

Gurwin Jewish Nursing & Rehabilitation Center Seniors Celebrate Graduation with Traditional Cap & Gown Ceremony

June 19, 2014

COMMACK, NY— Thirty-four seniors at the Gurwin Jewish Nursing & Rehabilitation Center in Commack graduated from the Center's Adult Education program today, capping a nine-month journey on a quest to continue learning, regardless of age or physical limitations.

Residents graduating from the program successfully completed month-long classes in such topics as movie-making, history and art. The program culminates in a traditional cap and gown ceremony, complete with a processional to Pomp & Circumstance, "diplomas," and Valedictory and Salutatory addresses.

Berthe Gersten, 93, was selected Valedictorian of the Class of 2014, and also served as Valedictorian when she graduated from high school just before World War II. "I would be poor without my education," she said. "I am fluent in five languages, and during the war, when I had to go to work to help support my family, I was a translator for news reporters." Berthe went on to graduate from college in Israel, and competed in the Israel Macabiada, which is similar to the Olympic Games, where she won medals competing as a hurdler and javelin thrower.

"Berthe is an inspiration, and proves each day that you are never too old to learn," said Karen Nash, Director of Therapeutic Recreation at the Gurwin Center, and the creator of the Adult Education Program more than 25 years ago. "These graduates never give up, they look for the positives in life, and they meet their own personal goals despite their limitations. They really are inspiring, and I am pleased to salute each of them tonight."

Susan Henshaw Jones, the Ronay Menschel Director of the Museum of the City of New York, was the keynote speaker for the 26th annual event. "It is for keynote speakers to give inspiring advice to graduates," she said. "But in this case, it has really been flipped on its head. Your example has inspired me, with your wisdom in recognizing the benefits that come when we embrace life-long learning." Jones saluted the graduates for the example they set for their family members and friends in continuing to pursue their personal goals.



Above: Valedictorian Berthe Gersten is congratulated by Larry Simon, Chairman of the Board, Gurwin Jewish Nursing & Rehabilitation Center; Susan Henshaw Jones, Ronay Menschel Director of the Museum of the City of New York and keynote speaker; Phyllis Charash, President of the Board, Gurwin Jewish Healthcare Foundation; and Herbert H. Friedman, Executive Vice President/CEO.



Above: Keynote speaker Susan Henshaw Jones, the Ronay Menschel Director of the Museum of the City of New York, congratulates graduate Irving Fuchs.



Left: Graduates at Gurwin Jewish Nursing & Rehabilitation Center toss their caps in celebration during the ceremony.

About Gurwin Jewish Nursing & Rehabilitation

The Gurwin Jewish Nursing & Rehabilitation Center is a 460-bed nursing care facility located in Commack, Long Island, offering short-term rehabilitation, skilled nursing care, medical/post-surgical sub-acute care, respiratory and ventilator dependent care, hospice and palliative care and on-site dialysis. In addition, Gurwin Jewish offers an adult day health program, home care services through two home care programs, and an assisted living community. For more information, go to www.gurwin.org.

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