



INTERNATIONAL  
ASSOCIATION  
OF JEWISH  
VOCATIONAL  
SERVICES

# *E-Lights: An IAJVS Publication for Executive & Professional Leadership*

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*IAJVS is a non-profit network of 29 national and international human service agencies throughout the United States, Canada, Israel, and Argentina. Our member agencies provide a vast array of services that have a direct effect on the lives of hundreds of thousands of people each year: career management, skills training, rehabilitation programs, health services, and home and community based services.*

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### Executive Director's Message

The past year was wonderfully productive for IAJVS. We proudly concluded two successful and long-running grants, secured a \$150,000 earmark from the Department of Labor, a \$40,000 grant from the Bank of America Foundation, and is considering a number of potential working partnerships for the upcoming year. I am very pleased with the prolific activities of the Professional Development Committee. The committee has organized 7 educational calls this year touching upon a variety of issues ranging from serving multi-barriered clients to staff development. I hope all of the staff at our member agencies is taking full advantage of the timely and relevant resources IAJVS offers each month.

The 2006 Annual Conference in Minneapolis promises to be very exciting. Sessions will focus on the multitude of issues facing baby boomers and older adults as well as the massive changes the American labor force will undergo in the coming years. I hope you will join us.

I wish you a healthy and happy year.

Genie Cohen

### President's Message

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to wish you all a happy, healthy 2006 filled with prosperity and peace. It is with great pride that I have the privilege of being the president of this organization. The open opportunity to share successes and lessons learned and jointly explore opportunities and learning is a unique experience for us in Toronto, Canada.

The world around us is changing at a speed previously unheard of and the need to be resilient, nimble and forward thinking is paramount to our future. As an international organization we live the reality of Tom Freedman's concepts in "The World is Flat". Together in the upcoming year we will rethink the workforce and our aging population. Labor market policies and organizational practices designed for an era of labor surplus must be reviewed and realigned with an era of labor shortages. We look forward to exploring these issues with you in depth in Minneapolis in May.

Happy New Year!!!

Karen Goldenberg

## IAJVS Board of Directors Meeting 2005

The IAJVS Board of Directors met in Phoenix, Arizona November 5 – 7 to review the achievements and challenges of the past year and discuss an agenda for the upcoming year. This year, the focus of the meeting was an exploration of the concept and practices of social entrepreneurship. IAJVS was fortunate to have Jim McClurg, Partner of Social Enterprise Alliance, as a guest speaker at the meeting. Social Enterprise Alliance is a nonprofit organization committed to guiding nonprofit organizations and funders in developing earned income strategies within their agencies. Mr. McClurg defined new trends in social entrepreneurship, the risks and advantages of such endeavors and offered the group a number of tips on starting and operating successful earned income ventures.



*Executives listen intently to Jim McClurg's ideas on social enterprise.*

The Board reviewed the organization's many accomplishments from 2005. IAJVS closed out the NEC grant that included multiple mini-grants for

## Swinging Into Action in Chicago

The television images of Hurricane Katrina translated into reality when the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago became a leading agency in the resettlement and readjustment of evacuees from the ravaged region. JVS Chicago became a partner in a consortium of five Federation-affiliated agencies whose immediate and urgent task was to solve housing, financial aid, and health related issues and help with job placement for these displaced persons.

assistive technology for youth with disabilities as well as the DEI grant of which there were 5 agencies participating for 7 years, providing computer services to people with severe disabilities. The Board approved the 2006 budget and was pleased to learn that excluding membership dues, IAJVS earned, either through awards or revenue, a total of \$364,712 in 2005.

The 2006 Annual Conference will be hosted by the JVS Division of JF&CS Minneapolis and the IAJVS Board has decided that the central focus of the conference will be issues facing baby boomers and older workers including individuals with disabilities. Sessions will examine the impending changes to the national labor market and explore emerging trends, strategies and initiatives in serving older workers.

The Fall Board meeting is a great opportunity for executives to share ideas and experiences and to strengthen the effectiveness of the whole network. IAJVS looks forward to a productive and exciting new year.

Working feverishly, with no road map for a catastrophe of this magnitude, except for experience in resettling refugees from the former Soviet Union, executives from JVS, Council for Jewish Elderly, Jewish Family and Community Service, Sinai Community Institute (a medical organization) and Jewish Children's Bureau formed the Jewish Com-

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## Swinging Into Action in Chicago

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munity Emergency Resiliency Team to provide the social services needs required by the evacuees. Quickly constituted, the team developed a structure, instituted systems, opened targeted lines of internal and external communication, and hired case managers, job developers and a housing specialist to implement and oversee the needed services.

The challenge throughout for these five complex agencies, working in collaboration with the Federation and its community partners, was to develop a comprehensive plan that would benefit the disaster victims, each agency taking an aspect of the plan that matched its unique mission. Within two months, all of this was accomplished, with the end result being a seamless referral and service system. Unexpected glitches that popped up were quickly remedied. JVS, in addition to supervising its two Katrina case managers, integrated the new evacuee employment specialist into its core job placement services, providing career counseling, job development, information on opportunities in Chicago, job leads and strategies, computer resources, marketing and ongoing support.

