



IAJVS Executive Quarterly Report

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Welcome to the second year of the IAJVS Executive Quarterly Report. It's been a busy first quarter; we are working in many directions on behalf of our affiliate agencies!

1999 Conference Report

102 people attended the recent IAJVS-AJVSP Annual Conference. Participants were celebrated, educated and inspired by an impressive array of speakers. Program highlights included U.S. Assistant Secretary of Labor Raymond Bramucci and Rodney Carroll of the Welfare to Work Partnership, who combined policy analyses with straightforward accounts of their own workplace experiences.

Current trends in funding were articulated by Evan Mendelson of the Jewish Funders Network and Terry Rubenstein of the Joseph Meyerhoff Family Charitable Funds. Past and present Jewish communal JVS work was discussed by Dr. Steven Fine of Baltimore Hebrew University and Richard Joel of Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life. Executive Directors had their first-ever Executive Leadership Institute and lay leaders enjoyed their own track of specialized programming including a discussion by Bert Goldberg of AJFCA on "Empowering Boards".

The mission to Capitol Hill included an impressive

legislative overview by Reva Price, JCPA, and an eloquent address by Senator Wellstone (D-MN) stating the reasons that he — and so many of us — are working for tikkun olam, within or in collaboration with the JVS field. The presence of snowflakes instead of cherry blossoms did not chill our group's enthusiasm for an afternoon of hands-on activity, making and maintaining contact with legislative representatives.

On the lighter side of the agenda, attendees and JVS programs were honored at the annual Awards event, combined this year with an elegant menu. Informal groups gathered on other evenings for dinner expeditions to area restaurants.

Due to the positive reception accorded the 1998 Conference Proceedings, we are in the process of assembling the 1999 Proceedings. We hope to have this completed for distribution by the summer.

We look forward to seeing all of you again next year — along with everyone who was unable to attend this time!

Save the Date:

**IAJVS-AJVSP 2000
February 27- March 1
Tampa Bay, Florida**

EDC to Meet in Chicago October 9-10, 1999

Building on the excellent example set by last year's autumn meeting, the Executive Directors Council will meet in Chicago over the weekend of October 9-10. Hotel and registration details will appear in the June issue of this newsletter.

New IAJVS Project Director

Lucy Klain joined the IAJVS staff on March 1, 1999 as the Project Director for the National Welfare to Work Program - Project RETAIN. Ms. Klain has also assumed responsibility for the Department of Labor Disability Employment Initiative (DOL/DEI) Grant. Many of you had the opportunity to meet Lucy at the annual meeting in Washington. In keeping with the IAJVS tradition of "baptism by fire," Lucy jumped right in, planning and facilitating the two working sessions for the welfare to work grantees. Highlights from the two sessions included opportunities for grantees to meet one another and our DOL contact; to learn about each of the six participating agencies' programs; and to review the Department of Labor's grant and financial requirements.

These were the first of the three planned meetings with the grantees. Subsequent sessions are scheduled for fall 1999, in Philadelphia, and for February/March 2000, during the IAJVS annual meeting in Tampa Bay.

Washington Updates

- On March 23rd, I attended a Capitol Hill event that launched Project EMPLOY, an initiative of the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities to expand employment for persons with cognitive disabilities. More than three hundred employers and disability service providers viewed a video, "Discovering an Untapped Resource", which profiled individuals with mental retardation working successfully in public and private industries. If anybody is interested in reviewing the video with the accompanying training materials, please call me.

- As a follow up to his presentation at our annual meeting, I had the opportunity to meet again with Richard Joel, President of Hillel. We discussed the National Youth Project, collaboration between IAJVS and Hillel, and local linkages. Before a national effort can be put forth, Richard wants to see the extent to which local Hillels are working with the JVSs in their respective communities. I will be preparing a report for him, outlining the current programs. If you have a program in place for college and post college young adults, and have not already shared this information, please send materials to me.

Current and New Legislation: Public Policy Issues for JVS Consideration

President Clinton has announced several initiatives/pieces of legislation that affect the work we do and the people we serve in communities across the country. As a network, we need to come together and establish our position on some of the following:

- **Hate Crimes Announcement** - On April 6th, the President applauded public and private efforts to teach children about tolerance, and urged Congress to pass federal hate crimes legislation quickly. This legislation strengthens existing federal hate crimes law by extending the situations where prosecutions can be brought for violent crimes motivated by bias based on race, color, religion, or national origin, and expanding the federal hate crimes to include sexual orientation, gender, or disability.
- **Patients Bill of Rights** - Introduced in the last Congress and again this year by Democratic congressional members, this legislation — supported by the President — calls for a strong, enforceable Patients Bill of Rights to include: guaranteed access to needed health care specialists; access to emergency room services when and where need arises; continuity of care protections to assure patient care if a patient's health care provider is dropped; and access to a timely internal and external appeals process with a medical necessity standard.

