

MESSAGE FROM LISA MILLER, BOARD PRESIDENT

Strength to Strength

As I complete my first year as President of the Board of Directors for the Jewish Federation of Western CT, I look back on this past year in which many changes took place, and I look forward to the coming year in which we will continue to redefine and rebuild our Federation and its role in our communities both here, in Israel and worldwide.

Last year at this time, David Hill, the outgoing President, created two committees—Mission Efficiency and Organization and Structure-- to plan for the future of the Federation. Throughout the summer and into the fall, these committees met. When their tasks were completed, a Strategic Planning committee was formed. After meeting on several, Sundays, a new **Mission Statement** for our Federation, was created: **The Jewish Federation of Western CT commits to support responsive and innovative work as we move toward furthering the advancement of our Jewish values locally, in Israel and worldwide.**

In addition, a **Vision Statement** was also written: **The Jewish Federation of Western CT aspires to be an organization with steadfast and sustained commitment. We strive to be an open and embracing community that fosters and strengthens our connections with fellow Jews.**

The **Five Pillars** on which our Federation will now focus are: **Jewish Education; the Vulnerable Population; Israel and Overseas; Emergency Response; Jewish Identity and Inclusion.**

I would be remiss if I did not thank each and every person who worked on these committees and gave of their time, their input and their dedication to the success of the Jewish Federation.

As the Federation continues a period of transition, a review of the past year indicates the organization meets the vital needs of our local Jewish communities, while connecting our Jewish community with world Jewry.

This year our Federation continued and expanded efforts to communicate with our constituents through multiple channels including our newspaper **Connections**, our webpage ([www. JFed.net](http://www.JFed.net)), Facebook, E Blasts, town newspapers, synagogue newsletter, and any way we could to get our message out. Our webpage has been revamped to let people know who we are and to highlight upcoming events and programs as well as an easy and efficient way to donate.

The Jewish Film Festival of Western CT, in its third year, enjoyed its most successful season yet. Under the leadership of Arlene Kreinik, with support of an active and involved committee, the Festival was attended by more than 300 people. Plans are already underway for the 2015 season, which promises to be the best season ever!

In addition to the Jewish Film Festival, a number of other programs took place over the course of the year. A few of the programs included the following:

Micah Halpern, a political and foreign affairs commentator and writer of the Micah Report (micahalpern.com) spoke at both our Major Gifts event as well last August during the Israel Palestinian crisis. Both events were well attended and most attendees left with a better understanding of the politics of the Middle East and its impact on Jewish communities at home and in Israel.

Joyce Saltman, an expert on the therapeutic value of laughter, once again entertained at our annual Women's (and men) Brunch. Joyce has already promised to come back this year as she enjoyed herself as much as those in the audience enjoyed her!

We were also fortunate to have Nancy Spielberg, yes Steven's sister, show and discuss her documentary, **Above and Beyond**, about a group of Jewish World War II pilots, who volunteered to help Israel win its independence.

Continued: Lisa Miller

Although our Federation chaplain, Rabbi Dana Bogatz, will be leaving us to become a pulpit rabbi in Peekskill, NY, the popular Death Café will continue under the leadership of Ron Herrmann.

The Federation's preschool, Alef Bet and the PJ Library program continue to serve the families with younger children. This coming year, we hope to expand both programs.

Love 'N Knishes, our senior lunch program, successfully continued to thrive with a delicious hot lunch and a variety of entertainment every other Wednesday afternoon. We are looking forward to expanding our entertainment portion of the luncheons in the coming year.

Along with an array of programs, the Jewish Federation of Western CT responded to the call for help, as a result of the tragedies in the Ukraine, in Paris and Nepal, with an outpouring of financial support that was sent directly to JFNA, our national parent organization, which, in turn sent the monies overseas.

I would also be remiss if I didn't thank those who took the time to ensure that money raised went where it would do the most good. I would like to thank the Grants and Allocation committee, under the leadership of Larry Smotroff, for examining how we do things so that we are able to grant our funds and support our vision and mission.

It would be virtually impossible for us to provide assistance to those in need; help our youth attend camp; send PJ Library books to Jewish homes; publish the **Connections**; provide funds for Jewish education and offer a robust array of programs without our many volunteers and donors. We are extremely grateful for each and every contribution, be it large or small, as every dollar makes a profound difference, as we work together to build the future.

