



March 12, 2020

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Dear Friends,

This letter was supposed to announce the date of our upcoming Scholarship Dinner. However, due to the medical recommendations of local infectious disease doctors and epidemiologists regarding concerns of Coronavirus contagion and spread, we will be shifting to a "Virtual Scholarship Dinner" this year.

Despite the unanticipated change in format, we are delighted to announce that **Karen L. Kessler will be our Guest of Honor** for our online Virtual Dinner campaign! We are also thrilled to report that **Rabbi Yitzi & Devorah Shulman will be receiving DHR's Pillars of Torah Award.** The great news is that with this special online format, the only thing that's contagious is our enthusiasm for our inspiring honorees!! You can "attend" the event in your pajamas, you won't have to listen to any speeches...just join us in recognizing our honorees and supporting Torah education in Rochester!

We are privileged to count Karen Kessler as an Ambassador of DHR and as a great supporter. We've known Karen for over 30 years, and what stands out about her most of all is her drive for excellence. She is never satisfied with doing something half-heartedly. She channels her very impressive skills and talents to ensure that everything is done properly and to the highest standard.

Karen has deep roots in the Rochester area. After graduating Magna Cum Laude from SUNY Geneseo with Elementary & Early Childhood Education degrees, she completed her post graduate studies in Secondary Mathematics. Karen then taught high school math and substituted locally. During those years, she obtained certifications as a Fitness Instructor and pursued her love for synchronized swimming. Karen is a Certified Personal Trainer; Fitness Instructor (for both land and water); Water Safety Instructor Trainer; Lifeguard Instructor Trainer; First Aid Instructor Trainer; and International Presenter in Fitness for the Aquatic Exercise Association. Karen is also the proud mother of Andrew Clark, who resides in Colorado.

For a decade, Karen worked at our local JCC, first as the Aquatic Director, then as the Health, Fitness and Wellness Director. In 1996, she accepted the position of Program Director for the University of Rochester's Center for Lifetime Wellness, where, over the next decade, she collaborated in developing fitness interventions for special populations. In 1997, Karen co-authored a research paper which was presented at the World Health Organization in Geneva, Switzerland.

Karen has volunteered as a past board member for the JCC, is currently president of Delta Environmental, has served as a Red Cross volunteer and instructor for 35 years, and is Secretary of the Board of Directors for the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra.

Karen is married to Laurence Kessler, who is an active supporter and volunteer for numerous important organizations in the Rochester community. They are an inspiring, beloved team! As an Ambassador of DHR, Karen's generosity and enthusiasm have been catalysts for others to get involved with DHR. We are hopeful that this distinctive event will inspire Karen's friends to help support our school's growing needs.

DHR's Pillars of Torah Awardees, Rabbi Yitzi and Devorah Shulman, are descendants of generations of Jewish educators and were raised in homes suffused with Torah. They have dedicated their lives to the betterment of our people by sharing our precious legacy with the next generation. Their energetic and outgoing personalities, combined with their positivity and zest for life, enable them to proudly and successfully teach Torah in the Rochester community.

Rabbi Shulman exhibits a love of Torah, teaching and people. Throughout his years in Yeshiva, he learned with and mentored younger students. While living in Israel and studying at the esteemed Jerusalem Kollel he received Rabbinical ordination from HaRav Yitzchak Berkovits, שליט"א. Upon returning to the USA, Yitzi did community outreach in Westchester, NY and then joined Rochester's Ohr Torah Outreach Kollel, the educational branch of Light of Israel. His classes were popular and well attended. Last September, he joined the faculty of DHR, where he is currently a Rebbe and the Middle School Math teacher.

Devorah holds a master's degree in Elementary Education and Special Education. She has taught for over a decade at the preschool, elementary, middle and high school levels, both in Israel and in America, and has led numerous kiruv classes for women. She has been teaching at Derech HaTorah since moving here nearly four years ago. Devorah possesses a rare ability to teach at any level; she has taught both Middle School and Kindergarten at DHR. She currently spends her day in our school's Kindergarten as our interdisciplinary Judaic and general studies teacher.

In addition to their teaching careers, the Shulmans have been directing summer camps in the Catskills for the past five summers. They are also the proud parents of Malka (grade 3), Dovi (grade 2), Yosef & Ahron.

As a result of DHR's fantastic faculty, the Torah Rochester advertising campaign, and our school's numerous supporters in Rochester and throughout the country, **DHR is the largest, fastest growing Jewish elementary school in Upstate NY.** Since opening 16 years ago with an enrollment of 31 students, DHR has blossomed to an established institution with 114 students. Although we are enthusiastic about our growth and are hopeful that it will continue, this type of success requires an even greater level of effort and commitment.

DHR exercises great fiscal discipline and spends 30% of what NYS public schools spend per student, despite having smaller class sizes and offering a dual Judaic/general studies curriculum. Even with this fiscal restraint, DHR struggles to avoid significant deficits due to the large number of unfunded, need-based scholarships that our school awards each year. No child is turned away as a result of financial circumstances. If DHR was able to collect full tuition from each family, no fundraising would be necessary. Because this is impossible, communal support is an absolute necessity to ensure our school's existence.

Our annual scholarship dinner and journal represent our largest annual fundraising effort, and we ask for your generous support in ensuring the success of this modified "virtual scholarship dinner" event. **Please participate in honor of Karen Kessler and/or in honor of Rabbi Yitzi & Devorah Shulman.** Help us sustain this pillar of elementary education and recognize the impact that our honorees have upon this community.

Stay tuned for more information about this exciting event! We'll keep you posted...

Sincerely,



Rabbi Daniel Goldstein
Executive Director



Lea E. Goldstein
Principal