

Founder and President
Rabbi Boruch Ber Bender

Chairman of the Board **Shulie Wollman**

Trustees Lloyd F. Keilson Ronald Lowinger

Treasurer
Alan Botwinick CPA

Executive Board
Dovid Bloom
Jay Gelman
Shlomo Z. Gutfruend
Moti Hellman
Ben Lowinger
Moshe Schreiber
Aron Solomon
Joel Yarmak

Board of Directors
Moshe Bloom
Yermy Boim
Alon Goldberger
Carmi Gruenbaum
Rabbi Dovid Greenblatt
Rabbi Yehiel Kalish
Meir Krengel
Michael Krengel
Aroni Parnes
Menachem Pollack
Rabbi Aron Rosenberg
Asher Schoor
Josh Szpilzinger

Health Insurance Department Coordinator **Sruly Miller**

Mental Health
Department Coordinator **Dr. Brucha Lowinger Psy.D.**

Project Coordinator **Shalom Jaroslawicz**

Legal Counsel

B. David Schreiber, Esq.

Yosef H. Kanner, Esq.

Insurance Consultant
Carmie Gruenbaum

Government Relations Liaisons **Michael Fragin**

Note: While every one of the stories and anecdotes mentioned in this publication is true, details and circumstances have been significantly altered to protect privacy.



Message From Our Founder



We've expanded.

In a basic sense, we've expanded to a new, larger and more expansive office on Central Avenue in Lawrence, thanks to an incredibly generous sponsorship. We've been able to greatly expand our services and capabilities which have enabled us to become exactly what we dreamed of: a comprehensive source of assistance for any and every problem faced by a community member.

Exciting it is. Yet, there is danger in growth—the danger of professionalism replacing personalization. And although growth is good, the loss of the personal touch goes against everything Achiezer stands for.

What is Achiezer, really? Not an organization. Not a Chesed center. Not a high profile association.

Achiezer is the community.

In a community, sometimes we give, and sometimes we take. Sometimes we are the volunteers, and sometimes we are the recipients. (Most of our volunteers have, in fact, also been recipients, one way or another.) We give and we get. Most of all, in a community we share.

After the ribbon cutting event celebrating Achiezer's new office, one of the attendees sent the following email, which may have expressed it best:

Almost every speaker touched on the fact that Achiezer assists everyone in the community, from Far Rockaway, Bayswater, to North Woodmere, West Hempstead and beyond. In my observation, the same can be said for the wide range of people who were there to join and show their support: Rabbis, philanthropists, medical professionals, accountants, lawyers, business people, politicians, lay leaders, and mental health professionals-They are all part of the movement that is Achiezer.

Over the coming year, some of you may visit the Achiezer office because you are in need of services. Others will visit the same office as volunteers, patrons, and donors. But there's really no difference. If you ever find yourself walking up to the Achiezer office, it can only be for one reason: because you're one of us.

Rabbi Boruch Ber Bender Founder

Contents

SPOTI	ICUT	ON	CLD	TICES

911 Paging System		
Budgeting		
Medical Recommendations		
Insurance Enrollment		
SNCH Respite Room	8	
A Day at Achiezer	9	
Achiezer Stories		
Bulletin Board	13	
ACHIEZER PARTNERS		
Community Leaders	14	
Volunteers	15	
BEHIND THE SCENES		
Fiscal Oversight	16	
Dr. Lowinger Interview	17	
Achiezer's New Offices	18	
Community Events	20	
Listing of Services		
Community Cares		
Sponsorship Opportunities		



334 Central Avenue Lawrence, New York 11559

Far Rockaway Office (By Appointment Only) 148 Beach 9th Street, Suite # 2C Far Rockaway, New York 11691

> Phone (516) 791-4444 Fax (516) 592-5626 www.achiezer.org

Message from the Chairman of the Board



Some five years ago, when Boruch Ber first came over to me and mentioned the idea of Achiezer, I came home and said to my wife, "This organization sounds unbelievable."

Today, as someone involved from the inside, I can say it unequivocally: This organization is truly unbelievable.

Who benefits from Achiezer? Everyone. I know I've benefited. Over the past year, as my family and I dealt with my father's deteriorating health, Achiezer was always there. And I mean ALWAYS.

My father passed away at 10:30 on a Sunday morning. I'm a Kohen; I'd never been in a cemetery. Pretty much the last person you'd expect to be familiar with burial procedures. Boruch Ber told me, "Shulie, the Mitzvah is to get the deceased buried as fast as possible. We'll take care of everything." My father, Yaakov Mordechai ben Avraham Lipa z'l, was buried within three and a half hours of his passing.

My son had an infection in his throat. The pediatrician's office told me to go to the hospital. I knew I needed medical guidance; who knew what kind of runaround I'd be facing at the hospital? Boruch Ber suggested that I see Dr. Woo from Manhattan. I called another professional who told me, "No way you'll get into Woo! There's a two week wait, minimum!" Within 15 minutes, Boruch Ber told me that I had an appointment with Dr. Woo. When I walked into Woo's office some twenty minutes later, the secretary at the front greeted me with, "Oh, Rabbi Bender sent you? Come right in." As if I was a celebrity.

And that's what Achiezer is. It's a place where anybody and everybody can get help. Whether you need a medical referral, financial help, guidance, support—they're there. I listen to people from the community—from all parts of the community—and their constant refrain is, "Achiezer helped." And that's why I believe in this organization, why I believe in everything they do.

Achiezer is a must-have organization. It's an organization that everyone should give to. Because at the end of the day, Achiezer is here for you. You should be there for them, too.

Shulie Wollman Chairman of the Board

ACHIEZER'S 24 HOUR COMMUNITY "911" SYSTEM

*The telephone number 911 is a special phone number across the US and Canada that provides quick access for emergencies, police, fire and EMS.

At 92 years old, Mr. Greenberg is in no condition to handle the shock of his daughter's passing.

It's 8 AM on a Friday morning. Yaakov Greenberg's middle-aged sister has just passed away in Israel, and Yaakov will have to start sitting Shiva at home, immediately. The problem is Yaakov's father. At 92 years old, the elder Mr. Greenberg is in no condition to handle the shock of his daughter's passing; yet how can you hide a Shiva from someone who lives in the Shiva house? And if Mr. Greenberg comes downstairs for breakfast and finds everyone sitting Shiva...

THIS IS THE KIND OF CALL THAT CAN'T WAIT ANOTHER HOUR UNTIL THE OFFICE OPENS; and that's where the 911 Paging System, Option 1 on Achiezer's telephone menu, comes in. As Project Coordinator Shalom Jaroslawicz explains it, "When callers with urgent matters leave a message on our phone system, instantaneous emails are sent to both me and Rabbi Bender. Usually, I'm the one to take the call initially and forward it to Rabbi Bender. I've called him at family Simchas, in Shul, at 2 in the morning-whatever it takes, we're gratified that we can say that there's never been a truly urgent call that wasn't answered within 10 minutes."

What kind of calls is the system used for? "Anything that can't wait until the next morning or office day," Jaroslawicz says. "A family with small children whose heat broke in the middle of a snowstorm. An elderly person who needs an urgent medical transfer. Nothing is too small if it is time sensitive."

