

Family MATTERS

Fall 2016, Vol. 5, No. 3 Jewish Family Services of Northeastern New York

Honoring JFS Women of Tikkun Olam

Mara Ginsberg, Rabbi Beverly Magidson and Chanie Simon

Thanks to generous donors, the JFS Women of Tikkun Olam celebration raised \$30,000!

This fall over 100 community members gathered to 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 recognized the dedication and leadership of our honorees. Each received the Anshei Weiss Community Builders Award, which was established nearly 10 years ago to recognize community members who serve humanity with humility.

Monies raised will directly benefit individuals and families in the Capital Region who might not otherwise receive needed services. Through the generosity of the community, JFS will be able to provide a range of services including: home visits to the elderly to assess for safety and provide support; supervised visits for parents and children who have been separated due to divorce, substance use or trauma; individual and family counseling sessions; in-home counseling sessions for the elderly and disabled; psycho-educational groups; health/wellness workshops for seniors; and transportation for seniors so that they can maintain their independence. We are grateful to the many corporate and individual sponsors who supported our mission and our critical work in the community.

As Rabbi Bev accepted her award, she reflected, "...one can't change everything; one can only improve things in one's own corner." It has been the mission of JFS for over 160 years to improve the lives of people in the Capital Region—our own corner. The JFS Women of Tikkun Olam helped further our mission.



Scott Hollander (JFS Board Vice Chair) and Mara Ginsberg



Robert Gumson (JFS Board Member) and Rabbi Bev Magidson



Rachael Woren (JFS Board Assistant Treasurer) and Chanie Simon

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A Message from the JFS Board Chair



First, I would like to wish each of you a very joyous holiday season, and a New Year filled with health, happiness, and peace.

I am honored to serve as BoardChair for JFS, as we enter our 163rd. As a small agency we respond to individuals and families throughout the Capital Region regardless of their ability to pay for services. Whether it's counseling services, helping over 1500 seniors live independently in their homes, providing support to those experiencing grief and loss, or helping coordinate care for a family member when relatives live out of town, our skilled and caring staff are here to help. I am very proud of the work they perform each day, and I know they need our support and funds to continue delivering comfort and guidance to so many in need.

At this time of year especially, our agency is asked to serve so many families who do not have the ability to pay, and I ask your help to insure that everyone who turns to JFS gets the help they need. Your contribution will make a difference, and I respectfully ask you to consider JFS as you plan your end-of-year giving. Any amount you send, will help strengthen the family that is our community. JFS is here for you and your family, when you need us.

Warm regards, and thank you for your support,


Jocelyn Dax

JFS NNORC Partners with the Mooncatcher Project to Help Girls in Developing Countries

Imagine a group of seniors crafting something right here in Albany that will have a lifetime impact on a girl in a developing country. That's what happened when we partnered with the Mooncatcher Project.

Girls in developing countries often drop out of school when they reach puberty because they have no access to feminine hygiene products. The Mooncatcher Project in Schenectady addressed this problem by making reusable, washable menstrual pads, making going to school while menstruating possible. Educating girls is the most effective means of improving their lives and fostering economic development in third world countries.

The Mooncatcher Project partnered with the JFS NNORC to host a "Moonbee" where 31 people gathered to sew, cut, iron and assemble the reusable menstrual pad kits for girls. Using cotton flannel, waterproof Tyvek, and a highly absorbent soft bamboo fleece, the group enthusiastically made Mooncatchers which will be sent directly to girls in Uganda. Everyone was bursting with good will.

"We were absolutely delighted when NNORC Residents' Council member Julie Elson presented us with the idea of hosting a MoonCatcher Sewing Bee in the NNORC," said Michelle Dannenhoffer-Cau, NNORC Outreach and Community Care Coordinator. "It's a natural fit, because it taps into the generosity and talent of this very special, very progressive community. There's already talk about hosting the Moonbee on a regular basis, as well as exploring other service opportunities for our residents in the future." 

Two Staff Join the JFS Family



This fall we welcomed **Marla Gornstein** as the Program Assistant to the NNORC. Marla will be assisting with planning recreational activities and programs for the NNORC community.


