

Shorefront's Toys for Tots fundraiser celebrates 30 years of giving back

Gotlieb: 'It takes a village'

October 31, 2025 Wayne Daren Schneiderman



Hon. Brian Gotlieb, center, Craig Schatzman, left, and Shorefront Toys for Tots board members. Photo by Mario Belluomo

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CONEY ISLAND — Shorefront Toys for Tots, an organization which distributes gifts to sick and underprivileged children throughout the holidays, held its 30th anniversary fundraiser at Gargiulo's Restaurant the evening of Oct. 26.

Civil Court Judge for the City of New York in Kings County Brian Gotlieb founded Shorefront Toys for Tots in memory of his late mother, Myrna Helene Gotlieb. Shorefront has reached more than 60,000 children and sponsored multiple child safety programs, community blood drives and reading programs.



Hon. Brian Gotlieb, Civil Court judge of the City of New York-Kings County, addressing the audience. Photo by Mario Belluomo



A group effort

The fundraiser honored five individuals: Consolidated Edison's Senior Procurement Team; NYC Health and Hospitals/South Brooklyn Health CEO Svetlana Lipyanskaya; State Sen. Jessica Scarcella-Spanton, D-23; and I.S. 228 David A. Boody Community Coordinator Shakeya Stephenson. Surprise honoree Judge Gotlieb was given a "Lifetime Achievement Award."

Shorefront Toys for Tots President Craig Schatzman presented the award to Gotlieb, acknowledging that his “dedicated service, unwavering commitment, leadership and generosity have made a lasting impact on our community.”



From left: Craig Schatzman, State Sen. Jessica Scarcella-Spanton, former State Sen. Diane Savino and Hon. Brian Gotlieb. Photo by Mario Belluomo

Gotlieb told the audience that he felt he was in a courtroom as spectators rose from their seats and applauded. “You may now be seated,” Gotlieb quipped.

“It’s not just one person doing all of this by themselves,” he said. “Anything I did was a group effort. When I started this organization in 1995, I never thought that 30 years later, I would be receiving this award. The fact that it’s still going as strong as it is is a testament not to me but to everyone who has had a hand in putting it together.”



From left: Craig Schatzman, Hon. Brian Gotlieb, Svetlana Lipyanskaya and Shakeya Stephenson. Photo by Mario Belluomo

Giving children hope

Schatzman told the Brooklyn Eagle that the fundraiser expected to raise approximately \$8,000. “That’s really enough for us to run our organization,” he said, noting that all of Shorefront’s board members are volunteers.

“All the money from the fundraiser is used to buy toys for children all throughout New York City,” Schatzman explained. “It’s so important that every child has a toy. The smiles it brings to their faces is utterly priceless. Something that seems like such a small task is so huge for these kids.”

Schatzman is also deputy county clerk in Kings County. He has worked in the New York State Unified Court System for 24 years and was previously a law clerk and court attorney in New York County Criminal Court, Kings County Supreme Court and Kings County Civil Court.



From left: Anthony Diorio, Lisa Mangal, Ranju Batra, Ravi Batra, Esq., Craig Schatzman, Charles Small, James Blain, Jay Sharma and Charles Ritz. Photo by Mario Belluomo