example set by Royalyn that I accepted the nomination of president. In some respects, Royalyn salvaged our Sisterhood, and it was important to me to keep up the momentum.

Royalyn was a very active, organized, and effective Sisterhood president. She was (and is) not afraid to speak her mind and risk disagreement, without it leading to discord.

Royalyn remains very involved as the immediate past president. In addition to always being available to assist me, she continues to assist our treasurer, prepares monthly Committed Fund reports, and is active in the budget-setting process as well as programming. She attends every Sisterhood program and meeting (and Friday night services), and helps in any way needed.

Royalyn is a huge promoter of WRJ and is active in the Central District. In addition to being on the district board, she regularly attends local and national conventions and has done for many years. Recently, she organized the card-making project at the kallah in Zionsville.

Royalyn's dedication to Judaism and the community is obvious through her involvement in Sisterhood, both locally and at the Central District level.

Beside her contributions to Sisterhood, Royalyn deserves the Deborah Honor simply because of the person she is. She is kind, generous, honest, and compassionate – a person anyone would want as a friend.

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ABBY POOK

TEMPLE KOL AMI - WEST BLOOMFIELD, MICHIGAN

Temple Kol Ami Sisterhood is thrilled to recognize Abby Pook as Temple Kol Ami's Deborah Award Honoree for 2013-14. Abby has volunteered tirelessly, and with all her heart, for the good of our sisterhood, our temple and our community. During her two terms as President and past two years as Immediate Past President, she has had her hands in everything from conducting cooking workshops and blanket-making projects to organizing "Abby's Outings," and so much more. Abby's leadership has set the bar high for everyone who follows her as President. She has been our Temple's Volunteer of the Year, and was recently recognized in the general community for her ongoing devotion and work on behalf of the Children's Leukemia Foundation of Michigan. Abby is a caring and giving person who doesn't know the meaning of, "no, I can't." No one is more deserving of this award than Abby!

KAREN SIM

ISAAC M. WISE TEMPLE - CINCINNATI, OH

Karen is a totally dedicated woman to Sisterhood and WERJ. Her devotion to the Temple and work of WRJ is unmatched, especially her love of the Y.E.S Fund. Karen has served on the WRJ Boards at the local, central and national level. She is always available for mentoring and providing Sisterhood and WRJ history. Karen's warm personality and smile make her an easy person to seek advice from. She is currently co-chairing our Opening Luncheon and continues to work tirelessly for WRJ and our Sisterhood.

REBECCA YOUNG

TEMPLE ADATH ISRAEL - LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY

Rebecca Young is very passionate about Sisterhood. She was President from 2010-2014 and attended almost every WRJ regional conference at that time. Rebecca also attended the URJ/WRJ Biennials in both 2011 and 2013. She stayed in close touch with the Rabbi and Temple during her Presidency to see how Sisterhood could better serve the Temple. Rebecca also introduced the Anita W. Mersack Woman of Valor Award in our Sisterhood to recognize

one woman each year who provides exemplary service on behalf of Sisterhood. Rebecca is an outstanding choice for the Deborah Honor!

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PAM RICHARDS
TEMPLE EMANUEL - ORANGE VILLAGE, OHIO

Pam Richards thought of and implemented our “Midrash and Margaritas” program, which takes place bi-monthly at members’ residences. Although we’re pretty light with the margaritas, and other such cocktails, we’re very strong with the Midrash portion. Our temple educator, Kate Milgrom, facilitates the discussions, which always focus on women in the Midrash. This program has proved to be successful with regularly high attendance, ranging from approximately eight to 15 women, and the conversation is always lively and interesting.

JUDY BERZOF
TEMPLE SHALOM - LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

Judy Berzof is our immediate Past President of Women of Temple Shalom (WOTS). She was a fabulous president of our Sisterhood – very organized and detailed, she led our Sisterhood with devotion, love and passion. As immediate Past President, she continues to be active as chairperson of our Mahj afternoons, mentors me as President, helps our in all committees and programs and is active in board discussions. Her love and dedication to our Sisterhood has not waned one bit! Judy is currently active in our WRJ Central District and serves on its board. Judy attends many WRJ Central District Kallahs and conventions; as well, she has attended the past two URJ Biennials. Judy Berzof is our most deserving Deborah Award nominee.

