

A Remarkable Tradition

The Levine and Sklut Families — Examples of Philanthropy in the Charlotte Community for Two Generations

Sandra and Leon Levine, Lori and Eric Sklut and Julie and Howard Levine have created a special tradition of support and caring that will benefit our community for many generations to come. Their legacy of giving has impacted thousands of people of all ages, all income brackets and all faiths. "The Levines and Skluts have been both an inspiration and wonderful role-model for our community,"

sion and endowment project like the one we have begun. There are few communities, big or small, that will have homes for their Jewish communities comparable to Shalom Park. It is fitting that the JCC will be known hereafter as the Sandra and Leon Levine Jewish Community Center.

The Tradition of Charitable Giving

Sandra and Leon Levine have

Israel for his philanthropic, humanitarian, educational and social contributions. For 18 years, beginning in the mid-1970s, Leon served on the Duke University Hospital Advisory Board. In 1991, he donated \$10 million — one of the biggest contributions Duke has ever received from an individual at that time — to help build the Leon Levine Science Research Center, a 375,000 square-foot, \$77.5 million interdisciplinary research complex.

Sandra has always been deeply committed to Charlotte's Jewish community, serving as past-president of Hadassah. She has also been involved in the Greater Charlotte community, serving on boards such as: Golden Circle Theatre, Charlotte Repertory Theatre, The Blumenthal Performing Arts Center, The Queens College Learning Society, and Charlotte Country Day School where the school's administration building on its main campus is named the Levine Center. Currently, Sandra sits on the board of Carolinas Medical Center. The Levines have made recent major gifts to the Children and Family Service Center and the Children's Learning Center.

After major renovations in 2000 and 2001, the Levine Museum of the New South reopened in October 2001. Sandra served as a founding board member of the museum. Emily Zimmern, Executive Director of the Museum, says, "Sandra and



The Levine Family. Back row: Dorothy, Harry, Minnie, Front row: Sherman, Alvin, Leon

Leon embody the spirit of the new South - entrepreneurial vision, financial success, a demand for excellence, a can-do optimism and a commitment to inclusion. Through their philanthropy, they are building a better future for the people of Charlotte and the State of North Carolina."

Family Dollar Leads the Way

Family Dollar's astronomical success is legendary, and professors use it as a case study at business schools. In 1959, a 22-year

old entrepreneur with an interest in merchandising became intrigued with the idea of operating a low-overhead, self-service retail store. Leon Levine believed he could offer his customers a variety of high quality, good value merchandise for under \$3. It was Leon's drive to succeed and intense competitive nature that kept him going. Because he had grown up in his family's retail store, he understood value, quality and customer satisfaction. In

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Mr. Leon Levine

according to Hal Levinson, President of the Foundation of Shalom Park.

The Levine and Sklut families have had a deep commitment to community, and that community has been defined in very broad terms. "Sandra and Leon, their daughter, Amy, a sophomore majoring in Early Childhood Education at the College of Charleston, Lori and Eric and Julie and Howard are each compassionate and feel a responsibility and obligation to help those who are most needy, as well as to help others achieve their dreams," according to Harry Swimmer, Foundation of Shalom Park, Campaign Co-Chair.

Shalom Park and the JCC are very close to the hearts of the Levines and Skluts. Without their support, our community would not be able to undertake an expan-

always generously supported the Jewish community. Locally, Leon was a leading force in the early 1980s in the creation of Shalom Park, a unique place for Jews from all over Charlotte to worship, share their heritage and culture and to meet, exercise and socialize. According to Mark Bernstein, the Levine's financial contribution to the creation of Shalom Park was a major one, but it wasn't the most significant thing they did for Shalom Park. "More importantly, Leon was behind the idea, helped us overcome some initial resistance and played a key role in bringing Shalom Park to fruition," he says.

The Levine's commitment to charitable giving extends well beyond Shalom Park and Charlotte. In 1974, Leon was awarded the Holy City of Peace Award from the government of



The 1962 opening of the Family Dollar Myrtle Beach store.