



**THE TOBY NUSSBAUM
JEWISH HERITAGE-NY2015 CONTEST**

KAVOD: RESPECT AND HONOR

**AWARD CEREMONY
MONDAY, JUNE 15, 2015
CITY HALL, NEW YORK CITY**

Jewish Heritage-NY2015 is a project of the
Jewish Community Relations Council of New York.

JCRC-NY is a beneficiary of

UJA  **Federation**
of New York



**THE TOBY NUSSBAUM
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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

Remarks Judith Shapiro
Chairperson, Jewish Heritage-NY2015

..... **Dale Nussbaum**
Co-Chairperson, Toby Nussbaum Jewish Heritage-NY2015 Contest

Tribute.....Bernard W. Nussbaum

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

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

**Jewish Heritage-NY2015 is a project of
the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York.
The Toby Nussbaum JHNY2015 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-NY2015 CONTEST WINNERS

Elementary School Level (Grades 4-5)

Ben Sorrentino

Public School 232, Queens
Teacher: Marilyn Stetina
Contest Coordinator: Lori D'Andrea
Principal: Lisa Josephson

Intermediate School Level (Grades 6-8)

First Place:

Isabel Hernandez

Public School 232, Queens
Teacher: Catherine Kellner
Contest Coordinator: Lori D'Andrea
Principal: Lisa Josephson

Second Place:

MarcAnthony Ramos

Public School 232, Queens
Teacher: Thomas Krieger
Contest Coordinator: Lori D'Andrea
Principal: Lisa Josephson

Third Place (Tie):

Taylor Rivera

Public School 232, Queens
Teacher: Thomas Krieger
Contest Coordinator: Lori D'Andrea
Principal: Lisa Josephson

Taylor Scotto

Public School 232, Queens
Teacher: Catherine Kellner
Contest Coordinator: Lori D'Andrea
Principal: Lisa Josephson

High School Level (Grades 9-12)

First Place:

Ciara Jordan

Brooklyn Technical High School
Teacher: Robyn McCullough
Principal: Randy Asher

Second Place:

Taliah Lati

James Madison High School, Brooklyn
Teacher: Robin Kovat
Principal: Jodie Cohen

Third Place (Tie):

Liam Elkind

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

Daniel Gendler

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

Ben Sorrentino #28

5-501 Ms. Stefina P.S. 232

JEWISH HERITAGE

How much emphasis do you place on respect and honor in your life? The Jewish population literally lives by respect, honor, and integrity which they call *Kavod*. All individuals should have a feeling of regard for their rights, dignity and abilities. This is the essence of *Kavod*. The Jewish people take this very seriously.

A very well-known quote recited by Ben Zoma is "Who is worthy of *Kavod*? The one who treats others with *Kavod*." This quote reflects the tragedy that the Jewish people endured in the holocaust. Adolf Hitler sent out his German soldiers to kill Jewish people. In total, the Germans killed approximately 3 million Jewish people alone. They also sent them to horrendous concentration camps, and they treated them with no respect. Thus making the Jewish absolutely worthy of

Kavod. As the quote stated, to be worthy of *Kavod* you must treat others with *Kavod*. Almost all of the Jewish population was killed in the holocaust, yet, they forgave them, and still treated everyone with honor. That is true *Kavod*.

A second case is the racist feud between black people and white people. In certain parts of the world, there is still unfair treatment happening today towards this race and other ethnic groups, such as the Asian population. This highlights the fact that many races don't treat each other with *Kavod*.

Unfortunately, there is still anti-Semitism that exists in the world we live in today. Can you visualize yourself treating other people that are different from you with disrespect? How would you feel if someone treated you that way for your religion, or your looks, or because you're different. If each person would

adapt to the concept of *Kavod*, we would have world peace. I could say from my own experience, my family and I live by the principles of *Kavod*.

**INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL
FIRST PLACE**

I remember being five years old. I remember eight o'clock bedtimes. I remember hide and seek. I remember baby teeth. I remember putting cookies out for Santa. I remember, when my existence was sheltered in a glass bubble. And now, over the past year, I have come to the realization that my glass wall has shattered down. None told me when it would happen. None asked if I was okay without a wall. What if I liked glass walls? Questions? Only echoes in a dark room. Without my glass wall, I have seen the worst of the world. Bullying, depression, discrimination, racism, hatred. Death. And sometimes I wonder if I can survive. Can I? Will I be able to overcome any obstacle, leap every hurdle? Maybe? Maybe not. But I do know that no matter how great an evil, kavod will always overcome. "Every human being, of whatever origin, of whatever station, deserves respect. We must each respect others even as we respect ourselves." -U. Thant. If we all believe in kavod, if we all believe that we are all equal, if we all believe that we should all be respected, our world will be a much better place. It will be a place for us all.

In the 1950s, the first Jewish immigrants arrived to the United States. They were trying to escape. Escape from their past. A past deeply engraved into their minds, overwhelmed with tyranny, hatred and evils. There were many organized riots and massacres against the Jews, and this contradicted every belief they had. Kavod. They weren't treated with respect. A respect they rightfully deserved. And this scarred them. So they came to America in a hope to find that hidden light. To find that respect, to find that honor. They joined together, they began to proliferate kavod. They found their hidden light. They followed U. Thant's words. They treat each other with respect and honor. And so will I. To make the world a better place. A place for us all.

INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL SECOND PLACE

PS 232
Class 8-801

MarcAnthony Ramos
April 27, 2015

Toby Nussbaum Jewish Heritage- NY 2015 Writing Contest Kavod: Respect and Honor

Throughout my life, I have been taught to respect and honor others. This is not just taught in the Jewish faith, this is a huge part of Catholicism. Growing up in New York I have always respected everyone and my elders. I agree with the quote, "Every human being, of whatever origin, of whatever station, deserves respect. We must each respect others even as we respect ourselves." (U. Thant, Former UN Secretary General). This quote reminds me of my faith. As a young boy, I was taught in religion class, to treat others as I would like to be treated, with respect. It does not matter the person's race, nationality, or beliefs; whether they're poor, middle class, or wealthy. Everyone is part of humanity and should be treated the same. We are all one under God.

The article, "Jewish Life in New York City" concentrates on Jewish immigration in New York, but many different ethnic groups have come to New York in search of a better life where they can live their life with dignity. One such group are the Latinos, who have migrated to New York since the 1920s. My grandparents came from Puerto Rico and taught their children to honor and respect others. Like the Jewish people, we are a close-knit family and my grandparents valued an education. Their motto was "Education is the key to success". As a result, my mom was the first in her family to graduate from college. My parents and I were born in New York City. New York is known as the melting pot because of its rich tapestries of ethnicities. In this city of 8 million people, there is someone from every nation living here. In order to thrive we need to have "kavod" for each other, especially our differences.

INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL THIRD PLACE (TIE)

P.S. 232
801

Taylor Rivera
4/28/15

A Father's Wish

As I lay in my death bed,
I write to you, my son, a tale my father once said
Kavod, respect, honor, something our ancestors have lived by
Something most people tend to deny

In our past we were uncared for, unwanted
Wherever we went our whole families, taunted
Through this all we still cared for and respected our peers
No matter how much we were persecuted throughout the years

"When you grow up", He had started with,
"When you too are made fun of for your religion and race",
"Say, 'I love who I am', and laugh in their face"
"Don't let anyone make you feel less than who you truly are"

Our heritage should be something you are proud of,
Not something you should be ashamed of
Through your life treat others with Kavod and never forget where you came from
Although I may not be here forever, I'm sure you will overcome the challenges you endeavor

My last dying wish is for you, my son,
To never forget what your people have done
Despite negativity and people's harsh words
Never let your vision on kavod be blurred

**INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL
THIRD PLACE (TIE)**

Taylor Scott

PS 232

kavod

Kavod teaches us to be kind to one another,
It has been passed down by ones father and mother.
Kavod has a meaning of regard and dignity,
and has the power to show the good-hearted
people we could be.

