

## THE NORTH WARD CENTER'S CASA ISRAEL ADULT MEDICAL DAY CARE CENTER COMMEMORATED ITS EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY

The North Ward Center's Casa Israel Adult Medical Day Care Center commemorated its eighth anniversary with a fun-filled celebration honoring the progress the center has made since it opened its doors in 2001.

Clients and staff gathered in the main hall Friday, Sept. 25, for the day's festivities, which included food, gifts, music and dancing. Children from the North Ward Child Development Center next door were brought in to join the fun. Clients were given ribbons and eco-friendly totes as thanks for their patronage.

Casa Israel is an adult medical day care center that provides high quality medical and social services for up to 120 eligible adults in the Greater Newark area. Clients receive transportation to and from Casa Israel and any medical appointments, health monitoring by trained profes-

sional staff, meals, and a safe environment where they can participate in recreational activities together.

Bruce London, Casa Israel's administrator, attributed the success of the center to the dedication of the hardworking staff and the genuine sense of caring and community exhibited by the clients every day.

North Ward Center Founder Stephen Aduato and his wife, Fran, were also present to express their love and appreciation for the staff and clients at Casa Israel.

"We are so proud of how far Casa Israel has come in these eight years," said Fran Aduato, who works at Casa Israel. "Everyone here is like family to us. God bless you all."

The first fifteen people admitted into Casa Israel in 2001 were presented with flowers and honored during the presentation: Elisa

Beovides, Geraldine Latorraca, Rosa Morales, Matilde Gonzalez, Della Sommers, Percio Grullon, Tomasa Cedeno, Hecotr Ramirez, Orfelina Grullon, Julia Melendez, Telma Lee, Gloria Mendez, Sixta Delgado, Emiliana Gonzalez, and Cristobalina Ruiz.

Latorraca, 77, tearfully thanked Mr. and Mrs. Aduato and called Casa Israel a second home. "I love to come here because I love everybody who is here," Latorraca said. "I have no other family, yet Casa Israel has become like a new family. They take care of me when I'm sick, they help me go shopping, and they make me happy when I'm here because they truly care."

Rubio, 85, said she enjoys coming to Casa Israel because she is always learning something new.

"This isn't just a place where we can come and eat, but where we can try new

things even at our age, where we can have fun doing things like arts and crafts, and just spend time with our peers," Rubio said. "They help us with appointments and are always there for us. Everyone here makes you feel like they really care. They are all genuinely good people. We learn here that no matter who you are or where you are from, we can all unite with respect and dignity."

Beovides, 84, said Casa Israel gives her an opportunity to get out of the house.

"They help me stay in good health by taking me to appointments and they allow us all to get together in happiness regardless of where we come from," Beovides said.

Cedano, 87, said the staff at Casa Israel have helped her.

"Everyone here is so friendly and caring," Cedano said. "We are all truly a fam-

ily and this is like another home for many of us. They have allowed me to maintain my independence because I am better here than I would be home alone. The owners here are genuine people who love us and whom we love very much in return. They even took us to eat at their own home once-that shows you the kind of good people they are."

Adrienne Davis, the executive director of The North Ward Center, said Casa Israel has become a significant institution in the city in the eight years since it was founded.

"Casa Israel serves the most vulnerable population in our city," Davis said. "Without Casa Israel many of these people would be home alone or in nursing homes. Casa Israel gives them a place to come where they can be cared for and where they can interact with other adults."