

Dear Friends
Good Evening and Welcome

As I stand here for the 7th Annual Gala it gives me great pleasure to see this room filled with so many friends, new and old and I thank you for your support and presence.

I'd like to recognize some of our distinguished guests: Major General Benni Gantz of the IDF, Shmuel Ben Dror, former Chairman of the Israeli Friends, Asael Shabo, a determined and brave young man who was the sole survivor of a terrorist attack on his family in Israel. WE are honored to have you all with us. Thank you to Dinner chairs Lori and Brian Schreiber; journal co chairs Nira & Ken Abramowitz Gala Steering committee members Rita Meed Ed Miller & Rita Ungar Moser along with the entire dinner committee, our Honorary Chair- Vladka Meed and my husband RICHARD

For many of us there is an undeniable void in the room tonight, I would like to take a moment to remember Jerry Ungar who was honored at this event just last year and send our support to the Ungar family. Jerry believed deeply in the POWER of Human Spirit and the universal eternal meaning of Holocaust education. We will miss her warmth and sparkle.

I'd like to welcome the Sonnenfeldt family, here to recognize and honor this year's Korczak Award recipient, Richard Sonnenfeldt. As chief interpreter to the legal team at the Nuremberg Trials, Richard Sonnenfeldt has many great stories to tell. But it is the way he shares his stories- with an eye towards RAISING AWARENESS and EMPOWERING the next generation- that so matches the APPROACH of the Ghetto Fighters' Museum and which we honor TONIGHT.

I also welcome and congratulate educator Wendy Lindner, who will RECEIVE our 2008 Korczak Teaching Award. Wendy has participated in our International Book sharing project for 7 years. This year, the project paired 30 US & 30 Israeli middle and high schools in a joint HOLOCAUST CURRICULUM. Many students on the American side knew almost nothing about Israel, Judaism or the Holocaust prior to this program- yet the program continues to ENGAGE young people in meaningful dialogue, and to forge connections not just AMONG students, but also between entire communities. Every year, Wendy and her colleagues have the satisfaction of seeing their students apply the humanistic lessons of the Holocaust to their daily lives- and I am so proud of this work. It would be impossible to mention the IBSP without thanking and recognizing the incredible efforts of the program's Director, Lana Bernhardt, who is here from Boulder Colorado. Without Lana, this program would not be where it is today, she inspires all whom she meets and her professionalism and success with these educators and students is unparalleled. TY Lana. And thank you to the staff of the Am Friends: Orna, Nathalie, & Linda.

We are at a pivotal time in the HISTORY of Holocaust Education. The challenge to keep HISTORICAL memories alive grows harder with each new GENERATION. Around the world, we continue to witness abuses of political power with ENORMOUSLY TRAGIC

human consequences. And, once again, we are confronted with world leaders all too ready to DISTORT and violate the facts of history for their own personal gain.

We say - “NEVER AGAIN”—but will future generations know the meaning of these words?

Within this context, the American Friends and its unique educational programs provide a critically needed response.

As we gather tonight, we mark the 65th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. The spirit of the Ghetto Fighters is the brick and mortar of the Ghetto Fighters’ Museum. The Museum honors those TARGETED for destruction, who refused to be spiritually and morally defeated. Never forgetting their own humanity, they chose NOT to submit to the tyranny DETERMINED to destroy them; choosing instead to RESIST and ACT according to the moral essence of Jewish culture.

We also celebrate the re-birth of the State of Israel 60 years ago—another expression of unyielding steadfastness, of not only the REFUSAL to SUBMIT to history but rather to SHAPE it, and of the CHOICE to SEIZE our own destiny. In the spirit of the fighters’ let us DEDICATE ourselves to more activism on Israel’s behalf, for what is more important than a free, secure and independent Jewish State?

I believe that today, we too have the opportunity to seize our own destiny at OUR moment in history. For me personally, this means WORKING TO ENGAGE the NEXT generation in remembrance of the Holocaust as both an ETHICAL ACT and an engine for change. TONIGHT, let us view ourselves as if we personally stood in the Warsaw Ghetto with BUT ONE CHOICE: whether or not to leave a LEGACY of honor for future generations. Once we’ve made our decision, the Ghetto Fighters’ Museum is here to help pave our path.

It is for this reason that I am so proud and honored to be here with you tonight to CELEBRATE our honorees and to FURTHER the work of the American Friends.