No matter what color or race,
Kavod helps people show their good grace.

Bullying is an example of an opposing behavior,
which is why you must be kind to your friends
and neighbors.

This Hebrew word has been passed down through
generations,

causing peace between people from many nations.

As Jewish immigrants entered our country and
created an influence on us,

their unfamiliar cultures were anything but brusque.

The impact they made on many American's lives,
has led to our kind and welcoming country that thrives.

Once the Jewish people came,

they taught us that being respectful is anything
but a game.

Many Jewish cultures today have been passed on,
with meanings that have been dwelled upon.

Throughout future generations we will remember,
Kavod teaches us to be kind to one another.

HIGH SCHOOL FIRST PLACE

Ciara Jordan

Brooklyn Technical High School

Kavod

In order to treat others with kavod, you must first treat yourself well; you must have self-respect. Kavod isn't letting another push you around; it is standing up for yourself, and taking your honor into your own hands. It isn't building up a protective shell around yourself; it is allowing yourself to be open to people and opportunities. It isn't turning a friend away because of a petty disagreement; it is forgiving and welcoming with open arms. It isn't seeing another as a villain; it is seeing each first as who they are: a person, like you.

Kavod is not only meant for your family, your friends, your elders, or teachers, but also for the man behind the deli counter, the woman next to you on the bus, the child screaming in a stroller. Kavod is speaking up even when it isn't beneficial to us. Kavod isn't hoping the train doors shut before a homeless man makes it in; it is holding the doors open for him. Kavod isn't bumping into a passerby on a crowded street with no second thought; it is meeting each face with a smile. Kavod isn't looking at people with disgust or contempt; it is accepting them regardless of who or what they are.

Sometimes we lose the fundamental essence of Kavod. We have seen genocides, when people forgot we are together; that we are all one. We have seen the absence of kavod when people immigrate to other countries, to new worlds for better lives, to see their children mocked and discriminated against. We see kavod being forgotten when people are persecuted because of the color of their skin, their gender, their religion. We see the lack of kavod every day in the rush of life.

Kavod starts as something small, but it's effect is immeasurable, like seeds in the wind, or the pebble thrown into the lake whose ripples reach the other shore. Kavod doesn't discriminate. It rises above our differences, our worries, our fears. It brings us together as one united human race.

Kavod is respect. Kavod is honor. Kavod is peace.

HIGH SCHOOL SECOND PLACE

Taliah Lati

James Madison High School

To me the word Kavod is very powerful; my whole life is surrounded by this word. Having the privilege of learning about my Jewish heritage, culture, traditions, and halachot (laws) kavod was always a word that brought a sensation to my mind. In today's society respect is absent, we tend not to appreciate people's work and effort. We must open our souls and stop closing our minds and start respecting every person as an important human being.

In the book of Exodus, the second book of the Torah, it states, "Honor/Respect your father and your mother in order for G-d to bless you with a long life on the earth he imposed you upon." Rabbi Isaac Levi, better known as Rashi the commentator, explains why "father" is stated first. As children we are more likely to be closer to our mothers, therefore respecting them more. "Father" is stated prior to "mother" to express the importance of honoring both parents equally. Not only should we respect our parents but also our elders and everyone we surround ourselves with.

Transferring to public school from a yeshiva in my sophomore year, I did not know what to expect. It took me a while to adjust to the environment. I was exposed to people with all different religions, race, and cultures. I found it beautiful how everyone intermingled. Many people were shocked to hear that I was an Arab Jew. They did not understand the concept, that a Jew can also be an Arab. As a Sephardic Jew I have an expansive background, and I can think progressively. It allows me to relate to my Muslim Palestinian friend. Although we differ in thoughts, we share many similarities. We eat similar foods, and speak the same language. I respect her, and help her with her troubles

whenever she needs to cheer up. I am lucky to be able to have an opportunity to respect other religions and backgrounds. I hope that people will allow their guards to come down and learn to approach and respect new people without prodigious.