MOLLIE BIRNBAUM
TEMPLE ISRAEL - MARION, OHIO

Mollie has served as a Director on our Sisterhood’s Executive Board for many years. She has baked and set up onegs and helped to coordinate temple dinners. Choosing a career in nursing, Mollie has always been concerned for others. Even after retirement she continued to donate her

time with our Sisterhood's community services and projects such as making blankets for the Junior Service Guild to distribute to shelters and to those in poverty in our community. Mollie is a guiding light for us and her dedication has inspired us all.

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SUE KORN

CONGREGATION SHIR TIKVAH - TROY, MICHIGAN

Sue Korn is the immediate past president. Like many Sisterhoods, ours underwent a succession crisis three years ago. At that time, Sue was in her first term as our board secretary. Before that she had served ably on the bylaws committee and volunteered for various projects and events, but she was new to the board. Not only did Sue agree to accept the nomination for the presidency, she worked with the past presidents and other board members to implement a shift in how responsibilities are distributed on the board. These changes made our board more dynamic and efficient, creating a more manageable job description for our president and making the job less intimidating for future leaders. In addition, Sue brought in several of her friends to serve on the board and help in other roles. This influx of capable, seasoned volunteers gave our Sisterhood the shot in the arm we were looking for. The result is a revitalized board that is functioning well and looks as if it will continue to do so into the future.

Sue did not rest on her laurels as a seasoned volunteer. She made it a point to continue to learn and grow on the job. She traveled to Washington DC for the WRJ Biennial in 2011 and came back more energized and inspired than ever. Out of this experience grew one of our Sisterhood's most successful initiatives, the Restore the Beautiful campaign that helped educate our congregation about women's health issues in the developing world as well as raise funds and collect supplies for women in need. This important project also helped attract new members and reinvigorate others who had become less involved in Sisterhood activities.

In addition to her service to our Sisterhood, Sue is active in the greater Detroit Jewish community. She is a regular participant in various educational and cultural groups and volunteers for many events including Bookstock, a huge event that raises money for many nonprofit organizations. She has also served as a dedicated board member and volunteer for Hadassah. Sue and her friend, (Sisterhood's current secretary) Sandy Gruca were Hadassah of Greater Detroit's Love of a Lifetime honorees this past spring for their distinguished service. Sue could have easily turned down the job of Sisterhood President, but we are very glad she didn't. Thanks to her willingness to share her time and expertise with us, our Sisterhood is stronger, with an even brighter future ahead.

HARRIET COOPERMAN
TEMPLE BETH EL - BLOOMFIELD HILLS, MICHIGAN

Harriet is constant force behind our sisterhood. She is always ready to help wherever she is needed. Her involvement in sisterhood includes putting together our sisterhood cookbook, spa day, donor luncheon boutiques, diaper drive, Chanukah toy drive and our most recent Wine and Chocolate fundraiser with an auction to name a few. Our Wine event last year enabled us to supply 5,360 meals in our community. Harriet is currently the chair of the event this year as well. She loves to bake, sew or make chocolates and is always in the kitchen making something to be donated. Harriet has served on the Sisterhood board as Vice President in different areas as well. We are very fortunate to have such a dedicated woman to serve on our Sisterhood Board.

EMILY AUDRA FLEISHER
TEMPLE BETH SHALOM - HUDSON, OHIO

Emily has consistently displayed her dedication to our Sisterhood over the years through her volunteer efforts and most recently over the past year she has stepped in as our Editor in Chief to process a weekly article for TBS's newsletter to promote Sisterhood events. The "Sisterhood Schmooze" has been a critical tool to get the word out on upcoming Sisterhood events, to call attention to issues and celebrate success; Emily's creative writing skills have made the Sisterhood Schmooze a destination for readers. In addition to her wonderful writing talent, Emily has a wealth of suggestions to help improve our Sisterhood and she has used this tool to keep her Sisterhood presidents in line and our calendar on track, for that we are both grateful.

MARILYN MENDELMAN
TEMPLE ISRAEL- COLUMBUS, OHIO

Marilyn Mendelman moved to and immediately became involved with the Women of Temple Israel. She did this eagerly and with both feet, by agreeing to be our Corresponding Secretary. She has always been more than our secretary, coming to the aid of each and every board member whenever needed. This past year, Marilyn suggested that we revive a fundraiser that had previously been one of our largest, a Good As New Sale. She has capably (and calmly) steered a small group of volunteers through a year-long planning process, that hasn't always been easy, but brought it to a wonderful end. Recently, she has also volunteered to run the day-to-day operations of our Gift Shop and while she not yet officially started on this, is already full of ideas and a passion I haven't seen in quite a while.