The Urgent Line accepts ap-

proximately 100 calls every month, the bulk of which are for medical recommendations. According to Jaroslawicz, "These can range from stitches to emergency bypass surgery. On Shabbos and Yom Tov a physician will call to ask us which hospital they should send a patient to. I personally just had a situation where my daughter needed a good orthopedist, up in the mountains. Who else could I ask?"

Does the system ever get abused? "Sometimes. Occasionally we'll have someone calling in at 3 AM to say that their stove is broken, or that they will need ride to the hospital in a week. But I'd say that 95% of the time it's used appropriately. The 'non-life-threatening but still

can't wait for tomorrow' calls usually come in between 7-10 PM, which is just what the line was intended for. And of course, when the situation involves any sort of potential danger, nobody should hesitate to call no matter what time it is."

For Jaroslawicz, who is literally 'on call' 24/7/365, one thing that keeps him going is "The pleasure of working with a staff of this caliber. All I can say is that when you're with people like this, who are constantly looking for more and better ways to help, you can't NOT want to be a part of it. And when you actually succeed in getting someone the doctor, or the appointment, or the ride, or the psychologist, that they needed at just that moment—there's no better feeling in the world."

...Friday morning, 8:30 AM. As family members look on, Achiezer's trained bereavement counselor gently and sensitively breaks the sad news to elderly Mr. Greenberg. Surrounded by a caring support system, the old man absorbs the information, heaves a sigh, and removes his shoes to begin Shiva with his family.



Sol's practice was in shambles, the family was in deep debt, and expenses were only growing...

he Klein triplets made their appearance with a bang. Triple feedings, triple diapers, triple joy—and triple expenses. Fortunately, Sol Klein had established a successful private law firm several years before. Unfortunately, Baby C ended up staying in the hospital for close to three years, making it virtually impossible for Sol to work at all. By the time Baby C was discharged, Sol's practice was in shambles, the family was in deep debt, and expenses were only growing. It was time to get help.

"OFTEN, PEOPLE KNOW WHAT THEY NEED TO DO, BUT THEY NEED SOMEONE TO DO IT WITH THEM," says Stacey Zrihen, one of Achiezer's volunteer budgeters. "Someone lost a job, is changing careers, or has a growing family, and they want to take a second look at their finances."

Achiezer offers several types of financial assistance, ranging from food vouchers to program enrollment and beyond. Ultimately, however, the goal is to bring the family to a point of financial independence; and that means hammering out a viable budget.

Achiezer utilizes the services of

several (mostly volunteer) budgeters, including certified accountants. With tact, discretion, and inordinate good sense, Achiezer's budgeters help families regain control over their finances.

"Sometimes we'll meet only once; sometimes it takes many months," Zrihen clarifies. "Some people have a very specific budget, and are very aware of their income and expenses. Others have never done this before. Some families have spending issues; others are doing their best, but still not making it. Sometimes I'll have just one or two small suggestions that may be useful; other times the budgetary analysis will lead into discussions about possible career changes, what they'd like to be doing, why the current system is not working, and more."

Isn't this something that adults should be able to do on their own? "A budgeter may not be more financially talented than anyone else," Zrihen acknowledges. "But there's definitely something very valuable to being 'forced' to sit down and do it together. It's also extremely helpful to see your own financial situation from an outside lens."

Talents aside, budgeters do have more technical knowledge regarding healthcare plans, credit options, taxes, and unemployment. "There are a lot of things that people may not think of on their own," Zrihen explains. "Things like finding alternative health care or cell phone plans; requesting tuition reductions; or even moving houses."

Perhaps the most gratifying part of the job lies in pinpointing those suggestions, and watching families regain their financial footing as each suggestion is successfully implemented. Asked if she has a message to share with the readership, Zrihen replied, "If you see you're having trouble, don't wait. There are people willing to work with you, and there is nothing to be ashamed of. When someone reaches out for help in their early 30s, they will most likely ultimately achieve financial health. But when someone is 50, carrying \$250,000 in debt, and already thinking about retirement... it's very late in the game. So don't delay. That extra outside perspective may be the key to your family's financial stability."

It was a long summer, filled with hard work. Bit by bit, Sol and his financial mentor cleaned up the office, sold the extra office supplies and baby paraphernalia, and put together a clear financial road map. Presiding over the triplets' fourth birthday party the following winter, Sol Klein felt that he could finally celebrate with a full heart.

Medical recommendations are by far the most sought-after of Achiezer's services, accounting for approximately 40% of all incoming calls.

OVER THE COURSE OF A COUPLE OF TYPICAL DAYS, ACHIEZER WAS CALLED BY INDIVIDUALS WHO SAID:

- ◆ I'm looking for an endocrinologist for a thyroid problem, who is close by, and takes United Health Care Community Plan.
- ◆ Do you know of a doctor who would do a throat culture for free or reduced rate, for a family who does not have insurance?
- ◆ My wife is experiencing pain and swelling in her hip. She's in a lot of pain and wants to see someone today. She works in Brooklyn, but someone in Nassau County would be better.
- ◆ I'm looking for a psychologist who offers specialized therapy and accepts Oxford Freedom.
- ◆ My father-in-law is in the hospital, needs bypass surgery now. One doctor that we heard of doesn't take our insurance; the other is on vacation.
- ◆ One surgeon wants to do a triple bypass on my mother, but another surgeon says the artery is too small and won't hold. We don't know what to do.

- ◆ My grandfather in the hospital has atypical menanginoma. Please advise.
- ◆ My sister needs a colonoscopy, but she has no insurance and can't afford to pay out of pocket. Are there any doctors who would be willing to wait for about three months for back pay?
- ♦ Mrs. T. is sitting with me now. She was just diagnosed with a large mass related to lymphoma and needs to go for a biopsy. Doctor wants her to see someone, preferably local.
- ◆ Looking for OB/GYN who takes straight Medicaid.
- ◆ My father is being released from the hospital but there are no rehabs that will take him; they all say they are not equipped to deal with him.
- ◆ My wife's back has been killing her all night; she couldn't sleep. We need a specialist ASAP.

The frustrating ins and outs of public insurance programs are enough to make anyone's head spin.

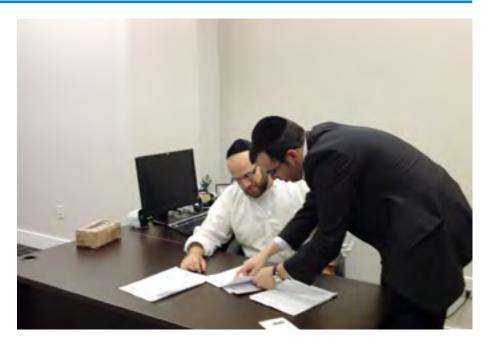
YOU WOULD THINK SOMETHING AS BASIC AS SIGNING UP FOR MEDICAL INSURANCE COVERAGE WOULD BE SOMETHING YOU COULD DO ON YOUR OWN. IF ONLY LIFE WERE SO EASY!

