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## **Tribute to 'J.J.' Greenberg**

### **Local couple honors educator with grant to Miami's CAJE**

BY DAVID ADDISON

Aryeh Rubin had the opportunity to watch Jonathan Joseph "J.J." Greenberg grow up.

"He was a wonderful human being and was always there as a major force in the background of things," said Rubin, of Miami. "His idea was to reach out to Jewish youth through music, culture and the arts. He had the best qualities of his mother and of his father."

Greenberg was just 36 when he dies in Israel last month after being struck by a car while riding his bicycle. He was the executive director of the New York-based Jewish Life Network, where he helped develop such landmark programs as Birthright Israel, the Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education, Synagogue Transformation and Renewal or STAR and the Jewish Early Childhood Education Partnership. He also worked with his well-known father, Rabbi Irving "Yitz" Greenberg on national efforts in conjunction with Hillel and the Jewish Heritage Program. His mother, Blu, is an Orthodox feminist leader who wrote the book "How to Run a Traditional Jewish Household."

A \$10,000 grant given by Rubin and wife, Raquel, to the Center for the Advancement of Jewish Education, or CAJE, in Greenberg's memory will benefit Jewish education professionals through seminars, workshops and conferences designed to keep them up to date on issues of concern in the field. Funds will be used to bring respected experts from around the country to conduct seminars for local education professionals. Representatives from CAJE, a beneficiary of the Greater Miami Jewish Federation/UJA Campaign, are now working with the Rubins to determine seminar subjects and speakers.

"This is a very fitting tribute to a man who dedicated himself to Jewish education during his lifetime," said Dr. Chaim Botwinick, CAJE's CEO and president.

For Rubin, the effort was a reasonable one deriving from his long relationship with the Greenbergs.

"Yitz was a mentor to the entire community during the Vietnam era and I had the chance to become friends with the entire family," Rubin said. "J.J. was a very special young man."

Rubin praised the Greenbergs for providing leadership during the tumultuous era of the 1960s and numerous efforts since.

"Both Yitz and Blu were very important in my own development," Rubin said.

The Rubins donated their grant through their Targum Shlishi (Third Interpretation) Foundation.

“Because J.J. was dedicated to educational outreach, giving the grant in his memory just seemed the right thing to do,” Rubin said.

Jacob Solomon, the executive vice president of the Greater Miami Jewish Federation, praised the Rubins and CAJE for their efforts.

“While it is a tragedy to lose someone as young, as gifted, and as full of promise as J.J., we can take comfort in knowing that, thanks to this grant in his memory, our teachers and administrators will be able to enhance their professional skills that are so important for the well-being and future of our children,” Solomon said.