



Jewish Family Services
of Greater Charleston

Impact Report 2021

A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT & THE CEO

Dear JFS supporters and friends,

Jewish Family Services of Greater Charleston (JFS) was launched as an independent organization on January 1, 2021. During this initial year as a stand-alone agency, JFS joined with you and others in the Charleston area in dealing with the challenges brought as a result of the Covid pandemic. Specialized accommodations were made to augment and complement the existing services received by the Jewish community in greater Charleston. Even during the early days of Covid, the doors of JFS never completely closed. We have been available to provide critical assistance and to allay the fear that families experienced due to encountering critical housing, transportation, and financial needs, and hunger. During this time of forced isolation, we maintained contact with our seniors, often as a stand-in for a geographically distant family member. We provided a caring voice of tangible support, even driving to a doctor's appointment. We grieved alongside the families who experienced a loss of a loved one whether due to Covid-19 or not.

Thanks to you, our dedicated donors, grantors, committed staff, volunteers, and concerned stakeholders, JFS has been able to meet the increased needs of our community. It would not have been possible without the outpouring of support from you, ensuring that the work of JFS is sustainable today and in the future. As we continue into this current year and beyond, we hope that we will have your continued support for our everyday, ongoing needs in the community. Not only will we continue to focus on seniors, compromised citizens, and Holocaust survivors, we also look forward to expanding our Circle of Welcome and resettle families from around the globe in our community. Your commitment to tzedakah and tikkun olam is what allows JFS to be a pillar of support.

*Sincerely,
Stu Tessler, JFS President
Sara Tick, JFS CEO*

OUR MISSION

The mission of Jewish Family Services of Greater Charleston (JFS) is to empower individuals, strengthen families, protect the vulnerable and help seniors age with dignity. Our work is based on Jewish values to improve quality of life regardless

of race, religion, ethnic background, sexual orientation, or gender identity. JFS is guided by the fundamental Jewish values of tzedakah (charity) and tikkun olam (repair of the world).

WE ARE GROUNDED IN FUNDAMENTAL JEWISH VALUES, ESPECIALLY:

TZEDAKAH

the obligation of the Jewish community to create justice in the world



CHESED

compassion and caring for others



G'MELUT CHASADIM

acts of kindness and assistance toward others



B'TZELEM ELOHIM

treating others with the inherent dignity that arises from the belief that all human beings were created in the image of G-d



TIKKUN OM

the collective obligation to work toward making the world right and whole



STATISTICS

365



Visitations to seniors in homes, hospital, retirement center, nursing facilities

98



Fulfilled requests for transportation

69



Households received emergency financial assistance for rent, utilities and transportation

1570



Challahs deliveries to homebound Jewish seniors

900+



Emergency Financial Assistance: Kosher Food Pantry packages distributed

Interest Free Loans:

6

Outstanding Jewish Free Loans

232



mental health counseling sessions in 2021; 90% sliding scale or pro bono

241



Personal interactions with individuals in our Jewish Community

5

Scholarships awarded for Jewish Overnight Camp

40

Jewish Educational Loan Funds issued totaling of **\$40,370**



Due to illness I was forced to go on medical leave. After exhausting all my PTO time, I became behind in my rent and was facing eviction. I only earn a few dollars and I had to make sure my kids had food to eat. I was desperate. Jewish Family Services responded quickly to my plea for help which saved me and my children from being evicted and facing homelessness. Forever grateful.

Anonymous



VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

BARBARA JONAS

Mother of Scott and Brian Jonas, and grandmother to three grandchildren, has volunteered with JFS since 2017. A previous MUSC Children's Hospital volunteer, general manager and licensed assisted living administrator at the Jewish Community Housing Corp in New Jersey, and certified elementary school teacher in New Jersey, Barbara's experience and passion has made her an excellent JFS volunteer.

with JFS by serving dinner at the Hope Lodge for families residing there while undergoing outpatient cancer treatments and services. Barbara is always there to put a smile on people's faces and make challenging times a bit sweeter. We are so grateful for her dedication to JFS, and congratulations to Barbara Jonas for being 'Jewish Family Services' very first volunteer of the year!



