

March 30, 2017

Erev 4 Nisan, 5777

Dear Honorees,

It is a great pleasure for me to send greetings to the honorees of the Schechter School of Long Island—Dr. Cindy Dolgin, Diane and Howard Wohl, and sixteen Past Board Presidents—on the occasion of tonight’s annual Anniversary Gala. It is also a pleasure to see so many other familiar names on the list.

It might surprise you to know that, given that our incoming students tend to be about 20 years older than your incoming students, JTS and SSLI have a lot in common. At JTS, our mission is to train thoughtful, innovative leaders for the American Jewish community. You honorees are yourselves excellent examples of exactly this kind of outstanding leadership. We also promote high-caliber lifelong learning for individuals and for communities, and with the preparation they receive at SSLI, I suspect that in decades down the road, many SSLI alumni will populate our Community Engagement courses, Days of Torah, and Institutes. Younger SSLI alumni can already be seen at JTS as students of List College, Davidson Graduate School of Jewish Education, Rabbinical School, H.L. Miller Cantorial School, and Kekst Graduate School.

It can all be traced back, I think, to the sayings attributed to Rabbi Hillel in *Pirkei Avot*: “the more Torah, the more life” and “the more study, the more wisdom.” Graduates of SSLI and JTS understand very well the path by which Jewish education enriches all aspect of life and the process of ongoing study itself brings wisdom and insight.

You are being honored tonight, therefore, for ensuring that new generations of American Jews have the best chance at living rich lives filled with depth of understanding, for other Jews and for our friends of other faiths and ethnicities, and also for being our partners, along with others, in strengthening Jewish life in America for our community from coast to coast as well as Jewish communities in Israel and around the world.

Congratulations to all the honorees, including those among you whom I recognize as friends, alumni, supporters, and—and yes—even a current Trustee of JTS! May all here tonight go from strength to strength, and may we never forget Rabbi Hillel’s ultimate conclusion: “The one who has acquired words of Torah has acquired the life of the world-to-come.”

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arnold M. Eisen".

Arnold M. Eisen
Chancellor