

2013–2015 Torch Awards - Application

Before you submit this application, please print out and review the "2015 Torch Awards Overview," available on the FJMC website.

Please complete the following information. The font for all submissions should be Times New Roman. Please embed photographs of your program into this file. This completed document will be submitted to us as a Word file, named in the format: "FJMC TA 2015_ChapterName_ProgramName.doc"

Please email your completed application to: torchaward.fjmc.2015@gmail.com. If you have difficulty, please contact the Torch Award Co-Chairs for assistance at the above email address.

Clubs participating must be in good standing as of March 31, 2015 (Club dues and Membership list received by FJMC). Programs to be considered for an award must have taken place between April 1, 2013 and April 15, 2015. Entries must be received by April 22, 2015.

Section 1: Title

Club Name: Temple Beth Torah Sha'ary Tzedek Men's Club

Current Contact: Alan Paley

Program Name: New Roads to Engagement

Section 2: Contact information

Person completing form

First Name: Alan

Last Name: Paley

E-Mail: adpaley@aol.com

Club President at time of Convention

First Name: Benjamin

Last Name: Kanarek

E-Mail: kanarekbb@gmail.com

Current Club President

First Name: Benjamin

Last Name: Kanarek

E-Mail: kanarekbb@gmail.com

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Section 3: Category

Please choose up to two (2) selections. Please note, you can only win in one category. The co-chairs reserve the right to reclassify your program.

- Club Administration
- Community Outreach
- FJMC Other
- Fundraising
- Health and Wellness
- Hearing Men's Voices
- Jewish Observance
- Israel / Masorti
- Keruv
- Men's Club Shabbat
- Programming for Younger Men
- Shomrei Ha'aretz
- Synagogue Service Project
- World Wide Wrap
- Youth Programming
- Shoah Yellow Candle
- I'm not sure, select for our club
- Best Overall Activities** **To apply for this award, please see specific instructions in "2015 Torch Award Overview," available on FJMC website**

Section 4: Program overview

Brief Summary - Please explain your program in 2-3 sentences.

We took the tools provided at the New Roads to Engagement meetings held at the 2013 convention in Danvers and moved forward with an overall engagement project that not only involved our synagogue, but one that we eventually merged with in 2014.

Detailed Summary - Please answer the following questions. Be as detailed as possible.

- What were the goals of your program? Are there specific problems or challenges that it addresses? Our Goals were to attempt to engage with our congregation by doing a series of things (1) Shabbat Greeters (2) Name Badges for all members (3) Telephone calls and a series of questions about the needs of our membership. (4) Establish more than 6 Chavurah groups made up of a cross section of our membership.

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- How does your program enhance the image of FJMC, your region, and your club? More engagement results in larger membership for the MC, as well as larger overall participation in MC projects and events.
- What is its value in building or strengthening your club? Continued growth and involvement in programs that would benefit the synagogue and or the membership.
- Who is your target audience? (i.e. congregation at large, chapter, community)? Initially, the congregation, followed by the community at large.
- How does your program support FJMC's mission, Involving Jewish Men in Jewish Life? As we went from a dormant MC to growing involved group of men, that in itself is involving Jewish Men in Jewish Life. We have unlimited possibilities, as our membership and core group of workers grow.
- Describe the source of your program and its unique aspects. Is this an original program or an adaptation or enhancement of a previous program (if so, which one)? We took the initial ideas discussed at the New Roads to Engagement Program in 2013 and embellished them to suit the specific needs of our synagogue.
- Please attach planning and marketing materials, as well as budgetary planning so the program can be replicated by other clubs.

