

AN EVENING WITH SCHOKE JFS SET FOR MAY 22nd Lawn Games, Cocktails, Dinner, Honors, and More

Schoke Jewish Family Service will hold its annual gala, **An Evening with Schoke JFS, Sunday, May 22nd at 5:30 pm** al fresco at the Italian Center of Stamford, 1620 Newfield Avenue, in an outdoor tented pavilion. The gala will honor the service of community leaders with a special celebration of the agency's work across Fairfield County. The evening's events will be hosted by our Master of Ceremonies, Mayor of Stamford, Caroline Simmons. The event will be co-chaired by Liz Kitay and Meryl Japha with Jeri Appel as auction chair.

Schoke JFS will award the 42nd Annual Mitzvah Award to the **Jewish Sportsmen's League** (Bruce Blasnik, Gary Bloom, Henry Bubel, David S. Cohen z"l, Marty Donner, Bob Dorf, Paul Gordon, Ed Kweskin, David Lewis, Carl Rosen, Paul Sabbah, David Swerdloff). The 3rd Annual Volunteer of the Year Award will be awarded to **Stacy Kamisar, Julia Marx, and Sheri Warshaw**.

Jewish Sportsmen's League

The **Jewish Sportsmen's League** was founded over twenty-two years ago following an inspirational Rosh Hashanah sermon at Temple Sinai. The Rabbi implored its members to find their own unique and fun way to do charitable giving. A small group, including the current and several former presidents of Temple Sinai, gathered at the brunch following the service and decided that a poker game would fit the bill, and so began the Jewish Sportsmen's League.

It was decided that money would be taken out of each pot and set aside in the "Rabbi's Cup." At the conclusion of the evening, the host forwarded the money in the "cup" to Temple Sinai. These contributions were in the name of the Jewish Sportsmen's League and for several years no one knew who or what the Jewish Sportsmen's League was.

Over the years two things happened. First, as members of the group expanded their involvement across many Jewish and non-Jewish organizations in the community, the giving expanded to those organizations as well. Second, the group decided to forgo their anonymity and began to place Jewish Sportsmen's League ads and purchased tables at many of the annual community fundraisers.

The total Jewish Sportsmen's League giving, separate from their personal giving, has now exceeded \$120,000.

The Jewish Sportsmen's League is composed of board members, officers, and past presidents of Jewish and non-Jewish organizations across Stamford, including Temple Sinai, Temple Beth El, the Stamford JCC, the Jewish Community Endowment Foundation, the United Jewish Federation, and Schoke Jewish Family Service. Three members of the Jewish Sportsmen's League



JEWISH SPORTSMEN'S LEAGUE



STACY KAMISAR

JULIA MARX

SHERI WARSHAW

currently serve on the Board of Directors of Schoke Jewish Family Service, with five members having served on the Executive Committee. They continue to be close friends and still enjoy their regular poker game.

Schoke JFS is honored to award the Jewish Sportsmen's League with the 42nd Annual Mitzvah Award for their philanthropy and continued commitment to the community.

Stacy Kamisar, Julia Marx, and Sheri Warshaw

Just a few weeks before Passover, in March 2020, COVID-19 sent shockwaves through the world and our communities. When everywhere was shutting down and locking down, Stacy Kamisar, Julia Marx, and Sheri Warshaw pulled together groups of volunteers to make sure that clients and families in need throughout upper Fairfield County could still get critical kosher food deliveries from the Freedberg Family Kosher Food Pantry at Schoke Jewish Family Service.

This ongoing volunteer initiative pioneered by Stacy, Julia, and Sheri in the parking lot of The Conservative Synagogue (TCS) in

(continued on page 4)

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO



HAPPY NEW YEAR

No, I didn't forget the date and I am not writing an article five months in advance. In Jewish tradition, there are actually 4 new years. The Month of Nisan, falling this year at the beginning of April, is the new year for Holidays, and where the Torah tells us to begin counting the months. It is, historically, the month the Jews left Egypt – the beginning of Jewish national history.

We are experiencing many new beginnings, so fitting for the calendar! During the pandemic, the needs of the community have grown, and Schoke JFS has grown along with them. New staff members, highlighted later in this newsletter, have joined our team to provide some of these new services.

In about a month, Schoke JFS will launch the Mobile Food Pantry. This pantry will enable us to reach farther and feed more people than ever before. By being able to travel to *all* of the towns

we serve, we will bring food to clients, instead of them having to come to us. You are a critical piece in this initiative, with volunteer and funding opportunities.

We are also the recipients of groundbreaking new technology, called UNIPER, which we will be able to deliver to Holocaust survivors and other elderly clients and will give them the ability to participate in activities and connect virtually at the “click of a button.” Schoke JFS was one of only 10 agencies throughout North America awarded a grant to deliver this program. This new technology, developed in Israel, will empower older adults to live a healthy and active social life that is full of interest and meaning – from the comfort of home. Classes, programs, fitness and social connection will all be available in a user-friendly way.

