



**THE TOBY NUSSBAUM
JEWISH HERITAGE-NY2014 CONTEST**

***L'DOR VADOR:
GENERATION TO GENERATION***

**AWARD CEREMONY
MONDAY, JUNE 16, 2014
CITY HALL, NEW YORK CITY**

Jewish Heritage-NY2014 (JHNY2014) is a project of the
Jewish Community Relations Council of New York (JCRC-NY).

JCRC-NY is a beneficiary of

UJA  **Federation**
of New York



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AWARD CEREMONY PROGRAM**

Welcome..... Hon. Richard Buery
New York City Deputy Mayor for Strategic Initiatives

Greetings..... Ronald G. Weiner
President, JCRC-NY

..... **Hon. Mark D. Levine**
New York City Council Member, 7th District, and Chairman, Jewish Caucus

RemarksJudith Shapiro
Chairperson, Jewish Heritage-NY2014

..... **Dale Nussbaum**
Co-Chairperson, Toby Nussbaum Jewish Heritage-NY2014 Contest

Tribute.....Bernard W. Nussbaum

Presentation of Awards..... Hon. Richard Buery

Closing Michael S. Miller
Executive Vice President and CEO, JCRC-NY

Jewish Heritage-NY2014 (JHNY2014) is a project of the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York (JCRC-NY). The Toby Nussbaum JHNY2014 Contest is sponsored in cooperation with the New York City Department of Education and is supported by a generous grant from Bernard W. Nussbaum.

JCRC-NY is a beneficiary of



THE TOBY NUSSBAUM JEWISH HERITAGE-NY2014 CONTEST WINNERS

Intermediate School Level (Grades 6-8)

First Place:

Shannon Sommers

Mark Twain Intermediate School 239
for the Gifted and Talented, Brooklyn
Teacher: Michele Wallach
Principal: Karen Ditolla

Second Place: **Grace Wan**

Mark Twain Intermediate School 239
for the Gifted and Talented, Brooklyn
Teacher: Michele Wallach
Principal: Karen Ditolla

Third Place (Tie):

Sebastian Freiberg

Mark Twain Intermediate School 239
for the Gifted and Talented, Brooklyn
Teacher: Michele Wallach
Principal: Karen Ditolla

Stina Trollbäck

NEST+m, Manhattan
Teacher: Vanessa Snowden
Principal: Dr. Olga Livanis

High School Level (Grades 9-12)

First Place:

Yuhan Michelle Zou

Stuyvesant High School, Manhattan
Teacher: Jennifer Suri
Principal: Jie Zhang

Second Place: **Ciara Jordan**

Brooklyn Technical High School
Teacher: Stephen Harris
Principal: Randy Asher

Third Place (Tie):

Danielle Hahami

Stuyvesant High School, Manhattan
Teacher: Jennifer Suri
Principal: Jie Zhang

Isfar Patwary

Stuyvesant High School, Manhattan
Teacher: Michael Waxman
Principal: Jie Zhang

INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL FIRST PLACE

Shannon Sommers
IS 239, Brooklyn

L'Dor VaDor is the Hebrew maxim that translates to *Generation to Generation*, the survival of a person's customs through their descendants. This saying means that, through familial tradition, we become ourselves. The culmination of past, present and future define who we are. As Alex Haley, author of "Roots: The Saga of an American Family" said, "In every conceivable manner, family is the link to our past, bridge to our future."

If life is a flower, then our family's ethics are the seeds. A flower is faced with several challenges as it blossoms, powerful forces of weather questioning its ability to bloom. Individual fortitude is the only factor in deciding its outcome. Whether or not a lilac will survive a rainstorm is a test of strength, but without its seeds, the flower never has the chance to expose its plum-colored petals to the warmth of the sun.

The same is true for people; everyone is unique, but we would not be able to explore our individuality without family customs. From the second we are born, we're immersed in the ways of others around us. Many instincts are developed through sight, imitation, and adoption of conventions. We are surrounded by family for the earliest and most critical years of our lives, and only after this time are we given the chance to explore. Formative childhood years are when we acquire our most prominent characteristics, and it is through our family's influence that we obtain them. Our knowledge of their hardships and observing their characteristics determines who we become.

