Dear Friends,

When we began responding to the pandemic in March, who would have thought we would still be struggling through this battle eight months later? Yet here we are. And thanks to all of you, JF&CS has been able to mobilize and re-mobilize resources quickly to meet the urgent needs of more than 14,000 clients. That’s meant reinventing in-person programs—creating socially distanced Family Table deliveries and Zoom-based support groups. It’s also meant putting in place new “pandemic era” supports to meet emerging economic and mental health needs—related to social isolation, childcare, joblessness, and so much more.

One simple, powerful thread runs through that work: a compassionate and immediate presence during times of need. Again and again, our staff, volunteers, donors, and other supporters quickly and tirelessly said, “We are here. We are ready. How can we help?”

Throughout this newsletter, you’ll read about these generous and steadfast partners and the impact they have on our work. I hope that like me, you are inspired by the conversations with Jamie Grossman and with Candice and Howard Wolk—dedicated volunteers and forward-thinking donors—and by stories of so many people saying, “we are here”— here to address food insecurity; here for people with disabilities; here for isolated older adults and new parents. And here for our community.

For me, these long pandemic days have been both grueling and inspiring—as I see the intense need in the community, along with the impact of our work, the gratitude of our clients, and the commitment of our many supporters. Thank you so very much for being our partners in that work. The urgency is not going away, and your partnership will mean more than ever throughout the winter. I am grateful for the many of you who have said, “We are here” over the past few months, and I look forward to working with you in the months to come.

My best wishes,

Gail Schulman
Chief Executive Officer

“...Whoever saves a life, it is considered as if he saved an entire world.”

—Talmud, Sanhedrin
The Power of Social Services Organizations: A Conversation with Candice and Howard Wolk

Last spring, Combined Jewish Philanthropies announced a transformational $10 million gift from Candice and Howard Wolk to assist individuals and families in need throughout the Greater Boston community and beyond. One million dollars of the donation was made available immediately in support of CJP’s Coronavirus Emergency Fund — JF&CS is a grateful recipient of a portion of those funds allocated to help vulnerable members of the Jewish community recover from the economic impact of the pandemic. Thanks to support from the Wolks and other like-minded donors, the JF&CS Center for Basic Needs Assistance and our Family Table team were able to respond quickly to the increased need for both emergency groceries and financial assistance:

- providing food to over 500 households each month and emergency food for over 200 new clients in crisis
- making over 540 deliveries to vulnerable older adults
- quadrupling the amount of financial assistance we typically provide
- distributing gift cards for food, diapers, wipes, and other essential items to over 200 low-income parents of young children

Earlier in the fall, we sat down with Candice and Howard to talk about how JF&CS played such an important role in delivering assistance during this crisis.

CANDICE: Howard and I have been involved with JF&CS for a long time. We have both been hands-on volunteers, and I served on the Board of Directors for five years. Throughout the current COVID crisis, what has impressed me most about JF&CS is their ability to reinvent themselves. Whether it is how they safely deliver groceries through Family Table, or the Friendly Visitor program adapting how they connect with isolated older adults, or helping an individual or family transition in crisis, JF&CS continues to demonstrate their flexibility and creativity while meeting the needs of those struggling throughout the current crisis.

HOWARD: Candice and I feel lucky, not just that we are in a position to help create a stronger safety net for the community, but that organizations such as JF&CS have the expertise and capacity to provide much-needed assistance in an effective manner. In normal times, the cards are stacked against so many people right in our community—but today, the pandemic, coupled with the economic crisis, means that more and more families are living in a vulnerable position. Those living paycheck to paycheck are standing on the edge of a cliff. If their basic needs are not met, they don’t stand a chance of managing successfully through this crisis. It takes real organizational talent and dedication to serve those in crisis with great sensitivity, and to do so at scale.