Of course, these are in addition to all the other ongoing services SJFS provides, such as the Zinbarg Camp Scholarship Program, (which is currently accepting applications for this year), the Brain Fitness program, helping seniors enhance their memory, the Hirsch Kosher Home Delivered Meal Program, providing catered weekly meals to those who need the convenience of prepared food, and the Home Companion program, enabling seniors and others with limited abilities to remain in their own homes.

It feels right to wish you a Happy New Year—as we embark on new ways to make all of our clients happier and healthier. Wishing you a happy Passover.

Matt Greenberg
Matt Greenberg, President & CEO

Schoke Jewish Family Service

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✧ – of blessed memory

A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



I recently received the “Save the Date” card for our 42nd annual “Evening with Schoke JFS” dinner. (There is still snow on the ground at the time of this writing!) I am so excited with our plans to hold this event in person for the first time in three years. I am especially pleased that in addition to the Annual Mitzvah Award, we are, for the third time, presenting a Volunteer of the Year Award.

Too often volunteers become an afterthought in organizations experiencing what Schoke JFS has experienced in the past few years. Explosive growth in demand for our services has required our staff to focus more than ever on how to get things done on a day-to-day basis. Our lay leadership has focused on broad policy issues resulting from our rapidly changing environment, as well as on how to pay for our ever-expanding need for resources. Our donors have been so generous in asking how they can help.

In such a challenging environment it is easy to lose focus on our volunteers. As many of you have heard, our list of those of you offering your time for working in the food pantry, packing for, or making food deliveries, as well as for many other chores has grown dramatically. Our staff tries to make the volunteer experience a rewarding one for all. Most of you have found that just doing the volunteer work has been its own reward.

For me that is not enough. Our leadership has been striving for ways to elevate the role of the volunteer in our organization to an equal level of recognition with board participation, being a donor, or being part of our great staff.

The Volunteer of the Year Award is one of those steps. The work and the impact that this year's honorees, Stacy Kamisar, Julia Marx and Sheri Warshaw, have had on our ability to fulfill our mission cannot be understated. Their recognition is so well earned.

I look forward to that recognition and seeing you all at An Evening with Schoke JFS on May 22nd at the Italian Center.

Paul R. Gordon
Paul Gordon, Board Chair

SCHOKE JFS FOOD PROGRAMS GO DIGITAL with PANTRYSOFT

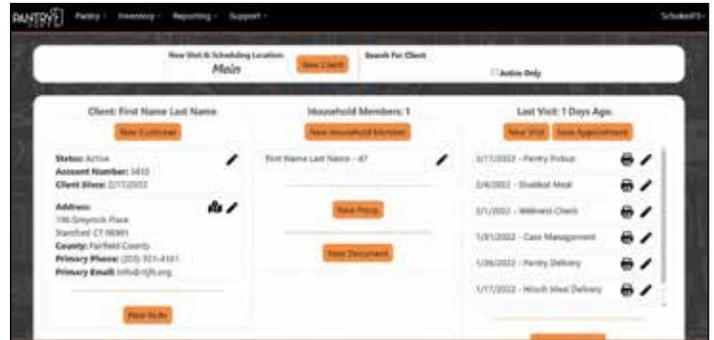
The COVID-19 pandemic brought a lot of unwanted changes, however with the help and support of United Jewish Federation of Greater Stamford, New Canaan, and Darien and the need to adapt to a new normal, the Freedberg Family Kosher Food Pantry is making a worthwhile and innovative change!

The Schoke JFS food programs will be utilizing a platform called PantrySoft to better track pantry inventory, client outreach and the services we provide, and most importantly, get the pantry online for the most dignified and financially responsible approach to serve clients.

Pre-pandemic, pantries across the county, including ours at Schoke JFS, followed best-practices and have worked hard to allow clients to have as much choice as possible. Client choice pantries mean saving the finite resources pantries have by not giving food that a client doesn't like or won't eat and will just get thrown away. This also means that clients feel better about what they receive because they have chosen it and it is what they want.

Prior to the pandemic, what this looked like was the ability for clients being able to visit the pantry and "shop" with the help of a staff member or volunteer to choose what they wanted based on a balanced recommended diet of fruits, vegetables, grains and protein based on the number of people in their household. As a result of COVID-19, many pantries have not let clients back inside, preferring to pack pre-made grocery bags with clients remaining outdoors to keep both clients and staff safer while still providing a much-needed service. Client feedback has told us that sometimes they receive items that they don't need, don't like and won't eat, creating waste.

