

## Our Purpose

Jewish Family Service is a client-centered, impact-driven organization working to build a stronger, healthier, more resilient San Diego



**Moving Forward  
Together**

February 12, 2016

Liz Woodward  
AJFCA  
5750 Park Heights Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21215

Re: Leadership Award Nomination

Dear Award Selection Committee:

Jewish Family Service of San Diego is proud to nominate Dr. Robert Rubenstein for the prestigious AJFCA Leadership Award. Dr. Bob, as he likes to be called, has been a community activist, mentor and philanthropist in the Jewish and general communities for decades, and Jewish Family Service of San Diego is an immeasurably better organization because of his commitment and support.

By way of context, Dr. Bob was the Founder and President of Big Brothers of San Diego, was President of Temple Emanu El and on the Council of Synagogue Presidents, held leadership positions for Israel Bonds and the California Association of Ophthalmology, and is currently on the Board of the Jewish Federation of San Diego. In 2009, he established a college scholarship program at Jewish Family Service for Jewish students facing financial hardship, and required community service as part of the scholarship's requirements. Since 2009, 123 students have received support for their college studies as a result of Dr. Bob's generosity and commitment to providing a hand-up. In 2011, Dr. Bob received JFS's Mitzvah Honoree Award for the impact he has had on our organization.

Two brief stories describe Dr. Bob as a community champion, far better than a compendium of facts:

1. Several years ago, the long-time rabbi of his synagogue was beginning to contemplate retirement, and the synagogue's Board immediately began searching for a new Rabbi. The perfect candidate was identified, though the current rabbi was

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not quite ready to retire. Rather than lose this ideal rabbinic candidate, Dr. Bob quietly paid the salary of the new rabbi for two years, until the senior rabbi was ready to retire. What a demonstration of his devotion to his synagogue and to acting in its best interest.

2. Dr. Bob is a graduate of the University of Colorado's Medical School and remembers, as a student there, how important it was to attend a specific medical conference. He remembers scrambling to scrape the money together to attend, and always worrying about whether he would have enough money to be able to go. Not wanting current medical students to miss this wonderful educational opportunity, Dr. Bob established a scholarship 15 years ago, to enable medical school students to attend this important conference. I had the privilege of reading a thank-you letter from the most recent scholarship recipient, and her gratitude emanated from the page.

For these reasons, and so many more, we believe that Dr. Bob Rubenstein defines what leadership is. His impact on the Jewish community of San Diego has been, and continues to be profound, and his championship and advocacy on behalf of Jewish Family Service, and the people it serves, is something we will forever be grateful for.

Sincerely,

Debora A. Rodriguez  
Chief Advancement Officer