CANDICE: What was important to us was to partner with a front-line agency, one that has direct person-to-person contact with individuals and families. JF&CS has a multitude of services under one roof. They can do everything from putting food on people’s tables to providing essential mental health support, to helping individuals maximize public benefits so they have the resources they need to survive...to move away from the edge of that cliff. We see JF&CS as a vital resource to the Jewish and non-Jewish communities and know that a gift to JF&CS will immediately be utilized to help those in transition or crisis.

HOWARD: There are so many worthy causes—universities, hospitals, the arts—but with the pandemic and its economic ramifications, the social services sector needs more attention from the philanthropic community. The combination of an umbrella organization such as CJP working in concert with front-line agencies such as JF&CS should help us as a community identify and serve those in need during this critical time. JF&CS has proven to be a vital part of our community and support system, and we should all be grateful for it.

Friendly Visitor Discovers a Surprising Connection

Ben Boverman (left) is an experienced JF&CS volunteer who became a Friendly Visitor in November 2019 with our Betty Ann Greenbaum Miller Center for Jewish Healing. The Friendly Visitor program matches trained volunteers with isolated older adults to provide friendship and a treasured connection to the Jewish community.

Ben speaks Russian, so we were excited to connect him with Frima. As they were getting to know each other, Ben shared that he was from Odessa, Ukraine. They quickly realized that Frima had lived two doors down from Ben’s family in Odessa and had been a classmate of Ben’s (now deceased) mother! As Frima told Ben stories about his mother, she described her exactly as Ben remembered her. She shared that his mother had been strong in math and the sciences, and Ben commented that she had become a high school math teacher. The two have built a strong relationship since those initial conversations. This summer, Ben traveled from his home in Dennisport to bring Frima masks and hand sanitizer in Brookline when she wasn’t able to get them herself. Ben commented, “I’m so grateful that by volunteering with JF&CS I made this special connection… one that I now cherish deeply. The fact that I found such connectivity with someone who had been a stranger to me is just unbelievable!”
**JF&CS Responds to Critical Community Needs**

Our commitment to meeting client and community needs is grounded in one simple principle: when we see a need, we figure out how to address it. That "figure out how to address it" part is what makes JF&CS such a powerful and effective resource. With over 40 programs, a wealth of partners statewide, and highly collaborative and knowledgeable staff, we can find and deploy (or recommend) the best set of resources to meet any client need. That core competency has been even more valuable over these past few months, when client needs have become both more complex and more urgent. Here are just a few examples of how JF&CS taps into our own resources, and those of our partners, to support vulnerable individuals and families with a powerful blend of efficiency and care.

**Ensuring Food Security**

**JF&CS Family Table** has recently partnered with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Contact Tracing Collaborative, providing emergency food delivery for low-income people throughout Greater Boston who need to quarantine as part of COVID contact tracing.

**Providing Access To Safe Housing**

Through a recent grant of over $120,000, **JF&CS Journey to Safety** is working with the Massachusetts Office of Victim Assistance to help survivors of domestic abuse stabilize their housing and/or relocate to emergency shelter, transitional housing, or a new residence. The grant, funded by the federal Victim of Crime Act (VOCA) Fund, is in response to the housing crisis exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Addressing Health Disparities**

Our **Services for Older Adults** team recently hosted the virtual symposium *Let’s Talk About Dementia and Culture: How We Talk and Teach About Dementia in Cultural and Linguistic Communities*. Over 625 participants joined in a far-reaching discussion of disparities in the risk of developing dementia and in access to diagnosis, research, and care. The symposium was developed in partnership with Dementia Friends Massachusetts and the Alzheimer's Association and generously supported by Tufts Health Plan Foundation and the Lebowitz Family Charitable Trust.

**Supporting Educators And Parents**

Our **Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation** team has offered evening support groups to over 50 teachers at three early learning centers with whom we have consulting partnerships: Horizons for Homeless Children, Dimock Children's and Family Center, and Epiphany Early Learning Center. We are also offering daytime "office hours" where teachers and parents can receive additional support.

