

# Young leaders receive Bnai Zion Community New Leadership Award



**1:** (From left) Staci Rubin; Rivka Altman; Adam Shepherd; David Eisenberg, then-national president; Avrielle Harris; Danielle Levy; Kim Kaliser; Erika Hayes; Yoav Apelboim, executive director Ahava Village for Children and Youth; and Cheryl Bier, national executive vice president

**2:** (From left) Arthur Skibell, Jackie Marx, Louis Marx, Margo Klein and Kimberly Marx

**3:** Julie Sironi and Rabbi Yerschmiel Fried

**4:** Co-Chairs Barry Wernick and Shane Stein were also masters of ceremony.

—All photos by Ira Hantz

Submitted report

**B**nai Zion Foundation Texas Region honored five young leaders — Rivka Linksman Altman, Pastor Stephen Hayes, Kim Hochschuler Kaliser, Staci Shapiro Rubin and Adam Shepherd — at its May 17 Spring Reception at Congregation Shaare Tefilla. There was a warm and caring ambience as more than 300 Bnai Zion supporters mingled and schmoozed with their friends and family. Barry Wernick and Shane Stein were co-chairs for the evening and served as masters of ceremonies.

The evening's focus was Ahava Village for Children and Youth, a residence for abused and neglected children in northern Israel. The Ahava Village promotional video shot the past month in Israel was premiered.

Yoav Apelboim, CEO of Ahava, and Danielle Levy, an intern and graduate student, spoke from the heart about Ahava and its need for a new therapy center. Cheryl Bier, executive vice president, Bnai Zion National, also spoke about her recent visit to Israel.

Honored guests included then-Bnai Zion Foundation National President David Eisenberg, Bnai Zion Foundation National Vice President Cheryl Bier, and then-Bnai Zion National First Vice President Steve Savitsky, as well as numerous elected officials, local rabbis and pastors.

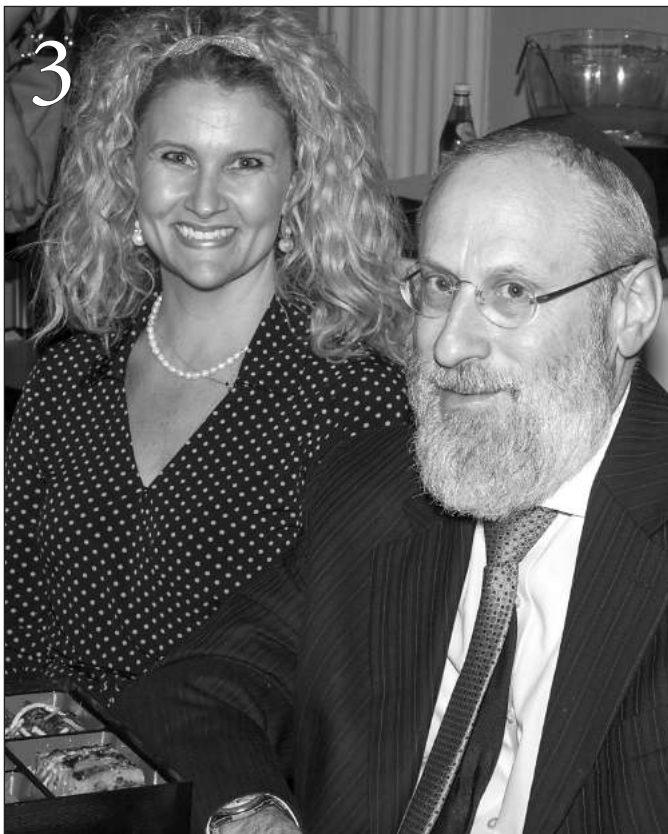
This award is given annually to outstanding young professionals whose work in the community and love for Israel serve as an inspiration to other young professionals and everyone in general.

Texas Region Bnai Zion President Diane Benjamin said, "Tonight's Ahava Spring reception was aptly named. We filled a standing-room-only, beautifully appointed and attended room with enthusiastic supporters who 'sprang' into action and contributed to this successful event!"

Before starting the live auction, Bnai Zion Foundation Texas Region Chairman of the Board Larry Strauss asked the pastors and guests of Covenant Church to stand, thanking them for all their donations and support which helped build the safe rooms so critical to the safety of the children and adults at Ahava. This was followed by resounding applause, which was so richly deserved, from those present. Larry then began the live auction. With his encouragement and skilled auctioneering, Strauss helped raise a sizable amount of money, 100 percent of which went immediately with Yoav Apelboim to Ahava in Israel, to begin construction of the therapy center and to purchase items needed.

Closing remarks were given by Texas Region Executive Director Avrielle Harris-Cohen, who thanked her assistant Harriett Rosen, the Texas Region board and Lowell Michelson of Simcha Caterers for his donation of the floral centerpieces and his signature Mai Tai drink.

— Submitted by Avrielle Cohen





5: Kim Kaliser, Staci Rubin, Rivka Altman, Adam Shepherd and Pastor Erika Hayes, accepting on behalf of her husband Pastor Stephen Hayes  
 6: State Senator Hon. Donald Huffines; Mary Catherine Huffines; State Senator Hon. Florence Shapiro (mother of honoree Stacy Shapiro Rubin); Diane Benjamin, president, Texas Region  
 7: Melissa Gendason, Ashley Grossfeld, Blake Eltis, Hilary Stern  
 8: David Eisenberg; Staci Rubin, honoree; Shane Stein; Barry Wernick; (front) Natalie, Sophie and Sam Rubin  
 9: Hilary Bernhardt, Joyce Govrin and Marcy Abadi Rhoads  
 10: Cheryl Bier, national executive vice president; Regina and Steve Savitsky, first national vice president; Fran and David Eisenberg, national president; Diane Benjamin, president, Bnai Zion Texas Region

