



Sharsheret®

Sharsheret Webcasts National Breast Cancer Genetics Symposium

More than 250 women and men participated in Sharsheret's fourth medical symposium, "**Breast Cancer Genetics: Impact on the Jewish Woman and Her Family,**" in October 2004. Experts addressed patients, family members, and health care professionals at Beth Israel Medical Center in New York City, while others viewed a national webcast of the event or participated via teleconference. Speakers included Dr. Kenneth Offit of Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, Dr. Ruth Oratz of Rocky Mountain Cancer Centers, and Jessica Mandell, principal genetic counselor and research coordinator of the *New York Breast Cancer Study*.

"During the past 3 years, one of the most urgent topics for those reaching out to Sharsheret has been the subject of tonight's symposium," said Executive Director Rochelle Shoretz. "Our goal is to answer some of the critical questions you

have brought to our attention, raise new ones, and generate discussion about the ways in which breast cancer genetics impacts the Jewish woman as an individual, as a family member, and as part of a broader community."

The symposium addressed the findings of the *New York Breast Cancer Study* that followed more than 1,000 women of Ashkenazi Jewish descent. Approximately 1 in 40 Ashkenazi Jews carry an alteration in the genes known as BRCA1 and BRCA2. Ms. Mandell noted that inheriting an alteration increases the likelihood that a woman will develop breast cancer in her lifetime.

Dr. Oratz discussed new research on genetic susceptibility for Jewish women of Sephardi descent. She highlighted recent studies of BRCA1 mutations

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Cindy Turkeltaub, CSW of Beth Israel Medical Center (left) and Rochelle Shoretz, Executive Director of Sharsheret.

During a question and answer session with the expert panel, symposium attendees asked the following questions:

- What can I expect during a genetic counseling or genetic testing session?
- What are the costs associated with testing and the implications on my insurance coverage?
- At what age should the women in my family consider genetic counseling or testing?
- What are the current surveillance and screening recommendations for women who have tested positive and for women who have tested negative?
- How does hereditary breast cancer affect Jewish men in our family?

To read the answers to these questions and more, view a transcript of the symposium "Breast Cancer Genetics: Impact on the Jewish Woman and Her Family." Visit www.sharsheret.org and click on Events and Transcripts.

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A Message From the Executive Director

Meeting the Growing Need



Dear Friends:

Writing this letter to you each year elicits mixed emotions: pride in all that Sharsheret has accomplished in serving the needs of young women facing breast cancer and regret that the need to continue our vital work seems to grow with each passing day. I find strength in the commitment of Sharsheret's staff and outstanding volunteers, women and men across the country who give their time and their talents to ensure that we can meet the growing needs of the women we serve.

"Meeting the growing need" is a theme you will recognize throughout this issue. You will read about the program Sharsheret has launched to meet the growing needs of parents raising young children through breast cancer. You will learn about the services Sharsheret is developing to meet the growing needs of family members – the spouses, partners, parents, and siblings of those facing breast cancer. And you will discover the ways in which Sharsheret is working to meet the growing need for culturally-sensitive resources and information designed for young women newly diagnosed or at high risk of developing breast cancer.

You will also read about the creative ways in which friends like you are helping Sharsheret meet that growing need. You will learn about the 200 men and women who joined together as Team Sharsheret to raise awareness and funds to support Sharsheret's national programs. You will meet Tana Farkas, who prepared for her Bat Mitzvah by designing pink bracelets that she sold with her mom's help to support Sharsheret. And you will read about Lisa Altman, who in the last months of her life helped launch Sharsheret's Annual Benefit Luncheon so that the families and friends of Sharsheret have an opportunity to honor the women who have touched their lives.

Sharsheret's third anniversary is a time of reflection and celebration as we look back on all that we have accomplished. It is also a time of determination and resolution as we set new goals to meet needs as yet unmet: support for women living with advanced breast cancer, programs to address the needs of single women. Together we will meet those needs and perpetuate the chain – the Sharsheret – that is already bettering the lives of women facing breast cancer across the country.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rochelle Shoretz". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rochelle L. Shoretz
Executive Director

Rochelle L. Shoretz
Executive Director

Elana Silber
Program Coordinator

Rivi Katz, LSW
Link Program Coordinator

Rebecca Schwartz
Administrator

Doni Farkovits
Technology Coordinator

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Gail Propp

Grant From Greater NYC Komen Affiliate Supports Sharsheret Outreach

A generous grant from the Greater New York City Affiliate of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation funded a culturally-sensitive education and support initiative targeting Hasidic and Orthodox Jewish women facing breast cancer in the New York metropolitan area in 2004. In collaboration with Bikur Cholim of Boro Park and Rofeh Cholim Cancer Society, Sharsheret developed and translated into Yiddish two educational booklets addressing the needs of Jewish women facing breast cancer (see below). Sharsheret also collaborated in the presentation of outreach events in the Catskill Mountains, Boro Park, Washington Heights, and Crown Heights in New York.