Family heritage is ceaseless; the passing of personal traits, beliefs, and mannerisms never ends. As the Talmud says, "As my family planted for me, so do I plant for my children." When tradition and innovation are combined, the concept of *L'Dor VaDor* is embraced.

INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL SECOND PLACE

Grace Wan

IS 239, Brooklyn

L'Dor VaDor is a phrase that transcends age, religion, and ethnicity to unite everyone. As stated in the Talmud, "As my family planted for me, so do I plant for my children," thus explaining the importance of *L'Dor VaDor* as a way to plant seeds of knowledge throughout history and family regardless of one's differences.

L'Dor VaDor can be applied to the experiences of various ethnic groups in New York, one of which is the Jews during their immigration to America between 1880 and 1925. Whether they were Ashkenazic Jews, Orthodox Jews, or a different ethnicity altogether, parents sacrificed their home - including their language and society - for their children. They bestowed upon their progeny lessons they had learned, helping them mature, even coming together to help Jewish and non-Jewish people alike; they had transcended their differences to transform New York into one interlocked family.

My family has also planted seeds within me. My grandparents' and my parents' lives were sturdy in China, but they wanted greater fates for my sister and me, so they started over in America to give us a chance at superior education. They had no connections, no one to guide them. Still, they persevered, and passed their wisdom to me. From them, I learned to endure instead of to give up, to hold on instead of let prospects slip away.

When I look around me, I see that my peers have learned the same. It does not matter what our skin color is, or which deities we believe in. We have taken different paths, but arrived at the same destination with the same wisdom imbued in us. Our families have planted seeds within us; their wisdom is like sunlight and water, nourishing us so that we may all flourish into beautiful flowers.

**INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL
THIRD PLACE - TIE**

I.S.239, Brooklyn

Sebastian Freiberg, Grade 6

Jewish Heritage -NY2014 Contest Entry

Family is our first learning experience.

They teach us what they know, lifelong lessons.

Teachings, traditions, memories all coming from the past.

These ideas will enter the future.

Passing down in a cycle, which could continue for years.

Grandfather to son, Grandmother to daughter, parents to their children.

It will continue whether it's Christmas or Easter, Hanukkah or Thanksgiving.

The ideas we learn, what will come with us.

The ideas we teach, what will come with them.

What we our parents show us, the ideals we follow.

Our children deserve to know them.

Family bonds traveling through space and time.

A mutual relation that is shared family to family.

Although some people endure hardships because of what they believe in, they still pass it down.

People will discriminate, but you have to carry on.

Communities come together with their traditions.

Generations teach their successors, and it goes on.

To quote a wise, important book that has taught many,

“ As my family planted for me, so do I plant for my children.”

INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL THIRD PLACE - TIE

Stina Trollbäck
Grade 8
NEST+m

L'Dor VaDor

It may seem a stretch for a Brooklyn teenager to tie modern-day culture to pillars of tradition. Yet, as Alex Haley once wrote, "In every conceivable manner, family is the link to our past, bridge to our future."

The *L'Dor VaDor* concept of passing on knowledge and history recently led my mother to hand me a 101-year-old German-Hebrew prayer book. It was a Bar Mitzvah gift to my Viennese great-great-uncle. The book was inscribed just weeks after Kristallnacht by his parents, who wrote of their hopes and dreams for their son, before he left on his solitary journey in December 1938 on foot away from Vienna and the destroyed temple where he received it. After reaching Switzerland, he voyaged on to New York.

My great-great-uncle's wife, a four-year concentration camp survivor he met one summer on a train from New York City to the Catskills, taped up the book's fragile old spine with buoyant reassurance and Scotch Magic Tape. She stashed her collection of four-leaf clovers in her husband's hope-filled prayer book. I am struck that she bound her fortunes to her husband's in the most intimate, if symbolic, of ways: housing her luck with his and the tender farewell and blessings of his parents.

Today, through a frayed pocket prayer book, I realize that my mother furthers her great-aunt's practicality and persistence, and preserves her great-uncle's last connection to his parents' love and hopes for him. My mother looks at the book with delicacy, as though it is just as vital to her to keep intact as it was to him.

At 13, I hold a source of light that has been shining for a century. The past is so alive it nearly has a heartbeat.

I try to grasp the courage of these immigrants to New York, where they witness a rainbow of children — my mother and classmates — throwing graduation caps into the air, all together.

