



**MATTHEW ORNSTEIN
MEMORIAL FOUNDATION**

November 29, 2018

Dear Family and Friends,

I hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving in the company of those you love. For us, Thanksgiving now marks not only the beginning of the holiday season, but also the start of the toughest couple months of the year, as we approach the anniversary of Matthew's death each Jan 3rd.

Recent Thanksgivings, though, have also provided us an opportunity to take stock of all that Danny, Norm, Pam and I still have to be thankful for: each other, of course; the unwavering love and support of all of you; the incredible success and meaningful work of the Foundation that you helped us establish and now help us grow; and the fact that we had Matthew in our lives for 34 wonderful years, with his unique brilliance, his extraordinary kindness and his special sense of humor.

These days, we try hard to keep our focus not on all that has been taken from us, but on all that Matthew left with us, to motivate and fortify us for the journey ahead. In addition to copious reflections on our times together, Matthew left humorous and philosophical writings, drawings, music, his eclectic collection of hundreds and hundreds of films, and so much more. What we treasure above all, though, is the amazing group of friends whom Matthew bequeathed to us.

No one ever had, or was, a better friend than Matthew; no one ever had closer or more devoted friends than Matthew; and no one ever cherished friends as much as Matthew cherished his. Now, those friends are our friends, Matthew's gift to us, as together we remember and we honor Matthew. Indeed, as just one recent example, we are so humbled to share that, right before Thanksgiving, a 6th baby was officially named after our beloved son by two of Matthew's closest friends. With each new life comes renewed hope for us, and for all the world.

So, I write to you today, inspired by Giving Tuesday and, in the lingering spirit of Thanksgiving, to report on the 2018 activities of the Matthew Harris Ornstein Memorial Foundation (MHOMF); to thank, from the bottom of our hearts, those of you who have already donated to the Foundation this year; and to urge those of you who have not, to consider making a donation before year end. <http://mornstein.org/donate>.

Norm, Pam and I have each made large personal contributions to the Foundation every year since its formation in the summer of 2015, but this year, in honor of the Foundation's third anniversary, in addition to our annual donation, **Norm and I will contribute at least *three* dollars more for every dollar donated by others to MHOMF in 2018.**

And we need the money to keep up our amazing momentum!!!!!! I am happy to report that all three of the Foundation's major projects (and several smaller ones) are now well underway: **(1) The Matthew Harris Ornstein Summer Debate Institute; (2) filming of our documentary about the tenacious efforts of Judge Steven Leifman of Miami Dade County to decriminalize treatment of those suffering from mental illnesses; and (3) regional trainings in partnership with The LEAP Foundation and its visionary founder Dr. Xavier Amador.** Short summaries of each of these projects appear below, but I urge you to open the embedded links and/or to go on the Foundation's website, www.mornstein.org, to learn more. And, of course, don't hesitate to contact us with any questions or to arrange a time to visit any of our project sites to judge for yourself the value of our programs.

I. MATTHEW HARRIS ORNSTEIN SUMMER DEBATE INSTITUTE

This was the first project undertaken by the Foundation, about 8 months after Matthew died. The Institute was established at the suggestion of Matthew's dear friend and high school debate partner, Alex Berger (also Father of the aforementioned new baby!), to honor Matthew's great love

of, and success at, policy debate. In its first year (2015), the Institute hosted a one-week session for about 30 new debaters. In 2018, the Institute enrolled approximately 120 students, from rising 6th graders through high school seniors, novices through varsity debaters, for two full weeks.

To get an idea of what this experience has meant to our students, I urge you to read the remarks delivered by Jonathan Collins at a recent fundraiser for our partner, the Washington Urban Debate League (WUDL): <http://mornstein.org/remarks-by-jonathan-collins-winner-of-the-2018-matthew-ornstein-debate-award>. Jonathan was the winner in August of the fourth Matthew Harris Ornstein Prize, given each year by Matthew's high school debate coach, at the awards ceremony at the end of the Institute, to the debater who most exemplifies the traits that made Matthew so special. We wish Jonathan well as he waits to hear about his college applications to Harvard, MIT and Cal Tech!

This coming summer, we will celebrate the Institute's 5th season and we hope to have the resources at least to expand enrollment to accommodate the waiting list that we had this past August. The Foundation spent approximately \$90,000 in connection with the 2018 Institute and this year, we are likely to spend more.