The PantrySoft system will allow for inventory to be tracked as food comes in from our foodbanks and community partners. Like FreshDirect or PeaPod, every client will have their own log in and will be able to "visit the kiosk" to see what is stocked in



As seen on the right side, PantrySoft will not only track and record the food pantry, but also all food programs, meal delivery, and case management at Schoke JFS.

the pantry. They will then be able to choose the food they want based on the number of people in their household and utilizing a simple point system. We will be able to encourage healthier food choices by having items like fresh fruits and vegetables ranked as fewer points than pasta, white grain products or high salt foods allowing people to order more food if they choose better. At the end, clients will check out by choosing when they will pick up their free kosher grocery order during one of our scheduled open pantry hours. For those clients that may have trouble with the technology either because of age or language, regular monthly wellness check in calls, in the client's native language, will serve a second purpose to place their grocery order with the help of one of our case managers.

Volunteers will still be essential to serving pantry clients. During open pantry hours, volunteers will be needed to help those who visit and have not yet placed their order. With the help of an iPad, clients can place their order in live time, like a "to-go" order and it will be packed by pantry staff or a volunteer in a matter of minutes while they wait. Additionally, volunteers will be needed each afternoon, following pantry hours to pack the custom orders that are scheduled for pick up the following day.

Utilizing this new software will bring the Freedberg Family Kosher Food Pantry into the 21st century while providing more food to more people in as dignified and client focused way as possible while also managing valuable resources effectively.

For more information about PantrySoft or Schoke Jewish Family Service Programs, please contact, Leah Schechter, Chief Program Officer at 203-921-4161, lschechter@ctjfs.org.

Schoke JFS Thanks

UNITED JEWISH FEDERATION
of GREATER STAMFORD,
NEW CANAAN, AND DARIEN

FEDERATION FOR
JEWISH PHILANTHROPY
of UPPER FAIRFIELD COUNTY

FOR THEIR GENEROUS
ONGOING SUPPORT

NEW AROUND THE AGENCY



Jen Bernstein joins Schoke JFS as the Food Programs Coordinator, overseeing the Freedberg Family Kosher Food Pantry, Hirsch Kosher Home Delivered Meal and Shabbat Meal Delivery Programs, and essentially all things food-related at Schoke JFS. Having recently moved to Stamford with her husband and two children, Jen is eager to put her experience in the non-profit, special events and hospital-ity sectors to work helping and serving others. “I am humbled to have the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of others in our community and honored to be a part of the dedicated Schoke JFS family.”



Anne Birchenough, LCSW, joins the Schoke JFS Kuriansky Family Counseling Program as a Psychotherapist, after previously having been an intern at the agency a few years back. She utilizes an eclectic psychotherapeutic approach in her practice, using a variety of tools from different modalities to create an ideal and personal approach. Anne has experience working with clients who are in crisis, have relationship issues, pre and post-divorce issues and are making career changes. Anne also has experience working with clients who suffer from trauma, PTSD, anxiety and depression as well as other mental health related issues. Anne is certified as a counselor in domestic violence. She has completed trainings in trauma and trauma informed care, trauma focused CBT (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy), EFT (Emotion-Focused Therapy), anxiety, confronting anger and fear, and DBT (Dialectical Behavior Therapy). Anne shared, “I am excited to be back at Schoke JFS!”



Brooke Davidson, LCSW, joins Schoke JFS as the Director of Clinical and Family Life Services. She received her Master’s Degree from Hunter College in 2015 and then moved to Philadelphia, where she had been residing for the past 6 years. While in Philadelphia, Brooke worked as a Clinical Social Worker at a Psychiatric Hospital on the child and adolescent unit and then directed a Mobile Crisis program for children and adolescents. For the past year and a half, Brooke has been working privately as a therapist specializing in depression, anxiety, trauma, and mood dysregulation. Brooke is very excited to be joining the Schoke JFS team and looks forward to becoming more connected to this wonderful community.



Hannah Pollack, MSW, is a recent graduate of Fordham University’s Master of Social Work program. Hannah is very excited to join the Schoke JFS family as a Case Manager and Clinical Therapist. She is passionate about helping people in all aspects of their life and was drawn to Schoke JFS because the agency offers so many different avenues of support for community members. Hannah currently lives in Stamford with her dog, Puddin’, and they can be found most weekends playing fetch or wandering along hiking trails searching for waterfalls.



Adolfo Rodriguez joins Schoke JFS as the Food Operations Assistant. Adolfo was excited to take his next steps with Schoke JFS because he understands the agency’s goals to help the community firsthand. He can relate to that because of his own family experience which is what truly inspired him to work at Schoke JFS. Adolfo has a background in food insecurity and a mother that fled civil war in El Salvador and came to America at age 17 and struggled with English and getting the help she needed. As a bilingual Spanish speaker, Adolfo helps many clients that come to the Freedberg Family Kosher Food Pantry.