The unusual dynamics of this effort cannot be overstated. Impacted by an upheaval of tremendous proportions, a diverse group of family members, who have been uprooted not by choice, losing loved ones, possessions, and jobs, are transported to a city with a climate and culture foreign to them. Are they remaining or going back? How long can they live in shelters? Can they rebuild their lives? How do they recreate their identities and resume? Do they have the skills needed in Chicago's job market? The questions and personal problems require a sensitive and individualized approach to address each evacuee's job search requirements. The final chapter of this story has not been written for the evacuees, but for JVS Chicago, this mobilization, in partnership with other agencies, has created a new blueprint for exceptional service.

*Within two months, all of this was accomplished, with the end result being a seamless referral and service system.*

## JVS Minneapolis Enters A New Service Arena Helping Seniors

Today in America, the face of the workforce is changing. AARP surveys suggest as many as eight out of 10 boomer retirees expect to continue working, at least part-time. The impact that workers over age 55 will make in the workforce over the next ten years will be unprecedented. Many of these seniors will need job training and placement assistance. The senior population is the only demographic segment that will have significant employ-

ment growth in the coming years.

JVS is honored to help meet the employment needs of this growing older workforce by becoming a sponsor organization and service provider of Senior Services America, Inc. (SSAI) based out of Silver Spring, Maryland. SSAI is one of the premier national organizations of the Department of Labor's

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## JVS Minneapolis Enters A New Service Arena Helping Seniors

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Senior Community Service Employment Program. Each year SSAI offers nearly 7,000 paid-internships in 23 states by working hand-in-hand with 107 local sponsor agencies. Tony Sarimento, SSAI President and Executive Director says, "We value the employment and training experience that JVS will bring to the SSAI family."

JVS will recruit community organizations and non-profit agencies to serve as training sites. Working together with these agencies, JVS will offer paid internships that provide real-work experience and skills by placing seniors in community-service jobs. After an internship period- anywhere from a few weeks to several months- these workers will go on to find unsubsidized employment. Janet Parsons, SSAI program officer, says "JVS' proven experience in placing individuals in jobs will help them meet this standard."



Ardis Wexler, program coordinator, is proud to be a part of this program that

goes back 40 years. "The vision to assist people age 55 and older with employment concerns continues to be a vital, valid and growing need as the population ages," says Wexler.

Along with offering seniors needed job skills and training, these jobs serve community needs. Seventy-nine year old Jessie Kennedy is a wonderful example. Ms. Kennedy would not qualify for a lot of jobs. She has problems with her legs, so mobility is an issue, as is her lack of work experience. But through this program, Ms. Kennedy found a job working for the Telephone Reassurance Company. She calls over 50 shut-ins in rural West Virginia to check on their health and provide laughs, sympathy and support. Without her daily call, most of these people would be alone all day. If she is not able to reach one of these seniors, she contacts a family member or the authorities.

Many seniors, like Ms. Kennedy, enjoy not only the monetary benefits of working, but gain satisfaction and self-esteem from enhancing their community. Leah Temkin, JVS career development manager explains that, "some

seniors feel isolated and want to work for the social contact that

*Without her daily call, most of these people would be alone all day.*

employment provides, along with the need to earn a paycheck and medical benefits."

This program is open to low-income seniors. Temkin explains that doesn't mean people don't own assets. "They may have a house or a car, but little or no income. A widow, for instance, who worked in the home her whole life and now wants or needs a job, can find the job training and support she needs through JVS."

Ardis Wexler, the program coordinator, can be reached at [awexler@jvsmn.org](mailto:awexler@jvsmn.org) or 952-417-2117.

## Partnerships for Excellence in Education: F.E.G.S and NYC Department of Education Celebrate Their New Bronx Lab School

“Today, schools like the Bronx Lab School are changing the ways New York City students learn,” said New York City Schools Chancellor Joel Klein. The school’s success is a direct result of the creative, productive partnership of the NYC Department of Education, the Institute for Student Achievement, and F.E.G.S Health Human Services System, Klein said.

Klein spoke before an overflow crowd of more than 200 students, parents, teachers, and community leaders at a December 8th reception, celebrating the expansion of the Bronx Lab School at the Evander Childs Campus on East Gun Hill Road.



*Al Miller, Chief Executive Officer, F.E.G.S (left), and Joel Klein, Chancellor of Education, NYC*

“Bronx Lab is important and successful because it sets high standards. It requires the intense involvement of students and parents, and committed teachers who don’t work by the clock, but work by the kid. Bronx Lab has all these things,” Klein said. He then reminded students, “If you want to have choices in the future for a better life, you have to do the hard work now.”

“I grew up poor, lived in public housing and attended public schools, and it changed my life. I have a strong commitment to the idea that if we fail our kids, we fail all the things we believe in as a people and as a nation,” he said.

Alfred P. Miller, Chief Executive Officer for F.E.G.S, told the students, “You have to believe in yourself – but we also have to believe in you.” Miller noted that F.E.G.S has worked with New York City schools for more than four decades, and praised Chancellor Klein for bringing to the Department of Education a new flexibility, a willingness to listen, and a desire to change. “Together, we create a team that can achieve dramatic results, like those we have seen at the Bronx Lab School,” he

said.