And thanks to the extraordinary work of WUDL, the action now continues throughout the school year, with monthly local tournaments, the most recent of which was on November 17, when students from around D.C. and Prince George's County gathered at Greenbelt Middle School for the Julia Burke Invitational. After a great tournament, the more than 250 members of the WUDL community who attended the debate received free tickets to Michelle Obama's "I Am Becoming Tour" at the Capitol One Arena and one of WUDL's scholars actually spoke as part of the program's introduction!

This year's (nationally established) debate topic is immigration and the debates we have watched so far have covered issues ranging from refugees and asylum to H-1Bs, EB Visas and the economics of

immigration, the diversity visa lottery and more. Students debate both sides of each issue, doing scholarly research to support their positions. Topics in the past have included education (last year) and policy towards China (the year before). It is so inspiring to watch these kids in action: their self-confidence, their facility with the material, and their civility towards one another, adeptly switching positions and coming to understand all points of view. Come see for yourselves or better yet, volunteer to coach or to judge at a tournament!

As one of our tournament judges wrote at the end of the summer:

I want to thank you for bringing the group together Friday evening and creating a volunteer opportunity! I focus on foreign policy, so I appreciated being able to do something for the local community. K-12 education is also very important to me, so I love being able to help kids out and help them overcome the nearly insurmountable obstacles so many of them face. This group was an inspiration. I loved their confidence and ability to debate respectfully. [I find] that a lot of millennials struggle with productively confronting others who disagree with them, and I'm glad that your camp is reversing that trend.

From its modest re-start in the Fall of 2015 (after the inaugural Summer Institute), with about 13 students and debate teams at 3 schools, WUDL has had 448 students from 40 area schools participate in debate activities this year under the amazing leadership of WUDL's Director David Trigaux. It came as no surprise, then, that WUDL was named the 2017-2018 "Outstanding League" in the country by the National Association of Urban Debate Leagues or that it was selected as "One of the Best" Local Non-Profits by Greater Washington's Catalog of Philanthropy and will begin to be listed in that broadly distributed book in 2019.

For more about the Matthew Harris Ornstein Summer Debate Institute and its partner WUDL, browse WUDL's website at www.urbandebatewashingtondc.org and to learn about the benefits of debate to the young people who participate, you might read Bob Litan's

piece on the Brookings website (<https://brook.gs/2QdKzmj>) and listen to Norm's recent podcast for the American Enterprise Institute. (<http://www.aei.org/multimedia/the-report-card-with-nat-malkus-election-edition-discussing-controversial-topics-and-debate-in-schools/>).

II. DOCUMENTARY EXAMINING MIAMI DADE COUNTY JUDGE STEVEN LEIFMAN'S PHENOMENAL SUCCESS IN DECRIMINALIZING TREATMENT OF THOSE WITH MENTAL ILLNESSES

As reported in our Spring update, the Foundation devoted a good deal of its time in 2018 (and approximately \$165,000) to working with Gabe London and Charlie Sadoff of Found Object Films (<http://www.foundobjectsite.com/>) on a documentary about the incredible work of Judge Steven Leifman of the Miami-Dade County Court-Eleventh Judicial Circuit in transforming the way the criminal justice system deals with those suffering from serious mental illnesses. To get a sense of the enormity of just one aspect of the challenge that has confronted, but not deterred, Judge Leifman, please take a few minutes to watch this horrifying 2006 report on CBS 4 News (local Miami channel) entitled, "The Forgotten Floor": https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JWxmFLit2_A.

Judge Leifman's extraordinary efforts over the past 17 years have simultaneously saved lives and dollars and have united judges, prosecutors, public defenders, police, jailers and politicians in common cause through a program that we believe can be successfully replicated by other communities throughout the country. Our documentary will, we hope, spread the word about Judge Leifman's universally acclaimed approach and will be a clarion call to reform a shameful nationwide system of incarcerating, rather than treating, those who are ill.

