

Serving Greater
Stamford, Greater
Westport, and
Upper Fairfield
County

JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE of Stamford, Inc.

Reporter



FALL 2016

Jewish Family Service to be Named ELAYNE AND JAMES SCHOCKE JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE OF FAIRFIELD COUNTY

For over forty years, Jewish Family Service of Stamford has provided critical social services to Fairfield County. While many have recognized the tremendous efforts of our agency, we are delighted to share that James Schoke, a past resident of Westport, has chosen to recognize the work of JFS with a legacy gift. In recognition of his generosity, Jewish Family Service is changing its name to the Elayne and James Schoke Jewish Family Service of Fairfield County. Both Jim and Elayne, Jim's wife for 69 years who passed away in 2014, have held a deep appreciation for the work of Jewish Family Service for decades.

"Elayne and I were driven to JFS

when we read about all the wonderful things they do for both the Jewish and general communities and met Matt Greenberg. We just love what they do, the scope and depth of their programs," shared Jim Schoke.

James A. Schoke was born in Chicago in 1924. In the early 1940's, he studied at the Illinois Institute of Technology, enlisted in the US Army, and was assigned to the Special Engineering Detachment of the Army Corps of Engineers and to the Manhattan Project's Instrument Section at the University of Chicago. Jim was responsible for inventing instruments to detect uranium and alpha emitters, travelling around the country to train scientists to use and maintain his instruments. His work gave him the opportunity to meet many other Manhattan Project scientists, including Enrico Fermi and J. Robert Oppenheimer.

In 1946, following his work on the

Manhattan Project, Jim went on to a career in the fields of Nucleonics, Instrumentation, and Fluorescent & UV Lamps, as the founder and president of several companies. At the same time, Jim and Elayne were active across the Jewish community. Elayne was a United Jewish Appeal "Lion of Judah," a Hadassah "Keeper of the Gate," and an ORT-America "Golden Circle" member for many years. She served at various times as a Trustee and Officer of Temple Israel of Westport.

"Several years ago I received a message from Jim, sharing that he wanted to make a lasting contribution to a Jewish agency that makes a significant impact on those most in need," explained Matt Greenberg, CEO of Jewish Family Service. "Of course, I was delighted to receive such a call and Jim and I spoke many times over the next few months. It did not take long for Jim to recognize the impact that his legacy gift to JFS could make for all residents of Fairfield



County. It is an honor to name our agency after Elayne and Jim. Their gift represents the highest form of tzedakah. It will help JFS to be a provider of chesed (compassion) and gemilut chasadim (acts of loving kindness) to thousands of families each year."

The official ceremony to name JFS will take place on Thursday, November 17 in conjunction with the Patron's Reception before the 5th Annual Saul Cohen - JFS Lecture. An invitation to the reception is extended to all JFS Annual Friends Campaign contributors at the \$613 level and above. For more information about joining us for the lecture, the reception, and the official naming celebration, please contact Jonathan Fass at 203-921-4161 ext. 108 or email jfass@ctjfs.org.

5th ANNUAL SAUL COHEN - JFS LECTURE Rabbi Sherre Hirsch, *Presenter*



Sherre Hirsch, rabbi, author and spiritual life consultant, will be the keynote speaker at the 5th Annual Saul Cohen - JFS Lecture. The lecture will be held on Thursday evening, November 17th at 7:30PM and will take place at the Ferguson Library in Stamford.

"Life does not always turn out like we expected. Sometimes it turns out worse, sometimes better but mostly just different. How can we survive and ultimately thrive through these changes to live with faith and not fear?" questions Rabbi Hirsch. She will offer some answers and thought at the community lecture, titled *At a Crossroads: Navigating Expected and Unexpected Transitions*.

The lecture is a gift, offered free to the community, through the generosity of Mimi and Saul Cohen.

After eight years in the pulpit, Hirsch left Sinai Temple, Los Angeles' largest and oldest conservative temple, in 2006. Since then, she has published *We Plan, God Laughs: What to Do When Life Hits You Over the Head*, and *Thresholds*:

(continued on page 3)

• ON THE INSIDE •

An Evening With JFS

See article and photos on pages 4-5

New Board & Staff of JFS

See page 7

Fall Programs

See page 9

A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



You Don't Know About Us Until You Need Us

"I didn't know that JFS did that!" This is a phrase I often hear when speaking to people about JFS. To a certain extent, this is a good thing. We often help people at times of challenge and difficulty, and while it may be a good thing that people do not *need* our services, it makes it difficult to spread the word about what JFS does. That is, of course, complicated further by the fact that we can't talk about what we do to help those who come to see us, since our services are confidential. However, many of the more than 5,000 people we help each year are your neighbors, and live right next door to you. But they probably won't tell you about it either. They don't want to share with you the problems that their family is experiencing.

You should know about us, however. We help more than 5,000 of your neighbors each year with counseling, food, housing, job training, and in home services to the frail elderly. And that is just the beginning. Throughout this newsletter, you will read about programs and services, and learn about the myriad things JFS does to make our community a better place. And you don't have to "need us" us to be part of it. JFS does many things to enrich life in the 15 communities we serve, and you can help. There are many exciting opportunities in which you can play a role. We provide fresh produce to dozens of families each month, and you can help us prepare and distribute food. We need college-age mentors to work with teens who are struggling to find their way. We need volunteers to spend an hour a week helping seniors strengthen their memory. And we always need ambassadors to the local synagogues to help us spread the word about what is available through JFS, and how they can be a part of it.

And speaking of exciting, elsewhere in this newsletter you will read about our upcoming name change, which reflects our newly expanded service area, and will honor two outstanding individuals. With the merger of the UJA/Federation of Westport and JCCS of Bridgeport, JFS now serves 15 towns from Greenwich to Bridgeport. Elayne and James Schoke were visionaries who believed in the work that JFS does, and wanted to ensure that we would be around for the long term. We are grateful to them for securing JFS' future. We are also grateful to all of you who support the important work that JFS does in your community.

