

Jewish Troopers Association, Inc.



Retired Lieutenant Sidney Spiegel #1047 Memorial Scholarship

(Lt. Spiegel Memorial Scholarship)

Sponsored by: Jewish Troopers Association

Introduction: The JTA will award the “Lt. Spiegel Memorial Scholarship” annually. The scholarship, in the amount of \$1,047.00, supports a graduating high-school senior who plans to pursue a college degree, professional trade school or accredited technical education. The scholarship is in memory of Sidney Spiegel, a 25-year dedicated member of the NJSP, veteran of World War II, and one of the first Jewish New Jersey State Troopers. The recipient must be the relative of a current or retired NJSP member. Relatives of former troopers, who departed service in good standing, may also apply, and the recipient does not need to be Jewish. The JTA may expand eligibility as the scholarship program grows and matures.

Criteria:

- Graduating high-school senior in good standing
- Relative of an active, retired or former NJ State Trooper in good standing

How to Apply:

- Complete application form provided by the JTA
- Obtain endorsement from guidance counselor or other school official
- Write a 500–750-word essay briefly introducing yourself, explaining how you will use the scholarship and why you should be selected. Demonstrate how you exemplify the values that defined Sidney Spiegel’s life. Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to incorporate an obstacle they have overcome.
- In lieu of an essay, applicants may provide an equivalent video or multi-media presentation addressing the same topics as the essay. Video presentations should not exceed five-minutes and must be viewable on common home computer, software.
- Applicants may provide a maximum of two letters of recommendation to enhance their application. Letters of recommendation are not required.

- **Selection:** The Jewish Troopers Association Executive Board screens applications and forwards them to Sidney Spiegel's family who select the recipient by majority vote.

Sidney Spiegel Bio:

Sidney Spiegel was born in New York City on March 21, 1920. His family was poor, and his early years were spent in a tenement on Manhattan's Lower East Side. The family relocated to Central New Jersey to share resources with other relatives and survive the Great Depression. Life was challenging as they faced financial hardship and discrimination for being Jewish. Sidney recounted stories of shopkeepers pushing him off the sidewalk in downtown Somerville and being harassed because of his religion.

It is unclear when Sidney became interested in police work and the NJSP, but he served as a Town Marshall and later as an armed industrial security guard before World War II. His law enforcement dreams were put on hold as Sidney enlisted in the Army shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor. He began his military career as a Military Police officer and spent over a year training in the US before shipping to England in 1943. In England, he joined the preparations for the invasion of continental Europe. Sidney served as a motorcycle officer in the military police and was brought to Supreme Allied Headquarters after providing an escort to General Eisenhower. He spent the remainder of the war working for the Supreme Allied Commander and later his Chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Walter Bedell Smith. He traveled throughout France and Germany, witnessing the devastation and human cost of the war, including a firsthand view of at least one concentration camp. Sidney's service is memorialized in Eisenhower's autobiography, *Crusade in Europe*.

Returning to the United States in late 1945, Sidney began anew the pursuit of his dream; becoming a New Jersey State Trooper. He served as a borough patrol officer, as well as a chauffeur to tobacco heiress, Doris Duke, before finally receiving an invitation to the State Police Academy in 1951. State Police recruit training was not easy for the 31-year-old. Older than most of his classmates, Sidney had what would later be discovered as a learning disability, a mild stutter, and faced anti-Semitic discrimination. While the hatred he received for his Jewish identity may not have come from the institution, it did rear its head from individual instructors and classmates who did not think Jews belonged in the New Jersey State Police. Sidney overcame all these obstacles, graduated with the 39th New Jersey State Police Class, and received Badge number 1047. Sidney often recounted that it was his dream to be a State Trooper. Overcoming the many obstacles throughout his journey granted him the privilege of realizing his dream, achieving his ultimate goal, and donning the distinguished French blue uniform with the renowned State Police Triangle.

Offers to work for now President, Dwight D. Eisenhower in the White House, as well as generous offers from Dorris Duke to retire and work for her, were respectfully rejected. Sidney's commitment and loyalty was to the New Jersey State Police. Sidney served for 25 years, earning the rank of Lieutenant, and concluded his service as regional director of Civil Defense. He was known for being a "Trooper's Troop," as well as a tough but fair leader who always had his

fellow Trooper's back. Sidney was known for having a true Law Enforcement Officer's intuition, or "Sixth Sense," for detecting criminal activity. His work rate and impressive ability as a Trooper placed him at the forefront of the formative events in the 1950's, 60's and 70's as they intersected, impacted, and cultivated the overall landscape of the State of New Jersey. Sidney had a way with people. Having faced discrimination and anti-Semitism all throughout his life, Sidney knew what it was like to be looked at and treated like he was "less." Carrying that with him, he made it a point to advocate for compassion and care for all those he encountered in the course of his duties. In his service to the State of New Jersey, Sidney exemplified and personified the core values of Honor, Duty, and Fidelity.

Sidney valued his family, his country, and his beloved Outfit. He believed in service, hard work, self-help, and striving to improve every day. He pushed people to do their best and was respected for the way he treated everyone, regardless of their status. He would be proud if someone used this scholarship in his name to get a college degree, but he would be equally proud if it led to becoming a tradesperson.

Sidney retired in 1976 and began a second career in corporate security. He never forgot the NJSP, serving as an active member of the Former Troopers Association. In the early years of retirement, he would rarely pass a Trooper with a car stopped without providing backup or checking on the Troop. As he grew older, he dedicated considerable amounts of time to helping establish the State Police Museum and Learning Center.

Lieutenant Sidney Spiegel passed away on May 23, 2001. The Jewish Troopers Association is proud to award this scholarship in his memory and honor his legacy.

Spiegel Family Selection Committee

- Sunnie Mortimer, RN, Lebanon, NJ – Medical practitioner
- Lillian Tarentino, Somerville, NJ – Professional musician, music educator and business owner
- Rebecca Sheasley, Bridgewater, NJ – Educator
- Rev. Dr. David Spiegel, Rochester, NY – Church pastor, hospital chaplain
- Col. Richard Spiegel, US Army (Ret.), Mechanicsburg, PA – US Civil Service