On Friday October 26, Judge Leifman was honored by the Brain and Behavior Research Foundation ("BBRF") with its Humanitarian Award (that last year went to Doctors Without Borders). The award was

presented at a gala dinner at the Pierre Hotel in Manhattan, following a day long symposium at which brilliant young scientists presented the results of the cutting-edge research they had conducted during the course of the year with the support of BBRF grants. At the symposium, Judge Leifman gave a keynote address about his own work and received a thunderous standing ovation.

BBRF is the nation's top non-governmental funder of mental health research grants. By awarding grants that will lead to advances and breakthroughs in scientific research, it is BBRF's mission eventually to alleviate the suffering caused by mental illness and other brain diseases. Since 1987, BBRF has awarded more than \$394 million to fund more than 5,700 grants to more than 4,700 scientists around the world.

I have attended BBRF's day-long symposia for several years now and have always come away both marveling at all that scientists are, finally, starting to learn about the brain, but simultaneously despairing at how far in the future any real breakthroughs remain with respect to understanding the true nature and causes of serious mental illness and other debilitating brain diseases and how elusive any cure, or really any effective treatments, still are. Until those nuts are cracked by the scientists, it is incumbent on the rest of us to work to eliminate stigma and improve the way we treat those suffering from mental illnesses. That is exactly what we are trying to do both through the documentary about Judge Leifman and the LEAP trainings discussed below.

The day after the BBRF Symposium and the gala honoring Judge Leifman, the Judge spoke to approximately 100 New York friends and Foundation supporters about his work in Miami Dade County at a beautiful reception hosted by our dear friends Philip and Maya Bobbitt, and we talked about the film MHOMF is producing to showcase the Judge's work. We took advantage of the occasion to show for the first time the film's trailer, which you can view by clicking on the link below and then, we'd love it if you'd share your thoughts with us:

https://www.dropbox.com/s/2vzqmfph3zkqjh9/JDP%20Trailer_181016-01.mp4?dl=0

The next step in the production process is to begin to take all of the scores of hours of film that have been shot on location in Florida by Found Object and fashion them into a cohesive documentary that, first, sounds the alarm about how overcrowded cells in jails and prisons across the country have replaced hospital beds and treatment centers, warehousing rather than treating those suffering from serious mental illnesses, and then, by showcasing Judge Leifman's fantastic success in Miami-Dade County, demonstrate that things CAN change.

This step will be costly, and we are currently meeting with a variety of potential funding sources and, simultaneously are thinking, and talking to people about, how we can eventually insure broad distribution for the film, which will be another costly proposition.

III. LEAP TRAINING FOR THOSE LOVING, CARING FOR AND/OR WORKING WITH INDIVIDUALS SUFFERING FROM ANOSOGNOSIA (LACK OF INSIGHT) AS A RESULT OF DAMAGE TO THEIR BRAINS

The week before Thanksgiving, Norm and I attended our first three day training (in Utah), in which MHOMF teamed up with the LEAP Foundation/LEAP Institute, www.leapinstitute.org, and its Founder Dr. Xavier Amador, to train about 100 family members, first responders and health professionals on how to partner, and to communicate effectively, with those who, through no fault of their own, do not believe that they are ill. The technical term for this well documented and scientifically demonstrated condition is anosognosia. To learn more about anosognosia, see <https://www.nami.org/Learn-More/Mental-Health-Conditions/Related-Conditions/Anosognosia>.)

On the second and third days of the program, some of those who participated in the training on the first day spent another day role playing

and learning to themselves become trainers certified in LEAP techniques with the goal of eventually creating a national network of individuals who will be able to teach, and work with, those seeking to employ the communication techniques developed by Dr. Xavier through years of research, study and lived experience with a brother who suffered from schizophrenia. These techniques are set forth in Dr. Xavier's numerous books on the subject, beginning with his international best-seller, "I'M NOT SICK, I Don't Need Help," which has been translated into many languages and is used around the world to facilitate communication with those suffering from anosognosia.

However, it is often not enough simply to read the books and watch the videos on the LEAP website. The LEAP technique is best learned in person, through role play, and needs regularly to be re-enforced because of the all-too-human tendency to deviate from it when frustrated by the seeming intransigence of a loved one whom a parent, for example, is trying to help. This note we got from a father who, with his wife, participated in the Utah training not only makes this point, but is typical of the reaction expressed to us by so many training attendees:

Dear Ornsteins,

A national day of gratitude is coming this Thursday. For me and my wife, that day already came -- last Thursday. The day we were able to see Dr. Amador in Salt Lake City.

