

Helping Hand Award Winners 2006

Date: 7 October 2006

אם אין אני לי מי לי וכשאני לעצמי מה אני ואם לא עכשו אימתי


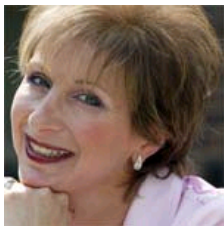

If I am not for myself, who will be for me? But if I am for myself alone, what am I? And if not now, when? (Ethics of the Fathers 1:14)

Norwood Announces 2006 Helping Hand Award Winners

Norwood this week announced the names of the people who will receive a **Helping Hand Award** at the charity's Annual Dinner on **6 November**. The Helping Hand Awards, chaired by Gill Fenner, highlight the 'unsung heroes' in our community by recognising exceptional dedication and commitment in a caring capacity to a Jewish person or family, by an individual or group over a significant period. **Judy and Arik Meshulam, Shelley Gilbert and Michael Levin** will receive awards in recognition of their outstanding contribution to the Jewish community over a significant period of time. This is the fourth Helping Hand Awards ceremony that has taken place under the auspices of Norwood.

The three recipients were selected by the Panel from nominations received nationwide. Each will be presented with a formal commendation certificate together with a cheque donated specifically for this purpose. In addition, all those nominated will be recognised and receive official commendations. The Helping Hands Awards, whilst held under the Norwood umbrella, is completely independent of Norwood and is self-financing, due to the exceptional generosity of its sponsors.

Click on the photos for details of each award winners...

		
JUDY & ARIK MESHULAM	SHELLEY GILBERT	MICHAEL LEVIN

HELPING HAND AWARDS 2006

HONOURING CARE



In association with:
NORWOOD
CHILDREN & FAMILIES FIRST

Helping Hands Awards selection committee

Chairperson, Helping Hand Selection Panel

Gill Fenner

Honorary Patrons

The Lady Jacobovits

Lady Elaine Sacks

Selection Panel

Dr Arnon Bentovim

Consultant child and adolescent psychiatrist. President of Relate

Norma Brier

Chief Executive of Norwood

Gill Fenner (Chairperson)

Founder of Helping Hand Awards

Michael Freedland

Broadcaster, journalist and author

Sally Friend MBE, JP

Jeffrey Greenwood

Solicitor, ex-chair of Jewish Care and senior partner of Nabarro Nathanson

Honorary President

Lord Janner of Braunstone QC

The Lady Levene

Trustee and Chair of Development at The Jewish Museum

Her Hon. Judge Valerie Pearlman

Circuit Judge, Deputy High Court Judge in the Family Division

Dr Jeremy M Pfeffer

Consultant psychiatrist

Esther Rantzen CBE

TV producer and broadcaster. Founder of 'Childline'

Astra Temko

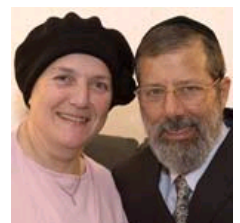
Psychotherapist

The three recipients are:

JUDY & ARIK MESHULAM

Judy & Arik Meshulam have four children. They have been respite foster carers for Norwood since 1996. Six years ago, they agreed to provide an emergency two-week placement for Rutie, a ten-year-old Chassidic girl with Rett Syndrome who was doubly incontinent, had little mobility and no verbal skills. Her mother had died, leaving her father alone with 7 children. When he re-married and moved abroad, Rutie was placed in a residential home. Her Local Authority contacted Norwood when the institution was closed down. We approached Judy & Arik who immediately opened their home and provided her with a safe, secure and loving family life.

Judy & Arik have become Rutie's long-term foster carers. Rutie is now 16 years old and, as expected, her condition has deteriorated considerably. In 2002, Rutie needed two spinal-fusion operations to help with her scoliosis and now she has a gastro tube in her stomach. Judy was almost continuously by Rutie's side during the many days and nights at the hospital giving her the care and encouragement she needed to



aid her recovery. When she was unable to be with her, Judy arranged for friends to sit with Rutie so that she was never alone.

