

# Connections

Your Donor Newsletter

## Roots of Our Agency

Serving the Jewish Community  
for more than 80 years

**For more than 80 years, JFCS has been serving Jewish individuals and families in need throughout Maricopa County.** Although social needs have changed over the decades, the central mission of JFCS has always been to help others. Time-honored Jewish values represent cornerstones of JFCS' mission past, present and future.

**The Jewish Community Services division of JFCS supports Jews of all ages and from all walks of life,** and is under the leadership of Ellie Schwartzberg, Vice President of Older Adults and Jewish Community Services, who has been instrumental in the amazing growth of services over the past 37 years.

**Last year, we increased the number of Jewish individuals served by 59%, jumping from nearly 6,000 in 2015 to more than 10,000 in 2016.**

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## Keeping Seniors Engaged, Connected



Every day in the U.S., more than 10,000 people turn 65. In Arizona alone, by 2020, it is predicted that 1 in 4 residents will be 60 or older. Research by the National Institute on Aging and the National Endowment for the Arts demonstrates that participating in creative arts as one ages helps improve age-related health conditions, including cognitive decline and dementia.

Earlier this year, with the generous support of Barbara and Barry Zemel and a grant from the Arizona Commission on the Arts, JFCS was able to launch a Creative Aging pilot program with the goal of getting seniors actively participating in the arts as well as socializing with their peers.

JFCS Creative Aging classes include Readers Theater (performing plays while holding the script), Storytelling (learning about creative writing and sharing stories), Line Dancing and Vocal Music (with a focus on individual performances as well as group singing).

The program has already included 59 participants ranging in age from 63 to 95 in its first two sessions. The next session begins in late April.

“We want to get seniors to use their brains in new and innovative ways,” said Janet Arnold, coordinator of Creative Aging at JFCS and instructor of the Readers Theater classes. “I’ve had students tell me that they’ve never performed before, but that they are excited to try something new.”

### PROVIDING A LIFELINE OF SUPPORT

In addition to the Creative Aging program, Arnold also serves as the Senior Concierge at JFCS, which was launched in 2015 and funded by the Jewish Federation of Greater Phoenix.

In 2014, the Federation commissioned a study on Jewish seniors to determine areas of greatest need. Finding information and referrals for various services and programs was determined to be one of the biggest frustrations for the elderly.

“Whether it’s information on home care, transportation, synagogues, classes, legal assistance or any other number



# CREATIVE AGING CLASSES

The next session of Creative Aging classes for those ages 60+, including Line Dancing, Vocal Music, Readers Theatre and Storytelling, begins in late April. Locations vary depending on the class, but there are sites in Scottsdale, Phoenix and Sun City. Register at [jfcsaz.org/creativeaging](http://jfcsaz.org/creativeaging) or contact Janet Arnold at 480.599.7198 for more information.

of questions, we have a directory of local resources to help," Arnold said.

Recently, an elderly woman contacted Janet Arnold after her husband had been diagnosed with macular degeneration and needed a \$3,000 pair of glasses. The couple did not have the money to cover the cost and did not want to pay credit card interest. Arnold was able to connect the couple with Jewish Free Loan, a resource of which they were previously unaware of, for an interest-free loan. She also provided information from a variety of agencies dealing specifically with low vision (i.e. library and audio recorded resources, as well as resources for assistive devices, adaptive aids and magnification devices).

Arnold added, "Life is a bit overwhelming; add to that aging and the complex task of navigating online and things can become really complicated. That's why we're here to help!"

For more information on Creative Aging classes or the Senior Concierge program, contact Janet Arnold at **480.599.7198** or [Janet.Arnold@jfcsaz.org](mailto:Janet.Arnold@jfcsaz.org).

# HOSPITAL CHAPLAINCY SERVES JEWISH COMMUNITY

When 32-year-old Jessica\* was hospitalized for the high-risk birth of her firstborn child, she sought out the Hospital Chaplaincy program at JFCS to bring her and her family comfort during a time of great stress.

