



JEWISH EMPLOYMENT MONTREAL: NEW 'JEM' ON THE BLOCK

Léa Benegbi-Gutstein, JVS Montreal

Jewish Vocational Service, in conjunction with Federation CJA, is excited to announce the official launch of a new agency to be known as Jewish Employment Montreal – Emploi JUIF Montreal. The launch took place at its 58th Annual General Meeting on Monday, September 29, 2003 at the Gelber Conference Centre.

“Together with Federation CJA, one of our major funding partners, we will introduce an integrated continuum of employment services to the Montreal community. Our objective remains to help people help themselves. We envision JEM as a one-stop agency for your employment needs. Whether you want to recruit the right candidate, find a job, change careers, or start a business, our team of professionals will be ready to guide you,” says Debby Becker Newpol, President.

Howard Berger, Executive Director, adds “Serving over 4,000 clients per year in French, English, Spanish, Russian, Hebrew, and Italian, we can answer the needs both of employers and of job seekers – offering recruiting support to employers, and job placement, skills training and job market orientation for job seekers.

As well, an immediate employment initiative has already begun to sensitize the Jewish Community to identifying and creating employment opportunities for many highly-educated immigrants arriving from Europe and Latin America.”

Scheduled for Spring 2004, JEM’s 1st Annual Employment Week will offer a variety of community-wide outreach programs to involve everyone from students to mature workers on the changing realities of career planning, job market strategies, and employment options. This week will culminate in a business luncheon with a prominent honoree from the Montreal Jewish Community.

Jewish Employment Montreal will be a constituent agency of Federation CJA, the central organization for Jewish philanthropy and community service in Montreal.

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JVS Expands Business Services Department

Melissa Jarvis-Prieto, JVS Los Angeles

With the economy and job market making a slow recovery, businesses now need to work smarter, hire intelligence, and rally their troops. In response to these conditions and to steadily increasing demand, JVS Los Angeles is expanding its business services department, which provides high quality programs and services to businesses at competitive market rates.

“We’ve recently recruited David Moses, a lawyer with over a decade of experience in non-profit and management to head up our business service and corporate development efforts, and we look forward to establishing new and vibrant partnerships within the business community under his leadership,” said Vivian Seigel, JVS’ CEO.

Mr. Moses most recently served as the Southern California Regional Director for the New Israel Fund. Under his leadership, the organization expanded their revenues by 173%.

JVS has worked successfully with many local and national companies including Wells Fargo, the Los Angeles City Fire Department, Union Bank, Macy’s, UCLA, Lightning Dubbs, Cedars Sinai, AT&T, and Ticketmaster.

“JVS is uniquely positioned to effectively and economically address the needs of both employer and employee because of our extensive experience working with both the public and private sectors in the current dynamic market,” said Mr. Moses.

From recruitment to outplacement, JVS offers a cohesive stream of service to supplement human resources. JVS’ career and business specialists work with more than 14,000 clients each year, many of them white-collar professionals, recent MBA graduates, and seasoned executives.

“The candidates we hired from JVS have proven to be loyal, dedicated, and hardworking. We look forward to a continued relationship, because the stronger our ties to the community, the greater success we are able to achieve,” said Macy’s Regional Recruitment Manager, Roxanne Posey.

JVS can also help companies develop the right job placement ads and target specific markets. Comprehensive business solutions offered by JVS include: assessment and training tools to determine if a candidate or employee is right for a company; mentoring, career development planning, and communication workshops to help employees further their careers and improve job retention; restructuring plans including transition techniques, re-training, job search skills, and career coaching for executives; outplacement programs and cost-effective computer training courses.

“One byproduct of corporate downsizing is the increased pressure on the staff and particularly managers who remain,” said JVS’ COO, Claudia Finkel. “JVS is uniquely qualified to address this issue and deliver specialized training to strengthen and support mid and upper level management.”