Barbara is always there to put a smile on people's faces and make challenging times a bit sweeter

Barbara helps organize and serve seniors at 'Jewish Family Services' Kosher Food Pantry. Families throughout greater Charleston visit the pantry twice a month and receive fresh and packaged items that are delivered to seniors or picked up at the Sherman House in West Ashley. Barbara also volunteers



TESTIMONIALS



While there's no adequate way to express it, please know I'm eternally grateful for everything you've done for my daughter and me. Without a doubt, your generosity & ability to make what was impossible possible, is one of the greatest gifts I've ever been given. I never would have imagined that I'd find myself in such dire shape but here I am. It pains me that I'm unable to provide all the services that my child needs. I hope you know what a difference you're making—you've impacted our lives in ways that can never be measured. I could not have survived this time without your support."

Anonymous



As a child, I remember putting money in the "pushke" (blue box) each week and being told that when the box was filled it would be sent to help (the newly created country of) Israel and the Jewish people who were building it. However, little did I know that box filled with my small coins was also being used in the community for various Jewish organizations and to help those who needed help or who could not help themselves. All these years later, giving is still critical. I am fortunate to be able to give time and more than the small coins I gave as a child. Supporting Jewish Family Services of Greater Charleston is a way of providing "community" for those who might otherwise not find that enrichment in their lives.

E.L.



Holocaust survivors face unique struggles as they age. The loss of independence and control that occurs later in life can be jarring for people who once had their autonomy taken from them.

A lovely 97-year-old Holocaust survivor living by herself in an apartment was managing ok until arthritis was making activities of daily living increasing difficult. Through our senior outreach program this person now has a companion three days a week giving her the assistance she needs to remain living in her apartment.

Anonymous

TESTIMONIALS



Thank you, and thank you again for all the help and peace of mind you provided. We will never forget your kindness.

Anonymous



I am very thankful to Jewish Family Services when the chips were down and we were very much affected by the virus. They came through and bridged a gap so that we didn't have to be homeless and I will forever remember

R.A.



I am writing to let you know how appreciative I am to have Friday Shabbat at the Sherman House. We look forward to saying the blessings every Friday for the people who attend. This is the first time since I am living here (4 years) that this is being done. Thank you to the Charleston Jewish Federation and the Sherm House for doing this.

S.M.



I enjoy Kiddush for a couple of reasons: We are welcoming in Shabbat together. It is not the same when you do it by yourself in your apartment. Also, we are coming together once a week for an hour. Otherwise, we would rarely see one another, except in passing. This coming together helps us to be community.

J.M.



Oftentimes we receive calls from adult children who are managing the care of their mother/father long distance. One case in particular was very moving.

A gentleman had lost his wife of 60 plus years, who was serving as his caregiver due to his diagnosis of congestive heart failure and Alzheimer's. His devoted grandson took leave from his job and was managing the care of his beloved grandfather. The family had exhausted their funds caring for this dear man and had accumulated significant debt. The home health care agency was about to terminate services.

Through our senior outreach program, a home visit was made to assess the situation. We were able to give financial assistance which enable the continuation of the home health to supplement the grandson's care. This intervention had a direct impact for this devoted family struggling to provide the best care for their loved one.

J.H.

GRATITUDE

JFS expresses sincere appreciation to every person and organization whose financial support helps make possible our work to serve the community.

FOUNDATION SUPPORTERS

Bill, Jennie, Conni & Harry Ackerman Foundation

The Leon Levine Foundation

Carolina Foundation for Jewish Seniors

Leslie L. Alexander Foundation

Charleston JCC Foundation

Nathan and Marlene Addlestone Foundation

Charleston Jewish Federation

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Hebrew Benevolent

TD Charitable Foundation

Hebrew Orphan Society

The Good People Fund

Henry and Sylvia Yaschik Foundation

Trident United Way (EFSP)

Jewish Federations of North America

Mailing address:
P.O. Box 31805
Charleston, SC 29417

176 Croghan Spur Road Suite 103
Charleston, SC 29407

www.CharlestonJFS.com
843-614-6494



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