To develop the outreach initiative, Sharsheret worked closely with Hasidic and Orthodox women who shared their experiences. "Our callers helped us identify many of the barriers faced by women in their community seeking support after a diagnosis: concerns about confidentiality and the lack of available resources that address their needs as Jewish women – using the Mikvah after surgery or during treatment, for example," said Executive Director Rochelle Shoretz. "We worked together to design written materials and outreach presentations that address those needs sensitively."



Nicole Rubin, Executive Director of the Greater New York City Affiliate of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, welcomes Rochelle Shoretz (left) and Program Coordinator Elana Silber (right) at a luncheon for 2004 grant recipients.

"The Greater NYC Affiliate of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation is proud to support Sharsheret's vital initiatives providing culturally appropriate breast cancer education, outreach, and support services to Jewish women," said Kavita Das, Program Director of the Greater NYC Komen Affiliate. "In particular, we commend its efforts to provide breast health education and support to Ultra-Orthodox and Hasidic Women and to disseminate specific information about the relevance of breast cancer genetics to Jewish women."

Sharsheret Publishes New Booklet Series for Women Facing Breast Cancer

A new booklet series published by Sharsheret will address some of the common concerns of Jewish women facing breast cancer. The series, entitled "**Breast Cancer and the Jewish Woman,**" includes resources for patients and their families. Sharsheret has released the first two booklets in the series with generous support from the Greater New York City Affiliate of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. "Breast Cancer Genetics and the Jewish Woman" addresses frequently asked questions about hereditary breast cancer. "Facing Breast Cancer as an Orthodox Jewish Woman" provides culturally-sensitive information about breast cancer and the support available to Hasidic and Orthodox women. A third booklet, "Facing Breast Cancer as a Jewish Woman," will be published in 2005. Topics will include Jewish spirituality in healing, Jewish law, and community support.



Help Sharsheret raise awareness by distributing "**Breast Cancer and the Jewish Woman**" booklets to colleagues, friends, and health care professionals. Call toll-free (866) 474-2774 to order your free booklets.

How Sharsheret Can Help

In response to the needs of the young women we serve, Sharsheret has launched three core programs:

The Link Program

The Link Program is a peer support network connecting young women newly diagnosed or at high risk of developing breast cancer with others who share similar diagnoses and experiences.

Education and Outreach Programs

Sharsheret's Education and Outreach Programs include health care symposia and community-wide outreach events to address the concerns of young women facing breast cancer. Recent events addressed the subjects of breast cancer and fertility and breast cancer genetics. Transcripts of all symposia are available on Sharsheret's website, www.sharsheret.org.

Quality of Life Programs

Sharsheret has developed Quality of Life Programs to address some of the concerns faced by young women living with breast cancer. These programs include the *Busy Box* for parents facing breast cancer and *Best Face Forward* to address the cosmetic side effects of treatment.

For more information about Sharsheret programs, call toll-free (866) 474-2774.

Reaching Out

Through the **Education and Outreach Program**, Sharsheret organizes and collaborates in the presentation of symposia addressing the needs of Jewish women and young women facing breast cancer. In an effort to educate the public about the unique concerns of the women served by Sharsheret, our representatives have attended conferences, participated in programs, and distributed informational material at events of interest to the Jewish community and breast cancer community.

Presentations and Collaborations

- Breast Cancer Genetics: Impact on the Jewish Woman and Her Family
Beth Israel Medical Center, NY
- Risk and Prevention of Early Onset Breast Cancer
Cancer Institute of New Jersey
- Ordinary People Can Be Extraordinary Volunteers
Boro Park Bikur Cholim, NY
- Jewish, Single, and Living with Illness
Orthodox Caucus Publication
- Jewish Genetic Diseases
Holy Name Hospital, NJ
- Breast Cancer and Fertility
Fertile Hope and Young Survival Coalition, National Teleconference
- Young Woman's Guide Through Breast Cancer
Y-ME National Breast Cancer Organization, National Teleconference



Medical Advisory Board Member Dr. Kenneth Offit of Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center discusses Jewish women at risk at Sharsheret's genetics symposium.



