



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Three Essex County Students Win Annual 20th Annual Nancy and Robert Eskow NCJW/Essex Volunteer Award

LIVINGSTON, NJ, June 28, 2022 - Three Essex County high school students were recognized for their commitment to service and dedication to improving the lives of others locally and globally with the Nancy and Robert Eskow NCJW/Essex Volunteer Awards. The 2022 award winners are: Eli Boshak and Sam Prince from West Essex High School and Aaron Lefkowitz from Montclair Kimberley Academy.

This marked the 20th year the National Council of Jewish Women, Essex County Section (NCJW/Essex) has honored extraordinary Essex County high school students with this award. Each winner received a monetary scholarship and a commemorative certificate.

Nancy and Bob Eskow shared, “We are so proud that for 20 years our family has been able to recognize local high school students for their contributions to our community and support them as they pursue their education. Together with NCJW/Essex, we are thrilled to highlight these outstanding students, and wish them all the best.”

“Once again, our winners embody the mission and values of NCJW/Essex through projects as varied as advocating for organ donation, helping seniors overcome loneliness and isolation and being part of the local first aid squad,” said Penina Barr, president of NCJW/Essex. “We congratulate Eli, Aaron and Sam, and cannot wait to see the impact they have in the future.”

Eli Boshak has spent more than 400 hours providing emergency medical services to members of the community working with the West Essex First Aid Squad, learning valuable lessons about teamwork along the way. Eli has applied those lessons when not on duty, rendering aid to fellow students experiencing distress at several high school sporting events, ultimately realizing he gained much more than the tangible results of his volunteer work: “I have learned that it is essential to not take anyone for granted and cherish the moments with loved ones,” Eli shared. Eli’s volunteering extends to both his town and his synagogue, participating in clean-up, service and mentoring projects. He is an accomplished tennis player, leading his high school team for four years and being selected as an NJSIAA Scholar Athlete. This summer, Eli will proudly represent the United States as a member of the USA

Under-18 Tennis Team in the Maccabiah games in Israel, before attending Tufts University to study medicine.

The isolation and feelings of loneliness experienced by a growing number of seniors moved **Aaron Lefkowitz** to action. In March 2020, senior living facilities were among the first to feel the impact of the pandemic, locking their doors and preventing in-person visits of any kind. Aaron, who had been spending time with residents in a local facility, quickly pivoted and created ways to continue those visits via video calls. Word spread, more people volunteered, and Aaron's initial idea has become Conversations to Remember, a 501(3)c organization that connects high school and college students with senior citizens through weekly video conversations to combat the epidemic of loneliness. "I never realized that as a teenager I had the power to enact great change on the world," said Aaron. "Our virtual visits give seniors something to look forward to each week and reminds them they are valued." Initially inspired to volunteer in this area following his grandmother's dementia diagnosis, Aaron has conducted research into the biological causes of Alzheimer's disease and plans to study neuroscience at Johns Hopkins University.

By his own account, **Sam Prince's** early childhood was not a normal one. Filled with doctor's visits, round-the-clock medications and restrictions on physical activity, Sam's life changed at the age of 8 when his family got the call they had been waiting for: Sam was getting a new heart. "It was a bittersweet moment," remembered Sam. "I was happy to be getting a new heart, but sad since I knew I was going to benefit from someone's tragedy." Since then, Sam has channeled his gratitude into his work with the NJ Sharing Network, an organization that serves a diverse community and provides hope for the nearly 4,000 New Jersey residents who are currently awaiting transplantation. He has represented the group nationally, speaking to audiences of up to 800 people, raising more than \$100,000 for organ donation awareness and becoming the youth spokesperson for the Transplant Games of America. Closer to home, he runs Sam's LemonAid Stand, a platform to sell lemonade, raise money and share his story. Sam is equally enthusiastic about sports. He hosts, produces, and edits a podcast, and he will attend Rowan University to study sports communications.

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About National Council of Jewish Women, Essex County Section

The National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) is a grassroots organization of volunteers and advocates who turn progressive ideals into action. Inspired by Jewish values, NCJW strives for social justice by improving the quality of life for women, children, and families and by safeguarding individual rights and freedoms. With more than 3,200 members, Essex County Section is the largest of the more than 100 NCJW Sections around the country. The Section was founded in 1912 and maintains offices in Livingston, N.J. For more information, log on to www.ncjwessex.org

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