"If the system was so simple, I wouldn't have a job," Sruly Miller, head of Achiezer's Insurance Enrollment Department, comments candidly. Aside from the frustrating bureaucracy inherent in insurance programs in general, the ins, outs, and caveats attached to public plans are enough to make your head spin.

As the stigma associated with Medicaid rapidly fades ("People who are afraid of it just don't understand it," Miller notes), more and more community members are turning to Achiezer for assistance with the enrollment process.

"Medicaid enrollment can't be done on your own," Miller explains. "You could go to the Medicaid office, but the lines are long, the service is poor, and the environment is uncomfortable. Here, we tell you beforehand exactly what documents you'll need to prepare. It's a Heimeshe office. It's private. We address your concerns about exactly what is covered, which offices will accept your insurance, and any other questions you can think of. We fill out and submit the application for you, and are prepared to go to bat for you if you hit a glitch in the system."

Other public insurance programs, such as Child Health Plus, may be



applied for on your own; however, many people opt to go through the enrollment and renewal procedures with Achiezer anyway. The newly expanded office can now process applications from Nassau County as well as Queens County, and approximately 700 separate applications and renewals are completed each year. All told, we're talking about millions of dollars in medical bills covered, without costing the community a penny.

"People keep coming back, and we're constantly getting referred," Miller states. "I give people as much time as I can, and I see that they're comfortable. We discuss all of their options, including public and private insurance. I help them make the best decision, working closely with Rabbi

Bender to be sure that they will have proper coverage for their personal medical needs. At times, someone was just laid off, and after I screen for eligibility, I'm able to refer him to other programs—entirely unrelated to insurance—that can ease the financial burden even more.

"I think people appreciate the fact that here, there are no surprises. If the application is rejected, or rightful coverage is denied, I can either pick up the phone or send in the appropriate documentation to fight it. Usually, we win. It's just a matter of knowing the system and communicating correctly. If that's something I know how to do through experience; if I can help people by taking that load off of their shoulders; I consider myself fortunate to be able to do so."

A haven for hospital patients and their families.

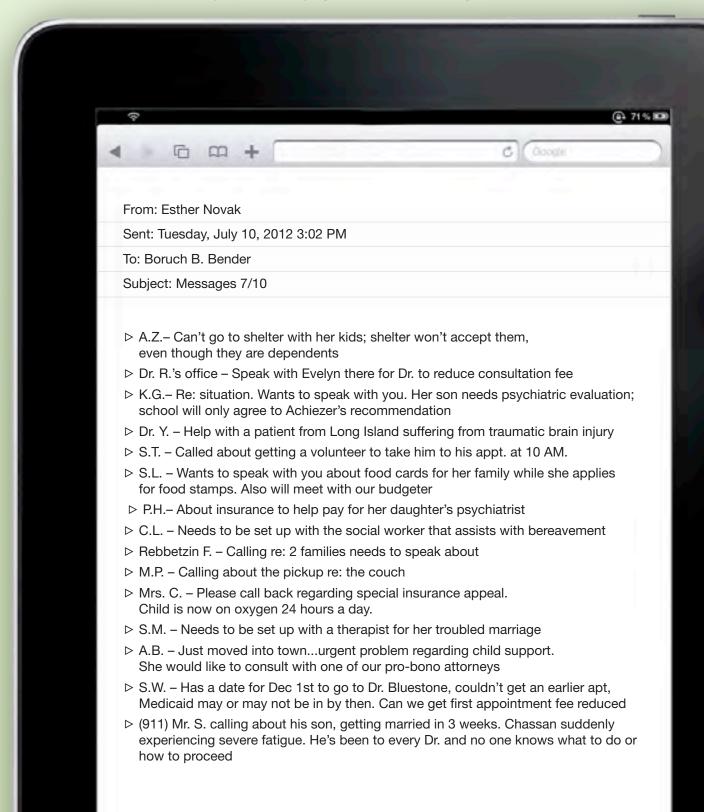
From fruit cups to freeze pops; from reading material to recliners; from hot meals to cold drinks; from Zmanim information to hospital information; the Achiezer Respite Room at South Nassau Communities Hospital is a haven for patients and their families. Small wonder that Mercy Hospital and Long Island Jewish have both recently approached Achiezer, asking that planning begin for similar projects at their own medical centers.

Achiezer extends its warmest appreciation to Gourmet Glatt for providing us with the bulk of the food provided in the respite room.



A Day at Achiezer

(An actual transcript of a daily report. Identifying details have been changed to protect and maintain confidentiality.)



Of Pharmacies, Phones, and Feeding Equipment

AS TOLD BY
RABBI BORUCH
BER BENDER AND
MAYER MALTZ

9:30 at night, my phone rang. My father. "Boruch Ber? I'm in Brooklyn, and I'm handing the phone over."

I could hear the phone being passed from hand to hand. "Why am I speaking to you?" came the voice over the receiver.

"Well, if my father wanted you to speak to me, I assume there's something I can help you with," I responded.



"Okay, so here's the story," the caller began. "I got a phone call from Mrs. Parnes, the daughter of the Bostoner Rebbe. She has an eightmonth-old baby

with Cleft Palate; a really severe case. It needs to be repaired immediately, and they're on a flight to JFK as we speak. They're transferring to a Boston flight for the surgery right after

landing. The problem is that the baby's special feeding system got misplaced on the plane. He hasn't eaten for seven or eight hours already. If we don't find someone with this feeding system, they'll have to take him to a local hospital for emergency intervention, and postpone the surgery."

"I'll do whatever I can," I said, and hung up the phone. Our specialty

equipment depot did not carry this type of equipment, but this is the sort of emergency situation that Achiezer thrives on because we simply don't turn people away.

First we called every 24-hour CVS in the phone book. None of them carried such a thing. Next, we tried all of the specialty pharmacies. Nothing doing. One contact in Boro Park thought he might have one, and rushed to open his store at 10:30 at night. He found that he had nothing in stock.

One natural contact was Mayer Maltz, owner of New Utrecht Pharmacy, who regularly assists Achiezer in locating specialty pharmaceutical items. He didn't have the feeding equipment in stock, but he offered to wait in his car in Boro Park just in case we did locate one and would need somebody to rush it to the airport.

The clock was ticking, but still no luck at any pharmacy. Somebody remembered that he had seen a small classified ad in the Hamodia about a medical equipment Gemach. "It was about three weeks ago... or maybe four... or two? I know I saw it somewhere, once..." he said.

Back to the phones. We called friends, grandmothers, anybody who might have a stash of Hamodias. Houses all over New York were turned upside down, as everyone emptied their Hamodia stockpiles in search of the little classified ad. Finally, the call came in: "I found it!"

We called the lady from the Gemach. "I don't have it," she said, "but try calling Mrs. Katz. She doesn't have a Gemach, but



her child had the same issue a couple of years ago and she may be able to help you."

We called Mrs. Katz. "You're not going to believe this," she said, "but just before my child

had the surgery, I bought two new sets of feeding equipment. I put them away just in case another family may ever need them at some point in the future. It's been so long, that by now I've forgotten all about them! You can come and pick them up—brand new, never used and ready to go."

