

New Jersey Jewish News
MetroWest Feature

Bildners honored for their support of Rutgers Jewish studies center



[NJJN Staff](#)

The New Jersey couple who founded and helped finance Rutgers University's [Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life](#) were honored for their achievements as the center celebrated its 10th anniversary on Sept. 17.

In a ceremonial dinner at the Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum on the university's New Brunswick campus, Joan and Allen Bildner, who reside in Short Hills and Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., were saluted by Gov. Jon Corzine and University president Richard McCormick.

"I am honored to have been invited to participate in honoring the Bildners, who have done so much for the state of New Jersey," said the governor.

"You can hardly participate in any event throughout the state where people are not impressed with their efforts. To invest in moral education, which the Bildner Center is so involved with, and to make sure that we understand those core values that we need to address is an absolute essential for the society and for New Jersey," said Corzine.

McCormick said, "The Bildner Center and all of its programs have been a launching pad for careers and achievements and a stimulus for community-wide conversations about contemporary Jewish life. We are proud of the Bildner Center's reputation for excellence in the field of Jewish studies."

Since the center opened on the New Brunswick campus in September 1996 as a single office in the history department's building, it has grown steadily as an academic enterprise to become the only college department of Jewish studies in the state. It offers an array of courses ranging from medieval Jewish history to Holocaust studies and

contemporary Jewish life, and sponsors a range of lectures and programs and an annual Jewish film festival.

In citing the Bildners for their continued financial and spiritual support, in a statement issued by the center the couple was praised for “their philosophy of equality, inclusion, and tolerance to all of their efforts, working against prejudice and bias of all kinds.”

“Before the Bildner Center, there were many Jewish students at Rutgers but there was not the focus in terms of how they could act out their Jewishness,” said Max Kleinman, executive vice president of the [United Jewish Communities of MetroWest NJ](#). “The Bildner Center has really provided an anchor for quality Jewish life, making Rutgers University one of the premier campuses in the country for Jewish life. Rutgers is the place to be for Jewish students.”

<http://www.njjewishnews.com/njjn.com/092106/mwBildnersHonored.html>