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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**JEWISH FOUNDATION FOR RIGHTEOUS PARTNERS WITH 2 NJ GROUPS FOR
SPECIAL VETERANS DAY PROGRAM**

EDISON, New Jersey – The Jewish Foundation for the Righteous (JFR) in partnership with the Jewish Community Center (JCC) of Middlesex County and the Jewish Federation in the Heart of New Jersey, will present an evening honoring Jewish War Veterans on Nov. 15th at 7:00 p.m. at the JCC’s campus, 1775 Oak Tree Road. The event will feature Pastor Chris Edmonds, the son of Master Sgt. Roddie Edmonds, who will recount not only the story of his father’s heroism in saving the lives of 200 Jewish American soldiers but also of how the younger Edmonds discovered his father’s heroism years after his passing.

To date, Master Sgt. Roddie Edmonds is the only American soldier who has been recognized as “Righteous Among the Nations” by Yad Vashem, Israel’s Holocaust Remembrance Center.

The program will include a screening of the JFR’s award-winning short documentary, “Following the Footsteps of My Father,” which recounts the inspirational story of rescue through the lens of Pastor Edmonds as well as several of the American Jewish POWs saved by the late Master Sgt.

On Dec. 19, 1944, Master Sgt. Edmonds was captured by the German Army during the Battle of the Bulge and sent to the Stalag IXA prisoner of war camp. As the highest-ranking American soldier in the camp, Edmonds was responsible for the camp's 1,292 American POWs. The camp’s commandant ordered Edmonds to identify the Jewish soldiers in order to separate them from the other prisoners. Instead, Edmonds refused, and when the German commandant placed his pistol against Edmonds' head, demanding that he identify the Jewish soldiers,

2022 VETERANS DAY JCC MC
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Edmonds responded, "We are all Jews here," refusing to identify the Jewish soldiers thereby saving their lives.

He survived 100 days of captivity, and returned home after the war, but never spoke of his actions. Edmonds passed away in 1985, and only long after did his son, Pastor Edmonds begin to put together the story of his father's heroism during the war. Posthumously, Edmond's actions have been recognized by Yad Vashem, who have conferred him with the designation "Righteous Among the Nations."

"As we mark Veterans Day and remember the heroic sacrifices made by those who have served in our Armed Forces, we would be remiss not to remember Master Sgt. Edmonds, the only U.S. Soldier to have been recognized as 'Righteous Among the Nations,'" said JFR Executive Vice President Stanlee Stahl. "With a gun aimed at his head, he chose to stand tall in the face of adversity and save over 200 soldiers who were able to return home and build their families, careers and lives. His legacy will forever stand tall in the histories told of the Greatest Generation."

The event will be free and open to the community. Advance registration is requested and can be done through the registration link at www.jccmc.org/veterans or by calling the JCC at 732-494-3232.

Event co-sponsors include the Jewish War Veterans Department of New Jersey, American Legion Father & Son Post 435, American Legion Fugle-Hummer Post 65, VFW Post 3117, Metuchen-Edison Area Interfaith Clergy Association, Anshe Emeth Memorial Temple, Congregation B'nai Tikvah, Neve Shalom, East Brunswick Jewish Center & Temple Emanu-El.

The JFR continues its work of providing monthly financial assistance to 120 aged and needy Righteous Gentiles, living in 12 countries. Since its founding, the JFR has provided more than \$42 million to aged and needy rescuers – helping to repay a debt of gratitude on behalf of the Jewish people to these noble men and women. Its Holocaust teacher education program has become a standard for teaching the history of the Holocaust and educating teachers and students about the significance of the Righteous as moral and ethical exemplars. For more information, visit <https://www.jfr.org/>.