Kavod is something that is taught but cannot be learnt. Teachers and advisors try to tell us how to respect and honor others, but the person must be willing to respect someone on his/her own, without other influences. When you reach to a point where you want to genuinely respect people, is when G-d acknowledges what you are trying to do. You cannot fake respect, because that defeats the purpose of it. You are obligated to find it in yourself to give respect in order to receive it back.

HIGH SCHOOL THIRD PLACE (TIE)

Liam Elkind

Stuyvesant High School

Honor and Respect in the Melting Pot

In a city as large as New York, people have vastly differing experiences and ideologies. These people are literally bumping into one another on a daily basis, and society often seems on the brink of falling apart. This diversity, despite posing difficulties, is essential to the understanding of all sides of the multifaceted debates that go on today. It is especially important, in times as perilous and dangerous as these, when people are protesting issues from gay marriage to minimum wage to police brutality and oppression of minorities, to remember and uphold kavod. Kavod is an ideal in Judaism, preaching the importance of approaching others with respect and honor. In controversial and difficult situations, kavod encourages us to approach the controversy with respect towards people of all viewpoints. It tells us that demonizing those with differing thoughts only serves to divide and increase animosity among groups. Instead of being ashamed of our differences, Judaism tells us to enjoy and celebrate our heterogeneous city.

The difficulties that the Jewish community has undergone in the past century have been horrific, but these struggles have made the Jewish community stronger by showing us that we can overcome any obstacle thrown our way, and by showing us the dangers of marginalizing other groups. Now, members of the Jewish community understand the importance of putting others' needs ahead of their own. Jews in New York City have learned to work towards a stronger New York for all religious groups, as well as improving the education system to breed a strong younger generation that will carry on the tradition of kavod throughout the rest of time. The idea of kavod, while present in other world religions, is particularly prevalent in Judaism, and shows us how to treat one another with love, respect, and honor.

HIGH SCHOOL THIRD PLACE (THIRD)

Daniel Gendler

City Lights

Stuyvesant High School

As I walk through somber
Brooklyn streets, looming
streetlights stand at
attention and shine
light on the shameful
secret that we live
in a world where
respect is treated as
if it were a foreign idea.

No longer gleam the
ideals of the past,
when the golden rule
was sacred covenant,
when to be treated
with kavod one had
to respect others,
regardless of race or
religion or class.

Children are taught
from their primal days,
that being different is
a source for insolence and hate;
so the Jewish people

who intertwine their
livelihood with kavod
have for generations
been treated with the
opposite, and pursued by
contempt and pain, a
perpetual enemy which
is impossible to evade.

Kosher stores in
Bensonhurst are defiled
By teens that know
Nothing else but this
Abhorrence for “them”,
For the Chinese market
owners, for the Russian
butchers, for the
Arab food vendors, for
The Yeshiva students.

All this I can clearly see
as I walk through somber
Brooklyn streets, yet though
they are saturated with
light, the streets are devoid

of any signs of kavod,
and the streetlamps radiate
purely artificial light in the
absence of the sun's
omnipresent rays.

The city too, is
bathed in artificiality;
respect is feigned for
false motives and
to comply with society's
norms, yet this is just
a temporary solution:
without genuine and
sincere kavod, the
sun will not rise,
and New York will
be cloaked in that
artificial light which
can only grow dark
as time passes by.

Thus, to save these
somber Brooklyn streets,
which yearn for

respect, but are instead
soiled with hate and
lies and impudence,
we must, as our
ancestors have done
before us, learn, that
for the sun to
rise again, we must
let the kavod of
our neighbors be
as precious as the
kavod we strive to
receive ourselves.

JEWISH HERITAGE-NY2015

**A project of the Jewish Communal Affairs Department of
The Jewish Community Relations Council of NY**

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

JHNY2015 Chairperson: Judith Shapiro

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