JVS also provides career services for job seekers and professionals of all levels. Whether someone is contemplating a career change, re-entering the workforce, or interested in better managing their work environment or career, JVS offers customized resources to fit their needs, including career counseling and assessment, strategic career planning and coaching, networking events, workshops, and career plan development. Job seekers can also access JVS’ fully-equipped Career Resource Center with exclusive job listings, industry trades, and internet-ready computers.

THE FOLLOWING IS A MORE COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF JVS’ BUSINESS SERVICES

HIRE INTELLIGENCE

JVS can determine which candidates or employees are the best fit for a company.

- Access to more than 14,000 qualified professionals
- State-of-the-art assessment and training tools
- Free job listings
- Recruitment of candidates

RALLY THE TROOPS

JVS delivers programs for all levels of employees to help them further their careers.

- Retention and performance
- Communication and conflict resolution workshops
- Career development planning
- Mentoring for staff and management

CHANGE FOR THE BETTER

Whether a company is reorganizing, implementing new programs or restructuring divisions, JVS offers workshops to

help heighten productivity and reduce risk.

- Transition techniques and planning
- Re-training for evolving market conditions and high-growth industries
- Human Resources legal compliance classes
- State-certified Skills Plus @ JVS
- Microsoft Office classes
- Flexible classroom facilities at JVS or outside location

MOVE FORWARD

When its time for a company to grow or downsize, JVS can make the change easier for management and employees.

- Cost-effective outplacement programs
- Job search skills and strategies for all levels of staff
- Effective resumes and interview skills
- Individualized career consulting and coaching for executives

JVS Minnesota Sees Changes with Minnesota Family Investment Program

Lori Lickteig-Grossman, JVS Minnesota

Now in its sixth year, the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), Minnesota's version of TANF, has experienced tremendous changes in MFIP state law and the loss of Minnesota's federal welfare-to-work waiver. The largest changes included:

- 1) Limiting job search as a "countable" activity to 6 weeks a year. Previously, program participants could job search all year long if necessary.
- 2) Limiting the number of months a program participant could be sanctioned to 6 months before MFIP case would close. Previously there were no limits.
- 3) In order to attend a training program longer than 12 weeks, a participant must work at least part-time (20 hours a week).

Despite significant changes to the MFIP program, JVS Minnesota counts itself fortunate to have renewed contracts to continue to provide services. According to Program Manager, Carrie Scheffler, "JVS consistently reaches or exceeds contract outcomes and provides excellent services to clients. Innovative opportunities for work, like JVS' strong relationships with business and our work-sites, will contribute to success with these new changes to MFIP."

To address the very short timeframe MFIP participants have to obtain employment, JVS Minnesota has developed a highly structured job search/work readiness campaign. Participants take part in weekly job search, including daily attendance of job readiness/intro to computer training. Participants develop and write weekly job search plans, including specific goals for applying for positions that week. Finally, if unsuccessful in obtaining employment, participants are then required to participate in paid or unpaid work experience provided for them through JVS Minnesota's collaborative relationships with employers and other community partners.

To prevent participants from having their case closed due to the new sanction rule, JVS Minnesota staff communicate weekly with participants who are about to enter sanction or who are in sanction. Staff also meet with participants to find out what is going on in their lives that may have caused non-compliance. Next, staff clearly explain the sanction process, including the duration of the sanction. Finally, JVS Minnesota staff advocate for the participant in reversing the sanction and to proactively develop plans to prevent future sanctions.

Once placed, JVS helps participants with job retention and advancement through continued contact on-the-job, working with participants to improve marketable skills. Participants can earn up to a two-year degree if working part-time – a new rule with MFIP. Employment specialists help identify training programs appropriate for each participant with the goal of advancing the participant to a job position that would remove their need for public assistance.

According to Scheffler, "Success takes a team of professionals and a lot of hard work. The JVS team includes employment specialists, job developers, case aides, and program coordinators. The combination of computer skills and a team of professionals who know how to work together has been a big part of the JVS formula for success for our participants."

