



## Greenburgh Hebrew Center

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### Tribute to **Philip E. Karmel**, Esquire

Heschel in a wonderful essay entitled *The Essence of Spiritual Living* writes, “Indeed, we must be open to the remote in order to perceive the near. Unless we aspire to the utmost, we shrink to inferiority.” This evening it is my pleasure to pay tribute to Phil Karmel who has shown his vision both in the legal world and as an accomplished servant of our community, our *Kehlich Kadosha*, Greenburgh Hebrew Center and has never lost sight of those people and ideals dear to him. We are proud to call you one of our own. This evening we celebrate a man who has pushed both himself and those closest to him to never shy away from challenge and thereby aspire to the utmost.

As the description of this man floods my head the directives of our tradition line up.

- ✓ “If I am only for myself what am I?”
- ✓ “Greet everyone with a cheerful disposition.”
- ✓ “Honor a man for what he is: but honor him more for what he does.”

All speak to the character of this great leader.

Phil lives his life in a holy place and has taught us through his example of the need to seize every day, and enjoy life. Greet each person with a smile but take seriously his obligations as a Jew. Phil serves our shared core morals and principles with perseverance and with foresight.

Phil has continually taught us the critical lesson that survival is the product of a strong Jewish identity and he has given of himself so fully to this great institution. By example he instructs us to live a value-driven life and that every human being has a unique contribution to make. In that way, his career is reflective of the man. Phil is a man who merits the confidence he has as success after success has been come to fruition in his professional and personal worlds. Phil is a devoted father, husband and friend to us all.

As Jock Elliot said of David Ogilvy “I thank you for the standards you set for all of us—standards of discipline, standards of hard work, of vision, of candor, of civility.” And I paraphrase “I thank you for making us proud – proud of you and proud to be a part of your life.

It is my pleasure, my honor and indeed my privilege to share in this joy. You are my dear friend, counselor and mentor.

Most sincerely,

Rabbi Jay M. Stein

A vibrant egalitarian Conservative Jewish community in Westchester County,  
embracing our traditions while actively participating in our changing world.