

Mitch makes a difference

REBECCA DAVIS

B'NAI B'rith has received a special contribution to its Making a Difference project. Mitch Weller recently celebrated his bar mitzvah and rather than accept gifts, asked for donations to Making a Difference. It is the first time that a bar mitzvah boy has nominated the cause as the recipient of donations in lieu of presents.

Making a Difference provides financial bursaries to disadvantaged Jewish VCE students. The recipients of the bursaries need to demonstrate a commitment to their studies, school and larger community. The financial support assists with the purchase of books, uniforms, excursions and summer camps.

Weller discovered the "wonderful cause" through the involvement of both of his grandparents, Jack and Gilah Leder.

"I was very moved hearing some of the stories of students that Making a Difference has helped in the past," he told *The AJN*.

"I hope that the contribution I have made will help students in need."

Weller's mother, Karin, is "really proud" of her son for "recognising the importance of providing support to people in the community who are less fortunate".

"Giving to this charity is a terrific way for him to mark the occasion of his bar mitzvah," she added.

Making a Difference has established relationships with each



Mitch Weller with Bette Pulver, honorary secretary of Making a Difference.

of the Jewish schools and state schools with significant numbers of Jewish students. The schools annually nominate two candidates whom they consider worthy recipients, withholding their names for discretion. Each recipient has received a bursary of approximately \$1000-\$1500.

Martha Vanderhoek, chairperson of Making a Difference, told *The AJN*: "We commend Mitch for his generosity in thinking of others and hope that other students follow his worthy example."

Since Making a Difference was established in 1996, the project has raised over \$150,000 to help support 225 students. The cause relies heavily on community donations, and with no administration costs every dollar received is contributed directly to the project.

For more information or to donate to Making a Difference, visit www.bnaibrith.org.au/making-a-difference.html.