JEWISH SPORTSMEN'S LEAGUE



STACY KAMISAR

JULIA MARX

SHERI WARSHAW

An Evening with Schoke JFS Set for May 22nd

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Westport continues to operate rain or shine, snow or sleet.

By 2021, the operation grew to include partnerships with Congregation B’nai Israel in Bridgeport and Federation for Jewish Philanthropy of Upper Fairfield County. This volunteer team pivoted again, including even greater volunteer recruitment, to deliver kosher food every month to clients in 14 towns throughout upper Fairfield County.

Schoke JFS is honored to award these three women the 3rd Annual Volunteer of the Year Award for spearheading these critical food initiatives with countless other volunteers to combat food insecurity during the pandemic.

The evening will begin with hors d’oeuvres, cocktails, and lawn games, followed by dinner, presentation of the awards to the honorees, a paddle raise and dessert. There will also be an online auction.

Scan the QR code to read more about our honorees and purchase your tickets to join us for the evening’s celebration! General tickets include dinner and dessert for \$180. Contact Lisa Rich at 203-921-4161 or lrich@ctjfs.org to place a journal ad.



SCHOKE JFS IS GRATEFUL FOR THE GRANTS RECEIVED!

Schoke JFS is pleased to thank and list the many grantors who assist us in helping those in need throughout Fairfield County. We rely, in part, on the support of these foundations and grantors to provide critical services. The following foundations and organizations have awarded Schoke JFS funding to assist in our mission of helping sustain individuals and families through all of life's challenges and building strong, healthy communities. The list includes grants received in 2022 to-date.

United Jewish Federation of Greater Stamford,
New Canaan and Darien (UJF)

Federation for Jewish Philanthropy of
Upper Fairfield County (FJP)

Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA)
Center for Holocaust Survivor Care and
Institute on Aging & Trauma

Southwestern CT Agency on Aging (SWCAA)
Older American Act Title III Award

Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies (NJHSA)
National Network Program Expansion: Uniper Technology

KAVOD SHEF Initiative Emergency Fund
for Holocaust Survivors

Jewish Federation Association of CT (JFACT)
Citizenship grant

United Way of Western CT Covid-19 Resiliency Fund

United Jewish Federation of Stamford,
New Canaan and Darien/Jewish Federations of North
America (JFNA) KAVOD SHEF Emergency Outreach and
Support Grant Award

Norwalk Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
Stamford Chevra Kadisha

Conference on Jewish Material Claims
Against Germany (Claims Conference)

St John's Community Foundation

Emergency Food and Shelter Program

Schoke JFS will utilize the grant funding to provide and enhance services by our case management programming. Our clients consist of individuals, families and seniors and live throughout Fairfield County. Our services support the many stages of our clients' lives, from birth through death and assist in those moments of crisis and need.

If you know of anyone in need of our case management services, please contact **Rebekah Kanefsky, Director of Case Management** at rkanefsky@ctjfs.org or 203-921-4163. Is texting easier? Send a text to 203-817-2586.



Sitting down to our Pesach Seders on Friday, April 15th will be a reminder of our people's freedom and of another kind of freedom as well.

This year, Schoke JFS will give an additional moment of freedom, or peace of mind, to over 250 households in Fairfield County, who need food assistance in order to observe Passover.

The expense and preparation to keep the tradition of not eating leavened bread is often a burdensome financial expense for families already struggling with food insecurity. In our communities those in need of assistance range from young adults, families with young children, empty nesters and the elderly and Holocaust survivors. In our efforts to serve everyone in the way they need, with as much dignity as possible, some households will receive prepared ready to eat meals for Passover. Others will receive Kosher for Passover pantry groceries so that they can prepare their own meals and seders at home.

This year we are grateful to all of the partners that help to support our Passover efforts. Special thanks to CT Foodshare, Dignity Memorial/Leo P. Gallagher & Son Funeral Home, Foodbank of Lower Fairfield County, H.L. Rich and Sons, Met Council, and Streit's. We could not fill all the shelves without the continued support of our community collections as well. Thanks to Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy, Congregation B'nai Torah, Chabad of Stamford, Congregation Agudath Sholom, Congregation Beth-El, Congregation B'nai Israel, Federation for Jewish Philanthropy of Upper Fairfield County, Stamford JCC and Sara Walker Nursery School, JCares, Merkaz, Temple Beth El, The Conservative Synagogue, Temple Israel, Temple Shalom, Temple Sinai, UJA-JCC Greenwich PJ Library, PJ Library of United Jewish Federation of Greater Stamford, New Canaan, and Darien.

May all have a meaningful Pesach and L'Shana Haba'ah B'Yerusalayim. May we next year, be in a spiritual Jerusalem, one in which food insecurity is no more.

