**President’s Message, August 2021**

Serving others is one of the pillars upon which Judaism rests. Doing good is considered its own reward, as these are the acts that help sustain humanity. So why is recognition as a form of rewarding excellence so important? *Because it helps spread the word and inspire others to act in kind.* This month there is much to recognize.



***Hadassah Magazine* Update**: Each year the American Jewish Press Association confers the Simon Rockower Awards, the annual prizes for excellence in Jewish journalism. This year *Hadassah Magazine* won 10 of these awards! In fact, the magazine has received a total of 30 Rockower Awards since journalist Lisa Hostein was named executive editor of the publication in late 2015. “I am thrilled that Hadassah Magazine has been recognized for the kinds of stories we do best — spotlighting women who make a difference by standing up and speaking out,” said Hostein. Among the stories recognized were “[Buffalo Cantor Resigns as She Vows to Fight Sexual Harassment](https://www.hadassahmagazine.org/2020/12/14/buffalo-cantor-resigns-vows-fight-sexual-harassment/)” and a story about Abby Stein, a Hasidic rabbi turned transgender activist, entitled “[Finding Her Voice](https://www.hadassahmagazine.org/2020/07/08/abby-stein-finds-voice/).” [You can access and read all of the stories honored](https://www.hadassah.org/press-release/hadassah-magazine-receives-10-rockower-awards) electronically or in your paper copy of the magazine.

**HMO Update**: Hadassah Prof. Yoram Weiss was recently quoted in [The Washington Post](https://www.hadassah.org/story/hadassah-prof-yoram-weiss-is-quoted-in-the-washington-post.). It is gratifying to note that Prof. Weiss, the director of Hadassah Hospital Ein Kerem, is recognized as an international voice in the fight against COVID-19. The article quotes him as saying, “We have reached a level of herd immunity in Israel that also provides cross-protection against the Delta variant, and, for that reason, the virus does not spread as quickly, it doesn’t reach the most vulnerable population and it doesn’t cause a lot of hospitalizations. It is making all the difference.” HMO has been on the forefront of COVID-19 treatment and prevention.

Part of HMO’s efforts against COVID-19 has been through cutting-edge research. The latest findings published in [the June 29 issue of *Helio Hepatology*](https://www.hadassah.org/story/liver-disease-is-linked-to-weaker-response-to-covid-19-vaccine%20) are by Dr. Rifaat Safadi, director of the Liver Unit at Hadassah Hospital Ein Kerem. Dr. Safadi found that individuals who have had liver transplants have a weaker response to the COVID-19 vaccine. This is due to the medication used to suppress the immune system in order to reduce organ rejection. These outcomes are useful in determining the best advice for patients.

# Education & Advocacy Spotlight: This summer an [important statement was released](https://www.hadassah.org/press-release/hadassah-statement-on-us-representative-ilhan-omars-dangerous-falsehoods) on US Representative Ilhan Omar’s dangerous falsehoods, that will serve to combat the dangers of misinformation and hate speech. The statement was offered in response to remarks made by Rep. Omar (D-MN) equating the actions of the United States and Israel to the atrocities committed by the Taliban and Hamas. The need to make this statement reminds us to consult Hadassah’s policy statement on [depoliticizing antisemitism.](https://www.hadassah.org/policy-statement/de-politicizing-anti-semitism) Hadassah is recognized as a leader in the fight against antisemitism.

**Administrative Update**: It is with mixed emotion that we wish a *lehitra'ot* to Janice Weinman, who stepped down from her position as Hadassah CEO/Executive Director on July 1. [Janice elucidates](https://ejewishphilanthropy.com/as-she-departs-hadassah-janice-weinman-shares-what-she-learned-accomplished-and-has-yet-to-do/%20) the scope of Hadassah’s mission, what she is most proud of having accomplished and her plans for the future in an interview with eJewish Philanthropy. During her nine-year tenure Janice ensured our critical role in the 2020 passage of the Never Again Education Act, created a number of new collaborations, bolstered the organization’s relationship with the United Nations, launched the reConceiving Infertility initiative, created the Coalition for Women's Health Equity and launched many domestic programs. To donate in her honor or leave a message, please [visit this page on the Hadassah website](https://www.hadassah.org/page/jw-surprise-fundraiser). We can reward excellence by recognizing Janice’s magnificent accomplishments.

We appreciate the individual and combined efforts and accomplishments of all our volunteers and wish you *l’shanah tovah tikatevu*.