In 2002, JVS Minnesota served 840 people in welfare-to-work programs, creating 343 jobs for participants who earned over \$6.6 million in annual wages. For more information about JVS Minnesota's MFIP program, contact Carrie Scheffler at cscheffler@jvsmn.org or 952-417-2182.

Over 250 Homebound Seniors Received Holiday Food from the JCS Milk & Honey Campaign

Sandy Kemp, Jewish Community Services of South Florida

More than two hundred people participated in Jewish Community Services of South Florida (JCS) Milk and Honey 2003 campaign volunteer effort, delivering holiday food to frail homebound seniors. The packages contained traditional food to break the fast for Yom Kippur and holiday cards made by children from Hebrew day schools.

The volunteers, with full smiles and high spirits, provided companionship and holiday food for Yom Kippur. At the same time, they were instructed to assess the needs of the senior citizens to determine if additional JCS programs and services might be needed.

Every Friday, 84 year-old Charlotte Koppel receives food from the JCS Senior Kosher Meals on Wheels Program. Charlotte was thrilled with her holiday visit and food package, commenting, "I was visited by darling children who hugged and kissed me and would not let me go. I never had children. Had I known they could turn out that good, I would have had kids." The two eight year-old twins even blew the shofar for Charlotte who said, "I was overcome, it made my life."

The mother of the twins, Lourdes Gittleman, is active in the Jewish Federation and has been volunteering with her family for years. "We do it because some of the elderly are without family. As a family we see the importance of making mitzvahs. To see someone so happy makes my children happy and then they want to volunteer again."

Milk & Honey 2003 Chair, Fran Berrin, and her family visited Norman Zimmerman who suffers from a leg ailment and arthritis. He has no income, insurance nor disability benefits. The JCS Senior Kosher Meals on Wheels provides Mr. Zimmerman with seven meals a week. Ms. Berrin has asked JCS to see what other services might be offered to help Mr. Zimmerman. Norman said, "I am willing to share my story because a lot of people need help these days. I want other people who need assistance to be able to use this agency."

Fran Berrin and her family have been delivering holiday food to the homebound since her kids were in car seats. "This program gives the opportunity for the whole family to connect to those in need in the community." Many long-term relationships are built from these visits. One of Ms. Berrin's daughters became so close to an elderly individual she visited that the daughter was asked to deliver the eulogy.

"These holiday visits are so important. In some cases, it is someone's only link to the outside world," said Ms. Berrin. "We have a responsibility to see that no one goes hungry in our community."

Robert Merlin, Chair-Elect for the JCS Board, has also been participating in JCS holiday deliveries for years and notes that, "It is a nice way for the community to touch lives of those living alone."

The Milk & Honey Campaign is dedicated to helping feed the elderly and others in our community who are in need of food. The goal of the Milk & Honey Campaign is to support JCS' nutritional programs, including Senior Kosher Meals on Wheels, congregate meal sites, and the Community Kosher Food Bank.

A Search for a New Home Results in Expanded Services for People with Developmental Disabilities

Tanna Brodbar, JVS Toronto

There is magic in the air at JVS Toronto – the magic of making the world of work accessible to everyone, and the magic of the diverse people we serve who actively explore and expand their personal, educational and professional boundaries in order to fulfill their unique potential. Perhaps nowhere is this magic more potent right now than at The AI Green Centre, JVS Toronto’s new employment resource centre for people with developmental disabilities.

Opened in August 2003, The AI Green Centre offers a full range of employment service options. With 184 clients, The AI Green Centre’s commitment to expanding employment opportunities for this special group includes services such as one-on-one planning to develop employment goals, assessments to identify employment potential and options, workshop experience, assistance with job placements, and on-the-job coaching.

JVS Toronto historically has made serving persons with developmental disabilities a priority, and when the need to relocate our workshop arose, we began an aggressive initiative to expand services to this population. Recognizing that the developmentally disabled population has often been underserved and neglected served as a catalyst to transform our search for a new workshop facility into a search for a building that would ultimately house an expanded workshop program and other programs that would provide greater opportunity to persons with developmental disabilities.