Rochelle Shoretz joins panelists at a genetics lecture at the Cancer Institute of New Jersey.



President of Sharsheret's Board of Directors, Amy Mines Tadelis, introduces Sharsheret.

Exhibits and Events

- Annual Conference for Young Women Affected by Breast Cancer (PA)
- Annual Symposium on the Latest News About Breast Cancer (NY)
- 92nd Street Y Women's Health Symposium (NY)
- Nishmat Health and Halacha Day (NY)
- Annual Conference of the Association of Jewish Family and Children's Agencies (OH)
- Race For the Cure (NY)
- Making Strides Against Breast Cancer (NY)
- CURE Magazine Patient and Survivor Forum (TX)
- National Conference on Breast Cancer (FL)
- Breast Cancer Action Coalition (NY)
- Cancer Institute of New Jersey and Novartis Outreach and Education Project (NJ)
- Long Island Breast Cancer Action Coalition Health and Cancer Expo (NY)
- Task Forces on Families and Children at Risk Annual Rebbetzin's Conference (NY)
- Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation Conference (MD)
- To Life! Genetics Conference (NY)
- Annual Bikur Cholim Conference (NY)
- Continuum Cancer Centers Breast Cancer Symposium (NY)
- San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium (TX)
- The Jewish Health and Healing Center Genetics Lecture (CT)

Interested in Bringing Sharsheret to Your Community?

Consider hosting or organizing a Sharsheret event in your home or neighborhood. Sharsheret representatives are available to speak about breast health and breast cancer in the Jewish community at conferences, lectures, fundraisers, and other community events.

To learn more, call toll-free (866) 474-2774.

Community Connections

Outreach events held in community centers, synagogues, and private homes across the country have provided wonderful opportunities for Sharsheret to reach women in diverse communities and to raise necessary support. Heartfelt thanks to all of Sharsheret's hosts and their event committees.

- Rachel Jacoby, Betty Brener
(Hollywood, Florida)
- Gloria Harris
(Boca Raton, Florida)
- Marcie Cappell, Michelle Salig
(New York, New York)
- Rena Levy
(Washington Heights, New York)
- Rofeh Cholim Cancer Society
(Brooklyn, New York)
- Tzipora Wolff, Lisa Rosenbaum
(Newton, Massachusetts)
- Temple Israel
(Sharon, Massachusetts)



Monticello, New York:
Board Member Naomi Spira.



New York, New York (left to right):
Marcie Cappell, Rochelle Shoretz,
Michele Sallig.



Hollywood, Florida (left to right): Amy Mines
Tadelis, Rochelle Shoretz, Rachel Jacoby, Betty
Brener, Elana Silber.



Boca Raton, Florida: Gloria Harris.

Sharsheret Forges Connections with Cancer Organizations In Israel

Sharsheret's Executive Director Rochelle Shoretz met with representatives from cancer organizations in Israel, sharing information and learning more about the resources available to Jewish women facing breast cancer. Volunteers from One in Nine, a peer support organization for women with breast cancer based in Tel Aviv; Ma'agan, a community center offering lectures and activities for those with cancer in Jerusalem; and Beit Natan, an organization addressing women's health needs in Jerusalem, identified the concerns of Jewish women in Israel facing breast cancer and the programs that have been shaped to provide support.

"It was important to forge a connection with organizational leaders in Israel who

can share their experiences addressing many of the same cultural needs that we address at Sharsheret," said Ms. Shoretz, who was also a featured speaker at a cancer conference organized by One in

Nine in Tel Aviv. "We look forward to collaborating on future programs that will connect the women of Sharsheret with their sisters abroad."



Chaya Heller (right) welcomes Sharsheret to Beit Natan in Jerusalem, where Executive Director Rochelle Shoretz met with volunteers.

200 Join Team Sharsheret To Raise Awareness

More than 200 men, women, and children joined **Team Sharsheret** to race, run, and raise awareness about breast cancer this Fall. Team Sharsheret joined thousands in the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation's Race for the Cure as well as the American Cancer Society's Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walk. Margo Allswang, a Florida resident who came to New York for the

Race, said, "It was uplifting for me to see so many people come out to walk with Team Sharsheret. This was a chance for us to join together, beyond breast cancer treatment, to enjoy a positive experience at an event for cancer."