SCHOKE JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Makes Summer Camp a Reality for Many Families

As COVID-19 continues to put a financial strain on families, Schoke Jewish Family Service understands that many households have limited funds to send their children to Jewish summer camp. Schoke JFS is excited to announce that applications for camp scholarships for summer 2022 are currently available.

The Joan and Ben Zinbarg – Schoke Jewish Family Service Camp Scholarship Program was created to assist families who cannot afford to send their children to a Jewish sleep-away or day camp program without some financial assistance. Camp scholarships are available for eligible families from Stamford, Westport, Bridgeport, and Upper Fairfield County.

It is well documented that attendance at Jewish camps helps to strengthen youngsters' Jewish identities and involvement in Jewish communities, now and into the future.

To quote one of our grateful recipients, "Thank you ever so much for helping me return to the greatest place on earth... My camp journey this year helped me become even prouder of my Jewish heritage. Thank you for all you have done for me."

The Joan and Ben Zinbarg – Schoke Jewish Family Service Camp Scholarship Fund is supported by the Zinbarg Family, the United Jewish Federation of Stamford, New Canaan and Darien and the Federation for Jewish Philanthropy of Upper Fairfield County.

As a result of their generosity, Schoke JFS awarded 50 camp scholarships in 2021.

Applications for the Joan and Ben Zinbarg – Schoke Jewish Family Service Camp Scholarship Fund for summer 2022 are available to download at www.ctjfs.org/joan-and-ben-zinbarg-camp-scholarship-program/.

The application must be filled out com-



pletely and returned to the Schoke Jewish Family Service office by mail or email to Maria McNulty at mmcnulty@ctjfs.org along with the required attachments. **The deadline for applications is Friday, April 15, 2022 and all information is kept strictly confidential.**

If you have any questions, please contact Maria McNulty at the Schoke Jewish Family Service office at 203-921-4161 or mmcnulty@ctjfs.org.

To donate to the Joan and Ben Zinbarg Camp Scholarship Program, please go to: www.ctjfs.org/camp-scholarship-donations.

DONATE YOUR VEHICLE TO SCHOKE JFS

Donate your car, truck, van, SUV, boat, motorcycle, ATV, trailer (perhaps your airplane?) to Schoke Jewish Family Service!

Your donation will help to assist friends and neighbors who are in need.

NO HASSLES! Free pick up!

Receive a tax deduction!

We will take any vehicle in any condition!

Contact Lisa Rich at **203-921-4161** or lrich@ctjfs.org to make your donation.



**SAVE THE DATE FOR THE
INAUGURAL GATHERING TABLE**

Fighting Hunger • Feeding Hope

With author **Joanne Goldblum**
Broke in America

**Tuesday Evening
June 14, 2022**

In partnership with Federation for Jewish Philanthropy
of Upper Fairfield County, the United Jewish Federation
of Greater Stamford, New Canaan, and Darien, and
the Jewish Book Council

CONNECTICUT'S FIRST KOSHER MOBILE FOOD PANTRY ROLLING INTO CONNECTICUT SPRING 2022



On MLK Day, 52 volunteers came to volunteer at Schoke JFS to help pack spice packets for our Freedberg Family Kosher Food Pantry clients! This project was made possible in part by Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy families.

VIRTUAL GROCERY STORE



At the Schoke JFS Virtual Grocery Store you can fill your shopping basket and help feed families in need!

We invite you to select your favorite items from our Virtual Grocery Store to help us ensure that our pantry has the ability to stock our shelves with diverse, healthy and nutritious items.

The Virtual Grocery Store helps you provide the resources for Schoke JFS staff to fill our shelves with the most needed and hardest to procure items for our clients.

We could not provide for our clients if it weren't for the incredible support of the community to help stock the pantry shelves.

Here are some suggestions of how to use the Virtual Store:

- Pick a night of the week or month that you and your family will fill a shopping cart with the items you are having that week for dinner.
- Fill a shopping cart with your favorite items and make it a recurring monthly shopping trip.
- Pick one item and order enough for one family each day of the month.
- Use with a school, class or group to make a collective gift to the Freedberg Family Kosher Food Pantry.
- Pressed for time? Order a half or full cart, and we will pick the items for you.

WWW.CTJFS.ORG/VIRTUALGROCERystore

77 YEARS AFTER THE HOLOCAUST

Schoke JFS Remains Committed to Caring for Holocaust Survivors Throughout Fairfield County



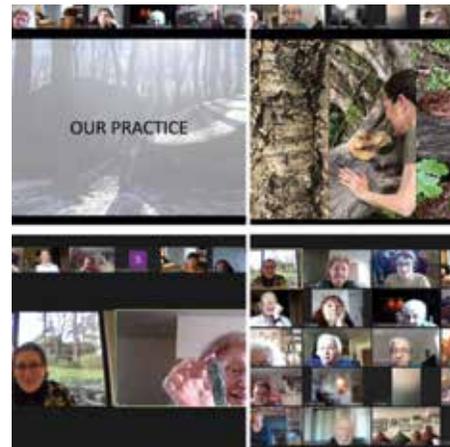
More than 75 years after the Holocaust ended, survivors living in the United States continue to suffer and rely on help more than ever. The United Nations General Assembly designated January 27th—the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau—as International Holocaust Remembrance Day. On the 77th International Holocaust Remembrance Day, Schoke Jewish Family Service commemorated the 3rd Anniversary of our agency Holocaust Survivor program, named Anachnu, in order to make the statement that survivors are not alone, “we” are together as a community with them and for them.