“We are committed to being a centre of employment resource excellence for this special group,” says Karen Goldenberg, President and CEO, JVS Toronto. “Our new centre will allow us to build the capacities of our employment resource programs for people with developmental disabilities, taking a progressive role in answering the needs of our clients.”

With The AI Green Centre, we have taken a significant step to

expanding employment opportunities to this special population.

Path2Work, a program supported by *Human Resource Development Canada* Innovation Funds, is one of the new programs being housed at The AI Green Centre. Through **Path 2 Work**, clients with development disabilities who are not eligible for employment benefits may now access community mentoring activities, pre-employment workshops, one-on-one coaching, self-directed learning using a computer, paid internship and a job coach to provide follow-up support. The program provides life-skills training and work for 30 people and, at the same time, helps local businesses to be equal opportunity employers.

Transition to Work, a second new program, bridges the gap for developmentally disabled individuals who have no employment support systems in place after school is completed. It offers access to support programs that will help to make an early and successful transition to employment.

The original **Workshop** will continue to provide structured and meaningful work opportunities to more than 35 clients. Our goal is to expand the capacities of the workshop, reinventing it as a transitional training program for integrating clients into the workplace.

At JVS Toronto, building capacities is what it’s all about. And now, thanks to generous donors who have recognized the need for expanding programs to address the needs of this special population, persons with developmental disabilities and the staff who works with them have a place they can call their own: The AI Green Centre.

For more information about The AI Green Centre and its programs, contact Chetan Bahri at (416) 782-3976, ext. 208 or email at cbahri@jvstoronto.org.



JVS and Jewish Family Service of Detroit form Caring Partners

Kim Graziosi, JVS Detroit

JVS Detroit and Jewish Family Service have formed a partnership to offer support services to assist older adults and people with disabilities to access the support needed to live independently and safely at home. **Caring Partners: In-Home Support Services** will match aides, companions and other service providers to the specific needs of the individual. Some people need help with activities of daily living, such as shopping, doctor’s office visits, etc.

Finding suitable help for people who have just returned from hospitalization or those struggling to maintain their independence at home has challenged families, who have turned to JVS and Jewish Family Service for recommendations. The two agencies determined that a more comprehensive service to the public was needed, and by uniting the specific strengths of each agency to better serve our seniors and others, we are better able to help them remain at home as long as possible.

Caring Partners provides an assessment to determine the type of care required and provide the family with a list of matched aides or companions who have undergone screening and background checks. “Just helping with daily living tasks, like light meal preparation, doing laundry, giving reminders to take medication, going for groceries, makes a world of difference to someone who wants the independence of living at home,” said Jan McHale, program coordinator.

This is especially helpful to the family members who are struggling with their own life commitments. “The program is a blessing for any family member who has used it,” according to Leah Rosenbaum, COO of JVS Detroit.

For more information and fee schedule, call Jan McHale at (248) 233-4239.



JCS Celebrates Older Worker Week

Sandy Kemp, Jewish Community Services of South Florida

Forty truly special people attended the recent Jewish Community Services of South Florida's celebration of National Employ the Older Worker Week. Three organizations and four older workers were recognized for their outstanding work and dedication.

Bob Merlin, Chairman-Elect of JCS, opened up the program by boasting that more than 700 people have participated in JCS' Senior Employment Program over the past 15 years. He told the group, "Your service to our community has helped people of all ages in the areas of nutrition, employment, housing, health care, counseling, refugee resettlement, home care, elder care, child care, literacy, and emergency services."

David Saltman, JCS President/CEO presented awards to the YWCA of Greater Miami, Easter Seals, and Catholic Charities for their time and commitment to working with the JCS Senior Employment Program. Each of these agencies has hired at least five participants.

Debra Harbour, Child Care Director at the YWCA of Greater Miami, was the first to accept her organization's award. Mr. Saltman referred to Ms. Harbour as a "champion, seeing to it that everyone becomes properly certified and trained for child-care positions." Ms. Harbour said she appreciates the nurturing and sense of humor older workers have brought to the childcare.

