

MARIA DEVINKI

Dear Children of the Future:

My name is Maria Devinki. I came to the Kansas City area in the year 1950. After the war, we knew we did not want to stay in Europe. Our first hope was to go to Israel. However, it was a difficult process at that time. If we could not go to Israel, we wanted to go the United States. We may have chosen the United States, but Kansas City chose us. Kansas City was kind enough to sponsor our family. The Jewish Community welcomed us with open arms. The most important thing for us was that we felt safe and wanted.

My proudest accomplishment since coming to the U.S. is raising my children with a strong Jewish education and identity. I was able to send all of them to college and beyond. My husband and I established our own business where, through hard work and a lot of luck, we were able to be successful and give back to the community that had helped us. On our 50th Wedding Anniversary, Fred and I donated a Torah to our synagogue, Kehilath Israel. This was one of the proudest moments in our lives.

MCHE provides quality education for a classroom setting, as well as adult education that would not be available to many people. Remembering the Holocaust gives an opportunity to teach the importance of understanding and respecting humanity and helps prevent further discrimination.

From studying the Holocaust, you should learn that anything good or evil is possible. People can be crueler than can be imagined. Indifference causes as much pain and loss as hateful acts. We must study patterns of human behavior so when hateful actions occur we can immediately stop them because the flames rapidly grow out of control.

Each person must learn as much as he can about his fellow man – politics, culture, and religion. To hate someone because you don't understand his faith, color, or culture is unacceptable. Each of us has a responsibility to be kind and give back to the world for good. We are our brother's keepers and we can never turn our back on anyone. It is only by the grace of God that we are here.

Very truly,

Maria Devinki
Wodzislaw, Poland
1938