I close my fingers around yellowed pages and see flames burning the temple where my uncle received the book. Yet, the pages are still here. Right here with me. And with them, I feel my family's history and start to understand it. "The great task of life is transmission," says George Will. And to that I say, thank you.

I'm here. I'm ready to begin.

I'm on the other end.

HIGH SCHOOL FIRST PLACE

Yuhan Michelle Zou

Stuyvesant High School, Manhattan

L'Dor VaDor, a phrase transcending through cultures,
We live as a whole, sisters and brothers.
As we are cradled by time, lives merging with one another,
The memories we hold, precious times that were shared
Painful moments that together were suffered
Yet to live is to remember.
To love is to join the cycle of life,
Of which, we are each born a member.

Blood to blood, souls connected as one
We think of what unites us, not what sets us apart
To hold those near and dear,
To share the history, prayers, stories heard by ear
To laugh or to cry, from parent to child,
The emotions that were transferred, kept tender and mild.
Though we know, time does not wait
L'Dor Vador, to understand the past, to hold on to fate

Understand your roots, gain strength from your culture
With the perseverance of a tree, the soul will not falter.
As my family planted for me, so do I plant for my children
To keep growing, the seed of knowledge is transferred to kin
As time strains the person, imposing weariness
The soul and the mind, they remain ageless

Pogroms, massacres, indescribable terrors,
Mistreated, expelled, they were people, not errors.
Fearing for their lives, they left,
Tears wiped away, in their hearts, there was no space for regret.
Upon reaching New York, they settled in slums
Living under miserable conditions, the future seemed bleak, their faces grew glum
In order for them to strive,
The Jews had to keep their traditions alive.

L'Dor Vador, the seeds of life begin to bud,
The children, the new generation,
Arise as a new nation.
Live for them, who survive through blood,
Sacrifices were made, bearing with the pain,
And though the struggle was real, the children would not lose,
A future with open opportunities they would gain.
Instead, a rugged path their parents and those before them would choose.

The aged will wean the young to hold the past close,
As deer will nurse their fawn,

Traditions will live, live to see another dawn.
Introduced to a new world, a world apart from where they had grown
The Jews recorded their journeys, accustomed to these lives,
They deemed the present their own.

As the world revolves, as time drags on,
Memories linger from the past.
Yet we attempt to forget, to forgive, and to relieve of the times.
Deep down,
We still remember.
We strive to prevail.
L'Dor Vador, generation to generation,
Though we may drift temporarily astray from the origins we hail
As long as our culture remains in our spirits,
Nothing will bring down our everlasting nation.

HIGH SCHOOL SECOND PLACE

L'Dor VaDor

Ciara Jordan
Brooklyn Technical High School

It's the stories we heard as children. It's what gives us a home no matter where we go. It's our base, our foundation. The individuality we carry within us. The connection we hold with the world. It's in the blood that runs through our veins. It's in the way we speak, the way we think. The community we have with others. The traditions handed down to us. The rituals we practice, though sometimes burdensome or tiresome. It's what we learn each day. Knowing where we are, who we are, and how we fit into society.

It has no race, no religion, no gender. It's lighting the menorah for Hanukkah, the star on the Christmas tree, and the firecrackers at Chinese New Year. It lies in our hopes, dreams, and aspirations. It's what immigrants held onto as they reached their new homeland. What gave them the resilience to build a new life. It's teaching the wisdom, the obligations, the responsibilities we have to society, to the earth we live in, and what we build for the children of the future. A duty to pass on the lessons we have learned to generations to come. It's learning from our mistakes, so we don't allow the atrocities of the past to be repeated.

It's the roots that keep us steady and nourished. Our air, water, and sun. It grounds us in a time and place, but lets us sway in the wind and grow far. It's the branches that reach out and touch each person. The shelter under its leaves. It's what each of us has to offer the world.

Our strength. Our core. Our heritage.

It's our legacy.

What is L'Dor VaDor?

It is our past, our present, and our future.

**HIGH SCHOOL
THIRD PLACE - TIE**

Danielle Hahami

Stuyvesant High School, Manhattan

Toby Nussbaum Jewish Heritage – NY 2014 Writing Contest

L'Dor VaDor: Generation to Generation

From one generation to the next,

L'Dor VaDor.