Gerry House, President and CEO of the Institute for Student Achievement (ISA), said that one of the things that has made Bronx Lab so successful is that it is a “school that focuses on continuous improvement”. ISA, in partnership with the New York City Department of Education, supports the academic achievements and operations of small schools.

Bronx Lab, led by Marc Sternberg, Principal, is a rigorous college preparatory academy with mandatory after-school and summer curricula. The project is part of the New York City Department of Education’s “small school initiative,” spearheaded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The school encourages students to explore different interests through elective classes, internships, and learning by doing. F.E.G.S’ role, which builds upon its many years of experience, provides a range of support services that help students stay in school and prepare for careers, and creates community models of family and enrichment that complement

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## Partnerships for Excellence in Education: F.E.G.S and NYC Department of Education Celebrate Their Bronx Lab School

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the school's high academic standards. Extended day programs allow students to take part in activities including sports, chess, computer technology, fencing, photography video production, and nutrition. In the words of one student, "It is now up to me to make something

of my life and I thank the Bronx Lab School for empowering me to make that happen."



*Marc Sternberg, Principal, with some of his students.*

## Ford Motor Company Employees Volunteer at JVS MetroWest

JVS MetroWest added four new workers to its staff in June 2005. These are not typical new hires, however. They are volunteers from a special program at the Ford Motor Company.

In February 2004, the Edison Assembly Plant of the Ford Motor Company was forced to close its doors. This closure caused approximately 600 workers to be displaced. While some of these workers were transferred to other locations or accepted early retirement, the remaining employees continued to receive compensation from the company through a collective bargaining agreement; however, the company did not have any work for those unable to relocate to another state. In an effort to provide these employees with

meaningful work, while providing a benefit to various community service organizations, some 275 employees were transferred from a layoff status to a "guaranteed employment number protected status", which enabled them to serve as full-time volunteers at selected nonprofit agencies until the termination of the collective bargaining agreement in September, 2007.

After providing Ford with a list of some 30 positions ranging from secretary to job developer to accountant, seven Ford employees expressed interest in visiting JVS to learn more. Following a half-day of orientation and personal interviews, four employees decided to accept Ford's offer and volunteer their time at the agency. As volunteers, these

individuals report to work at JVS each day, but receive their regular paycheck from Ford.

Gloria Ladson, a 28-year veteran Ford employee, became a teacher's aide in one of the agency's adult literacy classrooms, teaching reading and writing to low literate public assistance recipients; Hollis Venison, a general utility worker who has been a Ford employee for the past 23 years, chose to become a Production Assistant in the J.L. Weinberg Rehabilitation Center where he helps people with disabilities develop appropriate work skills; Robyn Startek, a ten-year Ford employee, works as a teacher's aide with beginner students in an English as a Second Language class; and Robert Mayrant, a

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## Ford Motor Company Employees Volunteer at JVS

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seven-year Ford employee, chose to work as an assistant in a computer training lab for students learning English as a Second Language. All the volunteers enjoy working at JVS and find the work rewarding. Gloria Ladson says she has learned a lot from her students and feels committed to them, as she has

worked to help them change and improve. "They are always surprised when I do something for them. Each day there is something different, something special."



Through the generosity of the Ford Motor Company, and the desire of these displaced workers to help others less fortunate than themselves, JVS has reaped the benefit of enhancing its professional staff with four experienced and mature volunteers.

## Israel Elwyn and Nonprofit Partners Develop Forum of Vocational Rehabilitation Services in Israel

Israel Elwyn recently initiated the forming of a coalition of non-profit agencies in Israel that provide vocational rehabilitation services for persons with cognitive, physical, mental health and other disabilities. The purpose of the forum is to advocate for the development of community-based employment options, in-

cluding the development of legislation that will codify de-facto supported employment programs and clarify the rights and obligations of workers and employers. The forum, currently consisting of five agencies, has hired, through Israel Elwyn's offices, a part-time attorney to coordinate the forum and work with govern-

ment agencies and Knesset committees on legislation. Plans call for additional agencies to be recruited into the forum, and for undertaking other areas of advocacy for the working rights of persons with special needs.

## JVS Baltimore Connects Jewish Teen Volunteers

Baltimore's Jewish Vocational Service (JVS), in collaboration with the Jewish Volunteer Connection (JVC) has been awarded a grant from the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council to provide leadership opportunities for teens with developmental disabilities. JVS will recruit 20

teens for meaningful community service activities that provide leadership development training. The Volunteer Connection will place the teens in volunteer programs coordinated through their Commitment to Service Initiative. In addition, JVS will provide disability awareness training

for all participants. This effort marks the first collaboration between JVS and a new Federation agency.

## Giving Back in Cleveland

A year after the Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland was founded in 1903, the very first grant that was established was for college financial aid. In 1904, Mrs. H. Black donated the hefty sum of \$2,500 to assist students with their college education. That was a significant sum of money in those days when tuition ran about \$100.00 a year.

