6 remarkable women with 1 common goal.

Meet this year’s Advance Women of Achievement in the Above & Beyond section. C1

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Advance Women of Achievement: Class of 2019

Six remarkable women.
One common goal.

They devote their time and talents to making Staten Island a better place to live for all of us.

Staten Island is home to some extraordinary people.
These six women have reached the pinnacle.
They are Advance Women of Achievement.
Read of their remarkable deeds. We think you’ll agree.
Their commitment to our community and our neighbors is extraordinary. Then help us honor the Class of 2019 on May 2.
Tikkum Olam — ‘Repairing the world,’ one person at a time. Meet Dr. Lori Weintrub.

Caroll Ann Bennington hexenwill@comcast.net

In a world where cultural and religious diversity is uncounted, understanding, learning and good example, Dr. Lori Weintrub builds bridges between peoples, cultures for multicultural ethnicities and religions on Staten Island and beyond.

The community leader, a professor of history at Wagner College, has devoted her life to fighting prejudice and creating a better community. “The number one thing I’m committed to is to use my heart, my mind and my spirit to open doors, hearts, minds and to celebrate diversity and not just tolerate it,” says Lori.

Lori’s interest in diversity was sparked early on, when as young as age three over two years studying in France, first in college and then doing research for a history dissertation.

“When you live in other countries you observe people have different values and it helps you grow as a person,” said the Westerleigh resident, before adding “You see other cultures and you learn to value and prioritize.”

Her grandparents were immigrants — her mom’s dad from Poland and her dad’s dad from the Ukraine. They were both persecuted and came to America for a better life.

“Each person’s story is a treasure because you learn so much about politics, those countries, history, arts and music,” she said.

Lori grew up in Fair Rockaway, Queens, relocated to Brooklyn and graduated from Steveston High School, where she was yearbook editor. She also was president of the United Synagogue Youth Group at her temple.

“My mom was president of the PTAs and my dad headed our synagogue, so I came from a family of volunteers,” she said early on the value of giving. “I saw for my presidency of my kindergarten class my grand- mother support the words ‘I’m good and kind,’ would be a huge slogan.”

She spoke of her college education at Princeton where the motto is “In the service of others.” She went through the volunteer service and the need to give back.

Therel CUC where she met “big girls” her passion to mentor people and work to make a better place for other became more powerful.

In Philadelphia there is a concept called “Tik- kum Olam” which means “repairing the world,” and I believe in this amazing principle. It gives all of us the power to make the world better,” she said.

She graduated at Princeton and, at UCLA she met a Holocaust survivor. “I opened up to show her what it hap- pened and that it could be shown — not so much how you understand it — but how you can explain it.”

She closed her recent phone to the Holocaust. She asks. “Why would the Nazis present a young girl with an iron to burn Shirley Temple and why wasn’t there more resistance?” It was chillingly sober and jarring.

SETTLES ON STATEN ISLAND

Lori’s love affair with Staten Island began when she relocated in August 1998 and quickly immersed herself into community life.

“It’s a love story and I became a cheer- leader in that relationship to the community of all communities, shers.”

Before long, she became involved with the Lithuanian refugee community in Park Hill. “As Wagner they were doing volunteer programs, and I thought,” I want to see Wagner serve the borough through civic engagement in Park Hill.”

Along with faculty from Wagner, PI 57 students were inspired by college students and connected to their African heri- tage. We did this for five years. The project worked to support 12th graders’ scores improved significantly. “The impact was amazing,” she noted.

HOLOCAUST CENTER

Lori, who has always been moved by people going through struggle, war and trauma, founded the Holocaust Center at Wagner College, which in 2005,;700 con- sumed of the importance of this integral part of history and the danger of the covering of survivals. The concept is meant to “inspire, and to show courage and empathy.”

Individual survivals inspire. Every day I think how I’ve done to tell their story — so it doesn’t happen again. It’s a pas- sion that comes naturally,” she said.

Five years ago Staten Island was the only borough not to have a Holocaust center on Staten Island to transmit the importance of remembering the past in order to create empathy, courage and ethical action,” she told us.

It’s mission? To awaken future gener- ations to the consequences of prejudice, anti-Semitism, racism and the dynamism of Jewish culture.

The Holocaust Center was founded and funded by the Chai Foundation of Wagner College and chaired by Dr. Victor and Kim Avis. The society enabled in a launch and a mem- ber of board members have made invaluable suggested contributions.