Don't wait to need us to know us. Get involved now. You can make a difference in the lives of hundreds of people.

K'tivah v'Chatimah Tova – Best wishes for a happy and healthy new year.

Matt Greenberg, CEO



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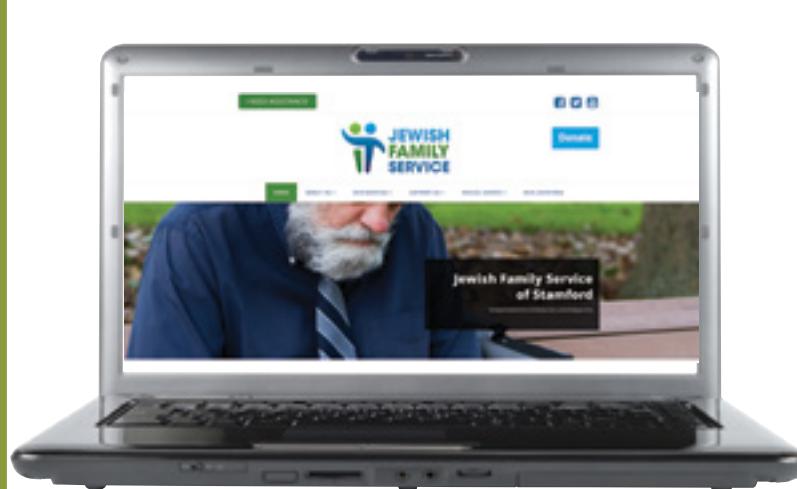
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Visit our new website

www.ctjfs.org



Now you can donate to JFS online
and keep abreast of new and
ongoing programs and services.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



How YOU Can Make a Difference

If you have enough food on your table, please help make sure those that do not, can.

If you on occasion have psychological counselling to help you manage a challenging life issue, please make sure everyone who needs help can receive it.

If you have a secure job even though you are past 55, please make sure everyone who wants one, does.

If you are easily able to send your child to day or sleep-away Jewish camp, please make sure everyone can do the same for their child.

If your life is going along reasonably well without a crisis, please ensure that those people in crisis have the support they need to resolve their desperate situation.

If you can easily afford to have help in your home for an aging parent, please make sure those who have that need can have it.

If you can afford to give your high school student special counselling for the post high school years, then help those who cannot have that counselling.

As a caring person, you wonder how you can do all of this yourself. There is no magic bullet, no special potion that solves these challenges. There is, however, a very special organization in our community, our Jewish Family Service which has met these challenges since 1978 with your financial support and volunteer help.

And so I want you to know that our Annual Friends Campaign appeal is coming to your mailbox very soon. Please be as generous as you can. For convenience, there is also a self-addressed contribution envelope included in this JFS Reporter. And then JFS can continue to do what it has always done – be there when your friends and neighbors need a helping hand.

Edith Samers
President

JFS THANKS

UNITED JEWISH FEDERATION OF GREATER
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FEDERATION FOR JEWISH PHILANTHROPY
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5th ANNUAL SAUL COHEN – JFS LECTURE Rabbi Sherre Hirsch, Presenter *continued from page 1*

How to Thrive Through Life's Transitions to Live Fearlessly and Regret-Free – both with Random House. In addition to writing, Hirsch has appeared on a variety of national media outlets from *The Today Show* to *Extra!* She counsels private clients, speaks nationwide at engagements for corporate and religious organizations, and teaches classes across a variety of themes. Hirsch serves as the Spiritual Life consultant for Canyon Ranch Properties, where she organizes retreats and leads workshops focused on coping with grief and the healing process. She is married to Dr. Jeffrey Hirsch and they have four children. Hirsch's mission is to empower individuals to be their own spiritual guides.

Prior to the Community Lecture at the library, a Patrons' Reception Dinner will be held with Rabbi Hirsch for a select group of generous donors to thank them for their support of JFS. For details or to learn how to become a JFS Patron, please contact Jonathan Fass, JFS COO at 203-921-4161 ext.108.

A book signing and dessert buffet will follow the main lecture.

Rabbi Hirsch will be offering a workshop to caring professionals, by invitation, on Wednesday afternoon, November 16th. The topic will be *Discovering the Cure to Compassion Fatigue*. Spending so much time taking care of others as part of the caring profession can inevitably result in compassion gradually lessening over time. How do we, as professionals, prevent burnout so that we can care for others with a full heart and forgive ourselves when we don't? Rabbi Hirsch will provide the guidance. For information about the workshop, please contact Eve Moskowitz, Director of Clinical Services at 203-921-4161 ext.122 or email at emoskowitz@ctjfs.org.

An evening program with Rabbi Hirsch will also be held the night before the Community Lecture for Jewish Twenties & Thirties at a private home. In an informal setting, she will discuss *How to Live Authentically in the Digital World of Masks and Veils*. Social media allows us to carefully craft how we want to be seen by others. Find out how we can maintain our integrity and authenticity in a world that does not necessarily know the difference. For more details or to attend, contact Jami Fener at jfener@ctjfs.org.

For more details of the 5th Annual Saul Cohen—JFS Lecture, please visit www.ctjfs.org.

HEALTH AND SHOPPING TIPS OFFERED AT WORKSHOP FOR JFS SNAP CLIENTS

The current clients of JFS who are receiving SNAP benefits and benefitting from the Kosher Food Pantry were invited to attend a workshop to learn about healthy eating tips and help with shopping in the supermarket. Over twenty individuals listened intently at the JFS Stamford office as the speakers offered important and easy guidelines to a healthier eating lifestyle.

Raema Salmon, an expert with a life-long interest in studying and researching natural health, provided answers to the most commonly asked questions, health tips and recipes, and an understanding that the body heals itself if you treat it correctly! She demonstrated her tips with food samples.

Lisa Crowley, Case Manager for MAZON (the grant providing funds to help seniors who are challenged by hunger) also spoke to the group. She illustrated how smart choices at the supermarket and SNAP benefits (formerly known as Food Stamps) can be instrumental in improving your and your family's diet on a budget.