Success! Mayer Maltz rushed down the Boro Park streets, picked up the equipment, and sped to Kennedy airport. In the meantime, Achiezer contacted airline personnel to inform them of the situation. Security officials were dispatched to meet Mayer outside the airport. As the plane landed, airport staff members brought the feeding system right out to the runway.

A very grateful mother and baby were soon on their way to a successful surgery at Children's Hospital in Boston, and dozens of people who were involved in the story were left to marvel over the truth that we'd all already known: there's nothing like the power of Achdus.

Just a Regular Day...

The following is culled from a letter that Achiezer received. It is a perfect illustration of the 'regular stuff' that Achiezer does—all in a day's work.

When my grandmother was brought to a small, local hospital by 911, we all went into a panic. Seven months earlier, my father passed away at that same hospital, after they mistakenly inserted a main line into his artery instead of a vein.

We needed my grandmother OUT. Her infectious disease doctor was at NYU, but her attending doctor, the emergency room head, and whoever else we were able to get a hold of told us that a transfer was not doable. If her needs could be addressed at this hospital, we could not get her moved.

You gave us hope by telling us that, at worst, we could take her out Against Medical Advice. (And you told us that that sounds scarier than it is.)



You then proceeded to make phone calls behind the scenes, and the next thing we knew, NYU had agreed to accept her, give her a bed, and send an ambulance! It was like the Geulah, when we had almost given up. B'Chasdei Hashem, they treated her successfully and she was discharged about ten days later.

...And a Somewhat Irregular Day

The following story is not the most typical, yet exemplifies the 'atypically-typical' domestic crises that Achiezer handles in the most comprehensive fashion.

Mrs. Jacob was a closet sufferer of post-partum depression. She was determined that nobody would ever know, and her

friends and neighbors were completely oblivious to the situation. Mr. Jacob worked long hours at a job in the city, and was struggling with his own issues. That left the Jacob children—on their own.

The children could not hide their secret as well as their mother. Shani, the Jacobs' eldest, became openly defiant in school. Moshe, the next in line, was caught taking snacks from other boys' briefcases. Both were coming to school disheveled and hungry.

Shani's principal, Mrs. Levy, was in a quandary.

The situation was clearly unsafe for the children; but a call to Child Services would result in the children being removed from the home, and who knew what effect that would have on them?

Mrs. Levy called Achiezer.

"The situation has reached the point that pretty soon, we'll have no choice but to expel this child, or remove all of the children from their home. But maybe there's a better way."

There was. The next Sunday morning found the Achiezer conference room filled with the principals of Shani and Moshe's schools; Dr. Lowinger, Achiezer's staff psychologist; Rabbi Boruch Ber Bender; and Mr. and Mrs. Jacob.

"We want to help you," Mrs. Levy explained gently but

firmly, "but first you need to help yourselves. If you want your children to remain in our schools, you need to agree to work with Achiezer and implement all of their suggestions."

Mr. and Mrs. Jacob agreed. For one thing, they had no choice; for another, they realized that this was the key to their own mental health and stability as well as that of their children.

So the work began. Achiezer arranged subsidized counseling for both children, as well as both parents. A professional organizer was dispatched to make order out of the chaos that had characterized the Jacobs' home for so long.

Slowly, things began to change.

Each month, Mr. and Mrs. Jacob were required to report back to Achiezer regarding various facets of their progress. Within a year's time, the Jacob home was a different place; and Mrs. Levy did not even need to confirm the change. The children's smiling faces said it all.



A Gift for Chanukah

The force behind Achiezer: Our incredible volunteers

It was the first night of Chanukah, and Shlomo and Miriam, active Achiezer volunteers, were on the phone with Rabbi Bender.

"Every year, we give our kids gorgeous Chanukah presents," Miriam began, "and we don't want this year to be any different. But we were just thinking. There's got to be another family out there who can't afford to

buy Chanukah presents for their

kids."

"So here's what we're going to do," Shlomo took up the thread. "We're going to buy the fanciest gifts we can think of. We're going to give them to our kids. And then we and the kids are going to pack the gifts up, and surprise another family."

And they did. After finding out ages and genders, Shlomo and Miriam bought the most magnificent

presents a child could hope for. They and their children wrapped the gifts beautifully and brought them to the Achiezer office,

where the gifts were dispatched to the F. family.

When Mrs. F. called Rabbi Bender, she could barely talk through her tears. "We were planning to give our kids bags of

Herr's potato chips for Chanukah presents. For all five children. You cannot imagine the looks on their faces when they opened those gifts."

Giving Shmuel a Lift

Shmuel, an elderly gentleman, was thankful to return home after an arduous hospital stay. Complications set in the very first moment, however, when Shmuel realized that he was still too weak to walk up the steps to his second floor apartment. Medicaid barely covered his essential medical expenses; buying an expensive stair-lift was out of the question;

and Shmuel resigned himself to weeks or months of homebound solitude.

His
neighbors
weren't so easily
deterred, and
placed a call to Achiezer.

Things started to move quickly. As Providence would have it, a state-of-the-art stair-lift had been donated to the Specialty Equipment Depot just days before. Achiezer's team of pro bono handymen picked up the necessary parts and brought them over to Shmuel's residence Cares* funds sponsored the actu

them over to Shmuel's residence. Community Cares* funds sponsored the actual installation, performed by a licensed professional.

Within three days of his hospital discharge.

Within three days of his hospital discharge, an incredulous Shmuel found himself in his regular place in Shul for Rosh Chodesh Davening.

*See page 26 for more about the Community Cares Fund.

Bulletin Board REAL COMMENTS FROM REAL PEOPLE



Hi, it's David Nussbaum. Thank you so much again for the Shabbos package you guys provided for my mom and sister last Shabbos at LIJ. BTW, I was speaking with a young couple in a doctor's office today, and just out of the blue they mentioned your name as the one who referred them there! That shows how your Chesed is everywhere.

DAVID NUSSBAUM

The 900 that you have shown towards ma and our greater community has no Thank you for teaching bounds. the rest of us the ideal model of true 300+

How can we bean to thank you for being so Kind heartens a helpful to our family. There are no word to express can feelings of ship horas for all that you have done Have a restal AL

Deat Book Bindy 89,88

have helded me

VIETERET WINDWISHOOM HASKEMSPIONS OF the

trasms whit we sometimes have to bridge in use But I truly before that he keeps on sending my many

special people to help get me thought

there are no words to even

I hope and pray that taken brings and and for family good the time the process of the strength and ability you continue to neep many others the way you have haden on

try and explain from spokers iam for everything ou for done for me doing this deprout time.

Dear Achiezer,

Just one year ago as I sat in my hospital bed,

Achiezer delivered Shabbos food; enough for an army to be fed.

When we went to the hospital with my infant son,

It was normal to speak to Rabbi Bender at night at a quarter to one.

You helped ensure for my son a specific doctor,

The success came through your input—it was a major factor.

And now the latest episode with my daughter and surgery,

You held our hands and guided us with such sensitivity.

Problems with insurance came along the way,

You called so many times and dealt with the insurance that very same day.

And now, as I wait in the surgical lounge chair,

I am so appreciative for all the extra efforts that Achiezer did do here.

Every phone call and visit my husband and I made to you,

Achiezer made us feel so important – a pleasure to deal with, too.