I feel the warmth of the wrinkled skin of my savta's hand in my own

Under the glare of Israel's sun as she shares stories from her past

Recalling a time before her grandchildren

Before the thoughts of children.

Basking in the memories of her youth, she reminisces.

Story after story

She retells each as though the events had taken place no more than a week before.

Through her recollections

Years are condensed to days,

Days to hours,

Hours to minutes,

Minutes to seconds –

Though still I wonder what there is to gain

From the aged memories of someone

So far past her prime.

As though she has read the questions through the gaze in my eyes

She yet again takes my hand in hers and says to me;

Buba, al tishkechi et mah sh'ani omeret lach

Begging me not to forget what she has told me.

And in her eyes I see how she longs for her stories to live on –
For her memories to survive.

From one generation to the next,

L'dor VaDor.

My savta takes my hand in hers and makes me promise

That one day when I've grown old

I'll sit in the warmth of the sun

With grandchildren of my own

Telling them of how I used to sit with my savta in the very same way

And I will grab my granddaughter's hand and say – just as my savta had said to me;

Buba, al tishkechi et mah sh'ani omeret lach

Because with each generation

Though the times will have changed

Our traditions,

Our stories,

And the history we share

Will remain.

So for this we rejoice and cry out to the world –

From one generation to the next,

L'dor Vador –

Hallelujah!

HIGH SCHOOL THIRD PLACE - TIE

Isfar Patwary

Stuyvesant High School, Manhattan

Generation to Generation

The Talmud once said, “As my family planted for me, so do I plant for my children.” Essentially, this means that generations follow one another and teach each other ways that they themselves have been taught by their parents. This quote can apply to the term L’Dor VaDor, a phrase meaning generation to generation. In New York City, a place where millions of people with different ethnicities live, there are people who teach their children the customs and traditions they have learned in the past and try to best prepare their children for the future. This tradition of passing down customs has long been rooted in our society and is what makes us unique.

In New York City, there are many immigrants who inhabit our five boroughs. Each from a unique country, all these people have something special to share from their lives, something that they have brought with them from their country. It is important to pass these traditions down to our children since our posterity is what keeps our ancestry alive. By passing down these traditions and customs, we are still able to give our posterity their own unique identity as well as having them keep the customs and traditions of their family alive.

The term L’Dor VaDor also applies to religion. Many families teach their children the religion they themselves were taught when they were a child. Religion can be a foundation in which families as well as communities are united and can help guide a person in their path in life. Although people aren’t born into a religion, the religion is passed down from generation to generation and provides a link to one’s ancestors.

L'Dor VaDor also means to teach our children about the past, letting those lessons and our example guide them in the present, and doing our best to prepare them for the future. Many families from all ethnicities do this. They teach their children about the hardships they have faced in their motherland and how they were able to overcome tragedies and pain. By telling these stories to our children, we are able to give them a role model as well as a lesson on how to live life, in order to not face the same struggle that their parents have faced.

Alex Haley once said that "In every conceivable manner, family is the link to our past, bridge to our future." The stories, lessons, and traditions passed down from generation to generation help to provide a link to our family and keep one's family bonded and united. The communication between parent and child can help to increase a child's knowledge of their homeland and of their culture in general. It is necessary to pass on one's culture in order to instill a piece of their culture into them, and to make sure that they never forget where they came from.

JEWISH HERITAGE-NY2014 (JHNY2014)

**A project of the Jewish Communal Affairs Department of
The Jewish Community Relations Council of NY (JCRC-NY)**

JCRC-NY President: Ronald G. Weiner

JCRC-NY Executive Vice President and CEO: Michael S. Miller

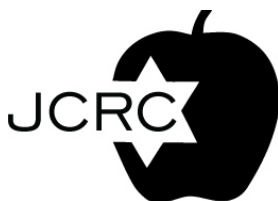
JHNY2014 Chairperson: Judith Shapiro

**The Toby Nussbaum JHNY2014 Contest Co-Chairpersons:
Dale Nussbaum and Michael Nussbaum**

Project Director: Marcy A. Fishman

Jewish Communal Affairs Department Director: Marcia R. Eisenberg

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**Jewish Community Relations Council of NY
225 West 34th Street, Suite 1607
New York, NY 10122
Tel. 212-983-4800
Fax. 212-983-4084
www.jcrcny.org**