A century later, the Joint Educational Loan Committee (JELC) continues its mission of assisting Jewish students with financial aid for college. The JELC offers interest-free loans, grants and family named scholarships. Funding comes from the interest on educational funds from the Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland, loan repayments and family-named scholarship funds. Since 1995, the JELC has increased its distributions from \$70,000 a year to over \$700,000 this year to 240 students. The goal of the JELC is to help students become self-sufficient and ultimately encourage them to give back to the community, either financially or through volunteer work.

This year, the JELC focus is to grow the family-named scholarship base since these funds last in perpetuity as only the interest generated each year is used to make awards. In addition, family members enjoy the opportunity to set the award criteria and participate in the selection process or make their own selection.

Bill Wortzman, JFSA's newly elected Board Chair and a past recipient of financial aid from the JELC, decided to set up a family-named scholarship. The Wortzman Family Scholarship Fund awards deserving students seeking business or law degrees.

Another JFSA board member decided to set up a family-named scholarship in honor of her granddaughter's college graduation. Grandma and granddaughter had such pleasure in choosing the recipient this year, a graduate student majoring in Speech Pathology who was just about to take out another student loan. When the news of this additional award reached the student, she was thrilled that she did not have to take on more student debt. This wonderful *mitzvah* not only positively impacted the award recipient but also had a shared impact on grandmother and granddaughter.

## JVS Toronto Launches A Pioneering Employment Program in Partnership with Federal and Municipal Governments

All three levels of government in Canada – federal, provincial and municipal – play a vital role in promoting a highly skilled workforce and an inclusive labor market. As an agency, JVS Toronto has a long and proud history of

working in partnership with all three jurisdictions in the delivery of employment support programs to unemployed and underemployed individuals, persons with disabilities, women in transition, youth and newcomers.

Up until recently, JVS was accustomed to “doing business” separately with each government partner.

This past fall, JVS Toronto was  
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## JVS Toronto Launches A Pioneering Employment Program in Partnership with Federal and Municipal Governments

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approached by the federal government to pilot REP (Re-Employment Program), an initiative that represents the first employment service delivery partnership between the Government of Canada, the City of Toronto and a nonprofit, community-based agency. According to government officials, JVS Toronto was selected as the service provider based on our expertise in delivering *both* federal and municipal employment services to individuals facing multiple barriers to employment.

Through federal funding, JVS Toronto has been able to hire two employment counselors. What is particularly unique is that these counselors are now working directly out of two separate municipal government locations – a first time experience for both parties. REP operates as an in-house service tailored to the specific needs of a particularly vulnerable population. The project goal is to provide seamless support to 350 Employment Insurance/Reachback clients on social assistance as they attempt to re-enter the workforce. Reachback is a Canadian term that refers to unemployed individuals whose

EI claims have expired within the past three years. These individuals remain eligible for federal government training funds and other funded programs. REP counselors focus on assisting clients to achieve increased self-awareness and self-sufficiency, thereby enhancing their ability to obtain and maintain employment.

In the past, clients who met with their municipal caseworker would not have necessarily been informed of the many available federal employment resources that could benefit them. This is largely due to a silo mentality that encourages the sharing of information and referrals most familiar to caseworkers within their own jurisdictions. The result was that many clients fell through the cracks. REP counselors, who bring a solid understanding of how to access *both* federal and municipal employment programs, are well positioned to identify the most optimal intervention(s) for their clients.

Under this newly established working relationship between municipal caseworkers and JVS Toronto REP counselors, clients are initially assessed by their caseworker and then directly referred to an in-house REP counselor.

Once a client meets with a REP counselor and develops an individualized return-to-work action plan, this is then shared with the municipal caseworker to facilitate joint implementation and consistency. The municipal caseworker and JVS work together to ensure that those issues impacting a client's potential for success are minimized.

JVS Toronto could not have anticipated some of the communication challenges that REP counselors faced when settling into their new location. Due to strict confidentiality/ security policies, REP counselors are restricted from communicating via email with clients and JVS Toronto management. Furthermore, a special Information Release Form had to be developed to permit REP counselors to share client information with federal/ municipal governments and JVS Toronto.

Putting security measures aside, this project is successfully underway. JVS looks forward to sharing the results of this initiative by October 2006.

## Jewish Community Services of South Florida, Inc.'s Youth Aide Mentoring Initiative (YAMI)

The Youth Aide Mentoring Initiative (YAMI) is a promotion and prevention program designed to enrich the lives of female youth and their families. The program provides structure and guidance to at-risk pre-adolescents while contributing to the stability and self-esteem of older, more stable adolescents working with the younger girls identified as at-risk. The mentor benefits as much as the mentee in this relationship. The mentor accepts responsibility as the "role model" and the mentee is open to learning from an older peer.

This is the first new funding from The Children's Trust for a unique program, specifically for girls, which is an area of services that is always lacking. The YAMI program is based on the Best Practice model of education, "The Helper-Therapy Principle." The program is designed to address the risk factors including violence, substance abuse, availability of firearms,

poor school attendance and per-



formance, weak family support, lack of structure in daily activities and inadequately developed social values to prevent and/or eliminate continued risk-taking behavior. The nationally recognized Best Practice curriculum of leadership development utilized is "Life Planning Education: A Youth Development Program."