So on behalf of my husband and myself, we would like to exclaim,

A great big thank you to an organization that lives up to their name.

NECHAMA KAHAN



When important medical decisions need to be made, it is both vital and comforting to know that in an instant you can tap into the vast expertise and experience of Achiezer. Even more importantly—they always come through.

LARRY GORDON

Community It is with an extremely deep sends of makeras hatey that I all down to write this Commuter it is with our extremely deep armose of makeras haboy that I say down to write this
Letter of appreciation to make someth mer meader and his introduce organization athieser.
The extent of the myriad character that achilizer and its valuations; prefere is beyond the
accope of this letter, spat I can discuss, however, is the only in which you belief by and may
us a semblance of charbon in the hospital. When my son was Tospitalized, mair Evengel (to whom I name a token of appreciation as sell) must see in teach eith Rabbl Sender who test together a full suckage of shabous food within an account, with less than three hours to go would shab to only all Each) Bender tensors that your physical requirement was set, he confirmed that my son was buing sared for properly and offered to help with any issues that may arise. achiese tould have simply provided us with the basic staples, but they supplied is with an array of home cooked dishes, cake, muffire, grape juice, condiments, standard even noish. The sareth and fare you projected helped us make it through shadous with a samet of monucles the sareth and fare you projected helped us make it through shadous with a samet of monucles therefore that might have otherwise boom missing that Shadous. A creaming there you to achiever see may submooth barriet by continue to great you to achieve that yithroot with the support you provide so well!

ACHIEZER PARTNERS: COMMUNITY LEADERS



Achiezer extends its sincere appreciation to

Assemblyman Phil Goldfeder

A real partner in government, Phil collaborates
with Achiezer on a daily basis to increase and enhance
community services on every level. Whether for
the community at large, or one specific family,
nothing is too small to escape Phil's radar,
and nothing is too big to take on.

Achiezer would like to take the opportunity to thank the many political activists with whom we maintain close connections, working hand in hand to achieve real results for our community.



A special note of thanks on behalf of the entire Jewish community to

Chief Medical Examiner of Nassau County

Dr. Tamara Bloom

Chief Medical Examiner of Suffolk County

Dr. Yvonne Milewski

Their deep compassion and understanding of our community's needs provides solace and comfort to families in their most trying hours.

From L-R, With Assemblyman Harvey Weisenberg, with Mr. Nelson Toebbe, CEO of St. John's Hospital, with Congressman Gregory Meeks and Assemblyman Phil Goldfeder.



כל מי שעוסקים בצרכי ציבור באמונה, הקב"ה ישלם שכרם

Achiezer salutes its incredibly dedicated volunteers. Never too busy, never too tired, you are the real heroes.

Suri Adams Lily Applebaum Kenny Applebaum Yola Ash Rivky Bachrach Yehudis Baida Bevv Baida Sara Bain Bluma Balsam Tamar Barningham Sheya Belsky Suri Bender Batsheva Berger Naomi Berger Chana Berger Aliza Berko Faigy (Jocelyn) Berman Malka Bernstein Chani Bloom Shifi Bloom Temima Blumenkrantz Elisheva Blumstein Mariam Bodner Tova Bollag Menucha Bornstein David Braun Basya Brecher Shuie Brick Aviva Brody Akiva Carrey Miriam Chait Faye Cohen Mindy Dershowitz Shoshana Deutsch Shani Devor Ezzy Dicker

Shlomo Drebin Simcha Dunn Rochi Dunn Ruchie Edell Joan Entel Eric Erinhouse Atara Fagen Shiri Feldman Sandy Feldman Chani Finestone Sharon Friedman Miri Friedman Adina Frisch Basi Frischman Chaia Frishman Dasi From Aliza Fuchs Eliezer Fuld Mrs. Galanter Yael Garbacz Yosifa Glaser Yitzchak Gluck Yanky Gobioff Bracha Goldberg Kalman Goldberg Ronald Goldman Rivky Goldman Leahuva Goldstone Eli Goldstone Aviva Golombeck Rena Golub Yocheved Goykadosh AB Greenblatt Miriam Greenblatt Yitzchok Greenblatt Malka Griner

Shulamith Gross Chana Shira Gutman Shloime Heimlich Izak Held Miriam Hellman Leah Hiller Dina Hirshman Tzippy Holland Adina Indig Chaya Isaacs Linda Judenberg Shaindy Judowitz Dovi Jaroslawicz Mendy Jaroslawicz Chaya Kafka Tzippy Kaluszyner Ettil Kaminetsky Yankel Kaplan Chana Devorah Karmely Aryeh Kaufman Sandy Klar Adina Klein Yussi Klein Yoni Klestzcik Sharon Kletchik Aryeh Kohn Miriam Kolodny Sarale Korn Suzanne Kornblatt Naomi Krasnow Meir Krengel Rachel Kutner Dina Leff Devorah Leff Emunah Lefrak Shmuel Levine

Moe Lipschitz Temima Loeb Chava Lovett Shoshie Manela Babshi Manela Yisroel Markowitz Hindi Mazel Shani Moerman Machi Muller Ariela Naamat Dafna Naamat Yehuda Nelson Gittie Neufeld Menachem Neufeld Elisheva Neuman Sarah Novak Tzvi Novak **Jacob Ostreicher** Tzvi Pancer Miriam Pearlman Goldie Platschek Dina Polishuk Joan Posnick Sendy Rabinowitz Mrs. Rand Ruchi Rose Mutty Rosen Zissi Rosenberg Pnina Rosenberg Shlomo Rosenblatt Yitzi Rosenblatt Ronit Rosenfeld Shirley Rothberg Boruch Rothberg Lauren Rothman Iris Rothman

Shoshana Salzberg Bashi Salzman Chaviva Sarf Tzippy Schechter Leah Schreiber Talia Schwartz Chavie Sebrow Tziona Shmell Shmuel Shnitzer Nesanel Silverman Simcha Silverstein Simcha Bunim Silverstein Tova Singer Perry Sitorsky Leslie Sklar Leah Solomon Naftali Solomon Vera Solomon Rochel Solomon Naftali Solomon Miriam Solomon Michelle Spira Gittel Stein Annette Turner Miriam Leah Ungar Reva Weingot Deena Weinstock Chayala Weiss Yonina Wisnicki Irit Wittman Elissa Worman Yehudis Yavitz

Nechama Zand

Deenie Zinberg

I wonder what they're really doing with my money...

NOBODY WANTS TO SAY IT. NOBODY WANTS TO THINK

IT. But even for the non-cynics among us, it's hard to refrain from the niggling thought that sometimes strikes, just before signing the check for the donation: I wonder

what they're really doing with my money...

At Achiezer, there's no need to wonder—because the books are open. And the information in those books is astounding.

Elana Goldstein, CPA, Achiezer's devoted bookkeeper, records all incoming and outgoing funds on a daily basis. Mr. Alan Botwinick, CPA, from Roth & Co., is Achiezer's Treasurer. He heads up a special finance committee and ensures that accountability is always maintained. Mr. Botwinick conducts an in-depth review of the books every month, to be shared with all Board members at regularly scheduled Board meetings.