But we still face many challenges as we go into our next fiscal year. The fact cannot be avoided that over the last several years our campaigns have continued to decline as large donors continue to depart our community. We also face the challenges that many younger people find their futures lie beyond our communities. Our Federation is in no way unique in these challenges. In order to face these challenges, we have responded by decreasing our spending and embarking on a more active, campaign initiative. As with all organizations, there will be changes, challenges and opportunities. As we face these changes, we will meet the challenges and take full advantage of any opportunities that come our way to build and strengthen the Jewish Federation of Western CT.

As the Talmud teaches us, The Torah begins and ends with acts of caring and loving kindness. So too, does Jewish life—in our Federation communities and around the world. I hope each of you takes a little piece of the important work the Jewish Federation of Western CT is doing. Knowing how many lives we touch--everywhere, every day, I hope you will join me in the coming year with your support of the Jewish Federation of Western CT. May we go from strength to strength.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Jewish Federation, I wish you and your families a safe and restful summer.

Lisa Miller, Board President

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Together, We Will Do Great Things!

By: Antonietta Hallet, Director

What a busy spring it has been! After a less than desirable and downright crazy winter, Mother Nature finally rewarded us with a beautiful spring. We are thankful that our community supported us through the winter, though, at times, some of our programs had to be rescheduled. This spring, our community has been able to join us for some super programs!

Over the last few months we have had some fantastic offerings! We began with Betty Hoffman who presented on *The History of Jewish Connecticut*, followed by a Mediterranean cooking demonstration with Chef Jerry. The highlights of our programming involved director Nancy Spielberg showing her unique and historically accurate documentary *Above and Beyond*, about the Israeli Air Force, followed by a fun breakfast presentation by baseball great and former NY Yankee player, Ron Blomberg!

These and some of our other programs have been made possible in part, to generous donations by anonymous donors. We are very grateful for their continued support of our Jewish community and the great work that we do.

We are gearing up for a new season filled with dynamic speakers along with programming to attract young and mature audiences alike! We will be hosting Bubble Mania on Sunday, June 30 at 3:00 PM and it will be a real treat for all ages! You really have to see it to believe it! The community is invited to join us.

It has been a year of both challenge and opportunity. Through it all, you, our dedicated supporters have been the driving force behind our continued success. As we begin the new campaign for 2015/2016 we are counting on you to help us continue our great work in this community.

It is an exciting time to experience a new chapter as we move forward. Our goal is to improve upon some things, continue what we do great, and to try some new things that we think will inspire positive community support!

We encourage you to get involved. Be a part of this awesome new challenge to help us continue supporting this great community. Help us to preserve the Jewish legacy for future generations. Help us to tell our positive story, as we strive for full participation and support in our Jewish community. Inspire one person to join us as we move ahead with your positive support. One person can make a difference! Together we will create a brighter and stronger future. Together, we will do great things!

We hope that you will join us on Sunday, August 30, 2015 at 10:00 AM to kick-off this new campaign year, and to help us make this the best year ever!

BROWNSTEIN JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE

June 2015 Annual Report

By: Debby Horowitz, Director

Brownstein Jewish Family Service (JFS) provides adults, children and families with quality information and referrals to enhance their independence and emotional and physical well being. Dynamic programming is also one of the hallmarks of JFS.

- During the past year, JFS fielded over 1,800 phone calls from people of all ages looking for help.
- Over \$20,000 in aid was given through our JFS Fund for Jews in Need to help with food, rent, mortgage payments, therapy, health insurance, medical and dental bills, heating oil, utilities, car repairs, and emergency home repairs.
- Food insecurity continued to be one of our community's biggest challenges. We fielded over 120 inquiries about food stamps, assistance and food pantries.
- We offered monthly SNAP (food stamp) screenings and got dozens of people on assistance programs for food and health insurance.
- We distributed over \$6,000 worth of grocery gift cards to community members.
- More than 1,570 hot kosher meals were enjoyed by seniors at the Love & Knishes Lunch Program, with an average of 58 guests at each program.
- Rabbi Dana Z. Bogatz, our JFS Chaplain, made over 400 contacts and visited dozens of people in local hospitals, 10 facilities and private homes.
- Through Skype and phone calls Rabbi Dana has been in touch with many family members, supporting them as they struggle with caring for their elderly. Often she is the only Rabbi with whom they have contact.
- The popular Death Café met 20 times.
- Purim packages were delivered to dozens of isolated and elderly clients