Marla grew up in the Albany area, and returned here about ten years ago. She has a Bachelor's degree from the University of Rochester, a Master of Social Work degree from Simmons College, and has worked as a medical social worker in various hospitals in the Boston and Providence areas. After 11 years home raising her children, Marla is looking forward to working with seniors again.

"I'm looking forward to engaging the JFS NNORC community with fun and enlightening programs," said Marla.

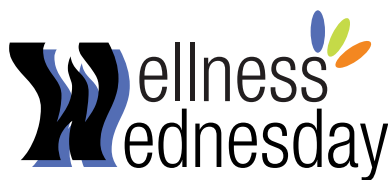


Susan Hoffman grew up in and was educated in Albany, graduating from Maria College with a nursing degree. She has working in many aspects of nursing in her career including public health, pediatrics, geriatrics, school health and mental health services.

As part of her role in the JFS NNORC, she will be out in the community doing blood pressure checks, answering senior's health questions and doing health and wellness checks with homebound seniors. "I am enjoying my work in the NNORC. It's been a pleasure getting to know the people who participate in our programs," said Susan.

Susan lives with her husband and their small dog in Delmar. She has two grown children, one local and one in Connecticut. 

New Program Helps Seniors Make Informed Decisions about Their Health




This fall we launched a new program for Albany Seniors: Wellness Wednesday—a monthly meeting that provides pertinent information and solid knowledge about topics related health and wellness.

NNORC Senior Health Education Coordinator Judi England came up with the idea for this program to help seniors take control of the choices they make about their health and wellness. "The goal of the JFS NNORC (Neighborhood Naturally Occurring Retirement Community) is all about successful "aging in place," of which good health is critical," England said. "Even though seniors are living on their own, many struggle with chronic health issues. Offering NNORC residents topics about wellness gives them useful and complimentary health information to enable them to make the best healthcare choices."

So far, the program has been a great success. The first topic entitled, "What's up down there?" was presented by Cynthia Cook an Adult Nurse Practitioner with over 12 years of experience in urology, colorectal and pelvic rehabilitation services. Seniors learned about bladder and bowel disorders, their significant impact on quality of life and how they are often undertreated due to embarrassment or lack of resources. "While not necessarily an enjoyable health topic, it's important that seniors are educated about the causes of these disorders, which in turn can lead to relatively simple solutions," England said.

In November, seniors learned about the health benefits of aromatherapy—a 6,000-year-old practice of utilizing essential oils from plants and herbs to help common problems such as insomnia, pain, tension, lack of focus, low energy and more. December's Wellness Wednesday will address strategies for managing stress during the holidays.

"The best part of this program is that seniors help shape the topics. They choose areas of interest that will help them make decisions about their health," said England. 



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NNORC

Breakfast Club

Over two years ago, the JFS NNORC launched the Breakfast Club, a monthly forum that gives seniors an opportunity to come together, nosh on a bagel, socialize and learn useful information. Guest speakers, including Congressman Paul Tonko, Assemblymember Pat Fahy and many others from the community volunteer their time to help simplify complex topics, provide new information and stimulate discussion. In the past two years, seniors have learned about a range of topics including long-term care, prescription medications, probate, chair yoga, tax issues and much more. If you would like to learn about the NNORC Breakfast Club, please call 514-2023.

December Breakfast Club: What's in a Title

Who owns what? This is a popular question when it comes to figuring out protecting your assets and making sure they go to the right person after your death. In this month's Breakfast Club, we will discuss the role of titling assets and beneficiary designations in an estate plan. These simple forms can either pave the way for a quick and easy transition of assets or upend your whole plan. Learn about the most efficient and tax friendly ways to transfer many of your assets at your death.

Presenter Kim Verner, Esq. has over 17 years of legal experience, with practice in the areas of include elder law, special needs planning, estate and tax planning, estate administration and real estate. She recently established her own law practice in Albany.

December 14, 2016
9:30–11:00 a.m.

Albany Jewish Community Center
340 Whitehall Road
Albany, NY

Bring your questions and your friends. A light breakfast will be available.

Reservations required.
Please call 514-2023 to reserve your seat.

Save January 11, 2017. Anna Gowdy from Senior Services of Albany will talk about gizmos and gadgets to help seniors remain independent.