Dr. Joan Bornstein, President and CEO of Easter Seals of Miami-Dade, received the next award. David Saltman said, "I understand that, for the past 15 years, Easter Seals has trained enrollees to work and provide assistance to the emotionally or physically impaired children, as well as adults with memory problems." Dr. Bornstein shared her appreciation of the program. "What you're doing here is just beyond excellent...[the participants] set the model for our younger employees so we're grateful to hire people not only for their work but their inspiration."

The Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Miami, Services to the Elderly was presented the final award. Project Director, Lourdes Santos, accepted the award. Lourdes said many participants of the Senior Employment Program that were trained at Catholic Charities have been hired for regular positions. Mr. Saltman said, "For the past 15 years of commitment, we thank Catholic Charities for training and hiring older workers."

Older workers who were honored included 89 year-old Dot Patterson, Assistant Program Director of the Senior Employment Program; 80 year-old Lydia Fernandez, administrative assistant; 67 year-old Gardener Mompremier, a custodian at Catholic Charities; and 68 year-old Carlos Neira.

Carlos was chosen as the 2003 Outstanding Older Worker. Carlos began as a clerk in the Easter Seals Alzheimer's Adult Day Care Program in 2001. Carlos' training included English language skills, office procedures, data entry, and telephone skills. Dr. Bornstein said, "Carlos' diligence, eye for detail, caring and willingness to assist whenever and wherever he is needed have truly made him a member of the Easter Seals team."

JCS Senior Employment Director, Donna Cutler, described Carlos as a wonderful example of the reliable and capable mature

worker. "He demonstrates initiative and flexibility. He has displayed sensitivity to the needs of the Easter Seals clients and their caregivers. Carlos always shows a positive attitude to participants, volunteers and staff."

The celebration ended with a special thanks to United Way of Miami-Dade for their consistent support of JCS over the past 15 years. Ela Goldfarb, Vice President of the JCS Senior Adult Division explained, "United Way has demonstrated its commitment to older workers throughout its provision of 'local match' dollars. Without United Way, we could not operate the program."

The JCS Senior Employment Program, part of the U.S. Department of Labor-funded Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), is funded by the State of Florida, Department of Elder Affairs and the United Way of Miami-Dade. For local information about SCSEP programs and the JCS Senior Employment Program, please call Donna Cutler at (305) 445-0555.

JFS and LifeTrack

Sunny Floum, Jewish Family Service of St. Paul

In these challenging times for non-profit agencies, with cutbacks and eliminations of government and foundation support, Jewish Family Service of Saint Paul (JFS) is reaching out to its community with a new and creative venture. After providing employment services to individuals receiving public assistance under a contract with Ramsey County (along with seventeen other social service agencies) for the past five years, the agency lost its contract. Those services are now being provided by only five agencies.

Understanding that the selected agencies are operating with limited staff and resources, JFS decided to reach out to assist Lifetrack Resources, the only one chosen to provide cafe-style employment services to individuals during their first twenty-one months on assistance. The two agencies joined forces in order to serve those people in their earliest stages of receiving financial assistance. JFS developed a 2-week training program. The course, aptly named "Challenge Group" consists of classes in Job Search and Job Retention Skills. The course, provided exclusively to Lifetrack referrals, is taught at the JFS location by JFS staff.

During the first week, segments focus on the ABCs of job search: job search tactics; application completion; resume and cover letter creation; interview practice; and elementary computer learning, including internet job search techniques. The second week covers the ABCs of job retention: balancing work and family, budgeting, punctuality, communication, and teamwork. Students also have access to the JFS Job Resource Room where JFS Vocational staff provide assistance.

The expectation of both JFS and Lifetrack Resources is that the development of these specific skills will assist the individuals served by the Challenge Group classes to make an easier transition into the workforce, subsequently resulting in self-sufficiency.