The Hospital Chaplaincy program provides spiritual comfort and support during times of illness or death to patients and their families who have nowhere to turn for spiritual guidance. The chaplains, Rabbi Robert Kravitz and Rabbi Michael Dubitsky, visit 25 hospitals weekly throughout Metro Phoenix and provide after-hours emergency services.

"Jessica was celebrating the joy of the birth of her daughter. I asked if she had recited the Mother's Prayer yet, and she had not," Rabbi Kravitz said. "I handed her a copy of the prayer, which she read aloud while holding her newborn with her husband and father nearby. With tears running down her face by the end of the prayer, we all said 'Shehechyanu' (a blessing to mark special

occasions) together and she kissed her baby and hugged her husband."

Rabbi Kravitz, who has worked as a JFCS hospital chaplain for the past 10 years, visits hospitals in Scottsdale and the East Valley, and Rabbi Dubitsky visits hospitals in Central Phoenix and North Central Phoenix. Kravitz is also on-call after hours, before 9 a.m. and after 6 p.m. and on weekends, including Shabbat and holidays for emergencies.

The Jewish Federation of Greater Phoenix and generous JFCS donors have provided funds to support this program's growth over the past several years. Last year, the Hospital Chaplaincy program at JFCS touched 4,657 individuals in Maricopa County.

For more information on the Hospital Chaplaincy program, please call (602) 452-4627.

\*Name has been changed to protect client privacy.



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# CONNECTING JEWS WITH JOBS

**“Jewish Career Services is tailored to meet the specific needs of the individual to maximize success.”**

**Kathy Rood,  
Program Manager,  
Jewish Programs**



Last fall, 49-year-old Stuart\* hit a bump in his career when the tech company where he worked for the past 10 years decided to close its Phoenix office. With three children deeply involved in their local schools and the Valley of the Sun JCC, he and his wife decided that relocation was not a good fit for them.

After a couple months of unsuccessfully applying for positions, Stuart reached out to Jewish Career Services at JFCS. The program, funded by the Jewish Community Foundation through a grant from the Carmella and Michael Blank Family Philanthropic Fund and the Carmella and Michael Blank Jewish Career Services Endowment, offers career services for the newly unemployed and underemployed.

“We offer skills assessments, a job search overview, professional resume writing, networking and salary negotiation tips, as well as interviewing and time management coaching,” said Kathy Rood, Program

Manager, Jewish Programs. “This program is tailored to meet the specific needs of the individual to maximize success.”

Since its inception in 2011, the program has served 326 individuals. The program typically gets about four to five requests for support per month.

For Stuart and his family, Jewish Career Services was a lifesaver. After updating his resume and finding out about several networking resources that were available to him, he ended up landing the first job he applied for after consulting with a professional job coach via Jewish Career Services.

For more information on Jewish Career Services or other Jewish Social Services programs at JFCS, contact Kathy Rood at (602) 452-4627 or [Kathy.Rood@jfcsaz.org](mailto:Kathy.Rood@jfcsaz.org).

\*Name has been changed to protect client privacy.



–Barbara & Barry Zemel

## Barbara & Barry Zemel

Barbara and Barry Zemel have been contributing to JFCS annually for more than two decades and are Legacy Society members. In 2007, they became aware of the Older Adult programs that JFCS facilitates for Jewish seniors and decided to increase their gift to specifically help fund Older Adult programming. “We became increasingly aware of the Jewish programming at JFCS and the incredible good it achieves in our community,” Barry Zemel said. “Our annual donations increased with this awareness.”

The Zemels believe the most vulnerable and often-overlooked segment of our community is the elderly. Whether living independently or in assisted living, and regardless of whether their adult children live nearby, seniors need socialization with their peers and the vibrancy of programs geared to their needs.

“When we were approached about funding a new creative arts program targeted to the mature crowd, it was a cause we couldn’t resist,” Zemel said. “The new Creative Aging program is still in its first year, but we understand the response has been quite positive. It is our hope that others will come forward with philanthropic funds to sustain this program into future years.”