With the untiring help of co-chair Elise Leonard, we quickly formed a committee, which was made up of a sampling of our overall membership composition. There were young members, both with and without children. Single, married, divorced, gay, lesbian, and seniors. Over 20 people attended our kick off meeting. We quickly determined that the main focus of our "engagement" project was to reach out to the entire membership with personal phone calls. During those calls, we would ask 4 or 5 specific questions, but would begin the call by telling the member that we appreciated the fact that they did belong to our shul, and wanted to thank them for their continued support. We then asked them to verify the contact information that we had on file in our business office (address, phone and cell phone numbers, e-mail addresses, number of children and age, and if college age, their contact information), We then went into the initial 4 questions (now increased to 5):

1. Do you feel that our temple is concerned about your family's Jewish needs?
2. What would you like to see from the synagogue? (type of events, fundraisers, programs, etc).
3. How could we do better?
4. Do you have any suggestions on how we can bring in new members?

We then thanked the member again for continuing to support the shul. We followed each phone call up with a personal e-mail again thanking them for taking the time to speak with us.

We have since added question # 5, which is: Are you a Kohen, Levi or Yisroel?

Once the questions were developed and a script was approved by the committee, we assigned about 20 phone calls to each committee member and asked them to begin calling. As with all committees, some members made phone calls and others did not. This did not deter us! Those committee members that made their calls, volunteered to take more. Other members dropped out.

The responses were quite favorable - we are an engaging congregation, we say hello and wish people a "Good Shabbos". We gladly help them if they have questions and hand each and every person a weekly Shabbat Program. All in all, we received pretty high marks from our congregants!

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In addition to the personal phone calls, the committee also came up with an idea to broaden our Chavurah program and see if we could get more congregants to participate and form additional Chavurot. This idea has blossomed and we now have 67 new people who are interested. As a result of their interest, we will form at least 6 new Chavurot. We said "thank you" to these 67 new participants by providing a free Shabbat Dinner last November. Part of the cost of this dinner was underwritten by both the Men's Club and Sisterhood.

We have now stopped meeting monthly. At one of our last meetings, we discussed the idea of getting name badges for everyone, so we can greet those people we do not already know by name instead of just "Good Shabbos" or "Welcome to our Shul". Another excellent idea of "engaging" with our congregation.

Last but not least is our Men's Club and Sisterhood. On the Sisterhood side, they continue with programs throughout the year that draw huge crowds and earn quite a bit of money which is used to help the temple and some of their key projects. With the addition of the Sisterhood members from Sunrise Jewish Center, we are now forming a "day" sisterhood to accommodate our senior members of the group, who may not drive or want to venture out at night. The Sunrise Sisterhood was also a very successful entity, and we hope this will continue now that they are part of our shul. Our once stagnant Men's Club is starting to come alive again! We have had several successful events over the past 6 to 8 months and are beginning to attract new members. With the guidance of Dr. Barry Kanarek, we seem to be on the right path.

So, we are moving ahead. We hired a full time young energetic Cantor. We are engaging, and we are increasing the membership in both our Sisterhood and Men's Club, and the synagogue as well. We are in a great place now, and truly look ahead to what we feel is a bright future for all of us.

Section 5: Certification

I certify that my club has not won a Gold Torch Award for essentially the same program in a previous year. (Previous silver and bronze winners in this category that submit an enhanced application only qualify to be considered for a Gold Torch award.)

Certification: Initials: _____

Section 6: Pictures

For all non-Shabbat programs, please attach photographs of your program.

****REPLACE/INSERT YOUR PHOTOS HERE****

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Section 7: Video

If possible, we ask that you please create a 3-5 minute video describing your program. Feel free to be creative in your submission, but try to include the following components:

- brief introduction, including name and goal of the program
- how did you encourage participation in the program
- how did you make the program meaningful to participants
- impact of the program to your club, synagogue and community

DO NOT ATTACH VIDEO TO THIS APPLICATION. Files are to be uploaded directly to YouTube, named in the following format:

“FJMC Torch Awards 2015_ChapterName_ProgramName_#”

Please review detailed instructions in the document “2015 Torch Award Overview.”

****REPLACE/INSERT YOUR VIDEO URL(S) HERE****