



Family MATTERS

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JFS to Celebrate Three Women of Tikkun Olam

Mara Ginsberg, Rabbi Beverly Magidson and Chanie Simon

On September 8, 2016, JFS will honor Mara Ginsberg, Rabbi Beverly Magidson and Chanie Simon for their outstanding contributions to making our world a better place.

JFS demonstrates and embraces the Jewish value of *tikkun olam*—repairing the world—in all of our community based work. The Women of Tikkun Olam Celebration recognizes the dedication and leadership of our honorees. They will be presented the Anshei Weiss Community Builders Award. Past recipients of this award include The Golub Family, Jerry & Ilene Sykes, Michael Castellana, Steve Lobel, Morris and Esther Massry, Mark Sullivan and Michael McNulty.

“It is very flattering and humbling to be honored by JFS as a Woman of Tikkun Olam. The work of JFS is by its very nature repairing our community and I am but one person connected to them and the community in which we all live,” said Ginsberg, Founder and President of the non-profit organization To Life!.

As a breast cancer survivor, Ginsberg founded To Life! to provide comprehensive education and support services to individuals and their families living and affected by breast cancer. Ms Ginsberg has been a practicing attorney for over 30 years. She is a Partner at the Albany law firm of Hinman, Straub, P.C., where she provides legislative, regulatory and legal services for clients in a variety of areas including health care, technology and education. She is also on the Board of Directors of the Jewish Federation of Northeastern New York and is an active member of women’s philanthropy.

As Director of Chaplaincy Services at the Jewish Federation of Northeastern New York and Religious Coordinator at Daughters of Sarah Nursing Center


in Albany, Rabbi Beverly Magidson embraces Tikkun Olam daily. “I am very honored to be a JFS Woman of Tikkun Olam,” said Magidson. “JFS has long been THE agency for promoting tikkun olam in our community. Chaplaincy Services began there, and as a program we were committed to reaching those Jewish seniors in long-term care facilities. JFS’s existence reminds us that you don’t have to be a rabbi to be engaged in tikkun olam!”

Rabbi Magidson served as Jewish Chaplain at the Capital District Psychiatric Center and Albany Medical Center and as Rabbi of Congregation Beth Shalom in Clifton Park. In July, 2016, she was appointed by Albany County Executive Dan McCoy’s Albany County Interfaith Coalition to address interfaith and interracial concerns.

In 2011, Chanie Simon moved to Bethlehem with her husband, Rabbi Zalman Simon, to expand the Jewish services being offered by the Bethlehem Chabad. After a couple of years they realized that a kosher food pantry was needed to serve the greater Capital Region. Under the auspices of Rabbi Rubin and the Capital Chabad, the Shalom Food Pantry was launched, which she currently oversees. “I am humbled to be recognized by an organization as venerable as JFS,” said Simon. “I am proud of the services that both of our Jewish organizations provide to the local community by assisting the underprivileged members in the Capital Region.”

Ms. Simon is Co-Director of the Bethlehem Chabad, running a myriad of programs including the Jewish Educational Program (JEP) Kids Club, Women’s classes, and Shabbat and holiday programs.

We are proud to present Mara, Rabbi Bev and Chanie with the Anshei Weiss Community Builders Award. They truly embrace the spirit of this award: serving humanity with humility.

Join Us! September 8, 2016 from 6:00-8:00 p.m. at SUNY Polytechnic Institute, 257 Fuller Road, Albany. For corporate sponsorships, to join the honorary committee or for tickets, please call 518-482-8856 or visit jfsneny.org. 

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New Harmony Between JFS and Community Musician Ruth Pelham

A new partnership has formed between JFS and musician-educator Ruth Pelham who, for decades, put her Jewish values into practice through song-filled programs, neighborhood empowerment projects and

community initiatives in the Capital Region and beyond.

She is the founder and creative force behind the highly esteemed Music Mobile and from her perch as “artist in residence,” Ruth weaves together the JFS core value, *tikkun olam* (repairing the world) with messages of peace, love and respect.

JFS, as part of its community programs, has sponsored a variety of free Ruth Pelham concerts and workshops at the JCC’s Camp Olam and Camp Tov, Temple Israel’s Camp Givah, the Bet Shraga Hebrew Academy, and the B’Yachad Religious Schools of Congregation Ohav Shalom and Temple Israel. The programs feature Pelham’s original songs and infuse her exuberant spirit that calls for hope and healing in these challenging times. Like JFS, Ruth’s passionate embrace of *tikkun olam* echoed as hundreds of children sang and clapped along at her performances.

