

The Brenda and Samuel Gewurz Award for Excellence in Jewish Education

Objectives

Brenda and Samuel Gewurz have established an award fund to show appreciation to educational professionals and demonstrate their importance in the field of Jewish education. The award will be presented to two professional educators each year and is to be presented at the annual meeting of FEDERATION CJA.

A professional educator, hereto called "educator" is defined here as a teacher, an educational administrator (i.e. principals), educational agency director or educator, etc. It is an individual and not the institution.

The Montreal Jewish Community recognizes the importance of formal Jewish experiences such as Jewish elementary and high schools and afternoon schools, as having a significant impact on young people and their connection and commitment to Judaism. By establishing this prize, the Gewurz family is demonstrating their commitment to those educators whose job is the education and transmission of Jewish values and ideas to young people and adults in the Montreal Jewish Community. In recognizing the excellence of educators in Montreal, the family hopes to strengthen endeavors in education that perpetuate the identity and continuity of the Jewish people.

The Award

It is recommended that there be two awards: one for educators with less than five years of experience and one for educators with more than five years of experience. In this way, young people who have chosen this career will be recognized for their efforts and furthermore, it will encourage the nomination of a greater number of candidates.

The award will have a monetary cash value. It is recommended that the annual award for educators with less than five years of experience be \$1,800 and for educators with more than five years of experience; \$3,600.

NB: It is preferable that there is no sharing of the award, i.e. nominations should be submitted for individuals and not groups of individuals.

In addition, the educational institution of each award recipient will receive a sum of \$1,800. This money will be used at the direction of the recipient for either:

- a) A special project in the school

- b) The purchase of specific equipment or item of the school;
- c) The sponsorship of a speaker for professional development or other lecture series of interest to the school population or teachers.

It is the intention that the \$1,800 awarded to the school not be used for the general operating budget but for the special items listed above.

Awards Panel

The Awards Panel will be comprised of between 5 and 8 members. The initial members of the committee shall be:

- At least one member of the Gewurz family;
- At least one member from BJEC;
- Three members to be appointed by FEDERATION CJA with the approval of the Gewurz family representative;
- The two most recent recipients of the award will sit on the committee the following year to help select the new winners.

It would be preferable to have at least one Sephardic member on the Awards Panel from amongst the members listed above.

Criteria

Any educator who is actively involved in transmitting Jewish heritage and values is eligible to submit an application for the Gewurz award. This includes, but is not limited to individuals who work in the following institutions:

- Jewish day schools (this would include non-Jewish teachers as well)
- Congregational schools/Supplementary Schools
- Central agencies of Jewish education (such as BJEC)
- Teacher resource centres

The Awards Panel should primarily consider nominees who:

- Show initiative in creating transferable programs or ones that have broader impact;
- Have a sphere of influence that is either wide or deep;
- Demonstrate creativity and introduce innovative programming;
- Show leadership and commitment;
- Can be a catalyst for change;
- Show communal dimensions or reflects communal values (e.g. does the nominee or his/her program make their institution a better place in the community).

Application Process

Applicants will be nominated by their peers. An application form will be completed and submitted to the Award Committee. The Committee will review the applications and make a decision based on these submissions.

The information submitted should include:

Information for the Nominee

- Nominee's name
- Nominee's organization
- Professional title
- Mailing address
- Telephone number
- E-mail address
- Years of service in Jewish education

Information for the Nominator

- Nominator's name
- Nominator's organization (if applicable)
- Professional title
- Telephone number
- E-mail address
- Relationship with nominee (professional or otherwise)

The Application will include a statement written by the nominator describing the nominee's outstanding contributions to the field of Jewish education and why the candidate would be a worthy recipient. This statement should not exceed two pages.

The nominator will also include two letters of support with the application. Each letter of support shall not exceed one page. It is preferable that the application and these letters of support relate to the criteria outlined above.

It should be noted that all files will be kept for a period of three years.

Marketing of the Award

The Gewurz family would like to encourage the greatest number of applications from qualified individuals. Therefore, money will be put aside in the award fund to allow for advertising in local papers, schools and Jewish institutions.

BJEC will promote the award through the Association of Professional Educational Leaders (APEL) and will encourage all appropriate individuals to submit nominations.

Long-Term Plan for the Award

The award will be granted in the manner set out above for a period of 5 years. After five years the committee and the Gewurz family will meet to evaluate the success of this program. At that time, the committee will evaluate the value of the award in achieving the general objectives and the desirability of its continuation in the present manner or in a modified form.

In addition, the family and committee will look at other possibilities such as establishing a mentoring program where the recipients could serve as mentors to other educators in the community.

The family will finance the award for the first five years and will endow the award at the end or within the five years.

Submissions

Completed applications must be mailed to:

Bronfman Jewish Education Centre
Attention: Helene Kaufman
1 Cummings Square
Montreal, Quebec, H3W 1M6

or e-mailed to helene.kaufman@bjec.org.

Deadline: June 2, 2008