

# Gurwin Jewish Nursing & Rehabilitation Center Seniors Celebrate Graduation with Traditional Cap & Gown Ceremony

June 3, 2015

**COMMACK, NY**— Thirty seniors at the Gurwin Jewish Nursing & Rehabilitation Center in Commack graduated from the Center's 2014-2015 Adult Education program, capping a nine-month journey on a quest to continue learning, regardless of age or physical limitations.

Residents graduating from the program successfully completed month-long classes in such topics as Women Who Made America, Great Wonders of the World, The History of English Royalty, Introduction to Psychology, and the 1950s and 1960s. The program culminates in a traditional cap and gown ceremony, complete with a processional to Pomp & Circumstance, "diplomas," and Valedictory and Salutatory addresses.

Maria Perez, 96, was selected Valedictorian of the Class of 2015. As an immigrant from Cuba more than 40 years ago, Maria says she learned English by immersing herself in the culture around her. "When I came to live at Gurwin, I didn't know what to expect: was my life going to be boring? Would I meet anyone who I could call a friend? My worries were all for nothing, since I have made many friends who I love, both peers and staff, and am very busy!" Maria credits the Therapeutic Recreation Department at Gurwin for her exciting days and for keeping her involved.

Dawn Lettau, Director of Therapeutic Recreation at Gurwin, said, "Each year, I am motivated by the perseverance of our graduates. Each of them faces their own challenges, yet daily they continue to realize the value of a moment and live each day to the fullest. They don't realize it, but we learn from them every day."

The Honorable Frank P. Petrone, Supervisor of the Town of Huntington, was the keynote speaker for the event. A former resident family member, Mr. Petrone congratulated the graduates on their achievement, and thanked them and the Gurwin staff for the care and friendship provided to his mother. "I drive by every day. Seeing the building makes me think of my mom, and that brings a smile to my face."



Above: Valedictorian Maria Perez and Salutatorian Joseph Donlon are congratulated by (standing, from left): Joanne Parisi, Assistant Administrator, Gurwin Center; Tracey A. Edwards, Huntington Town Councilwoman; The Honorable Frank P. Petrone, Huntington Town Supervisor; Larry Simon, Chairman of the Board, Gurwin Center; and Herbert H. Friedman, Executive Vice President/CEO, Gurwin.



Above: Keynote speaker Frank P. Petrone, Huntington Town Supervisor, congratulates graduate Mark Stevenson.



Left: Graduate Selma Roth poses with fellow graduate, her grandson Ben. Ben graduated in May from Cornell University, and brought his cap and gown for photos with his grandma.

## About Gurwin Jewish Nursing & Rehabilitation

The Gurwin Jewish Nursing & Rehabilitation Center is a 460-bed nursing care facility located in Commack, Long Island, offering short-term rehabilitation, skilled nursing care, medical/post-surgical sub-acute care, respiratory and ventilator dependent care, hospice and palliative care and on-site dialysis. In addition, Gurwin Jewish offers an adult day health program, home care services through two home care programs, and an assisted living community. For more information, go to [www.gurwin.org](http://www.gurwin.org).