Team Sharsheret 2004 was sponsored by Lucille Roberts, Med-Pat, Glatt Express, www.diamondsearch.com, Stern College

for Women, Women's Digital Imaging of Ridgewood, Mount Sinai School of Medicine, Department of Medicine, and Perry Chemical Corporation, and was supported by Leasco, Packer Shoes, Sushi Metsuyan, JH Darbie & Co., Handle with Care, Noah's Ark Restaurant, Vera and Nechama Realty, and Network Delivery Service.



Above and below: Team Sharsheret participates in New York's Race for the Cure and Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walk.



Team Sharsheret kids create and display their own Sharsheret banner.

Join Team Sharsheret in Your Community

Celebrate a special occasion, honor a survivor, or remember a loved one by participating in a local race or walk.

To learn more about organizing Team Sharsheret for an event in your community, call Sharsheret toll-free (866) 474-2774.

Save the Date!

Join us as we honor
Founding Board Member

Dr. Karin Katz

and

**The Women Who
Have Touched Our Lives**

at a Luncheon and
Silent Auction
to benefit Sharsheret

Sunday – May 15, 2005

Sheraton
Meadowlands Hotel
East Rutherford, New Jersey

For more information and
sponsorship opportunities,
please call toll-free
(866) 474-2274.

White House Invitation for Sharsheret's Executive Director



Executive Director Rochelle Shoretz and Board Member Jonathan Mirsky were introduced to President George W. Bush and Mrs. Laura Bush at a Chanukah celebration at the White House in December 2004. White House Liaison to the Jewish Community Noam Neusner passed on a message: "The President and Mrs. Bush send their best wishes to all the young women served by Sharsheret."

Sharsheret To Present Symposium For Young Survivors

The completion of breast cancer treatment can be cause for celebration. But for many young women, the transition can also raise new anxieties: fears of recurrence, concerns about fertility, and adjustments to changes in one's body image and feelings of intimacy. To address these issues, Sharsheret will present the symposium, "**Surviving Young: Life After Breast Cancer**," in April 2005. The symposium will be held at Weill Medical College of Cornell University in New York City and will be broadcast nationwide via webcast.

"The question I am asked most frequently by those completing surgery or treatment is, 'When will I be able to put cancer behind me?'," said Executive Director

Rochelle Shoretz. "Sharsheret's upcoming symposium will help young women learn to walk more comfortably beside cancer as we explore together strategies for addressing new concerns that often surface after active treatment."

Symposium panelists will include Dr. Kutluk Oktay, a specialist in reproductive endocrinology and infertility at The Center for Reproductive Medicine and Infertility, Dr. Ruth Oratz, an oncologist at Rocky Mountain Cancer Centers, Dr. Thomas Kolb, a radiologist in private practice, and Linda Roberts, LSW, who works with patients at Memorial-Sloan Kettering

Cancer Center's Post-Treatment Resource Center. Topics will include:

- Staying current on emerging cancer research
- Follow-up care after surgery and treatment
- The impact of breast cancer on Jewish ritual and spirituality
- Fertility post-treatment
- Coping with fears of recurrence
- Addressing issues of body image and intimacy
- Nutrition and exercise post-treatment

"Surviving Young: Life After Breast Cancer" will be sponsored by a generous grant from the UJA-Federation of New York.

Sharsheret Welcomes Link Program Coordinator

Rivi Katz, LSW, has joined Sharsheret's staff as Coordinator of the national Link Program, a peer support program connecting young Jewish women facing breast cancer. Ms. Katz is a graduate of the Columbia School of Social Work and began her professional training at Rockland Family Shelter, where she worked with Jewish women as the Coordinator of Domestic Violence Services.

Sharsheret's work is personally meaningful to Ms. Katz, who lost her mother to breast cancer six years ago. "Sharsheret is a wonderful way for me to use my social work training to help other women facing breast cancer," said Ms. Katz. "I enjoy connecting with the women who phone us, and sharing their experiences and challenges."

As Link Program Coordinator, Ms. Katz will oversee Sharsheret's peer support program, coordinate training of Sharsheret's peer supporters, and develop new programs in response to the needs of Sharsheret's callers. In 2005, she plans to develop programs for single women living with breast cancer and for women living with advanced breast cancer. "Sharsheret



Link Program Coordinator Rivi Katz, LSW.

is committed to meeting the needs of all young women facing breast cancer," said Ms. Katz. "Our new programs will address the specific needs of women whose concerns have not been adequately addressed by the services available to the general population of young women facing breast cancer."

