

Shema Kolainu - "Hear Our Voices" Celebrates Tenth Anniversary At Legislative Breakfast

On Tuesday morning, August 5th, Shema Kolainu-Hear Our Voices, a school and center for children with autism, hosted their Annual Legislative Breakfast in the Renaissance Ballroom in Brooklyn, New York. A primary goal of this event was to educate legislators about the urgency of autism care and research, raise support and

Greetings from Mayor Michael Bloomberg were related by Nazli Parvizi, Commissioner of the Mayor's Community Affairs Unit. The Mayor congratulated Shema Kolainu on their ten years of success and praised the tremendous work they do.

Councilman Simcha Felder commended Shema Kolainu on being the "unsung hero

thoughts with the audience and discussed how Shema Kolainu is able to get results for parents all across the borough, and how Shema Kolainu is equal to none.

Bronx Borough President Adolfo Carrion conveyed how our larger society denies the widespread impact of Autism and the effect it has on families. He thanked Shema Kolainu for being leaders in recognizing Autism and forcing legislation and budgeting in the right direction. Borough President Carrion presented the Legislative Leadership Award to New York City Council Member Bill de Blasio for his dedication to the community. Upon receiving his award Councilman de Blasio lauded Joshua Weinstein for his pioneering work, saying how when he took on this cause it was not easy or popular, but he was extremely successful.

Adding his voice of congratulations to Shema Kolainu, Assemblyman Dov Hikind

of community initiatives and specifically Shema Kolainu.

Shema Kolainu board member Milton Weinstock presented the Shema Kolainu Autism Leadership Award to Councilman David I. Weprin, New York City Council Finance Chair. Councilman Weprin spearheaded the Autism Initiative which provides millions of dollars in funds to Autism.

Symbolic checks were presented to Shema Kolainu from State Senators Kevin Parker and Diane Savino. Both Senators expressed their staunch support for Shema Kolainu, and committed to continue advocating on their behalf.

Shema Kolainu, founded by the trailblazing Joshua Weinstein, opened in 1998 and located in Brooklyn, New York, is a non-profit, non-denominational organization dedicated to enhancing the quality of life of



(L-R) Benjamin Krasna, Deputy Counsel General of Israel, Consulate general of Israel; Ezra Friedlander, CEO, The Friedlander Group; State Senate Democratic Leader Malcolm Smith; Malcom Hoenlein, Executive Vice Chairman and CEO, Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations; NYS Comptroller Tom DiNapoli; Assemblyman Dov Hikind; Peter Rebenwurz, Vice President, Shema Kolainu; Joshua Weinstein, President, Shema Kolainu; Bronx Borough President Adolfo Carrion; Councilman Bill de Blasio; Yitzchak Fleischer, Office of State Senator Diane Savino; Milton Weinstock, Board Member, Shema Kolainu; Menachem Lubinsky, President and CEO, Lubicom Marketing; John Catsimatidis, Chairman and CEO, Red Apple Group, Inc; Michael Miller, Executive Vice President and CEO, JCRC;

awareness and share ideas about working toward combating autism through effective public policy and legislation. In addition, communal, civic and religious leaders, community philanthropists, and elected officials, were in attendance to pay tribute to several outstanding public officials and community leaders for their dedication in furthering the mission of Shema Kolainu.

Menachem Lubinsky, the dynamic president and CEO of Lubicom Marketing Consulting acted as the master of ceremonies for the breakfast. Mr. Lubinsky praised the ten years Shema Kolainu has been in existence, and attributed the groundbreaking work they do to the vision Joshua Weinstein had from when Shema Kolainu opened its doors for just three students.

Joshua Weinstein asked the audience to stand up and give thanks for the tremendous accomplishments that were achieved since the inception of the organization. He saluted the children, parents, and staff of Shema Kolainu, noting that anyone who has visited the center can attest that Shema Kolainu is a success as a result of the hard work and dedication of the teachers and staff. Mr. Weinstein concluded by thanking the audience for joining in the commitment to give those children with autism the treatment they deserve.

Shema Kolainu was honored to have U.S. Senators Clinton, and Charles E. Schumer serve as the honorary breakfast chairs. The breakfast was graciously sponsored by Gristedes. John A. Catsimatidis, Chairman & CEO of Red Apple Group, Inc. served as Breakfast chair. In his remarks Mr. Catsimatidis noted that the work Shema Kolainu partakes in is about the children and what we can do to help. He affirmed that when visiting the schools it "opens your heart" and shows us that we must do whatever we can to help these children.

of our community". Councilman Felder presented the Shema Kolainu Hakoras HaTov Award to Bruce Rudolph, the Director of NYC Department of Design and Construction, he praised Mr. Rudolph's honesty and integrity emphasizing that such a pure person deserves and award from such a pure organization.

Peter Rebenwurz, Vice President of Shema Kolainu expressed his gratitude to Josh Weinstein for his leadership, and for turning Shema Kolainu into what it is today. He introduced Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz. Borough President Markowitz emphasized that Autism must be focused in on as a National goal for research so that it can become a distant past. Borough President Markowitz presented the Community Tribute Award to Yitzchok Fleischer, the Community Liaison to State Senator Diane Savino, for his service to the community, saying how deserving he was of this award as there is no part of Boro Park which has not been touched by his efforts.

Malcolm Hoenlein Executive Vice Chairman and CEO of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations presented the Legislative Leadership Award to New York State Senate Democratic Leader Malcolm A. Smith. Mr. Hoenlein lauded Senator Smith saying that since his appointment as Democratic Leader in 2006, Senator Smith has made a great difference, never sitting with what was, always coming up with new initiatives. Furthermore Senator Smith has an understanding of common responsibility, showing us true unity and personal responsibility. Senator Smith accepted the award and expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to serve. He also ensured Shema Kolainu that it will not suffer any cuts in its funding and that he will continue to support them.

State Senator Marty Golden shared his



(L-R) Ray Barcia, Boro Park Branch Manager, Park Avenue Bank; Charles Antonucci, CEO and President, Park Avenue Bank; Joshua Weinstein, President, Shema Kolainu; Peter Rebenwurz, Vice President, Shema Kolainu; Milton Weinstock, Board Member, Shema Kolainu; Ezra Friedlander, CEO, The Friedlander Group.

presented the State Leadership Award to New York State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli, noting that he is not only doing a great job as Comptroller, but also doing it from the heart; "a genuine mensch".

Comptroller DiNapoli accepted the award affirming the groundbreaking work Shema Kolainu does, and expressed hope that research catches up with the excellent social service Shema Kolainu provides; "we don't have a cure, but thankfully we have Shema Kolainu".

Joshua Weinstein presented the Shema Kolainu Appreciation Award to Charles J. Antonucci, CEO and President of the Park Avenue Bank for his endless support

children with autism in the five boroughs of New York. Renowned for their unique and pioneering approach based on the science of Applied Behavior Analysis, they offer education and other services in the field of autism care. Statistics confirm that autism has risen by epidemic proportions. Vital and urgent expenses for care, education and resources are staggering. Shema Kolainu hopes to build awareness and support to allow more children and families to benefit from the school's valuable and essential services and programs.

This event was coordinated by The Friedlander Group.

THE HEIMISHE CATERERS



LEIZER'S
Catering

BY LEIZER IGEL
917-613-8462