

15 Minutes

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Presidential Stature

Open University of Israel President Ingeborg Rennert honors New York State Board of Regents Chancellor and NYPD Commissioner.

Photo by Tim Boxer

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Cover Story



Merryl and James Tisch



Ingeborg Rennert and Dore Gold, former Israeli Ambassador to UN



Ira Leon Rennert and Commissioner Raymond Kelly



Adrienne and William Silver with Renate Zimet



Ira Leon Rennert (c) with Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly and wife Veronica



Munir Mashouqullah with Pernilla and David Avital



Bernice and William Schwartz

OPEN UNIVERSITY OF ISRAEL

Merryl Tisch's Life Is All About Education

Story and Photos by Tim Boxer

BEFORE she met **James Tisch**, she was **Merryl Hiat** for the first 20 years of her life. She grew up on the Lower East Side. Her father Philip was an Orthodox rabbi who held three jobs; her mother two. But the tradition of her immigrant parents promised endless possibilities.

Her grandmother walked seven blocks every day to meet the bus that brought Merryl back from Ramaz school on the Upper East Side, where she was a scholarship student.

"My grandmother, who spoke Yiddish and German, would sit with me every night while I did my homework," Merryl said.

Merryl went on to earn a B.A. at Barnard, an M.A. at New York University, and an Ed.D. at Teachers College of Columbia University. For 13 years she's been a member of the New York State Board of Regents. Last year she was elected chancellor of the board.

The day before receiving an award from the American Friends of the Open University of Israel this month at the Pierre Hotel, she asked, "Daddy, tell me something I can say at the dinner."

"Mamaleh," her father replied, "in our tradition education is everything."

Merryl earned the applause of her husband, James Tisch, president-CEO of Loews Corp., and the 230 guests, among them **William** and **Adrienne Silver**, president of the Harmony Club; **Abby Joseph Cohen** and her husband, Deputy Police Commissioner **David Cohen**; Ambassador **Dore Gold**; **Malcolm Hoenlein**, executive vice chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations; **David Avital**, president of MTP Invest, and Dr. **Hagit Messer-Yaron**, Open University president.

President **Ingeborg Rennert** and chairman **Malcolm Thomson** also honored New York Police Commissioner **Raymond W. Kelly**.

"Our bond with Israel became closer since 9/11," Kelly said. "We've assigned police officers to 11 cities overseas. Our most active location is Tel Aviv. We have learned an important lesson: No one is an island. No police department and no city can do it alone."