**Creating A Mental Health Support System**

**JF&CS Caring Communities Resource Network** (CCRN) brought together representatives from more than 20 synagogues for a virtual workshop focused on how synagogues can address mental health needs during the COVID-19 crisis.

We are grateful for the support we have received for this work, including from the MA COVID Relief Fund, United Way, Foundation for MetroWest, the Boston Resiliency Fund, Greater Boston Food Bank, Combined Jewish Philanthropies, and many other organizations and individuals. While the future is uncertain, one thing we know for sure: members of our community will continue to face complex and urgent needs. We also know that Jewish Family & Children’s Service — and our supporters and partners — will be there to help however, whenever, and wherever necessary.

**Day Program Participants Learn Cooking, Martial Arts, and More**

For much of the spring and summer, our CHAI Works day program for adults with disabilities was not able to offer its usual in-person programming, so we created a robust set of online classes and activities, offered four times each day. Over 90 adults with disabilities participated in classes that included martial arts with The East Coast Jornales System, cooking, science, art, and more. Even though we are now able to resume in-person programming, we continue to offer four hours of online programming each day, ensuring that all of our CHAI Works clients can remain active and connected.
Extending the Legacy. Expanding the Impact.

A conversation with past Board President and veteran volunteer Jamie Grossman

When Jamie Grossman stepped down as President of the Board of Directors of JF&CS, we had planned to honor her at our spring gala. Instead, we held a virtual celebration at our Annual Meeting, announcing that we were naming the board room—where she has spent countless hours working tirelessly on behalf of JF&CS—after her. Recently, we asked Jamie to reflect on her work with JF&CS, about leading during crisis, and the importance of legacy giving.

You have been involved with JF&CS for years… for 20 years here in Boston and through your mother’s work in Philadelphia years ago. In your mind, what has remained constant about JF&CS, its work, and its impact?

Two things really stand out. First, the complete devotion of board, staff, and volunteers to meeting the needs of our community…it’s just extraordinary. Second, that commitment has such longevity. If you did a poll of how long staff has been there, it’s really incredible. Board members also stay around once they are engaged.

Once I got a feel for the organization, I became more involved as a volunteer and saw firsthand the value and impact of the work. I remember a Schechter Holocaust Services event where a client spoke about how isolated she was, how challenging it was to decide between paying for heat and purchasing food. I learned that her story was not unique, that 30% of Holocaust survivors live below the poverty level and have to make choices like that every month. To know that as a JF&CS volunteer and donor, I could help over 400 Holocaust survivors connect to resources that reliably meet their basic needs, to have the opportunity to make such a difference in someone else’s life… that’s a pretty compelling reason to stick around!

You clearly had a strong role model in your mom and are an equally powerful role model for your own girls. Is there something about JF&CS that makes it a great place for families to learn about the power of giving back?

When I was younger, it was not like it is today, with everyone running their kids around to volunteer everywhere. My mom went out 2 nights a week to tutor girls in a residential home, and sometimes she’d bring them home for Shabbat dinner. Seeing my mom in that role was my original exposure to volunteerism and the impact we could have on each other’s lives… that’s a pretty compelling reason to stick around!

You clearly had a strong role model in your mom and are an equally powerful role model for your own girls. Is there something about JF&CS that makes it a great place for families to learn about the power of giving back?

When I was younger, it was not like it is today, with everyone running their kids around to volunteer everywhere. My mom went out 2 nights a week to tutor girls in a residential home, and sometimes she’d bring them home for Shabbat dinner. Seeing my mom in that role was my original exposure to volunteerism and the impact we could have on each other’s lives. Once I had my own daughters, our family volunteered with JF&CS as much as we could… distributing food at Family Table, helping with Shabbat dinners for adults with disabilities, and more.

What was your proudest achievement as Board President?

