

Expression of Condolence for Julia Koschitzky by Toronto City Council

Moved by: Councillor James Pasternak

Seconded by: Mayor John Tory

The Mayor and Members of Toronto City Council are deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Julia Koschitzky on Monday March 21, 2022 at age 78.

Julia was a transformative and revered figure in the Toronto Jewish community and beyond. She dedicated much of her life to vital causes that helped build the social cohesion of Toronto and the critical role that the Jewish community has played in building our City.

Taking a modest yet determined approach to her various causes, Julia garnered the respect and admiration of thousands of local residents and world leaders in numerous countries. When one steps into her office, visitors are struck by the plaques, scrolls, awards, honorary degrees, and certificates lining the walls along with pictures of Julia providing counsel to many world leaders.

Julia was a recipient of the Order of Canada and took the honour very seriously. She took the opportunity to serve as the officiating government representative for new Canadian Citizens emphasizing how honoured and fortunate they were to be part of the Canadian family. It was an example of Julia giving back to a country that embraced her family as they moved from pre-Nazi Germany to Cardiff, Wales, and then to Canada, where she met Henry, her husband. The Henry-Julia duo were a powerhouse of generosity, leadership, and building a Toronto of high purpose.

Julia and Henry were great supporters of Jewish education, establishing and funding the Julia and Henry Koschitzky Centre for Jewish Education at the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. And they both inspired young people to be leaders for the future, and take on noble causes. As the Chair of UJA's Annual Campaign, Julia helped raise millions of dollars that were distributed to social agencies helping newcomers, reducing poverty, supporting seniors and sustaining the social safety net that Canadians value.

Julia was a source of great wisdom, never uttering a harsh word yet also taking on the mantle of leadership. She was always seen as a source of inspiration. She organized rallies in support of Israel in that small country's darkest hours; she was one of the leaders behind Operation Exodus, which helped tens of thousands of Jews and others escape the totalitarian Communist regime of the former Soviet Union and seek freedom in Israel.

Julia gave hundreds of speeches world-wide and she took great care to make every word count. She was known to go through numerous drafts adhering to truism that the written word will never go out of fashion and words matter. She left her audiences inspired, motivated and with the firm belief that her words will not be forgotten. Standing ovations were common.

The City Clerk is requested to convey, on behalf of the Members of Toronto City Council, our sincere sympathy to Julia's husband Henry, her children Sarena, Hartley, Jonathan and Leelah, and Julia's extended family and friends.

April 6, 2022