For more information about assistance with the Kosher Food Pantry or SNAP benefits, please contact Rebekah Kanefsky at 203-921-4161 or rkanefsky@ctjfs.org.



Raema Salmon

THE SPECIAL NEEDS OF THE BLENDED FAMILY

By Eve Moskowitz, LCSW

Statistics regarding blended families indicate that 3 out of every 4 people who go through divorce (75%) will eventually remarry within four years, and over a third of those will remarry within the first 12 months. Every 3rd marriage in the US today is a second union for one of the partners and will form a stepfamily system. This means that it is almost as normal for kids to have a step parent as it is for them to live with their biological parents.

When speaking about the stepfamily, it is essential to understand that the formation of new relationships post-divorce and/or death of a parent is based on the concept of loss, so that timing is essential. The need to heal is a key in successfully blending new families. Often pre-marital counseling is helpful to actualize some of these ideas.

A huge challenge for stepfamily couples and the key to their ultimate success is to make their relationship a top priority, positioning the relationship as the foundation of the home. This does NOT mean de-prioritizing children or neglecting them, it simply means presenting as a unified front, engendering more power, just as a unified parental system does between biological parents.

Members of stepfamilies do not always instantly love one another. It takes time for the adult couple in a blended family to build their relationship and yet there is an unrealistic expectation that step parents and step children will automatically love one another. There needs to be time to build a relationship, while engendering new patterns and new value systems. In a successful stepfamily, the memories of the biological family and mutual respect for the past is paramount and will affect the success of the future.

So in the end, what does a healthy stepparenting relationship look like?

As set forth by MFT Tammy Daugherty, author of *Co Parenting Works, Helping Your Children Thrive After Divorce*, the following steps are essential in order to create the strong blended family:

1. Give children the freedom to love both parents.
2. Understand that a child's wellbeing is directly affected by the positive and negative relationships with their other parent/stepparent.
3. Transitions between homes should be smooth and without conflict.
4. Encourage and foster contact with all extended family.
5. Intentionally and with forethought plan specific and creative details for holidays with no stress.
6. Recognize the developmental stages of the children and temper expectations accordingly.
7. Encourage children to have photos of the other parent in their bedrooms.
8. Allow children to express how much they miss the other parent.
9. Do not use children as messengers or go betweens.
10. Speak highly of the other parent, never use disparagement.
11. Try to maintain similar rules and standards of conduct in each of the child's homes.

Jewish Family Service is facilitating a program on Blended Families at the Stamford JCC on Thursday, September 22nd from 7 to 9pm, which will address all of the special needs of blended families, including those of same sex and interfaith and interracial unions. For more information, contact Eve Moskowitz at 203-921-4161 or emoskowitz@ctjfs.org.



An Evening with JFS

A Special Night!

Jewish Family Service held its annual community and fundraising event, *An Evening with JFS*, with over 250 people in attendance on a beautiful Sunday evening on May 15th, at Temple Beth El in Stamford. **Linda Russ and Sandy Speter**, the 37th annual Mitzvah Award recipients and **Iris Morrison**, Special Recognition, were surrounded by their families and friends and many from the community as they accepted their honors. Meryl Japha, Janet Welkovich and Liz Kitay co-chaired this year's successful event.

Cocktails and dinner were served at a variety of stations while attendees browsed through the silent auction items on display. Bids were recorded while guests socialized. The Auction, chaired again this year by Sandy Speter, offered a wide variety of items contributed by local businesses and members of the community.

The personable, past president of the JFS board, Laurence Sheinman, conducted the live auction, which was both fun and exciting. Once the silent auction was closed, Seth Linzer brought his humor to the podium as program emcee.

Upon accepting her award, Sandy Speter said, "JFS provides hope for individuals and families who are in need and care for the most vulnerable in our community. We are a family who works together for the benefit of those in need. I will cherish this Mitzvah Award and am honored and humbled to be able to do my small part."

Linda Russ said, "Tonight, I know some of you are first learning about JFS and the help it provides for young, and old, and in between, whatever the need may be. I hope you never need JFS, but thanks to support from all of us, JFS can continue its vitally important work every day."

When accepting her Special Recognition, Iris Morrison commented, "In addition to honoring Sandy and Linda, you're all here this evening to make sure that this agency, that gives so much to so many, remains strong and a cornerstone of the community... it is only through your support that it can continue to answer the growing needs of families and kids, the bereaved, the single parent, or the special needs high school student..."

On her retirement, Iris added, "It's been a wonderful 11 years – when you work for a place like JFS, you are doing a mitzvah every day.... but you are receiving even more in return."

The board and staff thank all those who served on the *Evening with JFS* event and auction committees. Your commitment to this event helps ensure its success. Thank you to all who help JFS successfully assist your friends and neighbors when they turn to us for help.







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JFS THANKS ITS GENEROUS DONORS FOR THEIR SUPPORT OF AN EVENING WITH JFS' 2016 AUCTION

The Adventure Park at the Discovery Museum
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 Age of Reason
 Avon Theatre Film Center
 Beames Designs
 Kerrin and Stephne Behrend
 Beldotti Bakery
 Benefit Cosmetic Boutique
 U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal
 Bobby Valentines Sports Academy
 Bobby Valentine's Sports Gallery Café
 Marcia and Mark Braunstein
 Dr. Kenneth Broder
 Café oo la la
 California Pizza Kitchen
 The Capital Grille
 Caramoor Center for Music and the Arts
 Cesco's Trattoria
 Susan and Martin Clarke
 Cob's Bakery
 Columbus Park Trattoria
 Continental III Salon
 Curtain Call
 Dangerfield's Comedy Show
 Doral Arrowwood
 Roz and Joel Etra
 Finescape and Sons
 Stephanie and Howard Fogel
 Nancy and Mark Funt
 Getner Farms
 Gold's Delicatessen