Sharsheret's Link Program is supported by generous grants from the Nash Family Foundation and the Wolfensohn Family Foundation.

Link Training Teleconferences Prepare National Peer Supporters

Breast cancer survivors interested in volunteering as Sharsheret Links – peer supporters in Sharsheret's national Link Program – can now participate in free teleconference training sessions. The teleconferences are designed to highlight Link Program guidelines, identify critical breast cancer resources, and address the challenges and joys of serving as a peer supporter. Teleconferences are conducted twice each year and include a question-and-answer session with Sharsheret's Link Program Coordinator.

More than 250 women from 23 states across the country have participated in Sharsheret's Link Program, a peer support network connecting young

women nationwide. The Link Program pairs women facing breast cancer with volunteers who can offer culturally sensitive peer support. Callers are matched on a one-to-one basis with a "Link" who can address their specific concerns.

"As both a breast cancer survivor who is Jewish and a health care professional, I only wish your wonderful organization was available when I was diagnosed at the age of 41 in 1999," wrote one Sharsheret supporter. "I am so glad to know that young Jewish women facing this crisis in their lives can now turn to your organization and receive this special support."

Sharsheret in the News

Sharsheret has been featured in articles published in the following newspapers and magazines this year:

- Bergen Record
- Blueprint
- Forward
- Hadassah Magazine
- Hem/Onc Today
- Jerusalem Post
- Jewish Journal of South Palm Beach Florida
- Jewish Press
- Jewish Sentinel
- Jewish Standard
- Jewish Tribune
- Jewish Week
- Jewish World
- JM in the AM Radio Program
- Lilith Magazine
- New York Times
- Parent Paper
- Radiology Today
- South Florida Sun-Sentinel
- Wall Street Journal

More than 300 Celebrate at First Annual Benefit Luncheon

More than 300 guests celebrated life and loved ones at Sharsheret's First Annual Benefit Luncheon in May 2004. The event featured remarks by acclaimed author Tova Mirvis (*"The Ladies Auxiliary"* and *"The Outside World"*), and a silent auction that raised critical funds to support Sharsheret's national programs and services. The Benefit was inspired by Sharsheret volunteer Lisa Altman, who envisioned an opportunity for the friends and families of Sharsheret to "Honor the Women Who Have

Touched Our Lives," the theme of this special event.

Sharsheret honored Ms. Altman, who lost her battle with breast cancer a few months after the meaningful event she helped establish. "You are being singled out by your peers for your stellar character and dedication, to be held as a strong shining link in the chain known as Sharsheret," said Debra Klein, in tribute to her sister, who received a standing ovation from guests in

attendance. Sharsheret also recognized the contributions of Benefit co-Chair Nikki Sausen, who hand packs Sharsheret Busy Boxes for children with a parent undergoing cancer treatment. Lauryn Weiser, a member of the Board of Directors, described Ms. Sausen as one of the women who has touched her life. "Nikki has honored me by taking on my cause and accepting my challenges as if they were her own, and in so doing she has done the same for all who have been touched by Sharsheret."



More than 300 men and women celebrated life and loved ones at Sharsheret's First Annual Benefit Luncheon.



Sharsheret Board Member Lauryn Weiser (right) honored her friend and Benefit Chair Nikki Sausen.



Debra Klein (right) paid tribute to her sister and Benefit Chair Lisa Altman (z"l).

Sharsheret Webcasts National Breast Cancer Genetics Symposium

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found in women living in Southern Colorado and Northern New Mexico, and possible connections between those women and the Jews who left Spain during the Spanish Inquisition. For those who have tested positive or negative for BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene alterations, Dr. Ofrit reviewed appropriate follow-up care. His remarks featured current research addressing MRI technology and mammography for those with a family history of breast or ovarian cancer.

The symposium also addressed the impact of hereditary breast cancer on the

extended Jewish family – including mothers, sisters, and daughters – as well as genetic counseling and testing in Chasidic and Orthodox Jewish communities where confidentiality can be a critical component of cancer support. Dr. Sheldon Feldman and Dr. Stewart Fleishman of Beth Israel Medical Center addressed those unique concerns before participants were invited to ask questions of all the panelists.

