

Dottie's Story

The Jewish Federation **MAKE
IT YOURS**
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but I am concerned...

THAT
THE **INSTITUTIONS**
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FUTURE”

*Dottie has a passion for building
a more robust Jewish community.*

Ask Dottie what is important to her, and be prepared to hear about her love of family, community and growing the Jewish community on all sides of the Potomac river.

In the quest for a more robust Jewish community, Dottie brought her characteristic candor, passion and wisdom to The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington and to many other local and national Jewish institutions. As she puts it, “I’ve been privileged to serve on many boards devoted to insuring the future of the Jewish people and the Jewish community.”

“I’m at that stage of my life where I have a very different perspective. I want to make sure that we always question what we’re doing, because I think we’ll be stronger when we get the answer.

Intelligent questioning allows us to make sure that our priorities remain first and foremost, and that our precious resources are used to further those goals.”

The capacity of the Jewish community to care for its most vulnerable members is one of the areas that motivates Dottie. She also devotes herself to mentoring young Jewish leaders. She is a proud supporter of Geshur Jewish Day School because she feels that day school education is the perfect melding of secular studies and religious education, preparing students to take their place in the Jewish community.



"For many years I was an \$18 giver, and at the time, people made me feel that it was a worthy gift. It is one of the reasons I still give today."

"I believe in this community," she says. "But I'm afraid that the institutions that mean a lot to us all will not be supported properly in the future." To that end, she says there's a need to "re-engineer in our kids the understanding that if they don't support the Jewish community, nobody else will."

And their gifts need not be huge. Dottie says she was an \$18 giver for many years, and "the fact that it was a worthy gift at the time, and people made me feel that way, is one of the reasons I am still today a giver at The Jewish Federation."

These days, with the ability to multiply that gift many times over, Dottie has established an endowment fund—several actually—through the United Jewish Endowment Fund, The Jewish Federation's planned giving program to help secure the future of our Jewish community, for which she cares so deeply. "I believe in doing it while you can, and I think it is a responsibility we have once our family is taken care of. I think it is a beautiful gift to leave as an example to others and to your own family. I truly believe in leading by example."

"Lessans" of Tzedakah



When Stuart Lessans was a child, he witnessed his parents' deep commitment to Jewish peoplehood, Israel and performing *mitzvot* (good deeds). And so, as a fitting tribute, Dr. Lessans and his family have decided to consecrate that legacy by endowing The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington's Good Deeds Day in their name. "I want to honor the memory of my wonderful parents—whose commitment to family, community and their Jewish homeland, Israel, was limitless. Making a gift to a program that they would wholeheartedly approve feels like the most perfect way for our family to carry on their ideals."

The Sarah and Samuel J. Lessans Good Deeds Day will continue to be a yearly event where thousands of Washingtonians join volunteers in Israel and around the world in a wide variety of hands-on volunteer projects that make a difference and improve the lives of their neighbors and community.

