



Jewish Family & Children's Service

# CONNECTIONS

**Donor Newsletter**

*A time of hope and healing*

# Delivering Hope and Healing Behind The Scenes

with JFCS Quality Management, Training and IT



JFCS Staff during CPR training session

As an agency that works with vulnerable populations, it is crucial that Jewish Family & Children's Service does everything possible to reach those who depend on us for programs and services. From our integrated healthcare clinics to senior programming to telehealth and job development services, the JFCS team provides critical support to the community.

When we think of organizations like JFCS who provide countless direct client services, we might not think of the team of individuals behind-the-scenes who make sure everything is running smoothly.



Megan Lipman  
VP of Compliance and QM

Megan Lipman and her Quality Management (QM) team take that responsibility seriously. "The QM staff regularly identifies and assesses the strengths and vulnerabilities of the entire agency, taking immediate action to serve our client population better," says Lipman. "We regularly ask ourselves if our programs and services are accomplishing what we set out to do – are we helping clients stay on track, so they ultimately achieve success."

Training is such an essential part of this effort. Asking different questions to get to the actual needs and providing staff with the tools to ensure QM is being implemented.



Tara Perdue  
Director, Administrative & Clinical Training

Tara Perdue, who oversees training and development, couldn't agree more. "All of our training is specific to JFCS," said Perdue. "We need to meet and exceed certain requirements that come from the health plans we support, accreditation organizations, and of course, our training programs. We have established a solid foundation for learning that keeps our entire staff fully entrenched in the best practices for the integrated health care industry."

# Delivering Hope and Healing Behind The Scenes

with JFCS Quality Management, Training and IT

Some of the training sessions required regard trauma-informed care for JFCS staff members that interact with clients daily. All agency staff must undergo training involving cultural competency, ensuring that policies and procedures are inclusive of all the communities JFCS serves and that agency policy and procedures adhere to best practices.



Jessie Smith

Director of Information Technology and Facilities

In addition, there are monthly lunch-and-learn sessions on topics such as working with individuals who have been victims of sex trafficking, refugee communities, and accommodating deaf and the hard of hearing individuals.

The training is offered both in-person and online, relying heavily on connectivity and technology.



With so many online trainings and critical technology systems, our IT department is essential to JFCS' operations. "We have a small but mighty staff," says Jessie Smith when referring to the IT team at JFCS. "We are accessible 24/7, ensuring that all our systems are operational and fully functional at all times."

COVID-19 presented some unique challenges throughout the organization. Still, the QM, Training, and IT teams adjusted and adapted so that all departments had little to no disruption in their ability to do their jobs.

By closely monitoring client needs and anticipated health outcomes, the organization is able to quickly and efficiently implement a more data-driven, strategic and innovative approach to the programs and services we provide.

"Our ability to strictly adhere to regulatory standards but also our ability to take an internal look at ourselves is what fosters growth, improvement, and advancement," said Lipman. "Our ultimate goal is to help our clients achieve success while providing the needed tools and strategies to our staff."

## **Support JFCS through an Arizona Charitable Tax Credit Donation**

Did you know you can still make a donation to a Qualified Charitable Tax Organization and receive the credit on your 2021 tax filings? Donations can be made through April 18, 2022. The Arizona Department of Revenue provides a dollar-for-dollar credit on your state income tax when contributing to a qualified nonprofit organization. Jewish Family & Children's Service is among the nonprofit organizations that are eligible for the Arizona Charitable Tax Credit throughout the state.

JFCS now offers behavioral health and primary medical care services in each of our four clinics across the Valley. As an agency that works with vulnerable populations who are most at-risk, we must do everything we can to reach those who depend on our services. In addition to offering comprehensive care, JFCS has a community-based team including therapists, clinicians, child case managers, youth and family specialists and family support partners that provide clients with wellness and treatment services.

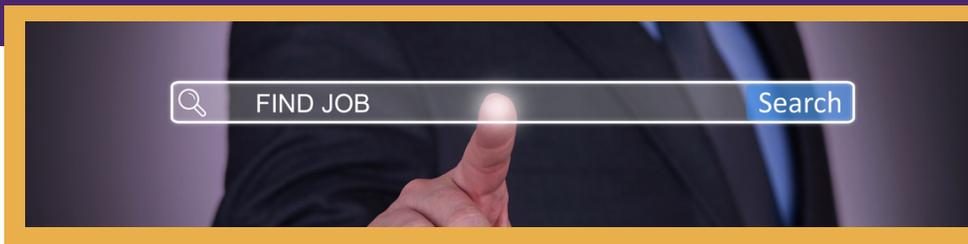
Individuals may make an unrestricted tax credit gift of \$400 (for a single filer) or \$800 (for couples filing jointly), directly benefiting the over 40,000 individuals we serve each year.

Donate today: [www.jfcsaz.org/taxcredit](http://www.jfcsaz.org/taxcredit)

On behalf of those we serve, thank you for your support and commitment to the work we do in our communities. Should you have any additional questions, please consult your tax advisor.



# The Search for Meaningful Work

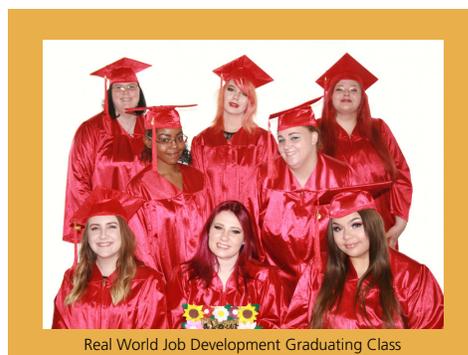


The definition of meaningful work is different for everyone, but the result of people searching for a different career path is causing a ripple effect across the Valley. Everyone is hiring and not just for a couple of open positions. The number of jobs available is staggering. During what many call 'economic uncertainty,' skilled professionals are looking for new experiences. Prospective employees ask themselves whether a company's mission aligns with their core values. We spend much of our time at work, so we should feel good about what we do.

