TJF grants support wide range of projects for local agencies

Barb Gelb

The Tidewater Jewish Federation Grants process was created to have an impact on the Tidewater Jewish and general community by providing funding for new and innovative projects that focus on the social, welfare, health, education, community relations, and cultural fields.

The latest round of grants, which were recently approved by the TJF board, included projects for 12 unique organizations.

Some of the new grants will enhance education, including an Augmented Reality Lab and 3D printer for Hebrew Academy of Tidewater, funding for electives such as Robotics and Foreign Language for Tora Chaim, funding to help send local college students to the AIPAC Policy Conference, and for a Jewish Learning Fellowship at Virginia Tech. In addition, the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities received a grant to provide workshops and trainings for teens, as well as teachers to build inclusive programs within schools in Hampton Roads. BINA High School for Girls received a grant for their new “Connections” program, which will allow them to participate in conventions and host a Shabbatons in Norfolk.

Andie Pollack, director of student services and fundraising coordinator at BINA, says she is excited about the grant because their school is so small and the girls need to know that there are others like them. “This grant is important because we want our girls to have the advantages of living in our small community and also a chance to network with like-minded girls through conventions and Shabbatons.”

TJF administers the grants process twice a year. The grants awarded in the Spring of 2018 are:

- United Jewish Federation of Tidewater: Handicapped accessible track surrounding retention pond
- Sandler Family Campus: community security upgrades
- Hebrew Academy of Tidewater: Virtual reality and augmented reality lab and 3D printers
- BINA High School: Connect 2 programs for Shabbaton and conventions
- Temple Emanuel: Emergency Fund
- Tora Chaim: After school electives
- Norfolk Kolel/Commodore Levy

Scott Kaplan, president and CEO of TJF says, “We are happy with the range of projects we were able to fund, and we hope to continue to stimulate creativity and innovation in our community.”

The next round of grant applications will be available May 15. Deadline is July 13. Visit http://jewishva.org/tjf-grants-process or contact Barb Gelb, TJF director of philanthropy, at 757-965-6105.

Handbag designer Judith Leiber and her husband, artist Gerson Leiber, die within hours of each other

(JTA)—Handbag designer Judith Leiber died hours after the death of her husband, abstract painter Gerson Leiber.

They died at home Saturday, April 28 in New York of heart attacks. She was 97 and he was 96.

The couple’s deaths were announced to the New York Times by their spokesman, Jeffrey Sussman, who was also their biographer. The couple did not have children.

Sussman told the Times that Gerson Leiber, who had congestive heart failure, told his wife the night before they died, “Sweetie, it’s time for both of us to go.”

Judith Leiber was known for her small crystal-covered handbags called minaudieres, many of which took the forms of small animals, flowers or other objects. The bags often were decorated with gems or semi-precious stones and were gold plated. Singers and Hollywood celebrities, as well as several first ladies, have carried her bags, which are part of several museum collections.

Gerson Leiber, known as Gus, was an artist who created abstract landscapes, prints and sculptures. His work has been featured in several prominent U.S. museums, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., and the Whitney Museum of American Art.

Judith Leiber, a Budapest native, learned the stages of handbag manufacture in an artisan guild. She used that knowledge to escape being sent to the Nazi concentration camps, and instead the Nazis put her to work sewing military uniforms.

Gerson Leiber was born in Brooklyn and grew up in northwest Pennsylvania. He was an Army Signal Corps sergeant stationed in postwar Budapest when he met Judith on a city street. They married in 1946 and settled in New York, where he studied in art school.

The couple opened their own handbag business in 1963 after Judith Leiber spent more than a dozen years working for other manufacturers. They sold the company in 1993 to the British company Time Products for a reported $16 million.