Pam Ehrenkranz and Matt Greenberg
 Harlan Social
 Heart of Gold
 Hope Pizza Restaurant
 Israel Vacation Homes
 Meryl and Ron Japha
 Karp's Hardware
 Kramer Portraits
 La Jolie Salon and Spa
 Lakeside Diner
 Lieba and Steve Lander
 Lapine Associates
 Lisa David Designs
 Ilene and Jim Locker
 Loews Hotels
 Long Wharf Theatre
 Luigi's Italian Restaurant
 Main Event/Mauzone Caterers
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 Shore Group at Morgan Stanley
 Iris Morrison
 Eve Moskowitz
 Mrs. Green's Natural Market
 NAGI Jewelers
 Navaratna Kosher Indian Restaurant
 Noble Salon
 Noelle Spa for Beauty and Wellness
 Norwalk Symphony Orchestra
 The Palace Theatre
 Palmer Jewelers
 Parkway Diner
 Peter Suchy Jewelers

Rosa Rastegar
 TD Rich Company
 Ridgeway Cleaners
 Planet Pizza
 Salon Shahin
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 Sandy and Moshe Speter
 Tziporah Miriam and Shaya Speter
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 Stamford Chamber of Commerce
 Stamford JCC
 Stamford Marriott Hotel

Stamford Police Department
 Stamford Symphony
 Stamford Toys
 Beverly and David Stein
 Stew Leonard's
 Betsy and Michael Stone
 SWC Office Furniture
 Sylvia's Gift Shop at Congregation Agudath Sholom
 Sisterhood of Temple Beth El, Stamford
 Trader Joe's
 Trendsetters
 Vector Marketing
 Alison Wachstein Photography
 Wagner's Luggage and Gifts
 Walt Disney World
 Westport Country Playhouse
 Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History
 Z Hospitality Group



Do a Mitzvah – Volunteer!

JFS WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBERS & STAFF

STEVEN COHEN



Steven Cohen has lived in Stamford for over 25 years. He currently serves on the Board of Trustees at Bi-Cultural Day School and previously served for many years on its Executive Committee. He has served on the Board of Directors at Congregation Agudath Sholom and currently serves on the advisory board to The Naomi Berrie Diabetes Center at Columbia University Medical Center. Professionally, Steven is a Principal and General Counsel at InTandem Capital Partners, an investment firm located in New York City. Steven and his wife, Elise, have three children.

LIZ KREBS



Liz and her husband, Gary, moved to Fairfield, CT in 2007 with her two children, Ilana and Justin. Since moving to Fairfield, she has been very involved at Congregation Beth El, Fairfield as a Board and Committee Chair of the Spiritual Life Committee. She is a graduate of the University of Hartford and entered into a Management Training Program with Republic National Bank, NYC, after graduation. After completing the program, Liz became an Assistant Branch Manager and then Branch Manager (Vice President) of a branch in New York City's Garment Center. Presently, she is employed by LifeBridge Community Services, Bridgeport, CT, as the Program Coordinator for Financial Education. She coordinates the Financial Coaching Program, teaches financial education workshops, and manages volunteers within the program.

GRETA SOLOMON



Greta is a principal and chair of Cohen and Wolf's Trusts & Estates, Elder Law and Tax Groups. She has been assisting clients in the areas of estate planning, elder law, and probate administration for more than 30 years. She divides her time between the Firm's Bridgeport and Westport offices. Ms. Solomon is a Fellow of the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel (ACTEC). She is also a member of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA) and serves on the executive committee of the Estates and Probate Section of the Connecticut Bar Association. Active in the community, Ms. Solomon has served on the boards of the Jewish Community Center for Community Services (JCCS), the Jewish Home for the Elderly in Fairfield, the Jewish Community Foundation in Bridgeport, and the Center for Women and Families. Ms. Solomon also chaired the distribution committee of the Greater Bridgeport Area Foundation and served on its board of directors. Ms. Solomon has received numerous awards for her civic involvement.

JONATHAN FASS, *Chief Operating Officer*



Jonathan joined JFS in April. He is responsible for the oversight of key elements of JFS operations and programming, including An Evening with JFS. He has 17 years of experience as a Jewish communal professional, serving most recently as a Vice Present at the Jewish Community Centers Association and previously as an assistant executive director and Jewish educator in JCCs across the United States.

From 2002 to 2006, Jonathan served as the Managing Director of Jewish Living and Learning at the JCC of Stamford. His family left Stamford in 2006 for Israel. He returned to Stamford in July 2014. He holds a MA from the Jewish Theological Seminary and was a fellow both in the Senior Educators Program of the Melton Centre for Jewish Education at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Jim Joseph Foundation Fellowship of the Lookstein Center for Jewish Education at Bar Ilan University.

"I am excited to join Matt Greenberg and the JFS staff in providing critical services to our Jewish community every day. You won't find more dedicated professionals, a Board of Directors, or volunteers to the mission of serving those most in need. It is a privilege to lend my hands and heart to the mission of JFS," said Jonathan.

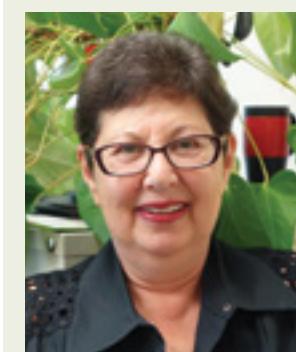


ANNE BIRCHENOUGH, *Intern with JFS Counseling*

Anne is currently a graduate student at Fordham University Graduate School of Social Service. Prior to attending Fordham, she spent over sixteen years in recruiting including as a Managing Director with a boutique executive search firm specializing in placing senior level executives in the private equity and corporate development industries. Anne graduated summa cum laude from Marymount Manhattan College with a Bachelor of Arts degree. Anne will be facilitating the JFS Let's Talk programs in both Stamford and Westport while interning with the JFS Counseling Program.



BONNIE RUSSO has joined Jewish Family Service as our bookkeeper, taking the position that Polina Pishnov held for twenty-five years. Bonnie is joining us from the Federation for Jewish Philanthropy of Upper Fairfield County, where she has worked for the past ten years. Bonnie and her family live in Norwalk. She and her husband, Robert, have one college-age son.