YAMI has been successfully implemented in collaboration with local public schools in Miami-Dade County, Florida. The goal is to prevent risk-taking behavior while developing leadership, interpersonal skills and connection to the community. The program outcomes include improved study habits, improved school attendance and performance, increased opportunities for pro-social activities and community involvement. It has been very gratifying to watch mentor/mentee relationships grow over time. It is not uncommon to see that when the mentees have a success due to the mentor's intervention (i.e. they get a good grade on a report they were struggling with, or they have some positive interaction with a parent), the mentors become really excited and report a real sense of accomplishment.

*The mentor benefits as much as the mentee in this relationship.*

Another unique aspect of the YAMI program is that mentors are paid. When the YAMI program was first proposed, an important component was that JCS targeted girls who needed to make some additional money, but who may not have wanted the traditional "mall" job. This program allows girls to make extra money while receiving specialized training about active listening, peer relations, and gives them an opportunity to have a positive influence on a younger at-risk girl. It's really a win-win situation!

## JVS Boston Offers Career Coaching for Incumbent Workers

In January 2005, JVS Boston received a grant from the Commonwealth Corporation to provide career-coaching services to entry-level employees at Harvard Vanguard Medical Associates (HVMA). HVMA is a large, multi-site, multi-specialty medical group practice. A JVS career coach meets one-on-one with interested employees to educate them about the career options available at HVMA, help them set short and long-term career goals, and develop an action plan which outlines the steps they need to take to meet their goals. The career coach provides information

about health careers and related training and educational programs required for these various careers. She guides employees through the application and selection process and works with HVMA Human Resources Department to help employees access tuition reimbursement and financial aid. The career coach provides encouragement and support to employees, increasing employees' confidence and motivation. Coaching takes place at work during work hours. Employees typically receive coaching for 4 months, meeting with the coach twice per month.

Preliminary results with HVMA showed that in the first seven months of the program, forty employees have received coaching for a total of 161 sessions. Eight employees have new positions, seven employees have applied for new positions, twelve have enrolled in college classes, nine are enrolled in pre-college classes offered by JVS at HVMA, one is enrolled in a GED class, and eight employees are looking at educational opportunities.

## JFVS Louisville Helps Students “Survive” Middle School

Jewish Family and Vocational Service of Louisville has a long history of offering career related and college counseling to high school and college age students. The traditional service involves a battery of career assessment instruments and follow-up counseling which involves assistance in finding the most appropriate college and college majors. These

services have recently been expanded to include the younger



teen population.

The Louisville metropolitan area is unique in that there is only one public school system for the entire county and students are free to choose among a number of magnet school options as well as basically choose to attend any school in the county. The existence of a number of private and parochial school options further complicates the decision facing the family of a middle school student. This fall JFVS offered a program entitled “Surviving the Middle School Years.....Looking to High School,

College and Beyond.” A panel of experienced experts advised parents on how to choose the appropriate academic curriculum, how to leverage athletics and extra-curricular activities, and how to deal with the social and emotional needs of young teens. This program helped to raise awareness of JFVS school advisement services, which span from the elementary school years through college.

## For Profit and Nonprofit: JVS Los Angeles Enters Partnership with Maximus

JVS Los Angeles and sister agency Career Planning Center have entered into a historic partnership with for-profit company MAXIMUS on a six million dollar grant from Los Angeles County.

MAXIMUS and JVS/CPC will operate Los Angeles County's GAIN program, which will assist participants of California's CalWORKS in overcoming economic, educational, social, cultural, and linguistic barriers to finding and keeping a job. Both agencies will provide full-service, case management services under the supervision of the County. The ultimate goal is freedom from welfare dependency.

Looking for expansion and growth, MAXIMUS, Jewish Vocational Service, and Career Planning Center have partnered up to create a team whose qualifications, performance history, experience, and dedication to quality is the number one measure of success. The partnership will offer Los Angeles County a solid model built on the strengths of different but complementary organizations, combining the MAXIMUS performance-driven business model with JVS and CPC's profound understanding of the local social service community and the refugee and immigrant population, whom JVS has a long history with. More than 9,000 people in the greater Los Angeles area will benefit.

"This is the largest grant in JVS'

*"This is definitely the way of the future—nonprofits and for-profits working together."*

75 year history. We believe our unique partnership with MAXIMUS is a great start to 'maximizing' each of our organizations ability to help our community and was a compelling factor in the approval of the County and the LA Board of Supervisors. This is definitely the way of the future—nonprofits and for-profits working together," said JVS CEO Vivian Seigel.