Working for an organization that builds stronger communities and gives purpose and strength to those it serves is topping the list of benefits as workers decide where their careers will take them next. It feels good when an employer provides meaningful opportunities to learn and act with purpose. Before making a career change, think about what's important to you. If it's impactful and purpose-driven work that serves the community, consider organizations like Jewish Family & Children's Service.

For more information, please visit <https://www.jfcsaz.org/careers/job-opportunities/>

## Transition to Adulthood Offers Guidance to Foster Care Youth



Real World Job Development Graduating Class

Thousands of young men and women age out of foster care every year upon turning 18, often times finding themselves with no support or place to live. Jewish Family & Children's Service's Transition to Adulthood Program addresses the needs of young adults between the ages of 16 and 21 needing guidance and support while navigating the responsibilities of adulthood.

The Transition to Adulthood team works one-on-one with clients to develop a personal support system for each young adult. This is a significant asset when preparing for the road ahead.

Through group sessions and activities, teens connect with others in similar situations to share experiences and provide support. Over the course of this program, teens will discuss important topics such as:

- Career planning
- Daily living skills
- Enrolling in college
- Finance management
- Housing
- Communication
- Social relationships
- Building community connections

The program is individualized for each teen, addressing specific areas of concern. A plan is constructed with a transition facilitator, with regular check-ins and progress updates throughout the process.

# Overcoming Barriers to Healthcare with JFCS Health Navigators



A health navigator (also known as a patient navigator or resource navigator) is a healthcare team member who helps individuals overcome barriers to quality care. These barriers may include access to health care, insurance or lack thereof, poor health literacy, transportation, childcare, and more.

Health navigators have a close understanding of the community served, often due to shared lived experiences. Jewish Family & Children's Service launched its health navigator program several years ago as part of a grant.

According to MaryJo Whitfield, MSW, Vice President/Behavioral Health for JFCS, incorporating health navigators into the healthcare team was one of the organization's first steps as it prepared to offer fully integrated healthcare in all of its clinics.

"Health navigators build effective working relationships with their patients, helping to support, educate and assist patients in navigating the complex health care system," says Whitfield. "Health navigators work effectively with patients, multidisciplinary care providers and community partners to identify their patient's physical, emotional, and cultural needs and help them access appropriate resources to meet these needs."

Health navigators need to have a good understanding of the health resources available in their communities to best refer their clients. Research shows that working with a health navigator reduces health disparities, improves an individual's engagement with their health, and enables them to get the care they need while improving health outcomes and reducing health care costs.

JFCS' health navigators work with clients both in-person and virtually through the organization's telehealth offering. In addition to working with clients on their physical and mental health needs, health navigators are also addressing social determinants of health like access to stable housing, transportation, and food insecurity.

"It is so important to address all aspects of a client's healthcare, including such things as housing and access to food," Whitfield adds. "We can only achieve successful outcomes when we address everything that may impact an individual's physical and mental health."

For those interested in the healthcare field and who have a genuine interest in helping others, a career as a health navigator can be very rewarding.

# JFCS Gains New Team Member

## introducing therapy dog, Magnificent Mighty Quinn

Therapy dogs bring comfort to individuals in anxiety-provoking situations. For the families at Jewish Family & Children's Service's Michael R. Zent Healthcare Center, lovable Golden Retriever Quinn will soon be doing just that.

Alex Warren, Enrollment/Demographic Manager for JFCS, has long understood the benefits of therapy dogs for patient care. Warren's Golden Wrigley has been a part of the MRZ team for a few years now. "With his calm demeanor, I knew he would sire pups that would make good therapy dogs."

One of 10 healthy puppies, Magnificent Mighty Quinn, as he is known, was born in November 2021.

"We started training Quinn right away. Within a week of bringing him home, we were practicing crate training, getting him comfortable with a collar, walking on a leash, and understanding basic commands like "sit" and "stay."

Starting the training early meant that within the first three months, Quinn could begin visiting MRZ, walking alongside Wrigley to meet some of the staff.

Warren's goal is to make sure Quinn is trained to work independently from her so that he can work alongside therapists and clients.

"Quinn's job will be to make sure the client is comfortable opening up and sharing with their therapist," said Warren.

With the proper training, Quinn will be ready to go to work in about two years.



Mary Jo Whitfield, Vice President of Integrated Health with Quinn



**Jewish Family & Children's Service**  
*Healing Lives. Whatever It Takes.*

The annual JFCS Backpack Drive is taking place now through May 31st! We need your help to provide over 1,800 backpacks for our school-age clients.

**For more information or to donate visit:**  
[www.jfcsaz.org/BPD2022](http://www.jfcsaz.org/BPD2022)

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Ellie Schwartzberg, MC, LPC  
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Linda Scott, MSW  
 Vice President of Child & Family Solutions

Gwynn Simpson  
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Mary Jo Whitfield, MSW  
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4747 N. 7th Street, Suite 100, Phoenix, AZ 85014 | 602.279.7655 | [www.jfcsaz.org](http://www.jfcsaz.org)