The symposium was made possible by a generous grant from the Jewish Women's Foundation of New York ("JWF"). "Our grant to Sharsheret fulfilled the

Foundation's interest in funding programs that reach Jewish women and girls with specific unmet needs," said JWF President Betsy Miller Landis. The symposium "was informative, well-organized, and most important of all, sensitive to the broad needs of the professionals in attendance and the individual needs of the women and families affected by breast cancer." The symposium was also sponsored in part by FORCE: Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered, Hadassah, and Supersol. A transcript of the symposium is available on Sharsheret's website, www.sharsheret.org.

Best Face Forward and Busy Box Join Quality of Life Programs

Sharsheret launched two Quality of Life Programs in 2004 to meet the needs of younger women facing breast cancer. **Best Face Forward**, designed by Sharsheret volunteer and makeup artist Adina Fand, addresses the cosmetic side effects of cancer treatment. Women enrolled in Sharsheret's national Link Program receive a Best Face Forward kit which includes resource materials, personal care products, and a cosmetics application card. The card provides easy-to-follow instructions for those facing hair loss and changes in skin tone.

"When women undergo treatment for breast cancer, they are often concerned about the changes in their appearance," said Program Coordinator Elana Silber. "Best Face Forward addresses these concerns in a program designed to be convenient, one of the fundamentals of all of Sharsheret's services."

The Best Face Forward Program was made possible by contributions from Palladio Beauty Group, H & M Cosmetics, Newport Sales, and a gift from the Fand and Silber families.

Sharsheret's second Quality of Life Program, the **Busy Box**, addresses the needs of those facing cancer during parenthood. Each Busy Box includes resource materials, books, and a video to educate parents about the impact of breast cancer on their children. In addition, the kit includes a transcript of Sharsheret's symposium, "How Do We Care For Our Children? Issues for Men and Women Facing Breast Cancer," presented at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. The Busy Box features games and activities to occupy children while their mother is attending a doctor's appointment or resting after treatment. Those who have participated in the program share their thanks with our Link Program Coordinator during their phone conversations.

The response to the Busy Box has been overwhelming. One program participant wrote, "I recently received the Busy Box you sent for me and my family and I wanted to thank you so very much for the effort that went into creating it. All of the materials were



The new Busy Box includes resources for parents facing breast cancer and activities for children to keep busy while mom rests.

well selected and age appropriate. My son LOVES puzzles, so the Hebrew alphabet puzzle was by far his favorite. I watched the video last night and read the transcript and found them both helpful. I am slowly going through the book as well. Thank you again for your kindness and that of Sharsheret. What a difference you have all made in my life."

The Busy Box Program was made possible by contributions from Toys "R" Us, xuppa.com, KidKraft, Englewood Hospital and Medical Center, and American Cancer Society, and with support from the Treetops Foundation.

Our Voices

"Shortly after my diagnosis, a lovely note and packet of brochures arrived from a friend-of-a-friend outlining all of the ways that Sharsheret was eager to help. What a comfort, to find that a like-minded community was out there. I was impressed with the directness of its approach. Rather than supplying the generic 'help lines' of other crisis groups, Sharsheret had scoped out the essential needs facing breast cancer victims—private links to our peers, information tailored to our unique Jewish lifestyle.

What could be more perfect? While Orthodox communities excel in stepping in to help families in need (and my neighborhood consistently amazed me with its help with babysitting and meals), neither books, support groups, nor on-line resources addressed my specific questions: How would I maintain privacy, soothe my kids, organize warm Shabbosim, visit the Mikvah, maintain Kashrus, keep Fast Days, explore testing for genetic markers common to Ashkenazi Jews? Sharsheret was ready to help me, but I forged through my diagnosis, multiple surgeries, and chemotherapy on auto-pilot. Denial was my personal way of thrashing through my cancer treatments.

It wasn't until I felt whole again that I felt ready to face my survivor status. For nearly a year I've been an eager Sharsheret Link. Hopefully, there's a good reason for everything I've gone through, and I'm guessing

that sharing my experience and lending support might be it. Being a Link is also a way to feel 'home free,' cementing my past-tense role in this disease.

May G-d bless the staff of Sharsheret with the resources it needs to continue watching over us, and leading us closer to a cure."

Shayna Meiseles – Monsey, New York

Sharsheret addresses the needs of Jewish women of all backgrounds facing breast cancer. To submit a piece for publication in "Our Voices," please e-mail voices@sharsheret.org.