Other JFS programs included:

- Everything You Wanted to Know About Mental Illness and Substance Use Disorders, But Really Didn't Want to Ask in a Room Full of People
- Love Languages
- Bullying and Domestic Violence
- Hanukkah Helper Holiday Prep Class
- Support groups, seminars and workshops for Alzheimer's, bereavement, diabetes management, Powerful Tools for Caregivers, Dialogue with the Docs, Veterans Benefits and flu clinics

JFS provides hope, healing, vital services and support to the entire community. Feel free to call anytime for information or referrals or to enjoy one of the many programs offered.

Continued: Brownstein

Some Quotes

"I am very low on oil...less than 1/8 tank. It is getting burned up faster than usual because of this weather. I'm concerned because my baby girl is in this house all day long while I am working. I worry it will run out when I am at work tomorrow or that I will wake up to frozen pipes tomorrow morning. Thank you for your help."

"I never thought I would be a person turning to others for help. My whole life I've been helping others and giving to those who need. It is a humbling experience to write this letter to you. Thank you for listening and for always being there for me and others."

"I could use some prayers right about now. My son and I are on a hair raising adventure, as we'll leave our home of 6 years and pack everything and live "in transit" without a permanent residence from now until we can find an affordable rental. If you have any leads for us of people that might have some space for us to help fill in some gaps I would appreciate it."

"During the challenging times I've been using diesel fuel. It's more expensive per gallon but more affordable when I can't meet a 100 gallon minimum purchase plus it's a heavy and messy to deal with. (I'm not looking forward to the cold weather)... "

In January, Rabbi Dana wrote to the adult daughter of a nursing home resident *"I picked up a little cake, and when I got to her room, your dad had just arrived with a box of bakery cookies. We sang Happy Birthday and had a little party. Your mom was wonderful, said that she had a great day - everyone was so nice to her.*

Hang on to moments like these, they will sustain you."

And the adult daughter wrote back *"Thank you so much! I can't tell you how much that has made my day. My sister and I called in the morning and we both felt so distressed to hear that she had had a bad night. I am so thankful it turned out better. Thank you so much for everything you have done for my mother. I so appreciate it."*

"I heard that Rabbi Dana went to see my mom at Beacon Brook in Naugatuck the other day. She has been failing lately from her cancer, and Rabbi Dana was singing to her in bed, and mom was humming along. It warms my heart, as she has been so unresponsive of late, and I wanted to get a message to Rabbi Dana to thank her for stopping by. I know it meant the world to my mom." - Anonymous

"I want to tell you that the Death Café conversation from the group recently was a great experience, and I'm really glad that I attended. I hope that Death Café is going to help make a big change in our culture and in others as well. The stigma that our society has with a fear of dying is really unhealthy, which is causing terrible problems for individuals and as a society as a whole. My prayer and hope that this movement will gain momentum so that more people will be able to live their lives to the fullest. So, I thank you for your leadership with forming the groups, and I will keep you and Death Café in my mind, and heart and will share my experience with others in my life, with hope the movement will grow. Thanks again and I will keep in touch."

God Bless and Shalom, Tom

William & Audrey Walzer Alef Bet Preschool 2014-2015

By: Elaine Beitman, Director

Alef Bet Preschool meets all Core Curriculum Standards

- Our well used early childhood lending library established in 2010 to promote literacy and encourage socialization now houses over 350 books. Families donate books throughout the year.
- Our ninth annual Mom's Night Out was attended by over 175 women and raised over \$10,000.
- Alef Bet children are introduced to Hebrew, Spanish, and sign language as an integral part of the curriculum.
- Forty parents, grandparents and friends attended our annual four year old parent child Seder.
- The Alef Bet Preschool's four-year-old class selected Children to Children, an organization that collects slightly used clothes to distribute to underprivileged children, as their class tzedakah project. Large boxes were filled weekly. The three-year-old class collected food every week for the Southbury Food Bank. They collected over 25 bags of food.
- Parent literacy volunteers continue to work in the classrooms weekly.
- Our Shabbat Parent Program continues weekly in all the classrooms.
- *Handwriting Without Tears*, a multisensory, hands on handwriting and readiness program has been expanded to include both three and four year old classes.
- The Enrichment Program was enhanced Yoga with Lori McGovern, Spanish with Senora Farfan, puppet making workshops with Robin McCahill and field trips.
- The Alef Bet Preschool enjoyed the following special programs sponsored by the Parents Committee and Mom's Night Out:
 - ⇒ Riverside Reptiles
 - ⇒ Nappy's Shadow Puppets
 - ⇒ Intuit 2 Arts
 - ⇒ Bossy Frog Concert

