

Mandy Stellman Helps Other Women Help Themselves

L. Mandy Stellman has been honored by many women's groups for her devotion to women's rights. Not only has she been honored as Woman of the Year of the National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1977, and a Wisconsin delegate to the National Women's Conference that was held in Houston in 1977, but she has become a role model for many women who want to take charge of their lives.

One can only admire a woman who became a lawyer at the age of 40, after her children were grown. Receiving her law degree from Marquette University in 1970, Mrs. Stellman has worked with the law, helping her clients, most of whom are poor, battered women. In a single day, she may help a woman locate a kidnapped child, or to receive child-support payments from an ex-husband who is in contempt of court or to seek employment for a woman who has suffered sex discrimination in her field. "With law, I can help women in a way that can most make a difference in their lives," she said.

Mrs. Stellman serves as one of the lawyers for women who call the Women's Crisis Line. She serves as a vice-president of the Women's Crisis Line and is president of the Wisconsin Women's Network.

Most of her clients come to her because they have heard her speak. She has extensive community speaking engagements before women's and men's groups.

Mrs. Stellman is also known for her involvement



L. Mandy Stellman

in many aspects of women's rights and for fighting for the Equal Rights Amendment. She is responsible for several federal law suits against sex discrimination for women.

"Being a feminist is not equated with being non-religious," said Mrs. Stellman. Attorney Stellman, who recently became a life-member of the National

Council of Jewish Women-Milwaukee Section, is gratified that NCJW, in celebration of its 85 years in Milwaukee, chose to give a grant to the Women's Counseling Center and Crisis Line, to form the Women's Support Group Program. When a group of women at the women's coalition held a feminist Seder the second night of Passover, the Stellman's who could not be present at the Seder, contributed funds for food, since many of the women who attended with their children are poor single parents.

Mrs. Stellman believes that her love for social justice came from her parents. Her mother, Rose Mandlesohn, "practices law without a license," she said. Mandy took her first name from her mother's last name. Her parents operated a grocery and butcher shop and would provide bail money for customers. "We learned at a very early age what *tzadaka* meant," she said.

Her father Abraham helped his customers with legal documents and gave credit to customers he knew would never be able to repay him.

"Human concerns are Jewish issues," said Mrs. Stellman. "I feel that in my work, I am working in the best way to help the Jewish community."

Long active in Jewish communal affairs, Mrs. Stellman worked in her early jobs in group work agencies, such as the Toronto Jewish Community Center and with youth. She worked for over 20 years with golden agers in the National Council of Jewish Women's project in Ohio.

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Mandy Stellman

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Mandy and her husband, Sam, are members of Congregation Beth El Ner Tamid. Wed 37 years, they have a loving marriage. Together, they work on many projects, such as founding the Underground Switchboard in 1969. They also founded "Volunteers in Probation" and helping to train over 5,000 volunteers.

Sam is a professor with the Criminal Justice Institute with the University of Wisconsin

Extension, which is operated state wide.

As a Jewish mother of two sons who both have Ph.D.'s, Mrs. Stellman feels that her daughter-in-law, author Jeanne Mager Stellman, has given her her highest honor. In the dedication to her book, **Women's Work, Women's Health, Myths and Realities**, she wrote: "To Sam and Mandy Stellman, for the way they taught their son."

— Debbie Weinstein