Schoke JFS consistently works to support Holocaust survivors through a variety of programming and support. Our agency partners directly with a number of organizations which act as support networks for survivors: KAVOD SHEF, The Blue

Card Fund (BCF) and The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (Claims Conference), to name a few. Through the support which these organizations provide, our agency is able to meet financial and socialization needs for survivors throughout Fairfield County. One important example of how the support from these partner organizations has become a critical lifeline would be the Blue Card Fund Telephone Emergency Response System (TERS) program. Survivors enrolled in the TERS program receive, at no cost to them, a life-preserving button that can be worn around the neck, wrist or a unit operated through their landline. With just a press of a button, the survivor is instantly connected to a care specialist who will contact help if needed, providing 24/7 medical assistance and peace of mind to both the survivor and their family. There is even a GPS unit which can be operated in and out of the home on the go.

Many of our survivors who are recipients of the TERS program report feeling a greater sense of security and confidence as a result of the unit. Victor*, a Schoke JFS Anachnu client, shared with our agency his near-death experience and hails his TERS system for saving his life. Victor took a train to visit his daughter in NY and, during his travel, suddenly did not feel well. He had a GPS unit and pressed his alert button right from the train station. The paramedics located him and he was taken to the nearest hospital. It turns out that Victor had had a heart attack. Because the system has a Russian translation, he was able to explain where he was and what happened, ultimately saving his life.

And TERS is just one example of the ways in which the Schoke JFS Anachnu



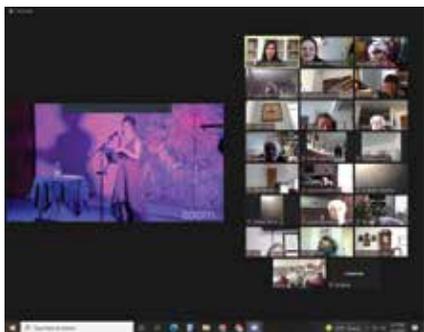
25 Holocaust survivors met Maura Smotrich, a Certified Nature and Forest Therapy Guide through the Anachnu Program. She shared different ways to connect with nature - through touching, smelling, listening, and tasting. Many participants shared their own thoughts and feelings and showed some interesting nature objects. It was a very meaningful program that brought peace of mind to our seniors.

program is able to assist our survivors. Nearly all of our Holocaust survivors receive emergency assistance and financial support for medical bills, utilities and rental expense, food and holiday gifts and even delivery of complete, prepared meals for those survivors who are unable to cook for themselves. Through our partnership with KAVOD SHEF, partially funded through the support of United Jewish Federation of Greater Stamford, New Canaan and Darien, the survivors in Fairfield County are provided with the financial means to make their life more meaningful and manageable. The sense of relief is palpable for those survivors who report greater level of suffering due to the impact of indigence and elderly age.

Schoke JFS strives to support Holocaust survivors and be the place where they can turn when in need through offering support groups, holiday gatherings, day trips, and emergency assistance for medical needs to Holocaust survivors across Fairfield County.

For more information about the Anachnu Program, please contact Marina Sapir at msapir@ctjfs.org or 203-921-4161.

* Name changed to protect confidentiality



A Client Journey of HOPE AND HEALING

BY EVE MOSKOWITZ, LCSW, Psychotherapist

Hailey*, came to Schoke JFS over four years ago at the age of 23 years old seeking support after a romantic breakup.

She told a story of growing up in a dysfunctional family which led to her history of harming herself, starting at age 13 in an effort to get attention. Hailey's parents were incapable of managing her emotional health and sent her to a therapeutic boarding school for high school. At school, she received therapy coupled with heavy medication management. She often "bucked the system" which resulted in hours spent in solitary confinement.

Hailey, who is very smart, ultimately graduated from high school, and attended a prestigious university and graduated with honors. She went on to attend an Ivy League school and received a Master's Degree in Social Science and is now attending university for a PhD in Sustainable Farming.

Since coming to Schoke JFS, Hailey has focused on building her sense of self-worth and acknowledging her fortitude, intelligence and strengths through the Kuriansky Family Counseling Program.