FOUNDATION

2014-2015 -- A Year In Review

By: Donna Albertario, Foundation Administrator

Larry Smotroff, Vice & Grants Chair

Every July the Foundation begins its year of work with a new budget. In December of the immediately preceding year the Foundation's spending policy is applied to the overall resources in order to generate the total amount of available dollars to support Federation staff, Federation programs, Grants and Allocations. This past year, 56% of the available funds, or \$595,501, were advanced to the Federation. Included were the specific donor funds supporting programs such as: the William and Audrey Alef Bet Preschool; The Brownstein Jewish Family Service, support for Jews in Need, and Grocery Gift Cards; the Traurig Senior lunch program - Love and Knishes; Jewish Chaplaincy and Death Café; Jewish Lego; Jewish Genealogy; and, the Fay and Max Katz Yom HaShoah Program. The remaining 43%, or of the available dollars were managed by the Foundation to support overseas initiatives, domestic projects, scholarships, camperships, and local Jewish Education.

Overseas Initiatives (\$203,846)

- Operation of the Brinker Maxillo-Facial Dental Clinic at **Emek Hospital**
- Support for non-institutionalized handicapped children from **Keren Malki's** Therapies at Home program.
- Project 365 providing "staycations" for 25 children in residential facilities whose home-life is too destructive for home visits through **Jerusalem Hills Therapeutic Center**.
- Leadership-Mentoring Program promoting tolerant Judaism, social responsibility and respect for "others" in society. **Kol Israel Haverim's** program offers training, community service projects, and scholarships for higher education for those in the poorest neighborhoods in Afula.
- **Leket Israel's** Meal Rescue Program provides 24, 200 meals to residents of Afula/Gilboa solely through Foundation's support.
- Youth Leadership through Sports provides leadership skills to Arab and Israeli students through team sport programs run by the **Peres Center for Peace**.
- Keshet Net increases self-sufficiency and improved employment opportunities for women in the former Soviet Union by providing computers, software and training designed by **World ORT**
- Haredi Workforce Integration Program initiated by **IT Works** helps provide low-income men with vocational training and professional tools to obtain employment in the hi-tech sector and break the cycle of poverty
- Ray of Light Program creates a connection between the children facing blindness and other disabilities with Jewish children in the US. To build awareness and raise funds for children with disabilities, activities such as Swim-a-Thons raise funds for the Hydrotherapy Center, Tactile Books, and 3D Cards for the children of **Keren Or**.

Jewish Education (\$175,000)

A priority for the Federation-Foundation is support for Jewish Education. Allocations to the regions' formal educational programs support 506 students. In addition, this year, the Foundation was able to award a

one-time Tuition Assistance stipend of \$4,000 for each school to administer on behalf of families in need. One student received a "Travel to Israel" award. Twelve students received assistance to attend college. Camperships were awarded to 214 Jewish campers for the summer of 2015. Finally, 2 young emissaries from Israel visited B'nai Israel Religious School each month sharing their stories of life in Israel.

Continued: Foundation

Local Projects (\$70,475)

