

Bnai Zion honors Seth Pinsky as 'humanitarian' and 'job builder'

The Bnai Zion Foundation, an organization that helps the less fortunate members of Israeli society through a variety of medical, educational social-service and cultural programs, honored Seth W. Pinsky, president of the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC), at its Annual Tribute Dinner on Sept. 6 in New York City.

The purpose of Bnai Zion is to help Israelis who have fallen through the cracks of the government welfare systems, said Jack Grunspan, Bnai Zion's executive vice president and national secretary. And Pinsky, who received the Bnai Zion Distinguished Humanitarian Award, presented to individuals who have made a significant impact on their communities by building bridges to unite diverse interests, embodies the organization's ideals, Grunspan said.

"We are thrilled to have the opportunity to recognize Seth and acknowledge what he has done for New York City, said Grunspan, calling Pinsky a "wonderful humanitarian."

Appointed by Mayor Michael Bloomberg to the NYCEDC in 2008, Pinsky has worked to promote New York as the global center for innovation in the 21st century.

"Many of those in this room are great examples for me to do what I do. A community can and should care for one another," Pinsky said. "After the collapse of Lehman Brothers in 2008, one of the first places we turned to was Israel and Israeli institutions were ready willing and able to help."

His efforts include new programs aimed at helping existing city industries transition to new business models and attracting cutting-edge industries. Under Pinsky, NYCEDC has also worked to modernize the NYCEDC's property management portfolio and the



(L-r): Alan B. Friedberg, president of Alan B. Friedberg Investment & Development Corp. and member of the board of the New York City Economic Development Corp.; Victor F. Ganzi, chairman of the Board of Directors of the PGA Tour, Inc., and chairman of the board of the New York City Economic Development Corp.; Jack Grunspan, executive vice president of the Bnai Zion Foundation; Seth W. Pinsky, president of the New York City Economic Development Corp.; Angela Pinsky, senior vice president, Real Estate Board of New York; Alan Schwartz, president of Bnai Zion's New York region; Mel Parness, executive vice president Emeritus of the Bnai Zion Foundation; Gary LaBarbera, president, Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York and Tribute Dinner co-chairperson; Harvey Goldfarb, owner of All Risk Brokerage; Rev. Joseph M. McShane, president, Fordham University; and Mitch Sternbach, New York director, Bnai Zion Foundation.

(Below): Pinsky receives the Bnai Zion Distinguished Humanitarian Award. "Many of those in this room are great examples for me to do what I do," Pinsky said. "A community can and should care for one another."



city's infrastructure by leveraging a \$2 billion capital budget devoted to basic infrastructure improve-

ments, public amenities and development in Coney Island and Hunter's Point.

Pinsky also helped negotiate the city's involvement in some of the most complex development projects in recent years, including the World Trade Center, the acquisition of the Brooklyn Bridge Park and Governors Island and most recently, the creation of the groundbreaking engineering campus on Roosevelt Island with Cornell University and the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology.

"One thing that Seth's projects do is build jobs," said Alan Schwartz, president of Bnai Zion's New York region. "If the Republicans and Democrats understood economics like Seth does, we would not be in this economic situation that we are in."

The event at the Roosevelt Hotel

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—Alan Schwartz

drew approximately 100 people, including Malcolm I. Hoenlein, executive vice chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations; Gary LaBarbera, president of

Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York; George W. Schaeffer, president and CEO of OPI Products; and Cam Turner, principal of United Fund Advisors. Rabbi Joseph Potasnik, executive vice president of the New York Board of Rabbis, served as the evening's master of ceremonies.

"This is an organization that doesn't care who you are, they just care if you need support. This is a very special occasion for a very special person," said Potasnik.

"It's what's on the inside that counts. I have seen all the good things that Bnai Zion does, and tonight our organization honors someone who is the same on the outside that he is on the inside. He is a great choice to receive this award, and we are thrilled to pay tribute to him," added Schwartz.

Projects that the Bnai Zion Foundation is responsible for include the Ahava Village for Children and Youth, which has helped thousands of children and at-risk youth in Israel. For the last 30 years Ahava has been home to about 250 abused children, placed there by the court system, who stay until they join the Israel Defense Forces or go into national service. The new emergency center provides help to 25 children taken out of their homes during urgent, threatening situations, and it serves as a therapeutic diagnostic center for their first three months, when the children are in a very fragile psychological state.

The Quittman Center, one of the residential facilities on the Israel Elwyn Jerusalem campus, is home to physically and mentally challenged adults who receive round-the-clock support in their daily functioning.

Visit www.bnaizion.org for more information.

—Florentino DiMatteo

AROUND THE JEWISH WORLD

FIDF GALA

Sex expert and avid supporter of Israel's soldiers Dr. Ruth Westheimer has been named keynote speaker at the FIDF Long Island Chapter 7th Annual IDF Appreciation Evening Gala. The event will take place at The Fresh Meadow Country Club, located at 255 Lakeville Road, Lake Success, on Oct. 16.

Westheimer is a Holocaust survivor who lost her entire immediate

family during the Holocaust in Germany. In 1948, she moved to the British Mandate of Palestine to fight for Israel's independence in the Haganah as a trained sniper.

The event will honor two women from the Long Island community: Lana Bakhsh, founder of the Babylonian Jewish Center in Great Neck, and Stacey Bernstein Malakoff, executive vice president and CFO of the Hospital for Special Surgery. The consul gener-

al of the State of Israel, Ambassador Ido Aharoni, will be giving the opening remarks, and Martin Rosenman will be the master of ceremonies. Also participating in the event is Edeed Ben-Josef, chairman of the dinner; FIDF National Director and CEO Maj. Gen. Yitzhak Gershon; and FIDF National Charman Nily Falic.

For more information, visit www.fidf.org.

JFNA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Jewish Federations of North America has announced that Rabbi Rick Jacobs will serve as the scholar-in-residence at the JFNA 2012 General Assembly, the largest annual gathering of the North American Jewish community. Jacobs was recently named the fourth president of the Union for Reform Judaism and previously served as spiritual leader at Westchester Reform

Temple in Scarsdale.

Thousands of Jews from across North America and around the world will gather later this year in Baltimore for the GA, which takes place Nov. 11-13. The conference will convene the Jewish community to network, conceive new ideas and examine the issues facing the Jewish philanthropic world.

For more information, visit www.jewishfederations.org.