While Board members freely offer advice for efficient allocation of funds, they are consistently amazed at the amount of Chesed that is accomplished on a budget far smaller than that of any comparable organization.

Some basic Achiezer tenets that keep the budget as lean as humanly possible:

Never spend money when you can petition or negotiate for pro bono services or reduced rates.

Never offer to foot bills that the family is capable of paying on their own.

Never use communal funds when you can find a sponsorship instead.

Board members openly admit that they believe that staff members are drastically underpaid for the amount of hours that they put in, which include being available around the clock, throughout the year.

In recognition of Achiezer's record of impeccable financial oversight, Gourmet Glatt has recently asked Achiezer to supervise its entire food voucher program. "We have seen that Achiezer is a paragon of fiscal responsibility and com-

petent management," says Yoeli Steinberg of Gourmet Glatt. "We know that with Achiezer at the helm, the food vouchers that we provide to numerous organizations will be distributed professionally and equitably."



"We have seen that Achiezer is a paragon of fiscal responsibility and competent management,"

YOELI STEINBERG OF GOURMET GLATT

QUESTIONS

for Dr. Brucha Lowinger Psy. D.

Dr. Lowinger directs Achiezer's mental health department, which has grown tremendously under her loving and experienced management.

Much as everyone would love a behind-the-scenes view of Dr. Lowinger's work, even the most determined interviewer finds that it is impossible to coax Dr. Lowinger

into divulging real stories. Her inordinate respect for people's confidentiality makes it unconscionable for her to recount even a camouflaged story without names. And while a conversation with Dr. Lowinger may not reveal an open picture of what goes on 'behind the scenes', it does leave behind one clear impression: This is a person who can be trusted.

Can you give us a bit of background about yourself?

I originally trained as a school psychologist, after which I completed training as a clinical psychologist. I received my PsyD over 25 years ago. I spent 24 of those years working as a psychologist and assistant director of the day program at South Beach Psychiatric Center. I'm also a mother of nine, grandmother of many. We moved to Lawrence several years ago.

How did you come to start working with Achiezer?

Rabbi Yaakov Bender, who is a close friend of my husband, asked me to consider joining Achiezer after my retirement. Although working within one's own community does present its own set of challenges, I was happy to have the chance to use my skills to give back to the community.

What exactly do you do?

I do intake evaluations, which involves meeting with people, or speaking to them over the phone. I'll help them figure out what kind of help they need, and direct them towards the right therapists or programs. Many people need professional help but can't afford it, and I am available for free counseling as much as the schedule allows, but it's not a strict therapeutic arrangement.

What are your impressions of Achiezer in general?

I think Achiezer is unique. It is hard to even describe what they do, because they do whatever needs to be done to help, even though each case can be completely different. It's a very congenial working atmosphere, and it's gratifying to see that you can make a difference in people's lives.

How is your department uniquely confidential?

There is an understanding in the office that we don't share information with each other unless it is absolutely necessary, and that is true for all departments. In my department specifically, the files are password protected. There is also a separate entrance from the back, that leads directly to my office. And should you meet me on Central Avenue, there is no need to feel uncomfortable; you don't even have to say hello if you don't want to.

Any message for the readers?

I think my main message is that people should know that we're here for them. If you think you need help—for yourselves, or for your children—reach out for it. If you're not sure, if you're worried—just come to talk, and we can decide together what to do about it. This is a very non-threatening, easy way to make a change for yourself. There's no major intake procedure, and it's not a very formal office; just a very low-key, easy way to break into taking control of your family's mental health.

Welcome! TO ACHIEZER'S NEW FIVE TOWNS LOCATION



Intake Coordinator and Triage



Hospital Support/ Respite Room Coordinator

FIRST FLOOR

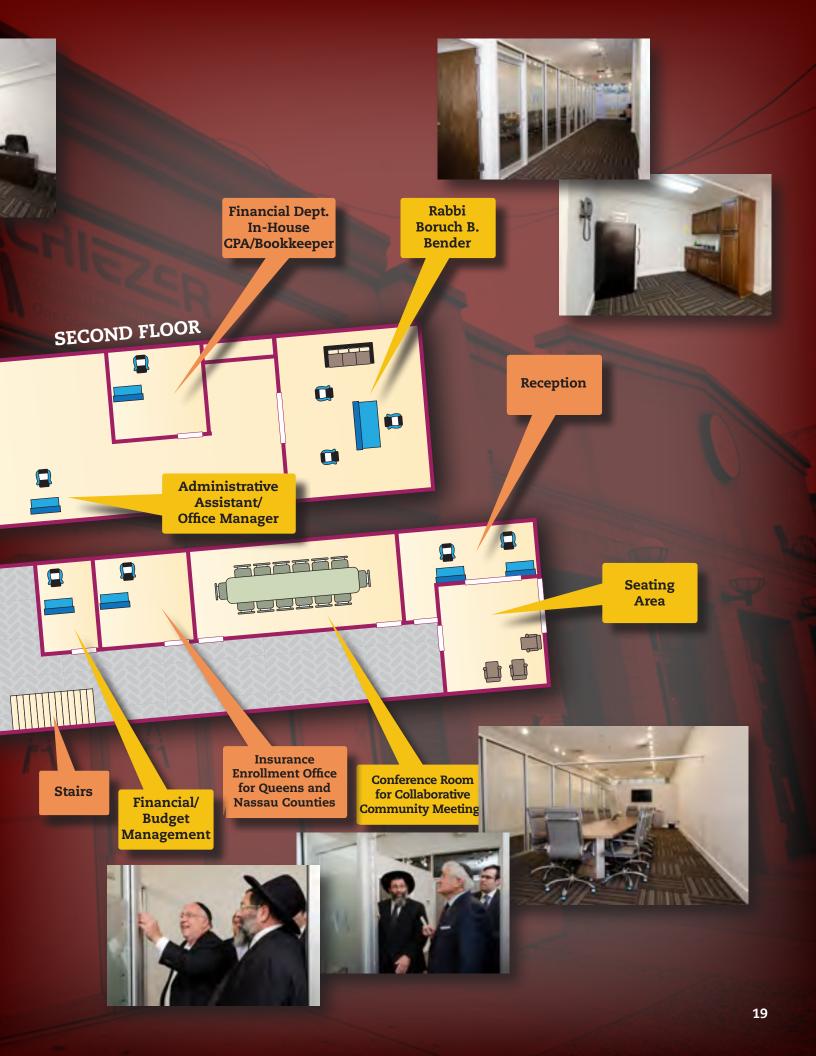
Private Back Entrance



Offices

Restrooms

Kitchen





March 11, 2012

Palliative Care Presentation at Agudah Breakfast

Achiezer was asked to present an informative talk on New York State's Palliative Care Act at Agudath Israel of America's annual breakfast. As the audience listened with rapt attention, Rabbi Boruch Ber Bender recounted the stirring tale of a terminally ill father who was saved from hospice care placement and returned to his home at the very last minute. The event, arranged and hosted by Agudath Israel of America, served as a stepping stone in the successfully-won battle over continued care for terminally ill patients in New York State hospitals.