We say farewell to **POLINA PISHNOV** who has been our Bookkeeper for twenty-five years. She retires to spend more time with her husband, Zak, and children and grandchildren in Houston.

"Over the years that I have worked at JFS, the agency has changed from being unknown to a significant part of the Jewish community. I am proud to have been here at JFS to see that happen."

We will miss Polina's smile and optimistic attitude.



SEND A JFS TRIBUTE CARD

Tribute cards are a meaningful way to celebrate with friends and family members on their Bar or Bat Mitzvah, graduation, wedding, birthday or any other simcha or special event. They can also be sent to family or friends in commemoration of a loved one. There is no fixed amount for a donation and the card will be sent from JFS on your behalf. The inscription notes that you have made a donation to JFS and for what purpose.

To make a tribute card donation, go online to www.ctjfs.org or call 203-921-4161.

CCFSA FAMILY CHAMPIONS 2016

On June 2nd, the Connecticut Council of Family Service Agencies (CCFSA), a statewide network of independent, non-profit family service agencies, honored the 2016 recipients of the Family Champion Award. Staff member Rebekah Kanefsky, Case Management/Jewish Family Life Education and board member Meryl Japha, Secretary, received these awards.

The Family Champion Award is given to volunteers, staff and board members who go above and beyond the call of duty to embrace the agency mission and positively impact the lives of families. Each Family Champion consistently demonstrates a commitment to empowering families and building strong communities.

Rebekah Kanefsky joined JFS five years ago as a development professional and quickly grew into her role. However, her true passion, since she is a clinician by training, prompted her to move to case management where she now serves as both supervisor of case management and coordinator of family life education. Her energy and innovative spirit have infused the Kosher Food Pantry program with volunteers, an increase in clients served and influx of funds to support the programs.

Meryl Japha, a member of the JFS Executive Committee and the board secretary, has incorporated technology to allow the agency and board members to be better informed. Most importantly, Meryl has chaired the annual *An Evening with JFS* with success for four years and anticipates its growth and evolution. Not just satisfied volunteering for JFS, Meryl began



The 2016 CCFSA Family Champions from JFS surround Matt Greenberg, JFS CEO (left to right) Rebekah Kanefsky, Case Management/JFLE and Meryl Japha, Board Member displaying their awards.

a program called *The Back to School Shop* that allows needy children to "shop" for back to school supplies, enhancing the children's self-esteem. In its first year, the program assisted 125 elementary school students!

A personalized glass citation was presented as part of the program.

CCFSA delivers services to over 150,000 families from over 90 offices located throughout the state.

Seniors Turn Out For Information on Retirement Presented by JFS at the Stamford JCC

Jewish Family Service and the Stamford Jewish Community Center held an evening program, "Taking Care of Yourself in Retirement-How to Stay Healthy, Wealthy and Wise" on Thursday, June 2nd at the Stamford JCC. The keynote speaker for the program, Dr. Stephen G. Jones, discussed "Living Long, Living Well" in a very humorous but fact-filled presentation. Dr. Jones is the Chief Safety Officer at Greenwich Hospital where he holds numerous additional leadership positions. In addition, he is an Associate Professor of Clinical Medicine at the Yale University School of Medicine and double board certified in Internal and Geriatric Medicine.

Following the keynote presentation, participants attended breakout sessions on the following topics:

"Reinvent Yourself." Donna Sweidan, MCC, LMHC, Career Coach and founder of Careerfolk discussed tools needed to work at a second career, alternative careers, educational opportunities and ideas for volunteering your time in a satisfying way.

"Brain Fitness." Jami Fener, LCSW and Program Coordinator of Brain Fitness, Jewish Family Service offered an overview of the current one-on-one Brain Fitness program available to qualified individuals who want to delay the cognitive effects of aging. Robin Fischel, MS CCC-SLP, Speech Language Pathologist and JFS volunteer, outlined some of the research supporting the Brain Fitness program and its creation. Tania Paparazzo, LMSW, Early Stage Consultant, Alzheimer's Association Connecticut Chapter helped those in the session understand the stages of dementia and Alzheimer's.

"Strategies for Legal and Financial Fitness." Sandra G. Gottlin, Esq., Elder Law & Estate Planning reviewed the important decisions and documents that can provide for a carefree retirement such as healthcare, living will, estate arrangements. Nancy Lombard, SWCCA CHOICES Counselor-Medicare Options, discussed the relative pros and cons of Medicare CHOICES. Steven B. Katz, Principal, BlueChip Financial provided an overview of the individual planning strategies necessary to smoothly transition into and maintain a comfortable lifestyle throughout the retirement years. For more information, please visit www.ctjfs.org.



Photo: Vanessa Butler, Eve Moskowitz, Jami Fener, Connie Cirillo Freeman, Director of Senior Services at the Stamford JCC, Jodi Maxner, Isrella Knopf, Ilene Locker, Jonathan Fass



JFS is pleased to announce our new office in Bridgeport. JFS will now expand its reach within the Greater Bridgeport community, providing the same critical services it offers from the Stamford and Westport offices.

LOCATED AT:

Jewish Senior Services

Henry and Jeanette

Weinberg Campus,

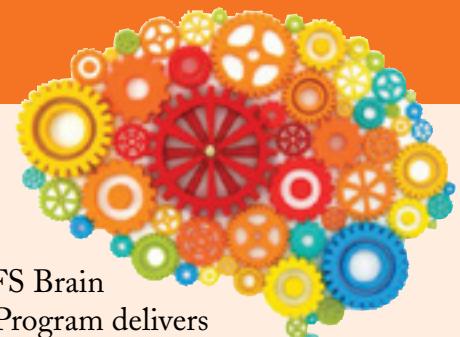
4200 Park Avenue

Bridgeport, Connecticut

For more information about how to qualify for services through our Bridgeport office, please contact the JFS Stamford office at 203.921.4161.

Brain Fitness Program

This growing program is currently seeking both clients and volunteers!