Over the years, JF&CS has become family, and as Board President, you want to care for your family. Being Board President during a leadership transition was one of the hardest things I have ever done. I was fortunate to work closely with smart, passionate board and staff members to ensure a smooth transition. The community could see that we were working together as a team to transition the leadership of the organization for whatever’s next, and that coming together was so empowering.

Why does planned giving matter to JF&CS? What’s the power of including the agency in one’s estate?

For me and my family, legacy giving is an investment in the enduring work and sustained impact of the agency. JF&CS has been here for people in need for over 150 years… we want to make sure it’s here for decades to come. Making a planned gift to JF&CS was probably one of the easiest decisions to make and also to execute. Knowing that my impact will touch generations to come is so gratifying.

Jamie Grossman

What was the gift she has given us. Care about your future. Care about other people.”
—Jessica Weintraub (Jamie’s daughter)

I could help over 400 Holocaust survivors connect to resources that reliably meet their basic needs, to have the opportunity to make such a difference in someone else’s life… that’s a pretty compelling reason to stick around!

You clearly had a strong role model in your mom and are an equally powerful role model for your own girls. Is there something about JF&CS that makes it a great place for families to learn about the power of giving back?

When I was younger, it was not like it is today, with everyone running their kids around to volunteer everywhere. My mom went out 2 nights a week to tutor girls in a residential home, and sometimes she’d bring them home for Shabbat dinner. Seeing my mom in that role was my original exposure to volunteerism and the impact we could have on each other’s lives. Once I had my own daughters, our family volunteered with JF&CS as much as we could… distributing food at Family Table, helping with Shabbat dinners for adults with disabilities, and more.

What was your proudest achievement as Board President?

Over the years, JF&CS has become family, and as Board President, you want to care for your family. Being Board President during a leadership transition was one of the hardest things I have ever done. I was fortunate to work closely with smart, passionate board and staff members to ensure a smooth transition. The community could see that we were working together as a team to transition the leadership of the organization for whatever’s next, and that coming together was so empowering.

Why does planned giving matter to JF&CS? What’s the power of including the agency in one’s estate?

For me and my family, legacy giving is an investment in the enduring work and sustained impact of the agency. JF&CS has been here for people in need for over 150 years… we want to make sure it’s here for decades to come. Making a planned gift to JF&CS was probably one of the easiest decisions to make and also to execute. Knowing that my impact will touch generations to come is so gratifying.

Jamie Grossman

What was the gift she has given us. Care about your future. Care about other people.”
—Jessica Weintraub (Jamie’s daughter)

I could help over 400 Holocaust survivors connect to resources that reliably meet their basic needs, to have the opportunity to make such a difference in someone else’s life… that’s a pretty compelling reason to stick around!

You clearly had a strong role model in your mom and are an equally powerful role model for your own girls. Is there something about JF&CS that makes it a great place for families to learn about the power of giving back?

When I was younger, it was not like it is today, with everyone running their kids around to volunteer everywhere. My mom went out 2 nights a week to tutor girls in a residential home, and sometimes she’d bring them home for Shabbat dinner. Seeing my mom in that role was my original exposure to volunteerism and the impact we could have on each other’s lives. Once I had my own daughters, our family volunteered with JF&CS as much as we could… distributing food at Family Table, helping with Shabbat dinners for adults with disabilities, and more.

What was your proudest achievement as Board President?

Over the years, JF&CS has become family, and as Board President, you want to care for your family. Being Board President during a leadership transition was one of the hardest things I have ever done. I was fortunate to work closely with smart, passionate board and staff members to ensure a smooth transition. The community could see that we were working together as a team to transition the leadership of the organization for whatever’s next, and that coming together was so empowering.

Why does planned giving matter to JF&CS? What’s the power of including the agency in one’s estate?

For me and my family, legacy giving is an investment in the enduring work and sustained impact of the agency. JF&CS has been here for people in need for over 150 years… we want to make sure it’s here for decades to come. Making a planned gift to JF&CS was probably one of the easiest decisions to make and also to execute. Knowing that my impact will touch generations to come is so gratifying.