Additionally, she learned confidence and self-respect and how to set boundaries with her family. As Hailey continues to work toward emotional and spiritual growth, she recently sent the following message to her therapist at Schoke JFS:

"I was thinking earlier today, you are the only therapist I've had that doesn't see me as a juvenile delinquent and actually sees me...thank you."

Hailey was able to access additional services through Schoke JFS including the Covid-19 support group (held on Thursday afternoons) in addition to the Jewish Twenties and Thirties Group (JTT) where she met other like-minded people and developed strong friendships. She has maintained her counseling appointments through Schoke Jewish Family Service's Kuriansky Family Counseling Program, transitioning from weekly to monthly sessions.

* Name has been changed to protect confidentiality



From left to right: Leah Schechter, Chief Program Officer at Schoke Jewish Family Service, Caroline Simmons, Mayor of Stamford, Matt Greenberg, President and CEO at Schoke Jewish Family Service, Matt Blumenthal, State Representative for Connecticut's 147th District, David Martin, former Mayor of Stamford, and Patricia Billie Miller, State Senator for the 27th District at the Schoke JFS Thanksgiving distribution event. Schoke Jewish Family Service supported over 500 families during the holidays, ensuring everyone had the chance to celebrate with meals from the Freedberg Family Kosher Food Pantry for Thanksgiving and Hanukkah and gifts for Matanot Lev.



Do a Mitzvah – VOLUNTEER!

ctjfs.galaxydigital.com




Join Our Community...



...from the Comfort of Home!

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Call Rebekah Kanefsky, LPC, Director of Case Management at 203-921-4163 or via email to Rkanefsky@ctjfs.org. You can also register at: <https://marketing.uniper.com/jfsschoke>



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Q&A with Michael Feldstein

Stamford Chevra Kadisha Board Member

Schoke Jewish Family Service has received a grant from the Stamford Chevra Kadisha to expand Kuriansky Family Counseling bereavement support programming for those who might need assistance before, during, or after the loss of a loved one.

There are two **Caregiver Support Groups**, one currently meets on Sundays at 11:15 AM on a bi-weekly basis on Zoom and the other meets Wednesdays at 7:30 PM on a bi-weekly basis on Zoom. The **Bereavement Support Group** meets on Thursdays at 7:30 PM on Zoom. The groups have been very well received and are already in their second round of sessions with more dates to be added.

We sat down for a Q&A with Michael Feldstein, who is on the Board of the Stamford Chevra Kadisha, to ask what their goals are for the support groups and why they decided Schoke JFS was the best organization to provide these services.

How did the Chevra Kadisha come up with the idea and get involved in the program?

The Chevra Kadisha wanted to branch out and expand its reach beyond the services we provide, but still remain true to its mission. In addition to making sure that the preparation for burial of the deceased is done according to Jewish law, we try to provide for the needs of the mourners as best as we can. This extends to after the shiva period as well. We thought there was a need for those who have recently lost a loved one to obtain emotional support, and we thought the best organization to provide such services was Schoke JFS.

What is the Chevra Kadisha's goal for the support groups at Schoke JFS?

We want to let community members know that there is a place for them to turn to after the death of a loved one. Sometimes the period after shiva is even more difficult than the period during the shiva, since the mourner is now alone without visits from friends and family. That's why the support programs that Schoke JFS has organized are so valuable and important.

How does the Chevra Kadisha see this as helping the community?

The Chevra Kadisha is limited in its scope. Schoke JFS is much more well-known and serves a broader base of community members. By partnering with Schoke JFS, we felt we could reach many more people -- and provide services that we are not trained to deliver or capable of providing.

How can the Chevra Kadisha and Schoke JFS partner together further?

Depending on how the initial programs are received, we can certainly expand into other programming that relate to end-of-life issues, caregiving, and dealing with loss, for individuals at various age levels.

Schoke JFS is grateful to the Chevra Kadisha for supporting these programs and choosing SJFS as its' partner in providing these important support groups.

For more information about the Schoke JFS Kuriansky Family Counseling Program, please contact Brooke Davidson, Director of Clinical and Family Services, at 203-921-4161 or by email at bdavidson@ctjfs.org.

SCHOKE JFS LEGACY GIVING CIRCLE

The LIFE & LEGACY program is a partnership between the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, United Jewish Federation of Stamford, New Canaan and Darien and Schoke Jewish Family Service, that helps individuals and families create a legacy commitment that will establish a successful and thriving community we want our great-grandchildren to inherit.

The Schoke JFS Legacy Giving Circle allows us to sustain our vital programs and services, while ensuring a strong and united Jewish community for future generations. Legacy Gifts can be provided through a gift in a will or trust, retirement funds or other charitable contributions.

Many thanks to those who have already signed up for the Schoke JFS Legacy Giving Circle. To join, or to learn more about our Legacy Giving Circle please visit our website ctjfs.org/legacy or contact Matt Greenberg, President & CEO at 203-921-4161.