- **Camp Laurelwood** - One Happy Camper program provides a non-need based stipend to participate in the Jewish camping experience at Laurelwood.
- **Susan B. Anthony** - Community Education Program educated 150-200 children in the Torrington area about bullying and domestic violence.
- **Waterbury Youth Service** System received money toward their Emergency Service program
- **Southbury Mobile Food Pantry** received funding to support monthly food distribution in Southbury to approximately 200 families each month.
- **B'nai Israel Religious School** - Roots and Resilience Program for the 6th and 7th grade.
- **Bais Yaakov High School** - Curriculum Advancement Program provides teacher training.
- **Waterbury Arts Magnet School** - European Conflict Tour III provides financial assistance for the student government body to tour Poland, Austria and Germany. Upon their return, students produce a documentary portraying their interviews and pictorials.
- **Literacy Volunteers of Greater Waterbury** received assistance for the Waterbury Reads and Hear My Voice programs. 500 books will be purchased for approximately 100 children and the students taking English as a second Language write stories which are bound and distributed at their end of year celebration.
- **Yeshiva University/Einstein Medical Center** received an award for their MyJewishGenetic Health.com online education series. This is an important website for all Jewish people to visit.
- **Danbury's PJ Library** received funding for two projects: Mezzuzah Making Class and a Hanukkah Party for youngsters in the program and their families. This is a great way to introduce families to the PJ Library program offering story books on Jewish culture and issues surrounding Jewish families and their children.
- **Helping Hands Chore Service** provides services for seniors to receive assistance in getting to medical appointments and to provide routine chores at a significantly reduced rate in the Winsted community.
- **Safe Haven** - Community Education and Prevention Program received money to expand their domestic violence education program to include the school districts in the towns of Southbury and Naugatuck.
- **AIPAC Conference for Teens** - B'nai Israel requested money to subsidize 10 teenagers from the region to attend the three day conference next spring to become inspired by, and advocates for, Israel.

Some donor funds support other Jewish and non-Jewish organizations. Distributions were made to support four area food banks in Waterbury; the Jewish Cemetery Association; B'nai Shalom Synagogue; B'nai Brith's Project Hope, which provides Passover Packages to those in need during the holidays; CT College; Gaylord Hospital; and the Traurig Scholarship Fund at UCONN. Of the \$1,083,015 made available by the spending policy formula for FY 2014-2015, all was awarded as illustrated above for worthy initiatives, projects, and causes; approximately \$31,000 remained and will be reinvested in the principal fund balance, earning additional income to be used in years to come.

JEWISH FEDERATION FISCAL 2014 INFORMATION

Campaign Contributions

Audited Financials	<i>Unrestricted Contributions</i>	255,551
	<i>Designated Contributions from Foundation</i>	60,638
	<i>Restricted/Designated Contributions</i>	<u>2,055</u>
	Total Campaign Contributions	318,244

Fran Lepore, Controller

Revenue

<i>Designated Grants from Foundation</i>	319,454
<i>Administrative Income from Foundation</i>	193,515
<i>Alef Bet Programs</i>	94,974
<i>Senior Lunch Program</i>	14,747
<i>JCC Programs Income</i>	13,508
<i>United Way - JFS Supplement</i>	5,048
<i>Miscellaneous Income</i>	<u>640</u>
Total Revenue	641,886

Total Campaign Contributions & Revenue **960,130**

Program & Support Services

Program Services

<i>Jewish Family Services</i>	274,553
<i>Alef Bet Preschool</i>	207,427
<i>Jewish Community Center</i>	105,718
<i>Grants & Allocations to Community Organizations</i>	108,084
<i>Other Community Services</i>	<u>82,269</u>
Total Program Services	778,051

Support Services

<i>Management & General</i>	85,448
<i>Fundraising & Newsletter</i>	<u>112,544</u>
Total Support Services	197,992

Total Program & Support Services **976,043**

<i>Income from Jewish Center LLC</i>	11,167
<i>Loss on Disposal of Prop & Equip</i>	(1,041)
<i>Transfer of Endowment Funds to Federation Reserve</i>	<u>50,336</u>

Total Contributions & Revenue

Over Program & Support Services **44,549**

FOUNDATION FISCAL 2014 INFORMATION**Income****Contributions**

<i>Restricted/Designated</i>	40,629
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<i>Unrestricted</i>	3,570
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Total Contributions	44,199
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Revenue

<i>Investment Income</i>	2,492,875
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<i>Administrative Income</i>	215,272
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Total Revenue	2,708,147
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Total Contributions & Reve-	<u>2,752,346</u>
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Allocations & Expenses

<i>Grants - Federation Cul- tural & Social Service Programs</i>	319,454
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<i>Grant to Fund Federation</i>	50,336
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<i>Camperships & Scholar-</i>	102,760
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<i>Grants - Outside Local</i>	88,230
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<i>Overseas Allocations</i>	87,514
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<i>Designated Campaign Contributions to Federa- tion</i>	60,638
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<i>Management , General &</i>	21,747
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<i>Administrative Fees -</i>	193,515
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Total Allocations &	924,194
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Total Reinvestment of Non-Allocated In- come	1,828,152
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Total Allocations, Expenses &	<u>2,752,346</u>
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