JVS' WOMENTORING CELEBRATES 5TH YEAR

Innovative Program is a Lifeline for Women in the Workplace

Melissa Jarvis-Prieto, JVS Los Angeles

Finding a job in a downturn economy can be tough. But what if you've been out of the workplace for 20 years? Or left a high paying job ten years ago to raise your children? Or need to support your family after being divorced or widowed? JVS Los Angeles' free WoMentoring program, now celebrating its 5th anniversary, pairs women in the workforce with professional mentors to help them achieve their goals.

Generously funded by Union Bank of California and the Powell family, JVS' WoMentoring program has helped over a hundred women increase their job skills, network, establish career paths, and discover new job opportunities. Each participant is paired with a mentor from the same professional field for one year. Both mentors and mentees undergo training on how to maximize the benefits of their partnership, and then meet with one another on a regular basis.

"Little did I know that a small ad would lead to a long-lasting mentor relationship and friendship," said mentee, Antoinette Threatt. Unemployed after years as a manager for companies such as Toyota and Mobil, Threatt was paired with mentor, Polonia K. Bright, Vice President and Manager of The Private Bank – Union Bank of California. After only a few months, Threatt landed a job with a leading bioscience firm.

"A trend that we're seeing this year is a return to more humanistic fields. We are seeing women leave high pressure jobs in entertainment for work that gives something back to the community, like non-profits and healthcare," said Claudia Finkel, JVS' COO and founder of the WoMentoring program.

When she was widowed, Marsha Lennox left the thriving career she'd built in television production to care for her young daughter. But after a few years, she needed to return to work to support her family. JVS helped her identify an interest and aptitude in the non-profit arena, and Lennox discovered that her production experience and writing skills were transferable to a new career as a grant writer.

The WoMentoring program aims to help participants reach at least one career milestone -- such as a promotion, completion of a training program, obtaining a key interview, or landing a job in their field of choice.

"People need whatever advantage they can find in this competitive job market. Traditionally, women especially have lacked role models in the workplace. JVS' WoMentoring program seeks to address this problem," said Finkel.

Each year, JVS Los Angeles helps more than 14,000 people find jobs or build careers.

JVS SF Distributes Curriculum Nationwide

Leah S. Abrams, JVS San Francisco

Three years ago, JVS San Francisco was awarded a Community Technology Center grant by the U.S. Department of Education. As a result of that grant, JVS' Technology Access Center launched an exciting collaborative with after-school programs and affordable housing providers to offer short-term introductory computer classes to adults in their own neighborhood. Two years, a dozen sites, and nearly 200 clients later, JVS is teaming up with the America Connects Consortium to make the curricula for the three computer class levels available nationwide.

With the program wrapping up, JVS didn't just want to abandon the students and partner organizations, so the idea came about to "publish" the curriculum. The program coordinator and instructors worked together to develop a comprehensive curriculum, laid out class by class, for the introductory, intermediate, and advanced computer classes that have become so popular. The goal was to develop something that could be flexible depending on the students' level, but also be solid enough that an instructor who had never taught the course before would be comfortable with it.

The biggest challenge was how to best distribute the curricula once it was fully developed. We knew we could hand it to people we know in a hard-copy binder format and post it on our web site, but we wanted it to reach beyond that scope. That's where the America Connects Consortium (ACC) came into play. Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, ACC provides technical assistance to the more than 400 community technology centers funded through the federal CTC program. Through training, evaluation, resource development, and information referral, ACC supports the use of information technology to improve adult literacy and achievement in education. ACC's Education Development Center's Director, Laura Breeden, had visited JVS many times to discuss the CTC program and the issues around a still-existing digital divide, and was eager to provide assistance with the project.

Ms. Breeden and her staff volunteered to take on the roles of developing the materials into a usable online format and, when complete, of making the materials available on their web site and notifying community technology centers around the country of its existence. This is an exciting opportunity to help other organizations doing this kind of work not have to reinvent the wheel.

For more details and information on accessing the curricula, please contact Leah Abrams at labrams@jvs.org.



E-lights Editors:

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To submit articles for future newsletters, please email Elizabeth at etoups@jvs.org.

Thanks to everyone who contributed to this issue of e-lights!