



VOLUNTEERS IN THE NEWS

## Resident Gets Schools Worldwide To Mark Pink Day

TABC graduate hopes to empower students to community service through breast cancer awareness event

By **Jennifer Pinto** March 7, 2011

For at least one day out of the year, Tzvi Solomon is proud to wear pink. It's his way of showing support to those individuals battling breast cancer.

"This is not a fight that anyone should be having alone," said the 19-year-old Yeshiva University student.

Solomon does his part to spread awareness about breast cancer by encouraging young people to take part in [Sharsheret's Pink Day Around the World](http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=148197978571793) (<http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=148197978571793>). Students are asked to wear pink on a specific day, volunteer in their community and raise funds for [Sharsheret](http://www.sharsheret.org/) (<http://www.sharsheret.org/>), a Teaneck-based nonprofit that assists Jewish women affected by breast cancer.



This year's Pink Day event took place on Feb. 9 and involved 68 schools across four countries, including the United States, Israel, Canada and England.

The concept of Pink Day originated at Solomon's alma mater – [Torah Academy of Bergen County](http://teaneck.patch.com/listings/torah-academy-of-bergen-county) (TABC) – by director of admissions and learning specialist Donna Hoenig.

Calling herself the "resident feminist" at the all-boys school, Hoenig said Pink Day began in 2006 as a way to make the male students more aware of illnesses that affect women. In 2007, Solomon and another student got on board with Pink Day and helped to increase student involvement in the event.

"Tzvi has great fundraising skills and superb social skills," said Hoenig, who still keeps in touch with Solomon. "Not many boys had pink clothing to wear on Pink Day, so Tzvi made sure to buy pink scarves to pass out."

Solomon said the first Pink Day at TABC involved about 15 students, but participation steadily grew each year. After Solomon graduated from TABC, he studied abroad for a year in Israel and introduced that country to Pink Day.

"I knew that no year would be complete without having a Pink Day," he said. "It was at that point when I reached out to representatives of various schools to grow Pink Day."

One representative that didn't hesitate to organize Pink Day at her school was Solomon's cousin Yaffa Bluman, a student at [Ma'ayanot Yeshiva High School](http://maayanot.org/) (<http://maayanot.org/>).

"I think it is amazing that for the past few years Tzvi has been collecting money and organizing Pink Day throughout many schools around the world," said Bluman. "I decided to do it because I thought it was a great cause. I think that Sharsheret is an amazing organization because it does not only collect money for breast cancer awareness but it also guides woman who are going through it and helps them out."

Elana Silber, director of operations for Sharsheret, said the national organization is grateful to Solomon for helping to coordinate this event and for recruiting participants.

"Sharsheret is very pleased with the thousands of students and schools who participate in Sharsharet's Pink Day Worldwide," Silber said. "Sharsheret is the only national organization dedicated to supporting young Jewish women and their families facing breast cancer."

The organization helps individuals during all stages of the disease: before, during and after diagnosis. The group also presents more than 200 educational programs nationwide.

The fact that students plan and run their own Pink Day events makes Solomon proud.

"A big part of the day is introducing volunteerism to students around the world," he said. "I want the representatives to really make this their day. I purposely do not make a general flier to pass around. The hope is that Pink Day Around the World will be just the first step into the volunteering world."

The only guidelines that schools must follow are to take a picture of all the students wearing pink and collect \$1 from everyone for Sharsheret.

"It always gives me pleasure to see students take the initiative after Pink Day and to see them get involved in various projects," said Solomon. "I am a true believer that if you have confidence you can accomplish anything you put your mind to. However, it is getting that confidence that has many students sitting at the road block. Pink Day tries to instill that confidence into students so that they can see what they are able to accomplish."