The Center worked with the Albanian Islamic Cultural Center to help promote knowledge of Albanian Muslims who res- cued Jews. “This model of interfaith toler- ance and humanity is critical in our time,” Lori adds.

On school programs she says: “They are interested to see the world differently and stand up more strongly against prejudice.”

In the words of Wagner college student and Holocaust Center intern Jasmine Minner, Wagner College student intern offers lessons to young people to spare survivors — jews, as well as other Nativi persons, particu- larly those with disabilities, Afro-Germans and homosexuals.

We have a network of Staten Island teachers meet to discuss practices to teach about the Holocaust and other genocid- es.

“We will have a signature in-annual con- ference, where we look at unique aspects, and a community of all cultures come to Holocaust exhibits at the Center at Wagner College,” she says.

10 YEAR GOAL

The Holocaust Center will empower and partner with organizations on Staten Island to promote the use of testimony in local history of not only the Holocaust but civil rights, LGBT rights and immigration history. And to be a national model to create a “Bor- ough of Kindness” in a “World of Empathy, Hope and Courage” — a think tank using energy of teachers, community and business lead- ers and youth.

In speaking of Lori, Dr. Victor N. Avis says: “She’s a dynamic person. Her energy and commitment to giving the Holocaust survi- vors a voice in ways we will never know, helped them tell their story in their later years.

“Also benefit Staten Island students and adults to learn first-hand about the Holo- caust and it will have on impact and give them understanding to not be silent going forth. Lori’s work is very timely. She multiplicus this opportunity will never happen again,” he said.

Lori’s personal life

Phil’s Parish is Lori’s partner of 18 years, a teacher of American Sign Language at LaGuardia High School and Sophonan Papas, 8.

Dr. Lori Weintrub, at a glance

Favorte quote: “Tikkum Olam — ‘Repairing the world,’ one person a time, and “Thou shalt not be a hypocrite.”

By quotes historians Yehuda Bauer

Favorite place: Chinese Scholar’s Garden at Snug Harbor

Favorite restaurant: Blue\n

Favorite film: “Bugs” a Japan- ese film

Favorite color: Lavender

WOMAN OF ACHIEVEMENT 2019: Lori Weintrub, a history professor and director of the Wagner College Holocaust Center, poses for a photo inside the Holocaust center. Shirl Stoll, Staten Island Advance photos

Dr. Lori Weintrub, left, with Julie Parreno, Phillip Papas and Sophonan Papas, with their dog Apollo, in their Westerleigh home.

MUSLIM COMMUNITY

In the days that followed Sept. 11, 2001, Lori was one of the first to create Muslim/ Jewish community dialogue with Imam Tahre Kuebl of the Albanian Islamic Cultural Center and Rabbi David Katz at Wagner College.

“I’ve been in five out of seven mosques.” Lori says. “This month we’ve having a dialogue on Muslims, the Holocaust, and Muslims. I’ve said we need to get that going and they say something about Park Hill. I think it’s important to challenge yourself and oth- ers and he open to neighbors and changes.”

LORI’S MISSION

To help people stand up and fight preju- dice and build a better community, one of the biggest reasons she has chosen to spread these values of not turning the other way.

“Let’s make this special borough one of kindness, empathy and courage — instead of just the forgotten borough.”

On Lori’s lawn there’s a sign that reads “Have no home here,” written in six lan- guages.

Shirl Stoll, an Advance multi media jour- nalist, has become a signed friend.

“Lori was amazing when we met at Café Europa, a Holocaust survivor event in 2015,” Shirl said. “I really wanted to inter- view the Holocaust survivors as an assignment. We talked about my life and exchanged infor- mation. I am so glad to be friend of Lori and it helped me connect to survivors and check facts. That sparked our friendship and she became my mentor not just about the Holocaust but everything. We’ve been visiting Holocaust survivors together and they de- veloped a bond with Lori.”

Lori pals out that on April 17 at 10 a.m. in the St. George Theatre more than 1,000 audience members will watch a performance by college students about six Staten Island- ers who survived the Holocaust, with songs in Hebrew, Yiddish and English. The pro- gram titled “Wise Up” teaches how to stand hale.

Childhood photo of Lori - jazz photo

Dr. Lori Weintrub, at her graduation from UCLA in 1990, where she received her PhD in Modern European History.