



Alyson L. Friedman: "I get so much satisfaction making a difference in other people's lives. I enjoy finding ways to solve problems and make others feel good."

A 'Professional Volunteer'

Alyson L. Friedman will receive a lifetime achievement award for her lay leadership activities at the annual convention of the Federation of Jewish Women's Organizations.

By Caryn R. Sagal

Alyson L. Friedman discovered she was drawn to doing "the important work of *tikkun olam*" in her early 30s. Two decades later, Friedman, an Owings Mills wife and mother of two young adults, has practically made a career out of lending her time and talents to local nonprofits.

"Volunteering is in my blood," says Friedman, 52, a lifelong Beth El congregant. "I get so much satisfaction making a

difference in other people's lives. I enjoy finding ways to solve problems and make others feel good."

For these efforts, Friedman will receive the E.B. Hirsh Lifetime Achievement Award from the Federation of Jewish Women's Organizations of Maryland at its annual 104th annual convention May 21 at Baltimore Hebrew Congregation.

The award is named in memory of Eleanor Betty Rosenthal Hirsh, a local Jewish

communal leader and BHC member who passed away in 2007. Past recipients of the award include former Baltimore City Councilwoman Rochelle "Rikki" Spector, Myrna Cardin, Lois Rosenfeld, Martha Weiman, Linda Hurwitz, Ellen Lightman, Peggy K. Wolf, Beth Goldsmith, Debs Weinberg, Jo-Ann Mayer Orlinsky and Nancy Aiken.

"We chose Alyson this year because of how she has touched all age groups, from young children to senior adults, through her volunteer service in the last 20 years," says Linda Boteach, the federation's president. "She has served in many leadership roles and truly embodies the spirit of E.B. Hirsh with her values and commitments and involvement."

Friedman says she finds it "incredibly humbling and validating to be acknowledged for spending countless hours as a 'professional volunteer.'"

"Those who know me know I take my 'job' very seriously and always give 110 percent," says Friedman, who made her volunteering debut with CHANA, answering helpline calls and serving on the board for 17 years in various roles, including president.

In addition to chairing the Jewish Community Center's Hall of Fame and J-Live events, Friedman served on the National Women's Philanthropy Board of the Jewish Federations of North America, sat on the National Board of the Jewish Women's Archive and was Women's Campaign chair for The Associated: Jewish Federation of Baltimore.

She currently serves as marketing co-chair for the Center for Leadership at The Associated, where she also sits on the Agency Excellence Board, the Associated Women's Board and the Jewish Women's Giving Foundation. For the latter group, she has served as president, campaign liaison and founding board member.

"Alyson Friedman has been a dedicated volunteer and leader in our community for decades. She continues to nurture and encourage others in the community through her leadership at our new Center for Leadership," says Debra S. Weinberg, board chair for The Associated. "Alyson leads with her heart and her head; our community is better

because she is part of it."

An active volunteer and member of Israel Bonds, Hadassah, Beth El's Soul Center and Jewish Women International, Friedman also sits on Art with a Heart's "Art of Leadership" board, as well as its board of directors, where she previously served as president.

"Alyson is a committed volunteer who shows up and cares about the community she is serving," says Randi Alper Pupkin, founder and executive director of Art with a Heart. "She is enthusiastic, eager to learn and always willing to help. We are grateful for her service to our organization."

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That sense of enthusiasm is as strong as ever, Friedman says. She says she still feels "privileged" to hold board and committee positions, and finds it "gratifying" to meet the people they serve.

"My future plans are to continue volunteering with organizations I feel passionate about," Friedman says. "Jewish organizations are my top priority. However, there are some other organizations doing incredible work in Baltimore City, and I would like to devote more time to causes in the city that desperately need help." 

In addition to honoring Alyson L. Friedman at its 104th annual convention, the Federation of Jewish Women's Organizations of Maryland will present the "Women Who Welcome Award" to a member of each of its 27 constituent organizations. For information visit jewishwomensfed.org.

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