

# Family MATTERS

Spring 2016, Vol. 5, No. 1

## Meet our New President and Chief Executive Officer, Robert Marmor



After a comprehensive, thoughtful, local and national search, the JFS Board of Directors is pleased to announce the hiring of our new President and Chief Executive Officer Robert Marmor.

Bob has a Master's in Social Work from Columbia University, School of Social Work and an MBA from University of Massachusetts, Eisenberg School of Management. He most recently served as the Chief Strategic Officer at the new Silver Springs, Maryland office of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), a position which he held for over a year. Prior to that, Bob was President and CEO of Jewish Family Service of Western Massachusetts. When he started at JFS in 2001, the agency had one location in Springfield, MA, seven staff and a budget of \$450,000. Despite being lean, the agency helped nearly 1,000 people annually. With Bob's vision and leadership, after 14 years, the agency now has four locations, 42 employees and a budget close to \$3 million. They help several thousand people each year.

"Bob's experience in the social services field, both as the CEO of a community-based agency and on the national level, and his passion for serving vulnerable populations will be terrific assets to JFS of Northeastern New York and the community," said Lee Sherman, President and CEO of AJFCA (Association of Jewish Family and Children's Agencies).

"I am honored to be selected as the new CEO of this historic organization, and look forward to both leading JFS and joining the community," said Bob.

## ASK JFS – How can I help my brother grieve?

*My brother and I were very close to our mother, who after a long illness, died last month at age 83. I am concerned that he has not cried or expressed any strong feelings since her death and even at her funeral. When he sees me cry or when I talk about how much I miss our mom and how hard it has been for me since she died, he gets annoyed and dismissive. I know he loved our mother. And I imagine he must miss her; they were very close. Is there anything I can do to help him grieve?*

**A**Very often family members express their sorrow and mourn quite differently. It is helpful to realize the individualized ways in which people express their grief. Some, like your brother, internalize their feelings and do not share them. And others, like you, are much more open and expressive. It is important not to judge the way people respond to grief or to infer that they do not care as much or feel as much if they do not cry or talk about it. Similarly, just because your brother is not crying openly in front of you or talking about your mother does not mean he is not grieving when he is alone or talking with another family member or friend. The process of mourning is different for each individual, not only in how they express their sadness, but also in how long they feel their sorrow and loss. Perhaps if you give your brother more time, he eventually will be able to talk with you about your shared loss. Losing a parent is a significant life change. While your brother is coping in his own way, you might like an opportunity to talk with a bereavement counselor to gain more support at this difficult time. Trained social workers and mental health counselors are available at Haven at JFS to provide individual, family and group support. Please call us at 518-370-1666 for more information.

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# A Message from the Board President

**Family MATTERS**  
is published by Jewish Family  
Services of Northeastern  
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***"The price of doing the same old thing is far higher than the price of change."***

—Bill Clinton

As the first faint hints of spring have begun, at JFS we have begun anew as well with the culmination of an intensive year-long search. It is my great pleasure to announce to you that the Board has selected Robert Marmor as the next President and Chief Executive Officer of Jewish Family Services of Northeastern New York. And with our new leader, we embark upon the next chapter of this great organization, with our mission to imbue our service with Jewish values always in mind. Bob assumes his new role at the end of March.

As the longtime President and Chief Executive Officer at our sister agency, Jewish Family Service of Western Massachusetts, Bob was known for his innovation and leadership skills and he oversaw an era of unprecedented growth. He is very familiar with our area, having attended college here and being our neighbor for many years. He is a great fit for our needs and I'm certain that Bob will be a wonderful addition to our JFS community, our larger Jewish community and the greater Capital region.

We owe an enormous debt of gratitude to our Interim Executive Directors, Scott Hollander and Judy Avner, each of whom has served our agency with tremendous distinction during their tenures. We are extremely fortunate to be the beneficiary of their expertise and judgment during this time of transition.

Under Bob's leadership, the JFS Board is making a significant commitment to the future, one which will build upon strengths that we have sustained over many decades, but also one which will bring change. Change is never easy, but with the help of our dedicated professional staff and our network of friends and supporters like you, we look forward to the challenge.

