

Goldberg inaugural recipient of Cooper scholarship

By Jason Sherriff

Call it a legacy. Call it a gift. Call it the last wish of a public servant who sought to continue giving to the Ottawa Jewish community even after his passing.

The George Joseph Cooper scholarship award is the final and everlasting gift of G.J. Cooper, and Ariel Goldberg is the inaugural winner of the cash scholarship, worth \$14,762 this year.

The scholarship was set up by the Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation (OJCF) at

Cooper's bequest to support people between the ages of 18 and 30, who display leadership qualities, academic excellence, and an interest in the Jewish community. The scholarship's aim is to advance the winner's artistic, literary or social fields of study or work.

Goldberg, who aspires to become a writer and a Jewish educator, is honoured to be recognized for his efforts.

"When others value what you're doing, it is very humbling," he says.

The educator currently

spends much of his time on programming and teaching with the Ottawa College of Jewish Studies (OCJS), founded in 2004 by Rabbi Ely Braun. Goldberg plans to graduate next year with a BA in ethics from the University of Ottawa and Saint-Paul University, and says the award brings his dream of studying at a Yeshiva in Israel after graduation "closer to reality."

"Working with the [OCJS] is an intense and meaningful experience," he says. "It allowed me to play a leading

role in a number of ways [and to] get my feet wet as a Jewish educator."

With a desire to lead, academic success and a commitment to the Jewish community, Goldberg was an easy choice for the Cooper award, says Jack Silverstein, executive director of the OJCF.

"The scholarship is an amazing gift," says Silverstein. "My hope is that [Goldberg] comes back to Ottawa after his education abroad, so the community can benefit from having him around."



Ariel Goldberg (left) with Greg Sanders, outgoing OJCF chair at the Foundation's AGM. (Photo: Peter Waiser)