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## **Roads to Redemption Gala a Huge Success** *From Addict to Activist - Jon Esformes Honored as Model of Recovery*

Los Angeles, Ca. January 22, 2015 - "We're thrilled and so grateful for the enthusiasm for the work we do and the belief in the road we are on," says Beit T'Shuvah's Rabbi Mark Borovitz after learning the 23rd Annual Gala was by far the most successful to date. This past Sunday 850 people gathered at the Hyatt Regency Century Plaza in support of the Beit T'Shuvah treatment center and educational institution raising a total of \$1.6 million.

Beit T'Shuvah graduate Jon Esformes was honored as a model of recovery for his inspiring transformation from addict to activist. "He went from pushing shopping carts to filling the shopping carts of others" is how Harriet Rossetto, CEO of Beit T'Shuvah, describes Jon Esformes' changed life. When she met him he was pushing a shopping cart filled with booze to feed his alcohol addiction. Jon was also suicidal and homeless. Experiencing the recovery program at Beit T'Shuvah inspired him to devote himself to his recovery, and then to reach out and help others.



Esformes is now the operating partner of the Pacific Tomato Growers and pioneering a human rights movement to honor the voice of every farmer. As a result Pacific Tomato Growers along with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) worked to create the Fair Foods Standards Council based on a uniform code of conduct. Esformes' fight for this human rights standard has been featured in media world wide and recognized by dignitaries internationally and by President Bill Clinton who called it "the most astonishing thing politically happening in the world we're living in today."

Esformes is headed to Washington D.C. next week as a panelist on the [White House Forum Combating Human Trafficking and Supply Chains](#).

Beit T'Shuvah teaches that no matter how lost one becomes, that person has the potential to overcome, prosper and give back the way Jon Esformes has. "Thousands of lives have improved, and that is the power of saving one soul," says Rabbi Mark Borovitz. Esformes reflected on the day he walked into Beit T'Shuvah, "They saved my life. If it wasn't for what this community did, I wouldn't be here today."

He's now committed to accepting no less for others. As the head of Pacific Tomato Growers Esformes spreads a message of shared responsibility. "We are all responsible for making sure workers safety and protections and accountability work throughout the country," he said. Beit T'Shuvah hopes to extend the reach of this message even further by holding a community screening of the movie [Food Chains](#) which features Esformes on Sunday February 8th, followed by a Q & A discussion.

At the gala, other BTS graduates spoke about how recovery impacted their lives, including Asher and Rachel Ehrman who met and fell in love during their treatment and are now happily

married. Entertainers included Cantor Shira Fox, the BTS Choir, Soloist Shany Zamir and BTS resident Ben Foster.



"This is a community fostering love, respect, and self determination," says Rossetto. "We are not only extremely proud of our graduates and residents, but also continually inspired by the support we received from our friends throughout the Los Angeles area and across the country."

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Soloist Shany Zamir and BTS Resident Ben Foster



Jon Esformes, CEO Harriet Rossetto and Rabbi Mark Borovitz



Jon Esformes, Annette Shaprio, Lise Applebaum, Avia Rosen, Rabbi Mark Borovitz, Meryl Kern, Harriet Rossetto and Janice Kamenir-Reznik

### **About Beit T'Shuvah**

Beit T'Shuvah is a treatment center and educational institution dedicated to guiding individuals and families towards a path of living well in order to recover from addiction. For the past thirty years they've operate on a faith-based model in Los Angeles integrating spirituality, psychotherapy, Jewish teachings, the 12 steps and the creative arts. For more information please visit [www.BeitTShuvah.org](http://www.BeitTShuvah.org).

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