Schoke JFS extends our deepest appreciation to the following people and their families for their support through a Legacy Gift.

List in Formation as of February 2022

Anonymous	Meryl and Ron Japha
Adrienne and Michael Alexander	Marc and Liz Kitay
Jeri Appel	Susan Kostin
Mark Appel	Scott and Elizabeth Krowitz
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Nan and Paul Gordon	Stephen and Gail G. Trel
Pam Ehrenkranz & Matt Greenberg	Linda B. Gornitsky & Harvey Weber
Grecia And Ron* Gross	Renee Zinn

☆ *Of blessed memory*

SCHOKE JFS IS HERE TO SUPPORT YOU

Learn More About Our Ongoing Support Groups

Caregiver Support Groups

*Every other Sunday, 11:15 AM, On Zoom
Facilitated by Rona Wall, LCSW*

*Every other Wednesday, 7:30 PM, On Zoom
Facilitated by Hannah Pollack, MSW*

For those who face the hardships of caring for a loved one who is ill. This support group is for anyone who might need assistance before, during or after the loss of a loved one. Share feelings and exchange ideas in a non-judgmental environment that provides emotional, practical and spiritual support.

**This support group is provided with assistance by the Stamford Chevra Kadisha*

COVID Support

*Thursdays, 4:00 PM, 1st and 3rd Thursdays, On Zoom
Facilitated by Dr. Toby Lazarus, Ph.D*

Zoom sessions to help community members manage the stress brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Brain Fitness Group

*Mondays, 10:30 AM, Ongoing Weekly – held on Zoom
Facilitated by Dr. Toby Lazarus, Ph.D*

*Wednesdays, 10:30 AM, Ongoing Weekly – held on Zoom
Facilitated by Dr. Toby Lazarus, Ph.D*

Want to stimulate your brain power? Schoke JFS promotes the cognitive health and well-being of older adults, people with a history of trauma as well as Holocaust survivors through a Brain Fitness cognitive remediation program. Led by a trained neuropsychologist, sessions are offered on Mondays and Wednesdays and focuses on improving brain health and understanding brain functioning. Participants are welcome to join both sessions.

**This service is supported in part by a grant from The JFNA Center on Holocaust Survivor Care and Institute on Aging and Trauma.*

CENTER ON HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR CARE
JEWISH FEDERATIONS INSTITUTE ON AGING AND TRAUMA



Healing Chair Yoga

Held on Zoom

Class schedule to be announced on the website

Schoke JFS promotes the physical health and well-being of older adults, people with a history of trauma as well as Holocaust survivors through a yoga mindfulness and meditation wellness group. The group blends both chair yoga and meditation techniques for soothing the mind and relaxing the body.

**This service is supported in part by a grant from The JFNA Center on Holocaust Survivor Care and Institute on Aging and Trauma.*

CENTER ON HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR CARE
JEWISH FEDERATIONS INSTITUTE ON AGING AND TRAUMA



Divorce Support Group

*Mondays, 1:00 PM, Ongoing weekly – held on Zoom
Facilitated by Lois Meyer, LMSW*

This is a group where anyone at any stage in the divorce process can meet remotely, in a safe and confidential space to bounce ideas off of, seek support with, or simply just listen to and seek solace in the fact that they are not alone.

Bereavement Support Group

*Thursdays, 7:30 PM, Ongoing weekly – held on Zoom
Facilitated by Amanda Geffner, LCSW*

Find the healing which comes from being with others who know first-hand what you are going through. Learn how Jewish ritual, prayer and tradition can support the grieving process.

**This support group is provided with assistance by the Stamford Chevra Kadisha*

To join the support groups, please fill out the form at:
www.ctjfs.org/counseling/groups/

Hebrew Free Loan Program

Helping families secure interest free loans

Do you have a financial emergency?

Would an interest free loan help you solve an immediate need?

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Accredited by the International Association of Hebrew Free Loans



FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Leah Schechter, Chief Program Officer

203-921-4161

lschechter@ctjfs.org



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		5,800 KOSHER MEALS WERE DELIVERED AND PREPARED	48 CHILDREN RECEIVED CAMP SCHOLARSHIPS	88,000 MEALS DISTRIBUTED THROUGH THE KOSHER FOOD PANTRY
		110 HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS RECEIVED SERVICES	255,436 HOURS OF HOME COMPANION SERVICE PROVIDED	
	97 FAMILIES IN CRISIS RECEIVED EMERGENCY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE	27 PREVENTED FROM HOMELESS- NESS	1,853 COUNSELING SESSIONS WERE PROVIDED TO CLIENTS	

To make a gift online visit ctjfs.org or contact Lisa Rich at 203-921-4161 or LRich@ctjfs.org