

Donating Profits to Assist Children in Need

William and Chaya Spencer wanted their children to have some kind of perspective on the life they enjoyed as a solid middle-class family.

As Mr. Spencer recalls, when the children were small the family established a banking system with three jars. Allowance would be divided into a "me" jar, a savings jar and a charity jar. On top of that, the family volunteered to serve meals to the homeless through a local church. The Spencers felt it was important for the children to have a

greater awareness of their community and understand that, even for all of the comfort and affluence, there were still people in need very close to home.

The kids are now 20 and 16 and have outgrown the jars, but that system of integrating charity into the household is still at the heart of the Spencer home. Only now, it is Mr. and Mrs. Spencer who are giving to support their local Upper Saddle River, N.J., community. The Spencers have recently given in excess of

\$60,000 to support Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of New Jersey.

Mr. Spencer is the creator of Whole-System Learning, an adult learning and corporate training and facilitating company, and Mrs. Spencer is the director and founder of Shree Yoga Studios in Saddle River. The couple donates 10% of profits from their small businesses to charity and Mr. Spencer's company has contributed materials and time to help CASA with its volunteer trainings. Mr. Spencer and his

company will be honored for his contributions at CASA's annual gala to be held Thursday night.

"For us, it was about charity to those that are in our neighborhood," says Mr. Spencer. "When I came across CASA of New Jersey, in a way, it was like a perfect fit. They are looking after the most disadvantaged, the most needy, the kids who live amongst us."

CASA of New Jersey works to provide a court-appointed special advocate to some 3,000 children who have been

removed from their homes. CASA's thousands of volunteers go through a minimum of 30 hours of training before being sworn in by a family court judge. The volunteer works as an investigator into the child's case and as a liaison to the court, always acting in the best interest of the child. Often the volunteer commitment can stretch over years.

"CASA's mission of looking after abused and neglected children is, for me, it is like a mark of a society, how well



William and Chaya Spencer

we take care of our own young people," said Mr. Spencer. "If we can't do that, I don't know what that says about us. I feel really passionate about the idea of looking after the most neglected in society."