**2021 Torch Award Application
Temple Israel Men’s Club, Charlotte, NC**

**Category: Health & Wellness or FJMC Other**

**Title: A Taste of Kentucky**

**Date: August 2, 2020**

**Summary: This was a "hybrid" event with both Zoom participants and in-person, socially distanced small groups at several homes for a guided bourbon tasting with speakers including our new Rabbi who had just moved from Louisville! Each "pod" had the same bourbons and food pairings. Rabbi Wolk started with a bracha and then discussed the Jewishness of bourbon, both halachically and from a business perspective in Kentucky, a member discussed his extensive bourbon collection along with how to taste it, and a third member talked about the technical aspects of bourbon and how it is made.**

**Details: In addition to building stronger relationships in the Jewish context of study and camaraderie, we raised more than $300 for our new Rabbi’s depleted discretionary fund. We gave people the choice of buying their own bourbon and tuning in through Zoom (many did) or joining a small group at several members’ homes. We charged everyone the same $20. We had one member choose the bourbons for tasting, another procure the airplane bottle samples, another yet buy the food, and yet another design the promotional flyer. Many members made phone calls to other members with personal invitations.**

**Timeline: Planning this event, whether in the Sukkah or not, takes less than one month including promotion. Start with presenters, choose a date, and go from there.**

**Impact: This was an excellent early relationship builder with our new Rabbi. He saw how much Men’s Club wants to make him feel welcome and to give him the opportunity to make friends in a new town. He was appreciative of the donation, and we enjoyed beginning to get to know him on a less formal level.**