The JFS Brain Fitness Program delivers a customized program to individuals looking to stimulate their brain power. Clients are paired with volunteers for this meaningful, supportive experience. Volunteers work with one client at a time following a brief training and sessions are held once per week for 5-8 weeks. Training materials are provided.

There is **no prior specialized training required** to volunteer for Brain Fitness! There is **no cost** to clients!

To learn more about Brain Fitness or to refer a client or inquire about volunteering, please call Jami Fener at 203-921-4161 or email JFener@ctjfs.org.

Fall 2016

Jewish Family Service Programs and Activities

JFS Life Transitions, beginning Wednesday, September 14th at 4 pm Support group for unemployed facing the emotional challenges of finding employment at the Stamford JFS office, 733 Summer Street, 6th Floor. Contact Anne Birchenough at 203-921-4161 or abirchenough@ctjfs.org.

"How to Be a Successful Blended Family", Thursday, September 22nd at the Stamford JCC from 7:00 - 9:00 pm. For families who are co-parenting, step-parenting or parenting alone including same sex, interfaith and interracial families. Bob Abrams, Jewish Educator and member of a blended family, will be joined by Eve Moskowitz, LCSW, Director of Clinical Services, JFS and Dr. Lee Combrinck-Graham, JFS Psychiatric Consultant to address the issues that arise. For more information, please contact Eve Moskowitz at 203-921-4161 or emoskowitz@ctjfs.org.

Visit the JFS exhibit at the **5th Annual Stamford Health Wellness & Sports Expo 2016 on Sunday, October 16th** at Chelsea Piers CT in Stamford. Check out all the exhibitors, new technology and activities. The admission and parking is free. Please check www.ctjfs.org for more details.

SAVE THE DATE: 5th Annual Saul Cohen-JFS Lecture Thursday, November 17th at 7:30 PM Open to the community at no charge at the Ferguson Library in Stamford. Call JFS at 203-921-4161 or visit www.ctjfs.org for more information.

Let's Talk- Thursdays, 11:00 am Free at the Stamford JCC, 1035 Newfield Avenue. Seniors talk about common interests and concerns, facilitated by a Jewish Family Service counselor. Contact Anne Birchenough at 203-921-4161 or abirchenough@ctjfs.org.

Let's Talk- Thursdays, 1:00 pm Free at the Westport Senior Center, 21 Imperial Avenue, Westport. Seniors talk about common interests and concerns, facilitated by a Jewish Family Service counselor. Contact Anne Birchenough at 203-921-4161 or abirchenough@ctjfs.org.

SNAP Enrollment Workshops For adults and seniors, JFS will be providing information and eligibility assistance for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP-formerly food stamps). **The second Tuesday of every month at 11:00 am in the Westport office (431 Post Road East), SNAP Enrollment Workshops** will be presented monthly. For additional information or to register, please contact Rebekah Kanefsky, JFS Case Manager at 203-921-4161 or email rkanefsky@ctjfs.org.

SNAP Enrollment Workshops For adults and seniors, JFS will be providing information and eligibility assistance for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP-formerly food stamps). **The second Wednesday of every month at 2:30 pm in the Stamford office (733 Summer Street, 6th Floor), SNAP Enrollment Workshops** will be presented monthly. For additional information or to register, please contact Rebekah Kanefsky, JFS Case Manager at 203-921-4161 or email rkanefsky@ctjfs.org.

Be a Friend to JFS!



With the Annual Friends Campaign starting in September, now more than ever JFS is counting on our generous donors to continue their support.

Your gift allows JFS to continue to provide programs and services to thousands of people in our community who turn to us in need each year.

To make your tax deductible donation, please fill in the enclosed reply card, call our office at (203) 921-4161 or donate online at www.ctjfs.org.

Thank you for being part of the JFS Family!



JFS College Ahead!

Debuts in Bridgeport on December 1st

by Claire Friedlander, *JFS College Consultant*

The much anticipated annual college planning program, *College Ahead!*, presented by Jewish Family Service and Federation of Jewish Philanthropy will come to Bridgeport on the evening of Thursday, December 1st at the new offices of the Federation of Jewish Philanthropy at 4200 Park Avenue, Bridgeport. Each year, three or four prominent admissions officers join us to share important information regarding the current college scene and a "must" for students and parents considering college now and in the near future. These admissions directors represent colleges and universities area students frequently consider as they proceed with their searches. Information about academics, Jewish life on campus, residential options and other interesting topics are often regarded as critical as families begin the "search".

Topics the college officers cover include not only a satisfactory college preparatory record throughout all four years of high school, but also how students should be allocating their time outside of school to demonstrate their interests and contributions to the community and others.

Reading this article should be a "wake-up" call to college-bound students who have not reached out thus far to expand their activities beyond their own self-interests.

School and community activities are a vital part of most college applications. So, use this time to become involved. Waiting until mid-senior year is not wise.

The *College Ahead!* program is brought to the community through the efforts of Jewish Family Service and the Federation of Jewish Philanthropy of Upper Fairfield County. It is free, open to the entire community and no registration is required.



For additional information, contact the JFS College Consultant, Claire Friedlander at 203-921-4161 or email at clairef@ctjfs.org.

CASE MANAGEMENT

THE NEED FOR EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE HAS NEVER BEEN GREATER

By Rebekah Kanefsky, LPC, JFS Case Management

As a Case Manager with over a decade of experience in the human service field, I have seldom seen anything as heart wrenching as the new food insecurity reality in Lower Fairfield County. The rates of financially and food insecure members of our community are rising every month. People who never thought they would find themselves among the ranks of those needing to apply for public assistance are now receiving food benefits and rely on local food pantries for basic nutritional needs.

"I thought I would always be able to provide for my family, I have great marketable skills, I should not be looking for a minimum wage paying job..." a JFS Food Pantry client

Most of the food pantry clients at Jewish Family Service come from households that the USDA describes as "food insecure;" the USDA measurement of food deprivation is a household whose "consistent access to adequate food is limited by a lack of money and other resources at times during the year."