## Israel Elwyn Assumes Management of Vocational Rehabilitation Programs for City of Raanana

On September 1, 2005, Israel Elwyn assumed management responsibility for the vocational rehabilitation programs for adults with developmental disabilities in the City of Raanana. The move follows a competitive bidding process in which a number of non-profit and private, profit-making agen-

cies participated (based on the bidder's quality and experience, not fee levels, which is determined by the Ministry of Social Affairs). In the first stage of this process, Israel Elwyn assumed responsibility for the operation of a sheltered workshop previously run by the municipality. Almost immediately after this took place,

efforts began to develop a supported employment program for some of the nearly 100 persons who work in the sheltered workshop. It is ultimately planned to develop an entire continuum of vocational services for adults with special needs in Raanana, based on existing Israel Elwyn models in other cities.

## JFVS Middlesex Provides Services to Individuals with Traumatic Brain Injuries

In September 2005, JFVS Middlesex was awarded a grant from the Henry H. Kessler Foundation to provide supported employment services to individuals with traumatic brain injuries (TBI). JFVS is collaborating with the Brain Injury Association of New Jersey and the NJ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (NJDVRS) in this innovative project to assist individuals with brain injuries to gain and successfully maintain employment without long-term supports. Research shows that individuals with TBI often need to relearn skills required to work and maintain employment. There are currently very few programs in Central New Jersey offering supported employment

services to individuals with brain injuries. The funding is rarely sufficient to provide the extended follow-along services that are often required for this population.

A unique aspect of this project is that the Brain Injury Association is providing training, technical assistance and resources to project staff. JFVS is also consulting with a neuropsychologist to assist the staff in their knowledge and understanding of individuals with brain injuries. The neuropsychologist will also be available to provide assessments as needed.

The initial project is eighteen months and will include job-

readiness training, job development and job placement. Individuals will also receive job coaching and follow along services.

This initiative comes on the heels of JFVS' approval for vendorship, from the NJDVRS, to provide supported employment to individuals with disabilities. This will allow JFVS Middlesex to continue to provide services to this population upon completion of the Kessler funding requirements.

For more information on this project please feel free to contact Lisa Fiore, Director of Vocational Services, at 732-777-1940 or email [l.fiore@jfvs.org](mailto:l.fiore@jfvs.org).

## JEVS Philadelphia Offers A Helping Hand to Jews At Risk

In the Greater Philadelphia region, 57,000 Jews (or 24 percent of the Jewish population) have an annual income of less than \$25,000 per year. Even more alarming is the fact that the majority of the region's low-income Jewish households are not eligible for public benefits.

In response to these statistics and other research findings, the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia developed a number of initiatives that help those at-risk get on the path to economic independence. One such program is called Helping Hands. Helping Hands provides comprehensive services that promote self-sufficiency for Jewish clients who are under 65 and living at or near the poverty level.

Begun as a pilot in September 2004, Helping Hands is now in its second year. A key part of the program's activities was marshalling existing Jewish communal services and coordinating them as fully as possible. Jewish Family and Children's Service of Greater Philadelphia (JFCS) and Jewish Employment and Vocational Service-Philadelphia (JEVS) are the lead agencies, providing case management, counseling and ca-

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## JEVS Philadelphia Offers A Helping Hand to Jews At Risk

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reer-related services. To enhance the overall service delivery, particularly with regard to child care, Federation Early Learning Services and Jewish Community Centers are collaborators on this program. In addition, HIAS and Council Migration Service of Philadelphia work with low-income Jewish immigrants to help with documentation and immigration and to remove obstacles to securing mainstream employment.

“We take a team approach to the client,” said Penny Kardon, JEVS program director, “because the only way to make people self-sufficient is to break the cycle.”

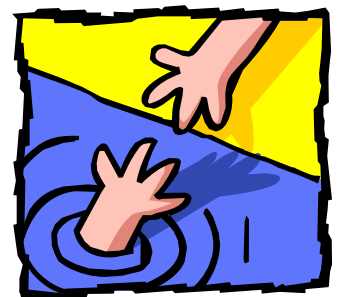
Upon an in-depth assessment and screening process, the client is accepted into the program when participation seems likely to result in an increased level of employment and income. The employment outcome is JEVS’ piece of the service continuum. JEVS begins working on potential employment after the first meeting for some of the more job-ready clients and explores other options based on the client’s vocational assessment. As job leads are being developed, JEVS works with clients on their resumes, interviewing skills and numerous job readiness skills.

As this past year progressed, JEVS staff expanded training opportunities for clients. For individuals with minimal barrier rating scores who were interested in exploring training options beyond basic ESL or computer training, staff helped them consider an array of paths. Some examples were enrollment in trade certification programs and completion of an undergraduate degree (when only one or two classes were needed).

The JEVS staff members remain in close contact with active clients throughout their job search and/or training stages. Once employment is secured, the job developer and counselor communicate with clients on a consistent basis, through the first three months of their job or completion of their probationary period, for on-going support.

The pilot phase of Helping Hands showed promising results. Of the 44 enrolled clients, 48 percent got jobs, and there were 27 total job placements. Many of the people who were classified as having “multiple barriers” found and have retained employment. Another noteworthy accomplishment was that 12 enrolled clients (27 percent) reached the defined “self-sufficient” level in year one.

While there’s still work to be done, the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia and the Helping Hands collaborating agencies are truly making strides in the employability and self-sufficiency of the region’s Jewish unemployed or underemployed. Many clients are working, feeding their families, paying off debt and balancing the struggles that life brings.



