

## Leadership

When the Miller family became a part of the Beth Evergreen family almost four years ago, we were excited about the prospect of being part of what is was a new and thriving Jewish community here in the mountains.

Not only did the leaders of the congregation make us feel welcome, we also felt an immediate bond to the entire synagogue community.

Moving here from Florida without a single social connection, Congregation Beth Evergreen became the center of our lives.

So, we were new. We knew no one. And no one knew us. There was only one choice, and that was to dive in with all twenty of our family's collective arms and legs.

We enrolled our kids in religious school and we started meeting other parents and families who today comprise the core of our universe of friends. Rather than sit back and remain a satellite in this wonderful world, we took a different approach.

Beth got involved in the religious school classroom and then worked with others to help build the congregation's social programming. I started helping with social programs as well and not long afterward became a member of the CBE Board as a member at large and now as a member of the Executive Committee.

Over the years, we have learned more and more about the heritage of leaders who came before us and played critical roles in the development of our congregation. Perhaps it is an homage to those pioneers that we devote the time and commitment to honing our leadership skills today ...and tomorrow.

Speaking of tomorrow, one of the most important facets of our congregational life is the role of leader of our Hebrew High group. There is an obvious vested interest in the group with my son Chasen joining the group for the first year this year. However, there is much more...

As the leader of this group of very impressive young people, I have the ability to develop a bond of Jewishness among the teenage sector of our community. In an area where Jews are an overwhelming minority, it is critical that our youngsters see in themselves their potential as leaders. The message is not to think of their heritage as a something to overcome, but as an incredible advantage and source of strength as they navigate this very important part of their lives.

How can you truly consider yourself part of a community and not take an active role in its roots. To this day, I envy the people who have had the good fortune of living here long enough to see the growth of our congregation's children from the start of their religious school experience to their bnei mitzvot to college and beyond. I guess that makes you all pretty old, but regardless, it must be wonderful.

After four years, I am starting to share those feelings. I can now look back two years ago when I was asked to fill the very large shoes left open when Dina Bartov returned to Israel and take over the sixth grade religious school class, a group who is now the largest part of our Hebrew High group.

This past summer, Rich Levine and I were the leaders of the Hebrew High trip to New York City. How wonderful it was to share with our young people the experience of those Jewish immigrants who led the way from Eastern Europe to New York. We collectively experienced what our ancestors experienced when they had their first site of the Statue of Liberty, welcoming them to their land of their destiny.

In conclusion, leadership is not about making an effort for yourself, it is about setting an example for others. Don't be afraid to step out of the shadows into the beautiful Colorado sunshine we all have the opportunity to bask in here at Congregation Beth Evergreen.