April 3, 2012

Senator Dean Skelos Legislative Office Building, Room 909 Albany, New York 12247

Dear Senator Skelos:

Firstly, I would like to thank you once again for taking the time out of your busy schedule to attend the important Agudath Israel Legislative Breakfast recently held in the Five Towns. Your genuine compassion, concern and willingness to do anything you can for our Orthodox community is unparalleled. There were many important items discussed at the breakfast and we are confident that you will do everything in your power to help get these important items of legislation passed.

When I delivered my remarks with respect to the Palliative Care Information Act, I had ended with a remarkable story of a 57 year old man that had against all odds come back from the brink of death and had now been recovering what was originally thought insurmountable illness. As I explained, the hospital was vigorously pushing hospice and other end of life recommendations upon the family until they thankfully were able to reach out to our office. It is with humility, pride and sheer excitement that I can now report to you that this gentleman was lovingly and caringly welcomed back to his own home. Yes, this individual that all hope had been given up on is now surrounded in the comfort of his own

There aren't many words to add as I believe the above ending to this remarkable story says it all. We must do everything possible to have the Palliative Care Act amended. Continuation of care and options for treatment must be added to this law. As I reiterated then, there is no greater law, no greater mandate, and no bigger responsibility that we have

I wish you continued success in all your endeavors and am sure that you will continue to do great things for our community as well as all residents in the great State of New York.

Rabbi Boruch B. Bender Founder and Director

cc: Mr. Michael Fragin, Trustee, Village of Lawrence Rabbi Chaim Dovid Zwiebel, Executive Vice President of Agudath Israel of America Rabbi Yechiel Kalish, National Director of Government Affairs, Agudath Israel of America Rabbi Simcha Lefkowitz, Congregation Anshei Chesed

February 4, 2012 Community Cares Event

Mr. and Mrs. Yanky and Machi Muller hosted the Motzei Shabbos launch of Achiezer's Community Cares program (see p. 26). Over a sumptuous sushi, dairy and dessert spread by Meisner's Caterers, more than 250 women from the community learned how they could help their neighbors and friends, at a cost equivalent to that of a manicure or latte. The overwhelming response of the crowd resulted in many commitments for weekly \$5-\$20 donations, totaling thousands of dollars to help neighbors and friends. In the paraphrased words of one participant, "I don't think twice about buying an extra snack or convenience item; how could I not pledge \$5 a week to help my family's friends?"

June 5, 2012

Far Rockaway Reception

The Far Rockaway community came out in droves to support the immensely popular Achiezer movement at the annual Far Rockaway Reception, hosted for the third year in a row by Rabbi and Mrs. Zvi and Goldie Bloom. In his remarks to the wall-to-wall crowd, host Zvi Bloom pointed out that "big people do small things"—an apt description of Achiezer's dedication to even the littlest details. Rabbi Bloom also thanked Achiezer for their assistance to his father-in-law, the late Mr. Yitzchak Isaac Rosenberg z'l, an

unforgettable individual whose warm smile and rock-solid support left an everlasting impression on Achiezer staff.

Keynote speaker Rabbi Moshe
Brown, Rav of Agudah of West Lawrence,
characterized Achiezer as a cornerstone of
Chesed, and the community's paramount
address for help. Rabbi Brown publicly
described the occasions that Achiezer was there
for his own family, such as the time when Rabbi
Brown's daughter was rushed to the hospital and

Achiezer arranged every detail, from proper doctors to expedited Erev Shabbos discharge.

Mr. Carmi Gruenbaum accepted the Achiezer Hakaras Hatov Award, in recognition of his outstanding work as Board Member and official Insurance Consultant.



February 15, 2012

Police Commissioner Meet and Greet

Newly-appointed Nassau County Police Commissioner Thomas Dale reached out to Achiezer, requesting an opportunity to meet with Nassau County Rabbonim



and leaders to discuss the needs of the community. Hosted by Mr. and Mrs. Shabsi and Tova Fuchs, the meeting served as a venue to create understanding and open lines of communication between the community and the Nassau County Police Force.

April 1, 2012 School Safety Meeting

Achiezer spearheaded an event dedicated to school safety in the aftermath of the tragic events in France, attended by 35 principals, Roshei Yeshiva, and executive directors of various community schools. Keynote speaker Josh Geiss, director of Community Safety Services, presented numerous safety protocols and principles that can be implemented practically, without disrupting the school's functioning or traumatizing the children. Several Yeshivos have since followed up by putting Mr. Geiss's suggestions into action.



December 27, 2011

Volunteer Chanukah Party

Some 150 enthusiastic volunteers showed up for Achiezer's Volunteer Chanukah Party, held on the first night of Chanukah at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Dovid and Shifi Bloom. Achiezer's Rabbinical guide, Rabbi Yaakov Bender, acknowledged each and every volunteer as an integral part of Achiezer's impact on hundreds of lives, and thanked them for "always being available to answer the call." Mentalist David Levitan provided the evening's entertainment, adding to the warm feelings engendered by the event.











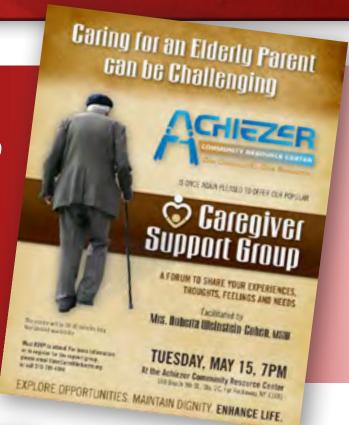
July 29, 2012

Tisha B'av Event

Achiezer and Yeshiva Darchei Torah collaborated once again on the community's annual Tisha B'Av program. Hosted by Darchei Torah and arranged by Achiezer, the event inspired over 1000 men and women with words of Chizuk by noted speakers including Rabbi Zevi Trenk (Mesivta Chaim Shlomo); Rabbi Paysach J. Krohn; Rabbi Naftoli Jaeger (Yeshiva Sh'or Yoshuv); Rabbi Shlomo Avigdor Altusky (Beis Medrash Heichal Dovid); and Rabbi Moshe Weinberger (Cong. Aish Kodesh). January-June, 2012

Eldercare Support Group

In response to overwhelming demand following the Eldercare 2011 Conference, Achiezer created the first Frum eldercare support groups within the community. A select group of caregivers met several times this winter/spring in the Achiezer conference room, along with Mrs. Roberta Weinstein-Cohen, MSW. With Mrs. Weinstein-Cohen's encouragement, caretakers were able to vent their feelings, exchange ideas, and find the strength to keep on going.





Achiezer's Megillah at Home initiative was received extremely well as a real and important service that assisted so many of our community members, particularly the homebound and elderly. In total there were 36 Megillah readings by 15 Baalei Korei, attended by residents from the communities of Bayswater, Far Rockaway, Lawrence, Cedarhurst, Woodmere, North Woodmere, Atlantic Beach and Hewlett. People confined to hospital beds, wheelchairs, and IVs were all accommodated by this service as well. Achiezer extends its thanks to Yossi Hershkowitz from Yeshiva Darchei Torah, as well as to all of the Baalei Korei, for their assistance with this project.