## F.E.G.S and Al Miller Honored for Efforts on Behalf of Individuals with Mental Illness

Within the worldwide forum of the United Nations, F.E.G.S Health and Human Services System received international recognition for its decades of providing comprehensive services to individuals with mental illness at a recent luncheon, held at the UN and sponsored by the American Association for Psychosocial Research.

Alfred P. Miller, Chief Executive Officer of F.E.G.S, accepted the Irving Blumberg Human Rights Award on behalf of F.E.G.S, which was presented by the American Association for Psychosocial Research, the U.S. branch of the World Association for Psychosocial Rehabilitation. The associations are NGO (non-governmental organization) members of the UN. The award is named in honor of Blumberg, who co-founded the World Association. Other honorees at the luncheon included Dr. Halfdan Mahler, former Director General of the World Health Organization, New York Supreme Court Judge Matthew D'Emic, and Hon. Richard J. Codey, Acting Governor of New Jersey.

The luncheon commemorated the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II and the defeat of the Nazi regime, during which some 200,000 persons with mental illness were murdered in the Holocaust.

The award acknowledged that “F.E.G.S has evolved into one of the finest psychosocial rehabilitation programs in the nation,” and that its efforts “have helped persons with mental illness live better and more productive lives in the community.”

Upon accepting the award Miller stated, “It is the unique partnership of volunteers, professionals, government and the private and philanthropic sectors that have enabled F.E.G.S to offer the creative programming that change lives and the community.” Miller has been CEO of F.E.G.S, one of the largest health and human services organizations in the United States, since 1976. Established in 1934 by the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies (now UJA-Federation of New York), F.E.G.S today serves more than 100,000 people each year at over 300 locations in the New

York metropolitan area – including more than 18,000 individuals with mental illness.

Miller is considered one of the country’s foremost leaders in the field of human services. F.E.G.S programs in the fields of mental health, education, employment, developmental disabilities, and family services have been models of integrated service delivery. Under his leadership, the agency has developed a well-earned reputation for finding new ways to marry technology to the delivery of health, education, and social services in order to create new efficiencies, better effectiveness, and improved quality of service delivery systems.

F.E.G.S has provided a comprehensive array of services for individuals with mental illness since the 1970s, and remains committed to helping individuals with emotional and psychiatric disabilities reach their own highest level of personal achievement through a model of recovery and rehabilitation. Today, its

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## F.E.G.S and Al Miller Honored for Efforts on Behalf of Individuals with Mental Illness

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extensive network of behavioral health programs includes nine counseling centers, four day treatment programs, six rehabilitation and recovery programs, two clubhouses, forensic and case management services, and a wide range of residential alternatives.

The agency's services are broad and tailored to each individual, and can include: counseling,

medication management, job assessment and coaching, cognitive remediation, housing assistance, and mutual peer support.

"We are proud of our multi-disciplinary approach of psychiatrists, social workers,



*Joseph Stein Jr., Chairman, FECS & Barry K. Fingerhut, President congratulate Al.*

rehabilitation specialists, substance abuse counselors, housing specialists, and peer support staff," said Miller. "Their expertise allows us to serve a diverse range of people, including youth, older adults, victims of domestic violence, persons with HIV/AIDS, ex-offenders, the Russian émigré community, and many others."

## New Employment Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities

JVS Center for Careers and Lifelong Learning in Boston, MA was recently awarded a three-year Project with Industries (PWI) grant for \$680,000 by the US Department of Education Rehabilitation Services Administration. This project will address the need in Boston for individuals with significant disabilities who have been unemployed for over six months to identify viable career paths, obtain relevant skills training, receive assistance with job readiness, customer service skills, individualized job placement assistance, post placement supports, and follow-along and career advancement services. The JVS PWI service has a zero exclusion policy with regard to disability diagnosis or severity.

The JVS PWI program will target the employment sectors of medical office, general healthcare, food service/hospitality and financial services/banking. After assessment and career plan development, participants will be assisted to access one of four employer-based training programs in these fields. The first three occupational areas are among the highest demand jobs, and are within projected growth sectors in Boston. The final sector, financial services/banking, is not as highly ranked for growth due to recent consolidations, but is still one of the largest employment sectors in Boston and employer partners project a steady demand for new workers. JVS will offer individuals with disabilities a four-week Job Readiness/Customer Service training program, which can either be taken alone or as preliminary course to the employer-based training courses. The customer service training will address the needs of employers across all sectors utilizing a Customer Service Training curriculum and CD-ROM from JVS Metro West, NJ enhanced with an instructor.

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## New Employment Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities

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Through this project JVS Boston will develop a strong partnership with industry, assist individuals with disabilities to select appropriate training and/or employment assistance, detailed in an Individual Career Plan, provide services that will enable participants to improve or acquire job readiness and occupational skills, and place and maintain participants in quality employment, and assist them to advance in their careers.