Zemel points out that JFCS is in the unique position to assist Jewish seniors, the socially and economically disadvantaged, and those with basic human needs in our community. He adds, “JFCS performs these tasks so well and gets the most bang for the buck because they are well run, efficient and committed.”

***JFCS is a jewel in our community and we are privileged to be donors and make a difference.***

*Special thanks to all JFCS donors!  
For a complete list of all JFCS Family Friends  
of Distinction donors, including Lifetime,  
Annual and Legacy Society members,*

***please visit [jfcsaz.org/donors](http://jfcsaz.org/donors)***

# STRATEGIC PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

## Jewish Federation of Greater Phoenix

Earlier this year, the Jewish Federation of Greater Phoenix announced its incoming board chairs: Mark Feldman, Chief Executive Officer and Managing Partner for MRA Associates, and David Weiner, President of Weiner Insurance. The two men are serving as board co-chairs for a two-year term. The Jewish Federation of Greater Phoenix is the largest annual donor to JFCS and their funds support many Jewish Community Services programs.

### **AS CO-CHAIRS, WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS FOR YOUR TWO-YEAR TERM?**

Our goal as co-chairs of the Jewish Federation of Greater Phoenix is to serve the community with grace and humility as we continue to develop our relationships with our community partners, donors and beneficiaries. Our focus is to help our Jewish community here in the Valley, in Israel and around the world. The Federation has a major responsibility to be part of a collective that has a global humanitarian drive to help others.

### **WHY IS YOUR STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP WITH JFCS SIGNIFICANT?**

We recognize the unique programs that JFCS delivers to our community and are thankful for its leadership and expertise in filling these needs. Whether it is seniors or those that need emergency help, we are proud to partner with JFCS and to fund and support its work.

The strategic partner grant from the Federation funds a portion of JFCS programs, including the Center for Senior Enrichment, which provides programming and services for hundreds of seniors each year. The Federation also created and funds the Senior Concierge program that provides much needed information and services. The Federation continues to follow through on the findings of its Senior Study by putting programs in place that provide our seniors with transportation, social programs and information about services available to them.



*Mark Feldman*



*David Weiner*

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

**We invite the community to engage with the Jewish Federation of Greater Phoenix and learn about its mission to help Jews in need and build vibrant Jewish communities here in the Valley, in Israel and around the world. Please visit [jewishphoenix.org](http://jewishphoenix.org).**

# FOCUS ON OLDER ADULT SERVICES

JFCS provides a variety of services to help older adults live as independently as possible for as long as possible. In addition to Creative Aging and the Senior Concierge program, the following programs are offered:

## THE CENTER FOR SENIOR ENRICHMENT AT THE PALAZZO

The Center for Senior Enrichment at The Palazzo in Phoenix provides a wide array of enriching programs for seniors four days a week. Classes range from the physical, such as tai chi, chair yoga and water aerobics, to the aesthetic, such as painting, jewelry making or creative writing. In addition, there are regular visits from rabbis for discussions and Shabbat observance. All Jewish holidays are celebrated with gusto, involving song, food and lively discussions.

The Center is open to all seniors, regardless of where they reside, and offers delicious lunches for only \$4. There is also a shuttle available to provide transportation to and from the Center.

The Center is supported by the Jewish Federation of Greater Phoenix, the Area Agency on Aging and specified donations from the Jewish community.

Whether you like mahjong, discussion groups, making challah or just being in a social setting, the JFCS Center for Senior Enrichment is the place to be. Our dedicated JFCS staff makes sure each person gets the individual care and attention necessary to enhance his/her quality of life.

And you'll want to stop in at our eclectic gift store for unusual and specialty gift items. All proceeds support senior programming. Volunteers are needed to help run the store. Contact Jody Goldman at 602.567.8614 if you're interested in volunteering.



## JEWISH OLDER ADULT PROGRAM

Comprehensive in-home support services designed to enhance independence and improve quality of life. Services include: care management, counseling and resource referrals to help older adults strengthen support systems, improve emotional health and develop connections.

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