Many who are facing some form of food insecurity are middle to lower-middle class, often seniors. This population, coined by the United Way, as "ALICE" -- Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed -- is a growing demographic of individuals, approximately 20% of our local community. They may be gainfully employed yet unable to afford their basic living expenses but their income levels render them

ineligible for public assistance.

With a grant from *MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger* (*MAZON*) in December 2015, the agency became charged to identify and serve those most vulnerable and underserved seniors and older adults in our community. There are approximately 145,000 seniors living in the towns in Fairfield County served by JFS, many of whom are struggling to put food on the table on a daily basis. Through the Senior Solutions to Hunger™ program, JFS has begun to address the growing local need of providing nutritious food to adults and seniors. As part of this initiative, nutrition workshops have been offered to pantry constituents in hopes of educating the community.

The goal of the *MAZON* grant focuses on enrolling eligible seniors and older adults in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps); however, the grant program has evolved into so much more for our agency and our clients. During the past 9 months, JFS has broadened our outreach and built partnerships with nearly 50 other social service agencies, educated over 500 seniors and older adults through workshops and programs, administered nearly 100 SNAP applications and acted as a liaison between our clients and their local managing government offices. Through our comprehensive case management intake process, we have been able to identify other areas of



need with a myriad of issues, such as housing, medical, emergency assistance and food pantry access. What starts as a simple application for food benefits, for many, advances into a full case management intake for a wide range of available support services.

As one SNAP nutrition attendee stated, "*This was so different and so interesting. I learned answers to questions I've been having with my food choices.*"

Additionally, JFS has been the host agency for a series of United Way Community Conversations where community members who identify themselves as the "ALICE" population are brought together. Group participants discuss issues, frustrations, feelings surrounding their present financial insecurity, as well as provide insight into current trends and statistics for the national ALICE population. These programs are an opportunity to gather data in a supportive environment for those experiencing distress, yet another way in which JFS can help.

If you know anyone who might benefit from the Kosher Food Pantry, please contact Rebekah Kanefsky, Case Manager at (203)921-4161 x128 or email: rkanefsky@ctjfs.org. All communications are kept strictly confidential.

SENIOR SERVICES

The Elayne and James Schoke Home Companion training program offers much more specific and detailed information about relevant topics for the population we are serving. For example, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and Diabetes are chronic diseases often dealt with by home companions and CNAs. The information is often presented in video format with supplemental readings required. In addition, JFS often presents in-service expert speakers on current topics such as hearing and speech disabilities, fall prevention, etc.

Beginning in 2007, we began to offer CNAs as we saw a need for more specialized care in the senior population. JFS still suggests home companions and aides for clients. The JFS staff has grown in number in order to service both an increasing number of clients and provide the services needed.

What are current trends/problems you are seeing in the senior population you service?

The clients we are servicing are living longer and living healthier! The average age of seniors we assist have increased over the years. It is not unusual to have a client over 88 years of age. Some in their 90's and even a few in the 100's.

I really feel that our aides have kept people living longer with the good service and attention they provide.

The Visiting Nurse Service refers new clients to us as well as other senior living options. We often service one spouse and then when the other spouse requires help, they come back to JFS because of the excellent service we initially provided.

The assisted living concept (out of the home) has become

an alternative to home care or a skilled nursing facility but a very clear financial plan is required for a healthy, long life.

JFS is offering a Brain Fitness Program to help seniors live healthier and delay cognitive issues as long as possible. Jami Fener at JFS can help with questions about the program.

How is the JFS Home Companion Program unique?

First of all we are a nonprofit entity so our motive is not entirely monetary. As such we are part of the community providing a needed service so we do keep the fees as low as possible. We have a history with the community--both Jewish and other denominations. Our aides are not employees! That gives them the flexibility to provide services outside of medical insurance but which may be covered by long term care insurance.

All CNAs and aides must successfully complete the JFS Training program. Only then will we refer them to a client. Aides must prove themselves to the client.

What are the most important factors a loved one needs to tell you to help assist their senior?

I always get the question, "What should I do with Mom or Dad? I usually answer "You are taking the first step by calling us!"

Loved ones should be honest and truthful to be helpful to JFS and not try to hide issues or problems. Loved ones should do as much as they can and communicate with us.

For more information or any questions, please contact Isrella Knopf at 203-921-4161 or isrellak@ctjfs.org.

Up Close with Isrella Knopf, JFS Director of Senior Services



As the Director of Senior Services, **Isrella Knopf** has overseen the explosive growth in JFS' Home Companion Program in over 30 years. The program delivers over 200,000 hours of service a year with Isrella guiding all the moving parts. Isrella's dedication to her clients' needs finds her buying food at the supermarket on the weekend or at her desk late into the work week (or weekend) helping others. *The JFS Reporter* sat down with her to talk about her role in the JFS Home Companion Program.

How long have you been involved with JFS Home Companion?

I've been here 15 ½ years but the program has been around for thirty-one years!

What are your responsibilities in the program?

I am in charge of the billing, intake of clients, teaching training classes, speaking to loved ones, developing relationships with other community professionals such as assisted living, skilled nursing facilities, quarterly visits to existing clients, making matches and on call during off work hours to solve problems.

How has the JFS Home Companion Program evolved?

JFS Kosher Food Pantry is Bigger and Better with Fresh Produce Days!



During 2016, the Kosher Food Pantry has greatly expanded its reach and assistance to eligible clients as well as those who are food insecure in the greater Stamford, greater Westport and Upper Fairfield County area with a variety of services.

First and foremost, JFS is still able to maintain the non-perishable food stock necessary to serve nearly 5,000 meals annually. Outreach to community organizations such as synagogues, Jewish day schools, teen groups and other volunteers continue to provide a generous source of non-perishable food items, gift cards for both gas and supermarkets and cash donations.

