

Once upon a time, a young 12 year old girl was sitting at her Moriah Yeshiva desk mesmerized by the discussion conducted by her wonderful teacher, Dr. Karen Shawn. The subject was the Holocaust, a dark, sad time in history with which the young girl was already all too familiar. Dr. Shawn presented the harsh topic in the most delicate and sensitive manner, one that was age appropriate yet never detracted from the devastating reality of this horrible period in Jewish history.

My name is Danielle Sarna and I was that 12 year old Moriah student.

As a granddaughter of four Holocaust survivors, I and my siblings were exposed at a very young age to the horror that was to become known as the Shoah. Understandingly, my parents were very intent on teaching us the lessons and facts they themselves had learned from their parents. But they knew that the most secure way to teach children about the Shoah was through the formal education system. That is why they were especially pleased to learn of the International Book Sharing Project which Dr. Shawn created.

For those of you who aren't familiar with the Book Sharing Project, it is a program that pairs students of similar ages in the United States and Israel. Each student reads a book about the Holocaust and corresponds via website (although back then it was via Fedex). This program is the most amazing project one could participate in. It is hard to sit in a classroom and learn about the Holocaust but when you discuss it with other students, whether they are familiar with the topics or not, it brings up an opportunity to discuss many things together.

Discussion is key in learning and teaching. I am proud to say that my 7th grade class at Moriah was the first school in the program which has since skyrocketed to over 60 schools in the United States and Israel.

Dr. Karen Shawn was the first of many extremely talented and special educators who ultimately influenced and positively shaped the minds of over 20,000 impressionable students. Because of the special regard in which these educators are held, the American Friends of the Ghetto Fighters' House created the Korczak Award as a way of recognizing and thanking these unique teachers.

This year's recipient of the Korczak Award has been a teacher for almost 17 years. With dedication and commitment, she has been involved with the Project since 2001. She teaches the Project in the framework of a psychology class. She doesn't just teach about the Holocaust, but is able to transform it into a meaningful experience in the lives of her students. She carries her students to places unknown to them, and introduces them to people's lives before, during and after the Holocaust. She combines lessons of history, literature and psychology in a way that transforms these lessons into real life lessons for her students.

Ladies and gentlemen, at this time I am honored to present the 2008 Korczak Teaching Award to Wendy Linder.

THE JANUSZ KORCZAK TEACHING AWARD
PRESENTED TO

WENDY LINDNER

Of Freeport High School, Freeport, New York

In recognition of outstanding work on the International Book Sharing Project

Your commitment to Holocaust education and to the International Book Sharing Project has inspired hundreds of students for many years. The history of the Holocaust and its important lessons will be passed on faithfully to younger generations through the vital work that you do, in the spirit of the educational philosophy of Janusz Korczak.

**The American Friends of the Ghetto Fighters' Museum
The Ghetto Fighters' Museum
Yad Layeled Children's Museum and Memorial**

May, 2008