Although she is tube-fed, Rutie is able to have small amounts of food orally. Judy is determined that she should experience the pleasure from tastes of different foods and lovingly sits with Rutie at least once a day to give her a meal. This takes over an hour. Despite her profound disabilities, Rutie is a much loved member of the Meshulam family and she clearly adores Judy & Arik, their children and grandchildren. Non-verbal, her eyes light up when they enter a room and she breaks out into a big smile. Last year, the family home was even extended, incorporating a purpose built ground floor facility which made room for the special equipment that Judy uses when attending to Rutie's personal care needs.

The family is totally devoted to Rutie and to her wellbeing. They happily welcome her extended family into their home when they come to visit from overseas and Judy regularly takes Rutie to visit her children and grandchildren in New York. Each year she also takes her to Canada to visit her father, siblings and step-siblings. Judy has a wicked sense of humour and incredible energy. In addition to caring for her family, Judy works full time for a residential home for Jewish children with disabilities. She and Arik are an inspiration to us all.

***Service-user names have been changed to protect client confidentiality.**

SHELLEY GILBERT

Shelley Gilbert does outstanding work for the benefit of the Jewish and wider community. She has spent her working life caring for others, initially as a Citizen's Advice Bureau Advisor and Manager. Fifteen years ago, she re-trained as a counsellor, and joined the Jewish Bereavement Counselling Service. Here, during the course of training other counsellors and initiating innovative schemes to expand her work, she became an accredited counsellor for bereaved children.



For the last six years Shelley has run her own private practice, counselling troubled children and young people. She aims to raise understanding of the bereavement issues that children face and to improve available resources. Three years ago she set up a registered charity called the Grief Encounter Project.

Her own parents died when Shelley was very young and she has used her personal insight into the issues facing bereaved children to write a unique children's book entitled 'Grief Encounter' which was published in 2004. The profits are donated to bereaved children. Shelley was also a volunteer counsellor for Place To Be, providing emotional and therapeutic support for children in primary schools. She runs therapy groups, sees children on a one-to-one basis and operates a service for bereaved young people and children and their families in need.

Shelley is a member of Woodside Park Synagogue and is actively involved with the children's service, kiddushim and supporting the elderly in her community. She and a friend set up and ran the Woodside Park Bereavement Service, the success of which led to the widely acclaimed Woodside Park Support Network, which is recognised as a beacon of good practice within the community and beyond. The United Synagogue invited Shelley to join them in the creation of the US Cares Advisory Committee. She is still involved in this project and regularly gives training and workshops to other communities covering best practice and other bereavement issues. Shelley's contribution to the community is truly exceptional.

MICHAEL LEVIN

Michael Levin's love of Judaism permeates everything around him. From the moment he arrived, he brought a beacon of light to Ravenswood Village in Berkshire. He has been Norwood's Cultural Advisor for the past 7 years, during which time his tireless drive to engage, support and offer a spiritual and meaningful experience to the organisation's service users, many of whom have profound and multiple learning disabilities, has been inspirational. Michael demonstrates outstanding commitment and dedication. He leads by example and is always on hand to offer unwavering support and encouragement to Norwood service users, staff and volunteers, allowing them to develop an understanding of, and respect for, the Jewish way of life.



Michael organises the most wonderful events for all of Norwood's residents with unparalleled enthusiasm which encourages the service users to celebrate the cycle of Shabbat and Festivals in the Jewish calendar, enabling them to live and experience their rich cultural heritage. His brand of Judaism is all encompassing – he is absolutely committed to ensuring that every resident he has contact with, has a positive and enlightening experience, one that they enjoy and appreciate.

Amongst Michael's many notable achievements have been the links that he has developed with Jewish schools and synagogues in London and the South East. The ties that have been established have afforded pupils at the Annie Lawson School, and adults living at Ravenswood Village and in Norwood's London Homes, the opportunity to develop lasting friendships with their able-bodied peers. In so doing, he is helping to abolish the stigma which is still so often associated with disability. Michael is a unique individual whose generous actions enrich the lives of hundreds of people on a daily basis. He is a man of rare quality and his compassion, kindness and zest for life, know no bounds.

For further information please contact **David Wosner**, Public Relations Officer at Norwood on 020 8420 6942 or email david.wosner@norwood.org.uk

©2012 Norwood

Norwood Ravenswood is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales under no. 3263519 and registered as a Charity no. 1059050. Registered office:
Broadway House, 80-82 The Broadway, Stanmore HA7 4HB