Over a year and a half ago, a fresh produce food pantry event, twice a month, was started. Volunteers at the JFS Kosher Food Pantry bring fresh vegetables and fruit (and sometimes eggs and dairy products) from the CT Food Bank, the Food Bank of Lower Fairfield County, Community Plates which includes food from Trader Joe's and Costco, local synagogues and temples, the JCC Greenwich Teen Action Committee (JTAC) and private donors (who financially support the program) to the JFS offices in Stamford. A similar option is also offered by the JFS office in Westport held at the Gillespie Center in conjunction with Homes with Hope

for those clients in that catchment area. At the last date, over twenty-five clients made appointments to "shop" at the event.

So many thanks are extended to our volunteers for transporting the food, setting it up in the office and helping with the distribution. Also, thank you to the JFS staff who help out on Fresh Produce Days!

Today, as a result of many volunteers and generous donations, not only food is given to clients and those who need help. Gently used clothing for both adults and children, shoes and boots, shampoo and various toiletries are accepted by those who visit our pantry. JFS even collects gently used books which are given to a client who sells them as part of her business. Partnerships with Community Plates, 613 Restaurant, New Covenant House, Person-to-Person, Temple Sinai, Temple Beth El, Chabad of both Stamford and Westport, Congregation Beth El of Norwalk and Fairfield, Temple Israel, The Conservative Synagogue and Beit Chaverim have resulted in those in need receiving the assistance they require.

To contribute or to receive assistance from the JFS Kosher Food Pantry, please contact Rebekah Kanefsky, JFS Case Manager at 203-921-4161 or email at rkanefsky@ctjfs.org

JFS Kosher Food Pantry



JFS welcomes contributions of all non-perishable items such as jars or canned goods (fruits, vegetables, soups, fish, peanut butter, etc), fruit juices, pasta, sauces, cereals, etc.

Please be certain that your donations are marked as Kosher and that expiration dates have not passed.

JFS is a member of the Food Bank of Lower Fairfield County and services the general population of our community. We are also grateful to Grade A Market, Inc. for their generous contributions.

**For additional information or to donate,
please call 203-921-4161**

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING:

Taking Your Job Search by Storm in 2016

Have you recently been downsized? Are you looking for a new job? Have you become complacent or unhappy in your present situation? **Absolutely Abby** will give you the pointers you need on how to "Take your Job Search by Storm in 2016."



JFS is fortunate to welcome back by popular demand Abby Kohut, who is known in the job search world as **Absolutely Abby**, President of Staffing Symphony, LLC and author of **"Absolutely Abby's 101 Job Search Secrets"**. She's led seminars on effective job search techniques, teaching professionals in transition how to find their vision, focus their energies, and be effective in the job search process. On Wednesday, October 19th Abby returns to offer Job Seekers guidance on using the "5 P's" to finish 2016 strong and in the work force.

According to Abby, in order to finish 'Strong' in the job market, individuals need to use the "5 P's" and be **Prepared, Persistent, Patient, Positive and Prudent**. Most of all we need to be Proactive and try techniques that others shy away from. All of these qualities help us during a storm but also help us during our job search. Join **Absolutely Abby** as she teaches the steps we need to take to assure ourselves a successful search before the New Year arrives.

Take your Job Search by Storm in 2016: A JFS Employment and Training Services Workshop

Date/Time: Wednesday Oct 19, 2016
from 1:30-3:00 pm.

Location: The JFS Office, 733 Summer St., 6th Floor, Stamford, CT 06901

*This meeting is free of charge,
but registration is required.*

To register or for more information please contact: 203-921-4161, ext. 106 Joyce Dimmock or email: JBurgess@ctjfs.org; X125 Jodi Maxner or email: jmaxner@ctjfs.org

Summer was a fun experience for...



JTT (Jewish Twenties and Thirties) had a very fun and event-filled summer! Several happy hours were held, including a celebration for Tu B'Av, the Israeli Valentine's Day. JTT also participated in several community-wide events, including the 3rd Annual Dodgeball Tournament at the JCC in collaboration with YLD with proceeds benefiting the charity 3SQUARE, as well as volunteering at the incredible Maccabi Games Opening Ceremonies in August. Other summer activities included an outdoor lawn concert and a Shabbat dinner.

JTT continues to grow as a dynamic program that connects local Jews in their 20s and 30s through various social, educational, cultural and volunteer events. For upcoming events and to learn more, look for our regular e-mails and also find the "Jewish Twenties & Thirties" group on Facebook. For more information, please contact Jami Fener at 203-921-4161 or jfener@ctjfs.org

Shana Tova

A Happy, Healthy & Sweet New Year!



The Board and Staff
of Jewish Family Service



Let JFS help you make your home sparkle!

JFS' Residential Cleaning Service can connect you with the help you need to get the job done.

Well-trained and carefully supervised cleaners provide regularly scheduled and seasonal cleaning.

Prices are competitive or slightly lower than the competition.

Revenues generated help JFS provide quality social services to those in need. The added value is that it offers employment to unemployed individuals in our community.

For additional information, please call Jodi at (203) 921-4161 or email residentialcleaning@ctjfs.org

Mitzvah Baskets Add Tzedakah to Every Occasion!

When you order a beautifully designed Mitzvah Basket for your celebration, the proceeds go directly to the JFS Kosher Food Pantry which provides food to thousands of individuals and families in our community.

Mitzvah Baskets and Center Pieces are uniquely designed and custom ribbon colors can be used to fit the décor of your event. The decorative baskets are filled with "faux food," symbolic of the food that is donated to JFS kosher food pantry.

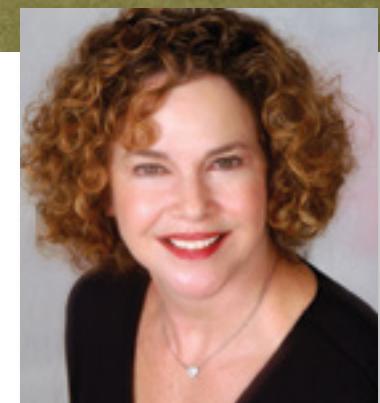
To order a Mitzvah Basket for your next event, go to www.ctjfs.org or call 203-921-4161.



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