

# New scholarship honors kindness, compassion

## Ruderman awards recall a grandmother's values

By Deborah Fineblum Raub  
Special to *The Advocate*

This spring, with the help of Combined Jewish Philanthropies, the Ruderman family set out to identify and reward seven students – from the highest grade level of each of Greater Boston's even Orthodox day schools – who most closely mirror Rose Ruderman's fundamental values of caring and devotion to family and community. And at a recent reception in Brookline, the seven scholars were toasted and congratulated.

"She was a simple woman and had little in the way of material things to offer us, but what she did give us was far more important," granddaughter Sharon Haporo told the students. "She vepi for her children and grandchildren, always doing for us and our friends and community."

Since 1993, the Rudermans have invested more than \$50,000 each year in helping area day school families who need tuition assistance to keep their kids in Orthodox Jewish day schools. This is the first time they've awarded gifts – \$1,000 for each Rose Ruderman Scholar – based on a student's character.



Mort Ruderman, left, presents Deborah Bellin, a student at Maimonides School, with the Rose Ruderman Scholarship.

"They're wonderful kids – I'm sure she would have been very happy with all of them," said Rose's son, Mort Ruderman.

Maimonides School's middle and upper school principal, Rabbi Yair Altshuler, found the process of selecting a scholarship recipient surprisingly easy.

"Everyone I surveyed agreed it had to be Deborah Bellin," said Altshuler. "Whenever someone needs help, she's there for them."

Deborah Bellin runs her synagogue's Shabbat kids group and plans to use the scholarship for study in Israel prior to attending

Stern College in New York.

"Our hope is that sometime in the future, when they hear the name Rose Ruderman, these young people will remember the qualities she personified: the kindness, the hard work and the caring," said Rose's grandson, Jay Ruderman, president of the Ruderman Family Charitable Foundation.

Bellin is already well aware.

"I read about her and she really seems like an amazing person," said Deborah. "I was just honored that that they recognized some of those qualities in me."

# JF&CS volunteers aid new mothers

By Cara Hogan  
Advocate Staff

Judy Spivak of Framingham began volunteering with Jewish Family & Children's Service's Visiting Moms program more than 19 years ago. The free service sends volunteers into new mothers' homes once a week to help them build confidence in their mothering skills.

"I have tried to support them, empower them and give them my compassion and empathy," said Spivak. "Sometimes they just need someone to listen."

Spivak is the recipient of the program's annual Simone Lottor Exceptional Service Award, recognizing her years of dedication. She said she has found great satisfaction in bonding with women as they bond with their children.

"We're not expected to burp and diaper, but I've held the babies and sometimes I've fed them," she said. "It's more to help the mother bond with the baby."

Volunteers go through 10 hours of training before they are sent out to local mothers' homes. Although not required to have medical experience, volunteers are trained to detect post-partum depression.

Debbie Whitehall, the director of the Visiting Moms program, said Spivak has contributed to a valuable program that helps all mothers, regardless of who they are.

"They don't have to be Jewish," said Whitehall. "They're usually over 21, but can be single, married, American, foreign immigrants, new to the area, low or high income."

Whitehall said people wrongly assume the mothers seeking JF&CS's help are single or poor.

"There's no mother of a newborn that does not need extra support," said Whitehall. "Just because they can afford a nanny, are professionals, have a husband or are wealthy does not make them immune to the difficulties of parenting a newborn."

Almost all of Visiting Moms' volunteers have been mothers themselves and have experience that is helpful to a woman going through the beginning steps of motherhood for the first time. And Whitehall said there is no such thing as too much support for anyone.

"The assumption is that this is all instinctual – every woman is born to be a nurturer," she said. "But we believe in order to nurture you must be nurtured also."

The funding for Visiting Moms now comes from donations and grants, since Combined Jewish Philanthropies has had to cut much of the program's funding. And the organization is always looking for new volunteers.

For more information, visit [www.jfcsboston.com](http://www.jfcsboston.com)