Tribute Cards

Give a gift of \$36 or more to Sharsheret in honor or in memory of a loved one and Sharsheret will mail a Tribute Card to announce your special gift. Celebrate a birthday, holiday, anniversary, or wedding, send thanks, or remember friends and family with a gift to the only organization dedicated to supporting Jewish women facing breast cancer nationwide. Call toll-free (866) 474-2774 or e-mail gifts@sharsheret.org for more information about Tribute Cards.

Spotlight on Giving: Tana Farkas

When Tana Farkas began preparing for her Bat Mitzvah months ago, her mother, Donna, sat her down for the big talk: Mitzvah Project. While other families preparing for a Bar or Bat Mitzvah celebration struggle with decisions about catering and music, the Farkas family has a history of more meaningful decision making. Each member of the family – Jessica, Evan, and Tana – has chosen a Mitzvah Project to accompany the rite of passage into adulthood.



Bat Mitzvah Tana Farkas displays the bracelet she designed to benefit Sharsheret.

Tana, a student at Grand Avenue Middle School in Bellmore, New York, chose to design and sell pink beaded bracelets with proceeds to benefit Sharsheret and Jewish women facing breast cancer. The fit was natural; Donna sells jewelry professionally from her own business, Donna C. Designs. “My mother has a few friends who have had breast cancer and survived,” said Tana. “I have learned a lot about breast cancer working on my Mitzvah Project.”

Tana made more than 60 bracelets and sold them to friends and relatives. Months before her Bat Mitzvah, she exceeded her goal of raising \$1,000 for Sharsheret and continued making more bracelets. More important, she encouraged everyone who purchased a bracelet to tell a friend about Sharsheret and her Mitzvah Project.

Tana plans to wear a pink bracelet to her own Bat Mitzvah celebration, a reminder of her meaningful project and of all the women she helped along the way.

Honor a Loved One, Establish a Jewel

Friends of Sharsheret may now honor or remember a loved one by establishing a Jewel in Sharsheret’s chain of support. Sharsheret staff will work closely with you to identify a meaningful program that will be supported by your special gift and the ways in which your Jewel will be recognized. Jewels can be established to:

- Honor or remember a loved one
- Commemorate a special occasion (Mother’s Day, birthday, anniversary, Bar or Bat Mitzvah)
- Involve family members in charitable giving
- Ensure the continuation of a Sharsheret program that is of particular meaning to you

Friends and family may also earmark gifts for your Jewel. At your request, Sharsheret will inform you annually of those who have enhanced your Jewel with their contributions.

Please call (866) 474-2774 or e-mail gifts@sharsheret.org to discuss the Jewel in your life deserving of recognition. Honor your loved one with a gift that will continue the Sharsheret, the chain, of support for Jewish women and their families facing breast cancer nationwide.

Our Thanks

We wish to acknowledge the many organizations and individuals who gave so generously to Sharsheret this year.

Foundations and Organizations

Bikkurim: An Incubator For New Jewish Ideas

Brad Meltzer and Cori Flam Charitable Trust

Greater New York City Affiliate of The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation

IDT Charitable Foundation

Jewish Women’s Foundation of New York

John and Allison Marston Danner Family Fund

Joshua Venture

Metzger–Price Fund, Inc.

The Nash Family Foundation

Ruth R. Greenberg Family Foundation

The Solelim Fund

Wolfensohn Family Foundation

Service Providers

Ari Engel, Website Development

David Korn, CPA

Dena Feigenbaum

Gitl Viswanath

Globix

Hogan & Hartson

IDT Corporation

Jason Rosenbaum, Outsource InfoSys

Jerry Meyer Studio, Photography

Michael Samuel

Naomi Singer Designs

Nexus Marketing Group

Rays Reproductions

Reel Simchas

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Family Will Be Focus of New Sharsheret Program

Sharsheret will develop **Family Focus**, a program to address the support needs of spouses, partners, parents, and other family members of women facing breast cancer. In an effort to enhance the quality of support Sharsheret women receive, the organization will design materials and services for family members who often face their own concerns when supporting a loved one through surgery or treatment.

“Many women have called Sharsheret to request support for their husbands and partners,” said Rivi Katz, Link Program Coordinator. “Mothers, brothers, and sisters have all called asking what they can do to support their loved ones.” **Family Focus** will begin with a series of guided group discussions including spouses, parents, and siblings and will culminate with a program designed to address the needs of family members at diagnosis, through treatment, and beyond.



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