The goals of this project are that 120 individuals per year will be assessed to determine eligibility and appropriateness for enrollment in the program, 72 participants per year will complete a training program, 50 participants will enter unsubsidized employment and maintain it for a minimum of 90 days in each year of the project, 25 individuals who have been unemployed for at least six months continuously will be placed in competitive employment each, and 25 individuals with a significant disability will be placed in competitive employment each year.

## A Proud Year for JFVS Louisville

JFVS Louisville is excited about the many grants and awards it received in 2005. JFVS was awarded a grant from the Office of Refugee Resettlement to operate a Refugee IDA program, serving about 60 refugee families a year for the next five years. The Refugee IDA Program represents an anti-poverty strategy built on asset accumulation for low-income refugee individuals and families with the goal of promoting refugee economic independence. Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) are emerging as one of the most promising tools that enable low-income and low-wealth American families to save, build assets, and enter the financial mainstream. IDAs encourage savings efforts among the poor by offer-

ing matches for their own deposits. IDAs reward the monthly savings of working-poor families who are trying to buy their first home, pay for post-secondary education, or start a small business. These matched savings accounts are similar to 401(k) plans and other matched savings accounts.

The Klein Older Adult Department of JFVS, Louisville is also pleased to announce that they have received a grant from the Retirement Research Foundation (RRF), based in Chicago, Illinois for \$113,580 over a 3-year period. The purpose of the grant is to assist adults-65 and older in finding meaningful volunteer experiences and breaking the barriers that have prevented

them from doing so in the past. Additionally, volunteers 21 and older are being recruited to expand service opportunities for more frail seniors in the areas of friendly visiting, transportation, errands and chores, assisting with bills and insurance claims and more. To date, 20 volunteers, 65 and older, have been assessed and placed in volunteer positions and 10 volunteers have been recruited to work with seniors.

In addition, JFVS has earned a grant from The Weyerhaeuser Family Foundation for a very important and innovative program. The Foundation has agreed to fund a demonstration project, The Somali Bantu Par-

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## A Proud Year for JFVS Louisville

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ent Child project. The grant will allow a JFVS parent educator to train a Somali woman to go into homes of Somali mothers and

preschool children to increase literacy, developmental levels of the chil-



dren and acculturation. The program is an adaptation of the Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters and the Parent-Child Home Program.

Finally, JFVS received the Pyramid Award for Diversity, sponsored by Fifth Third Bank, at the Annual Meeting of the Center for Non Profit Excellence October 27,

2005. The award recognized the leadership role that JFVS plays in the Louisville community in developing and providing services to people from a wide range of cultural, racial and ethnic backgrounds.

## JFS Columbus Receives Award As One of the “Best Places to Work”

At a reception on November 10th, 2005, Jewish Family Services of Columbus, OH received recognition and an award in *Business First's* inaugural class of the Best Places to Work in Central Ohio. JFS placed 4<sup>th</sup> in the Small Company category (between 25-100 employees). *Business First* published its Best Places to Work supplement issue profiling these organizations on November 11th.

This award is more than a high score on an employee satisfaction survey. The process for small organizations was quite rigorous.

All employees were asked to voluntarily respond to an anonymous 38-question survey that went to Quantum Market Research, an independent company. To be eligible, at least 85 percent (27 of the 31 employees) had to choose to respond. Questions addressed the following areas: team effectiveness; retention risk; alignment with goals; trust with coworkers; individual contribution; manager effectiveness; trust in senior leaders; feeling valued; work engagement; and people practices. Indeed, Executive Director Chuck Weiden confirmed that despite a difficult year; “the major-

ity of staff has remained due to the love of their work and the fair treatment and respect they receive from supervisors and management”.

The agency is proud and pleased that JFS Columbus employees are engaged and feel valued for the work they do. Its staff does make a positive difference in clients and other people’s lives in how they carry out their responsibilities on a daily basis.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

In October 2005 JF&VS Middlesex welcomed Mary Jean Weston as the new Assistant Executive Director. Mary Jean comes to JF&VS from Houston where she served as the Executive Director of JFS since 1999. She is well known for expanding the delivery of services in Houston and organizing the resettlement of evacuees from New Orleans. The agency looks forward to working with her and expanding the delivery of services at JF&VS Middlesex.

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**Socially Responsible  
Leadership for the 21st  
Century**

**WHO WE ARE:** The International Association of Jewish Vocational Services (IAJVS), a not-for-profit membership association, links 29 social service agencies in the United States, Canada, Israel, and Argentina that provide a wide range of educational, vocational, and rehabilitation services.

**WHAT WE DO:** Through our member agencies, individuals seeking to improve their lives gain access to a vast array of services such as career management, skills training, rehabilitation programs, and health services. Each year, the IAJVS family of agencies—with a combined budget of over \$395 million—serves more than 350,000 individuals from across the social strata, including persons with disabilities, dislocated workers, people changing careers, recent college graduates, welfare recipients, refugees, older workers and the elderly. Since its founding in 1939, the IAJVS network has assisted over 16 million individuals, from both the Jewish and non-Jewish communities.

**OUR MISSION:** The International Association of Jewish Vocational Services strengthens the capabilities and capacity of its member agencies to increase economic self-sufficiency, independence and build a productive work force of its constituent clients.

**SAVE THE DATE!**

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