Updating the IAJVS Website

For those of you who haven't visited our website recently (you can find us at www.jvsnj.org/iajvs.html), now is the time! Thanks to some dedicated funding in the DOL Welfare to Work grant, IAJVS will be improving and updating our website in the months to come.

IAJVS will be getting its own "domain name". Many thanks to JVS MetroWest for hosting our current site. Other planned enhancements include:

- Information on recent IAJVS grant activity
- A new grants library highlighting successful grant applications and programs for IAJVS affiliate agencies
- A forum for discussion, through theme-specific bulletin boards and chat rooms
- Opportunities for on-line donations
- Updated links with JVS agencies and other pertinent sites
- Access to IAJVS publications such as the Executive Quarterly Report

As we move forward we would love to hear from you. What would you like to see on the IAJVS website? In what exciting ways is your agency tackling the "information highway"? Let us know! Send email to: iajvs@jevs.org

Notes from Israel: The World Council of Jewish Communal Service (WCJCS) Quadrennial Conference Jerusalem, November 12-16, 1998

Any international meeting is exciting, but it was particularly heartening to see this assembly so well attended by our colleagues in the JVS field. This solid presence was partly due to the efforts of **Jay Spector of Philadelphia JEVS**, who served as **North American chair of the WCJCS vocational sessions**.

David Mendelson of Montreal JVS moderated one of the vocational sessions on November 16, "**Professional Activities Session II: Vocational Employment and Training**". The three presenters included **Marianne Van Fossen, from Philadelphia JEVS**, who spoke on "**The Integration of Education and Employment and Job Training Programs**".

Cleveland JFSA sent a seven-person staff delegation including **Kaye Chavinson**, Executive Director; **Marcia Levine**, Associate Executive Director; and **Stephen Rusnak**, Director, JFSA Career Center. **Miriam Katz**, Coordinator of Holocaust Programs, presented a training program on interventions for Holocaust survivors.

I gave a presentation on our Department of Labor Disability Employment Initiative grant. The audience was very interested in how we are delivering computer training to persons with disabilities.

The two vocational sessions created such interest among their participants that we all agreed to put efforts into maintaining contact and possibly looking into funding for future international professional exchange programs.

Ron Coun, Executive Director of MetroWest JVS, also attended as a general delegate and participated in the General Assembly programming. **Thanks to all these members of the JVS network for providing such a notable turnout.**

Meet the IAJVS Executive Committee: An Interview with Howie Brecher, Member-at-Large

Howie Brecher ("nobody calls me Howard except my mother") came to Cincinnati twenty years ago from his hometown of Hartford, Connecticut. His JVS involvement began in 1982 when he joined the Employers Advisory Committee in deepening commu-

nity support for JVS. Howie's employer at the time was encouraging staff to become involved with United Way agencies. The key connection came from one of his neighbors, who worked for Cincinnati JVS. Howie has served continuously on their Board of Trustees from 1982 and was Chairman of the Board from 1994 to 1998.

Howie's initial JVS experiences encouraged him to continue volunteering. "I was impressed with what JVS was doing, I knew people whose sons and daughters were clients, and I thought it was a good organization. Also at the time we had Bernie Rosenthal as President and he was the world's best volunteer recruiter." For him, satisfaction comes primarily from sharing the agency's very concrete mission of putting people to work. "When you serve on their board it helps you have a direct impact. I have a lot of fun and I can also see results, and I've met a lot of wonderful people."

Howie's national-level volunteering evolved from his local work. "As I got involved and became an officer it became important to know what was going on in other communities. What goes on in your own community is impacted on by what happens nationally — and vice versa."

Howie is Vice President at Michelman, Inc., a firm supplying chemical products to industry worldwide. An enthusiastic business and personal traveler, he has visited over fifty countries. He has been to Israel five times, most recently in November 1998 for the WCJCS Quadrennial. When at home, Howie unwinds by gardening, reading or playing tennis.

Previous Executive Director Honored

Mazel tov to Dr. Marvin Kivitz, who received a lifetime achievement award from NISH for his steadfast efforts in the field of rehabilitation.

Cincinnati JVS Begins 60th Year with Honors

Jewish Vocational Service of Cincinnati enters its sixtieth year of providing quality vocational rehabilitation services to Southwestern Ohio as the recent recipient of two awards. The Ohio Rehabilitation Association presented JVS its Organizational Award that recognizes consistency in high quality programs that help people with disabilities lead productive, independent lives. Cincinnati Bell honored JVS as one of seven recipients of its Building Bridges Award. The award recognizes individuals and organizations committed to diversity and change.

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