Marilyn has dedicated innumerable hours to the Women of Temple Israel and the betterment of the Temple Israel community. Whether it is to serve on yet another committee, jump in to provide decorations for an event, send more correspondence out for sickness, death, simchas and donations or provide encouragement for our new members, Marilyn is an integral piece of our puzzle. We would simply not run as well or as efficiently without her. Her dedication, creativity and humor serve to raise the level of everything the Women of Temple Israel do. On top of all of this, she is a stalwart volunteer of the Temple itself and is always looking out for potential new members and spreading the message about our organization. Her various Temple roles, provides her with an excellent position to be a conduit to us and the rest of the Temple.

CINDY CRONIN
THE VALLEY TEMPLE – CINCINNATI, OHIO

Cindy Cronin has been an outstanding support and mainstay of our Sisterhood. She has been willing to do any task asked and chaired many departments and events. Cindy coordinated the Sisterhood picnics for our religious school and rummage sales all while running the gift shop. Currently Cindy is in charge of the gift shop and is the Sisterhood Treasurer. Cindy is an amazing person and is deserving of this honor for all of her hard work, and she does it all without fanfare.

BONNIE FOSTER
INDIANAPOLIS HEBREW CONGREGATION – INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

Temple Sisterhood of Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation is proud to nominate Bonnie Foster for the WRJ Central District Deborah Honor.

Bonnie served as our President from 2010-12 and demonstrated her leadership abilities and her commitment to Judaism in many ways. Bonnie led our sisterhood during a time of rabbinical transition at our temple. She maintained a strong community within our Sisterhood and dedicated many hours to the process of change. Bonnie's leadership enabled our Sisterhood to grow not only in numbers but also in innovated programs and thinking. As Past President, Bonnie has remained active. She serves on our policy, by-laws committee and budget committees, she chaired our nominating committee and even though she was eligible to leave the board (after fulfilling her two year past president commitment) has graciously agreed to remain on the board and to co-chair our YES Fund committee. Bonnie is a regular gift shop volunteer, often taking shifts for those who need to switch or cancel. She regularly attends our weekly Torah Talk with our Rabbi and always adds thoughtful comments to our study. Bonnie also worked very closely with our synagogue's Early Childhood Director in an attempt to improve some issues there. Bonnie is always a positive sounding board, both for Sisterhood and IHC issues and provides thoughtful and reasonable advice when needed.

Bonnie's unwavering dedication to Sisterhood, IHC, her personal and her family's Judaism are just some of the reasons we want to honor her with the Deborah Award.

WRJ Central District 2012-2014 Board

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Immed. Past Pres./Nom. Ch.	Hilda Glazer*	Beth Shalom
Vice Chair Nominating	Royalyn Vert	Congregation Shaarey Zedek
1st Vice President	Sandy Adland*	Temple Beth Shalom
VP Dev. /Spec.Projects	Sheilah Abramson-Miles*	Temple Shalom
VP Marketing/Communication	Michelle Simpson	Congregation Shir Tikvah
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Corresponding Sec.	Jan Goldstein	Valley Temple
Membership Sec.	Karen Smith	Temple Beth El
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Area Director—Southwest	Susan Glazer	Temple Shalom
Area Director—South	Liz McOsker*	Isaac M. Wise Temple
Area Director—Central Ohio	Rachel Lambermont*	Beth Tikvah
Area Director—West	Carol Anderson	Temple B'nai Israel
Area Director—N. Ohio	Trina Miller	Anshe Chesed Fairmount Temple
Parliamentarian	Elaine Frayman	The Temple-Tifereth Israel
Historian	Lisa Semen	Congregation Shaarey Zedek
Affiliate Development	Judy Berzof	Temple Beth Shalom
Speakers Bureau	Bernice Goldman	Anshe Chesed Fairmount Temple
Awards	Cindy Bolokofsky	Temple Beth El

Website Dev Manager	Hillary Handwerker*	Temple Beth Emeth
Jewish Family Concerns	Alida Forshaw	Shomer Emunim
YES Fund/World Union	Marci Delson*	Temple Israel
Convention Facilitator	Beth Lande	Indianapolis Hebrew Cong.