



PRESS RELEASE

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Heilicher Minneapolis Jewish Day School Receives \$1.1 Million Gift for Judaic Studies Program

Minneapolis, MN - January 22, 2019 — The Amos and Celia Heilicher Minneapolis Jewish Day School proudly announces a \$1.1 million charitable gift to the school from Rabbi Mitchell Smith in honor of his parents, Harold and Mickey (z"l) Smith.

The gift will create an endowment to be known as **the Harold and Mickey Smith Judaic Studies Fund**, which will help support the school's Judaic Studies program in perpetuity. Additionally, the lead Judaic Studies and Hebrew position at the school, currently held by Etan Weiss, will be renamed **the Harold and Mickey Smith Jewish Life and Hebrew Director**.

The gift also includes \$100,000 in honor of Harold Smith's 100th birthday to support need-based scholarships at the school.

“Jewish learning is among my father's most cherished values, dating from his youth growing up on St. Paul's West Side,” explains Rabbi Mitch Smith. “He passed this commitment on to my sister Margie (z"l), my brother Jim, and myself. Our parents championed this spirit among Jewish institutions throughout the Twin Cities, and it is certainly fitting for them to be honored by Heilicher, knowing the vital work which the school does in securing the Jewish future through education.”

“We are humbled to receive the Smith family’s generous gift that directly supports two of the school’s strategic goals: financial accessibility and Judaic Studies excellence,” said Yoni Binus, Head of School. “Scholarship funds allow us to provide tuition assistance for families who need it. Through a combination of annual operating support and endowment funds, this gift ensures that our Judaic Studies programs can continue to grow and strengthen for years to come.”

“We are deeply honored by the Smith family’s commitment to Heilicher,” added Bruce Manning, President of the Heilicher Board of Trustees. “What a tremendous endorsement of Jewish education and its promise to provide the foundation for a vibrant Jewish community into the future.”

About the Smith Family

Harold Smith is a long-time community leader and philanthropist who, with his late wife Mickey, has been a staunch supporter of many causes and organizations in the Twin Cities and beyond, including Herzl Camp, Beth Jacob Congregation, the Talmud Torah of St. Paul, the Harold and Mickey Smith Gallery of Jewish Art and Culture at the Minneapolis Institute of Art, the Harold and Mickey Smith Enhancement Center at Hadassah Medical Center, and Heilicher.

Rabbi Mitchell Smith, Harold and Mickey’s son, is an ordained rabbi, author, and consultant who has held many positions of distinction both in Israel and the United States. He holds advanced degrees in counseling and educational psychology with a specialty in sport psychology and exercise science. He currently resides in Del Ray Beach, Florida.

About the Amos and Celia Heilicher Minneapolis Jewish Day School

Founded in 1984, the Heilicher Minneapolis Jewish Day School provides academic excellence in K-8 elevated by a deep commitment to Jewish core values. The school nurtures students to become lifelong learners, leaders, critical thinkers, and **mensch**es (good people). Heilicher supports students as they strengthen their academic knowledge and develop their Jewish identities. Heilicher graduates enter the world with the curiosity, critical and ethical decision-making skills, and global competency to succeed in their future endeavors. Heilicher is currently accepting applications for all grade levels at www.hmjds.org.

Photo attachment: Harold and Mickey (z”l) Smith

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