During Older American’s Month this past May, the JFS Albany NNORC (Neighborhood Naturally Occurring Retirement Community) tapped into Pelham’s longtime work with senior adults. NNORC residents constructed “memory sticks” from bottle caps, nails and pieces of wood and helped Pelham write an upbeat song about the power and pride of aging called “Remember Well.” Attendees Mimi Kolker and Lenore Kesten stood arm-in-arm and reflected on the workshop topics of memory, affection and independence. Kolker said, “We all enjoyed writing the song together. I’ll take the word-sheet home and sing it, and maybe I’ll remember the melody!”

With Ruth’s programs well underway and more in the works, this new collaboration is a win-win for both partners, as well as for the Jewish community and the community at-large. “Music has always been a powerful means of communicating values integral to our Jewish souls.

Joining with Ruth is a natural expression of *tikkun olam*.

Ruth’s spirit and music embody the beauty of living Jewish values through the work at JFS,” said Judith Avner, JFS Director of Senior Adult and Community Programs.

For more information about JFS and its programs with Ruth Pelham, contact Jewish Family Services at 482-8856 or email info@jfsneny.org.



Joshua Fisher, former Camp Givah counselor; Ruth Pelham; and Justin Morris who attended the music workshop with Ruth and the campers.


If you build it they will come! The Village at Ohav Sholom Apartments is Thriving

The residents at the Ohav Sholom Apartments have spoken and JFS delivered. With funding from the Jewish Federation of Northeastern New York, JFS has been bringing an array of programs to foster a culture of wellness for the residents and they are showing up in great numbers.

"This is exactly the kind of programming people have been asking for," said Stacey Pacuk, Service Coordinator at the Ohav Apartments. "With JFS coordinating, it takes the onus off the tenants to plan and organize a regular schedule of activities. The residents know they can simply make suggestions without the burden of planning."

There are roughly 150 tenants at the Ohav Apartments, many of whom no longer drive or get out to socialize. While some of the seniors have developed friendships in the building, others stick to themselves. The Village at Ohav is fostering a community by helping to reduce isolation and enhance wellness through a variety of offerings. The first program, "Lunch and a Movie," featured Jersey Boys and drew nearly 45 people. Several people stayed after the movie to brainstorm future programming.

Since then, JFS has provided a blood pressure clinic, so seniors could speak with a nurse and get their blood pressure checked, and hosted an ice cream social! Earlier this year a complementary income tax prep was offered in cooperation with AARP Tax Prep and Congregation Ohav Shalom. The list of suggestions keep coming as do the residents. We're already planning a flu shot clinic for the fall.

The Ohav Sholom Apartments are currently being remodeled; construction will be complete in December 2016. At that time there will be an additional 50 apartments available. For rental questions please rental office at 518-489-5531 or visit ohavsholomapts.org. For information about the Village at Ohav program, please call JFS at 482-8856. 



JFS Partners with the PRIDE Center of the Capital Region

This fall, JFS will lead a 10-week mental health and wellness group for LGBTQA (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning and Asexual, Allied) young adults ages 18-24. The group, called THRIVE, is geared toward supporting young adults transition into adulthood. It will focus on social interaction and give participants coping and stress management skills that will help them with new endeavors like entering the workforce, starting a relationship and building their social network.

This is an excellent opportunity to support young adults in our community. The PRIDE Center offers a range of supportive services for youth and adults and THRIVE bridges the gap between these two age groups, specifically targeting those age 18-24. "Despite progressing societal acceptance about LGBTQA individuals, these young adults experience higher social anxiety, difficulty with interpersonal relationships, trouble acclimating to adulthood and insecurity around entering the job market," said Nancy Dunn, clinician at Jewish Family Services. "The THRIVE group will be a confidential and interactive environment to help young adults build confidence in new life endeavors."

Prior to coming to JFS, Nancy led the THRIVE groups at the PRIDE Center under a mental health grant from 2012-2015. Now at JFS, it was natural for her to reestablish the groups as the need in the community still exists. The PRIDE Center welcomed the partnership with JFS.

The groups will meet at JFS (877 Madison Ave, Albany) Wednesdays beginning October 26 from 6:00-7:30 p.m. A brief intake is required at the first group and the fee is \$10 per group.

Please call JFS at 482-8856 or email THRIVE@jfsnyny.org to join the group.





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Anschel Weiss Community Builders Award Celebration

Women of Tikkun Olam

Honoring Mara Ginsberg, Rabbi Beverly Magidson & Chanie Simon

Join JFS as we honor these outstanding women who share our dedication to Tikkun Olam.

Come celebrate, mingle with friends and enjoy some light fare.

Your participation supports the vital services JFS provides for individuals and families in the community.

September 8, 2016
6:00–8:00 p.m.

SUNY Polytechnic
Institute, Albany, NY



This event is open to all!

For Corporate Sponsorships,
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tickets, please call or visit:

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