*Linda Cohen*



## A Message from the Interim Executive Director

It has been an honor to assist JFS through its transitional period and serve as the Interim Executive Director. As the agency leader, I have come to fully appreciate the essential services and support that JFS provides to so many in the Jewish community and beyond.

Despite this being a transitional period, JFS continued to grow and meet the needs of the community.

We have embarked on a number of new and exciting partnerships with agencies in the Jewish community. JFS will be providing a special Banana Splits program and other support for students at the Hebrew Academy of the Capital District. With the support from the Jewish Federation, we will work with the Ohav Shalom Apartments to create the Village at Ohav Apartments, providing social health and wellness programs. And partnering with Ruth Pelham, founder of the Music Mobile, we are bringing special music programs to children and adults of all ages in our community. We also have enhanced our involvement with the Albany JCC, local synagogues and organizations. We have truly been on the move!

On a daily basis, JFS touches the lives of people with diverse needs and we will continue to do so with Bob's skills and leadership abilities.

*Judith Avner*

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# Long Time Former JFS Board Member Judy Rettig Passes Away

"Judy cared deeply about JFS, its work and its staff," said former board president Stephen Ribner, who served on the JFS board with Judy for over 10 years. "Her generous spirit, encouragement and strength were so meaningful to me," Ribner added.

Judy died in her home on November 29, 2015 at age 93. She was born in Philadelphia and received her medical degree from the Women's Medical College in Philadelphia. She had been the director of Medical Services for NYS Department of Mental Retardation from 1968-1989. She was also a preceptor in the Department of Ethics and a member of the Admission

Committee at Albany Medical Center.

Judy's son Ray (Ethan) Rettig and his wife Christine live in Voorheesville. Judy's dedication to JFS inspired her son Ray to take up her cause and he became a regular supporter of JFS.

While on the JFS board, Judy was the Director, Producer and writer of our Annual Celebration presentations that dramatically depicted JFS services and their impact on helping so many diverse parts of our community. "She was always in attendance especially during our most challenging times. She would invite us all to her house, feed us, and calmly help us work through the problem," said

Ribner. She was a humble donor, often providing monies to insure programs and services were delivered, without anyone knowing of her contributions. May Judy's memory always serve as a blessing and inspiration to each of us.

Those wishing to remember Dr. Rettig in a special way may make a memorial contribution to B'Yachad c/o Temple Israel, 600 New Scotland Ave, Albany 12208; Congregation Ohav Shalom, 133 New Krumkill Road, Albany, NY 12208 or to Jewish Family Services, 877 Madison Ave, Albany, NY 12208 or donate online at [jfsneny.org](http://jfsneny.org).



## New Grant Offers Nurse Drop-In Hours

JFS received a \$5,000 grant from the Frederick McDonald Trust to provide Nurse Drop-In hours at high traffic locations throughout the Albany NNORC.\* The JFS NNORC Nurse performs much-needed services such as health care screenings, blood pressure monitoring, case management and wellness programs. This grant provides an opportunity for our nurse to maximize the health and well-being of "junior seniors" and seniors in our community. Our consistent and trustworthy presence provides a level of emotional security for seniors by offering, on an ongoing basis, the ability to answer health-related questions, provide information relative to their health needs and increase compliance with healthcare providers' recommendations. We are grateful to the Frederick McDonald Trust for their generosity.

\* Neighborhood Naturally Occurring Retirement Community

## New Program at the Ohav Apartments

With generous support from the Jewish Federation of Northeastern New York, JFS is creating a new program called "The Village at Ohav Apartments" that will bring an array of programs and services to foster a culture of wellness for the residents at the Ohav Shalom Apartments.

Residents of the apartments will shape the program to assure that it is responsive to what they want. It will include social activities and gatherings, health and wellness programs, health screening opportunities and more.

If you would like to learn more about this valuable program, please contact JFS at 482-8856.