February, 2012

Bnos Bais Yaakou Visit

Achiezer hosted Bnos Bais Yaakov's senior class as part of BBY's community Chesed tour. Forty girls viewed the building and received a hands-on glimpse of Achiezer's many operations. In the words of their teacher, "The girls were blown away. It was a chance for them to see how people really have opportunities to get involved and make a huge impact."



Listing of Services

MEDICAL PROGRAMS

- Detailed Doctor recommendations and expedited appointments when necessary
- Hospital recommendations, admissions, and transfers
- Rehabilitation recommendations, admissions, and transfers
- Ambulance/ambulette services and ride

ELDERCARE PROGRAMS

- Eldercare support group
- Networking with Home Health Aid Agencies, rehabs, insurance etc.
- Elder law referrals
- Medicaid/Medicare guidance

INSURANCE PROGRAMS

- Government insurance Enrollment (525 families in 2011)
- Health insurance appeals and petitions
- Private insurance guidance and consultations

LEGAL NETWORK

- Attorney consultations for reduced rate or pro bono
- Lawyer referrals

FINANCIAL PROGRAMS

- Food card Band-Aid program
- Budgeting and financial planning
- Loan modification and re-mortgaging referrals
- Life and death medical cost coverage
- Government entitlement screening
- Reduced medical fee negotiations

MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

- On staff psychologist
- In-house crisis intervention (with a crisis trained staff)
- Mental health referrals
- Expedited appointments when necessary
- In-patient mental health authorizations
- Collaborative crisis team to assist with community emergencies

VOLUNTEER DRIVER PROGRAMS

Rides provided for medical, and mental health appointments

- Rides provided for handicapped and wheelchair bound clients
- Shabbos meal deliveries to hospitals on Friday afternoon

SPECIALTY EOUIPMENT DEPOT

- Hospital beds, pulse oximeters, pediatric wheelchairs, oxygen pumps, stairlift and hoyerlift equipment
- Most are delivered and assembled by Achiezer personnel and volunteers

HOME REPAIR ASSISTANCE

Network of local handymen that give their time and labor pro bono to local families who can't afford basic household fix ups.

DIABETIC CHILDREN'S SUPPORT GROUP

 Confidential gathering for children of all ages struggling with the diagnosis and maintenance of Type 1 Diabetes in the religious world.

24 HOUR COMMUNITY HOTLINE

- Immediate access to medical specialists
- Mental health emergencies
- Family crisis department
- Chevra Kaddisha/Bereavement arrangements

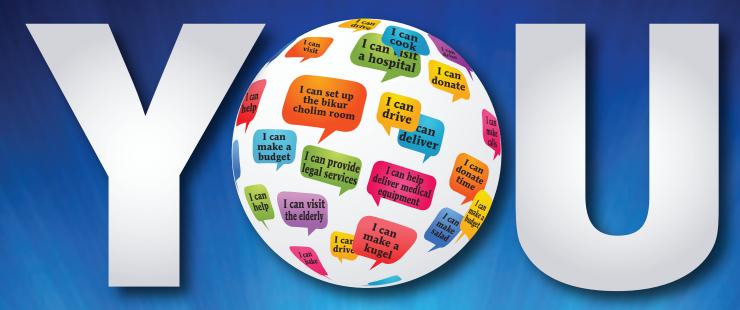
MEALS 'N MORE

- Homemade Shabbos meals to specified hospitals
- South Nassau Respite Room

ACHIEZER COLLABORATIONS

- Collaborative meetings to assist families including: schools,
 Rabbonim, community leaders, community organizations
- Collaborative work with local Rabbonim and organizations so as to help those in need, to verify need, and to avoid duplicated efforts
- **■** Community Events
- Collaborative meetings when necessary regarding community events and concerns, for example: • Hurricane Irene • NYPD and NCPD relations • NYC and Nassau County relations • Confidential concerns
- Government advocacy
 - Expediting Medicaid and Food stamp applications
 - Nassau County and Far Rockaway/Queens County

"עולם חסד יבנה"



CAN MAKE A WORLD OFA DIFFERENCE in just minutes!

Volunteer Today!

YOU can join the community's central chesed organization.

YOUR one act of kindness combines with others into a group effort.

YOU do chesed anyway now make an even greater impact!

CHESED VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- Drive meals to local hospitals on Friday afternoons. All you need is a car, and a desire to help. **ACHIEZER'S HOSPITAL MEALS 'N MORE PROGRAM** currently services: South Nassau, LIJ, North Shore, Mercy, Winthrop, Nassau University Medical Center, and St. Johns.
- Cook a particular dish/item (soup, fish, chicken, cake, challah, kugel, salad, dips, etc...) for someone in a hospital over Shabbos.
- Help deliver goods and maintain local Bikur Cholim/Respite Rooms. Ten minutes a day makes a tremendous difference for those in need.
- Volunteer professional services-legal, social work, budget expertise, accounting, home repairs, etc.



Your Chesed. Your Community. Your Organization. Be a Part of It!

TO IOIN CALL 516-791-4444 OR EMAIL INFO@ACHIEZER.ORG

COMMUNITY CARES



Lending a caring hand, friend to friend, neighbor to neighbor...

I magine watching a neighbor walk to the train station, and realizing that he's walking because he can't afford to fix his car for the drive to work.

It hurts.

Community Cares is a new Achiezer initiative that gives people in our community a chance to sponsor specific needs for specific people. The average donation is \$5 or \$10, charged to the donor's credit card on a weekly basis. The funds are placed in a special Community Cares account, to be utilized exclusively for the personal needs of struggling community members.

"I know many families that wait a few days before taking their kids to the doctor for sick visits, because the \$30 co-pay is beyond their budget," Rabbi Boruch Ber Bender remarks. "There are parents who can't afford to buy school supplies before the new year. Mothers on chemo who need to hire extra cleaning help. Fathers who haven't bought a new suit for Yom Tov in years. The mission of this project is to lend a hand, friend to friend, neighbor to neighbor, in a dignified and caring way."

And all for the price of a daily cup of coffee.



JOIN UP NOW!

Become a member of Community Cares by logging on to: www.achiezer.org/community_care.php



S SPONSORS GREAT MI

EXCLUSIVE OFFERING:

Your Chance to Dedicate The Achiezer Medical **Equipment Van.**

Achiezer's Specialty Medical Equipment Depot provides hard-to-find, specialty medical equipment at the most critical moments. Each year, Achiezer fills over 800 s eparate requests for these unique medical items

Achiezer is now offering a sponsorship opportunity for a new cargo van, which will quickly and efficiently perform deliveries and maintenance for the Medical Equipment Gemach. This is a high profile dedication with a lot of coverage, as the vehicle will continuously circulate throughout the Five Towns and Rockaway for years to come.

Specialty Medical Equipment Depot Supplies:

Feeding Pumps ◆ IV Equipment

Diabetic Supplies • Specialized Lifts

Hospital Beds • Commodes

Walkers/crutches

Specialized Wheelchairs



















334 Central Avenue Lawrence, NY 11559

Phone (516) 791-4444 www.achiezer.org

Achiezer Call Center fields over 30,000 calls a year.