Jamie Grossman

What was the gift she has given us. Care about your future. Care about other people.”
—Jessica Weintraub (Jamie’s daughter)

I could help over 400 Holocaust survivors connect to resources that reliably meet their basic needs, to have the opportunity to make such a difference in someone else’s life… that’s a pretty compelling reason to stick around!

You clearly had a strong role model in your mom and are an equally powerful role model for your own girls. Is there something about JF&CS that makes it a great place for families to learn about the power of giving back?

When I was younger, it was not like it is today, with everyone running their kids around to volunteer everywhere. My mom went out 2 nights a week to tutor girls in a residential home, and sometimes she’d bring them home for Shabbat dinner. Seeing my mom in that role was my original exposure to volunteerism and the impact we could have on each other’s lives. Once I had my own daughters, our family volunteered with JF&CS as much as we could… distributing food at Family Table, helping with Shabbat dinners for adults with disabilities, and more.

What was your proudest achievement as Board President?

Over the years, JF&CS has become family, and as Board President, you want to care for your family. Being Board President during a leadership transition was one of the hardest things I have ever done. I was fortunate to work closely with smart, passionate board and staff members to ensure a smooth transition. The community could see that we were working together as a team to transition the leadership of the organization for whatever’s next, and that coming together was so empowering.

Why does planned giving matter to JF&CS? What’s the power of including the agency in one’s estate?

For me and my family, legacy giving is an investment in the enduring work and sustained impact of the agency. JF&CS has been here for people in need for over 150 years… we want to make sure it’s here for decades to come. Making a planned gift to JF&CS was probably one of the easiest decisions to make and also to execute. Knowing that my impact will touch generations to come is so gratifying.

Jamie Grossman

What was the gift she has given us. Care about your future. Care about other people.”
—Jessica Weintraub (Jamie’s daughter)

I could help over 400 Holocaust survivors connect to resources that reliably meet their basic needs, to have the opportunity to make such a difference in someone else’s life… that’s a pretty compelling reason to stick around!

You clearly had a strong role model in your mom and are an equally powerful role model for your own girls. Is there something about JF&CS that makes it a great place for families to learn about the power of giving back?

When I was younger, it was not like it is today, with everyone running their kids around to volunteer everywhere. My mom went out 2 nights a week to tutor girls in a residential home, and sometimes she’d bring them home for Shabbat dinner. Seeing my mom in that role was my original exposure to volunteerism and the impact we could have on each other’s lives. Once I had my own daughters, our family volunteered with JF&CS as much as we could… distributing food at Family Table, helping with Shabbat dinners for adults with disabilities, and more.
For over 150 years, JF&CS has provided essential services that help individuals and families successfully navigate life’s transitions and overcome challenges. This vital work is made possible through the generosity of an expanding community of donors who provide us with ongoing annual support.

The JF&CS Leadership Giving Societies recognize those engaged donors and their deep connection to our mission and impact. There are five distinct membership levels based on cumulative giving during each JF&CS fiscal year — their names evoke our values as an agency and reflect our shared commitment to Jewish traditions.

Introducing JF&CS Leadership Giving Societies

Recognizing your commitment to our impact.

For over 150 years, JF&CS has provided essential services that help individuals and families successfully navigate life’s transitions and overcome challenges. This vital work is made possible through the generosity of an expanding community of donors who provide us with ongoing annual support.

The JF&CS Leadership Giving Societies recognize those engaged donors and their deep connection to our mission and impact. There are five distinct membership levels based on cumulative giving during each JF&CS fiscal year — their names evoke our values as an agency and reflect our shared commitment to Jewish traditions.