# JFS Welcomes New Board Members



**Ken Getnick** has served in many leadership positions in the Albany community, including President and Treasurer of Gideon Lodge 140, B'nai B'rith and Treasurer of B'nai B'rith Parkview Apartments and their Foundation. His current activities include serving on the Advisory Board of Compeer, an organization serving those with mental health issues, and volunteering at Ronald McDonald House and at Albany Medical Center. He is also a member of the Chaim Weizmann Society of the United Jewish Federation. When his children were younger, he volunteered with Cub Scouts, Indian Princesses and as a soccer coach. In 1997, Ken received the Albany County Volunteer Award for his service in the community. Ken is retired from Albany County Department for Children, Youth and Families. He and his wife Molly are longtime members of Congregation Ohav Shalom. They have two children and four grandchildren.



**Moses Brand** is a retired psychologist. His professional background includes working with children and families, teaching at two Capital District hospitals and designing psychometric techniques to assess memory for research sponsored by Abbott Laboratories. Moe's entire professional career has been in the Capital District. He is a member of Congregation Gates of Heaven, and has served as a trustee and later as a committee member when a preschool program was established. Moe is a graduate of Wabash College, has a graduate degree from Yeshiva University and a postgraduate certificate in family therapy from Albany Medical College. He and his wife have three children and four grandchildren.



**Scott Hollander** has spent over 40 years in the Human Resources and Quality Management fields working with start-up companies and those undergoing rapid and dramatic change. After his retirement, Scott was the Interim Executive Director of the Sidney Albert Albany Jewish Community Center for nine months. He recently served as the Interim Executive Director at JFS. His knowledge and investment in the agency and its mission will be an asset to the JFS board. Scott has served as a volunteer and board member with several nonprofit organizations in Albany County, New York and in Berkshire County in Massachusetts. He has been a board member at the Albany Jewish Community Center and also Congregation Ohav Shalom in Albany.



**Matthew Shapiro** is the Public Engagement Coordinator for the National Alliance on Mental Illness-New York State (NAMI-NYS), where he has worked since 2008. Matthew is also the host of the television program *Mental Health Now*, which is produced by the Town of Colonie. Originally from New York City, Matthew has lived in the Capital Region since 1994 when he began attending SUNY Albany, where he received a degree in Judaic Studies and served as the President of the campus Hillel. He is proud to have the opportunity to serve the Capital Region's Jewish Community with his appointment to the JFS Board of Directors. Matthew and his wife Jessica live in Slingerlands and are members of Congregation Beth Emeth, where Matthew also serves on their Social Action Committee.



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## JFS Teams with Albany Public Library

A creative collaboration between the JFS Albany NNORC staff and the John J. Bach Branch of the Albany Public Library resulted in the launch of a new program called *Library Links*—a library materials delivery service for NNORC residents who are permanently or temporarily homebound due to disability or health problems.

By calling the Bach Branch, homebound seniors who like to read books and magazines, watch DVDs or listen to “talking books” and music, can arrange to have items delivered to and picked up from their home by a corps of like-minded volunteer bibliophiles.

Books are delivered in a Library Links tote that seniors can keep. JFS created a bookmark for the program, which contains a “story” of the many ways we help seniors in the community.

“Since its February 1st launch, we’ve had an overwhelming response from seniors interested in participating in the program, and it has garnered much praise from the larger community,” said Michelle Dannenhoffer-Cau, NNORC Outreach & Community Care Coordinator. “It’s incredibly gratifying to identify and fulfill such an important need for so many of our residents.”

Library Links  
Bookmark



The story began with a request for **help with a Medicare form**, which led to a **home visit** where we learned that you crochet and that your husband recently died...**we started talking**...you said you don't get out much, that you don't drive, but you love to read and **could use some company**...we met each week at your home and **our nurse stopped by** to check your blood pressure and helped you better understand your medications...now we're **bringing you handouts** from the NNORC Breakfast Club and you're toying with attending next month...**we'll help to get you there** and bring you home.

**We're your Albany NNORC.**  
It's what we do and we get so much out of our relationships with you.

*Your NNORC Team*



**We're here for you.**

Give us a call: 514-2023

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