



Springfield Jewish Community Center
Neal Webber Building
1160 Dickinson Street | Springfield, MA 01108
SpringfieldJCC.org | 413.739.4715

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Seth Stutman, Membership and Marketing Director
413.739.4715 | sstutman@springfieldjcc.org

Summer Camp Scholarship Fund Established in Memory of Rabbi Mark Dov Shapiro

SPRINGFIELD, MA (December 7, 2020) – The Springfield Jewish Community Center has established the Rabbi Mark Dov Shapiro Memorial Fund for Social Justice to help lower-income families send their children to summer camp at the Springfield JCC. The fund honors the life and legacy of Rabbi Mark Dov Shapiro, a beloved spiritual leader who passed away in July 2020.

Springfield attorney Gary Weiner initiated the endowed scholarship as a meaningful way to recognize Shapiro's passionate commitment to social justice and ensure that the J's summer day camp is accessible for children of all backgrounds.

"Mark Shapiro was someone who continually crossed boundaries, spiritually and socially, to strive for inclusion of all individuals, whether they were Jewish or not," said Weiner. "In setting up this scholarship, it is my way to, hopefully, be part of the solution as we all try to bring people together of different faiths and cultures."

"The JCC has a wonderful summer camp that has meant so much to my family," said Marsha Shapiro, the Rabbi's wife of nearly 48 years. "This fund is a special way to honor Mark and will ensure the maximum number of kids have access to camp programs – it's really about having the most impact possible."

Rabbi Shapiro served as spiritual leader of Sinai Temple in Springfield for 28 years. He was an active member of the Interfaith Council of Western Massachusetts and served as the first "rabbi in residence" at Christ Church Cathedral, the seat of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts.

"Through his dedication to civic learning and social justice causes, Rabbi Shapiro touched the lives of countless individuals in our area," said Michael Paysnick, Springfield JCC Chief Executive Officer. "This fund will provide even more children with an engaging summer camp experience, and will continue the Rabbi's lasting impact for generations to come."

Anyone interested in contributing to the Rabbi Mark Dov Shapiro Memorial Fund for Social Justice may do so by contacting the Springfield JCC at 413.739.4715. Online donations can be accepted at the J's website (springfieldjcc.org) or checks can be mailed to the JCC, 1160 Dickinson Street, Springfield, MA 01108.

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The Springfield Jewish Community Center (Springfield JCC; the J) enriches community and nurtures wellness through physical, intellectual, social and spiritual programs and services. The J is guided by Jewish values, welcoming and respecting people of all abilities, ages, backgrounds, identities and faiths.