This summer past, his book opened our eyes to what our son was grappling with, in a way no other professional mental health help did. And we began a course correction in how we approached him immediately. By "course correction," I'm confident that you know what I mean - a 180-degree turn.

But simple though the concept of LEAP is, it's very challenging to execute moment-by-moment, day by day. It's 100% accurate to say that I failed far more times than succeeded. By factors of 10, or more likely, a hundred.

So, to be able to see and hear Dr. Amador was a true gift. More than words can describe. And it left me feeling something that I hadn't felt in months: hope.

That thing, as the poet Emily Dickinson wrote, with feathers, that perches in the soul.

To read the complete note, go to: <http://mornstein.org/note-from-grateful-participant-from-utah-leap-training/>

The LEAP program is making real changes in relationships and communication and is leading to more treatment and better outcomes. MHOMF has committed to work with Dr. Amador and LEAP to co-host at least three 3-day trainings in 2019, at a capped cost of \$50,000 per training.

SO, WHAT'S NEXT?

It is our intention to continue, and where possible, to expand, all three of these projects in 2019 and beyond. And there are so many other issues we want to be able to focus on as well. For example, the Treatment Advocacy Center (“TAC”), headquartered right down the road in Arlington, Virginia and established by E. Fuller Torrey, one of the country’s leading authorities on schizophrenia, just released a report ranking the various states in terms of barriers to treatment for those with serious mental illnesses. In doing its research, TAC asked a single question: “Does the state law allow an individual in need of involuntary evaluation or treatment to receive timely care, for sufficient duration, in a manner that enables and promotes long-term stabilization?” Based on our own experiences, and the experiences of others who have been in touch with us, it came as no real surprise that Maryland, in the shadow of the nation’s capital, ranked 50th out of 50 in TAC’s report; dead last in terms of ability to get help for a loved one. *See*, “Grading The States: An Analysis of Involuntary Psychiatric Treatment Laws” at <http://www.treatmentadvocacycenter.org/>.

THIS HAS TO CHANGE and we aim to help change it by, hopefully starting in 2019, advocating for a more realistic legal standard for involuntary treatment in cases where individuals with diagnosed brain diseases fail to seek treatment on their own, for example as a result of anosognosia.

We also plan to continue, for the foreseeable future, the mental health lecture series we personally endowed in memory of Matthew at the Everett Center in Chautauqua, New York. This year our speaker was Dr. Lloyd Sederer, Chief Medical Officer of the New York State Office of Mental Health, who gave two lectures, one entitled, “Improving Mental Health: Four Secrets in Plain Sight” and the other about his new and very wise, but also practical, book about the opioid crisis (“The Addiction Solution”). For those of you familiar with Chautauqua, you know what a perfect place it is, far from the stress of daily life, to kick back in a beautiful setting and contemplate some of the perplexing issues confronting us as individuals, our society and our world. Dealing with the scourge of serious mental illness is certainly one of those perplexing issues.

If you are still reading: thanks!! And remember, for every dollar you contribute to Matthew’s Foundation, Norm and I will contribute three: <http://mornstein.org/donate/>. Before I close, just a couple house-keeping matters. First, I really, truly am retiring from my firm effective December 31st and it is my hope that, by giving up my law practice, I will be free to devote more time to the Foundation and its mission, which is so close to our hearts. Starting January 1, I can be reached at judithlharris@gmail.com and judy@mornstein.org. My cell, 301-379-5705, and our home landline, 202-387-0397, remain the same.

Second, we will try our best to get donation acknowledgements and tax receipts out in January, but we are still a small organization (*ie*, me) when it comes to the administrative work of the Foundation, so please bear with us.

Finally, this coming summer we hope to celebrate the fifth season of the Matthew Harris Ornstein Summer Debate Institute with a big picnic on Matthew's birthday, Sunday July 28, for all our supporters. Please save the date, just in case it actually happens (small administrative staff: me)!!

May your 2019, and ours, be a time of renewed hope. With love and boundless gratitude for your sustaining support of our family and our cause, we wish you the happiest of holiday seasons.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judy". The letters are cursive and fluid, with a long tail on the final 'y'.

Judy (Norm, Danny and Pam)