**Kavod Society**

$25,000+

The Kavod (Respect) Society recognizes donors who allow us to invest deeply in our programs and significantly expand their impact. For instance, a gift of $25,000 provides a full year of comprehensive peer support for six mothers in recovery from substance use disorder. Chairs: Jamie Grossman & Bob Kinder

**Tikkun Olam Society**

$10,000 – $24,999

The Tikkun Olam (Repairing the World) Society recognizes donors who strengthen our ability to offer inclusive, accessible programming. For instance, a gift of $10,000 supports a full year of gas and maintenance for client outings in our accessible vans. Chairs: Shari & Robert Cashman

**Chessed Society**

$5,000 – $9,999

The Chessed (Loving Kindness) Society recognizes donors who help us create and maintain meaningful connections for clients at all stages of life. For instance, a gift of $5,000 provides supportive home care for two Holocaust survivors for a month. Chairs: Alexandra & Jody Simes

**Tzedakah Society**

$2,500 – $4,999

The Tzedakah (Justice) Society recognizes donors who help us provide advocacy for clients navigating complex challenges and systems. For instance, a gift of $2,500 helps ten families advocate for special education services. Chairs: Danielle & Gregg Darish

**Chaverim Society**

$1,000 – $2,499

The Chaverim (Friends) Society recognizes donors who help us meet the basic needs of the individuals and families we serve. For instance, a gift of $1,000 provides nutritious groceries for one family for an entire year. Chairs: Allison & Josh Blank

To learn more about the JF&CS Leadership Giving Societies, or to explore other ways you can help us provide exceptional human services guided by Jewish traditions, please contact Terri Grogan, Director of Individual Giving, at tgrogan@jfcsboston.org or 781-693-5707.
Impact in Action

In May, we held our annual Women's Breakfast, honoring First Lady Lauren Baker, who is on the front line responding to the pandemic, working in tireless partnership with the Department of Children and Families. The virtual event raised over $200,000 for the JF&CS Center for Early Relationship Support® (CERS) and its range of support groups, clinical therapy, and other programs that foster growth and resilience in hundreds of new parents.

"JF&CS has a huge and important impact, a ripple effect for parents and their children — and the rest of us — for years to come. Their knowledge and years of experience make them experts in the field. The state turns to them as it builds their thinking and experience into early childhood care and education policies and programs."

—First Lady Lauren Baker

This fall, Team JF&CS Family Table participated in the Ride for Food – Off the Beaten Path, a hunger relief fundraiser organized by Three Squares New England. Members of our team biked and hiked hundreds of miles, raising over $55,750 for our Family Table food pantry. "It was truly inspiring to see so many people committing themselves to the fight against food insecurity," said Bernice Behar, Director of Family Table.
Thank You for Making the Caring During Crisis Campaign a Success!

Dear Friends,

Many of us find ourselves looking for silver linings during these challenging times. For me, personally, having our four children under one roof last spring was a gift. Family dinners and endless poker nights brought us together with caring and laughter. At JF&CS, my silver lining has been the unprecedented response from volunteers and donors reaching out with a selfless desire to help those in need.

Our first Family Table Distribution during the pandemic in April welcomed dozens of new volunteers who immediately responded to our request for help. Hundreds of volunteers have created heartwarming cards for older adults; companies have donated laptops; and hand-sewn masks have arrived at our office daily. Our diaper fund has topped $15,000, supporting the needs of our low-income families. On March 25, we launched our Caring During Crisis campaign, and by July 1, we had raised over $1.1 million — with contributions ranging from rolls of coins from children to a single gift of $125,000. Combined Jewish Philanthropies was one of our first donors, immediately ensuring that we could quickly pivot and respond to emergency needs. We are grateful for their continued support, partnership, and inspiration.

Today, like every non-profit, JF&CS is figuring out how to do more with less. And while uncertainty is the new normal, what I know for sure is that our loyal donors and volunteers will continue to stand at the ready to help those in need. That kind of response with time, talent, and treasure is what has sustained our work for generations.

My personal thanks are beyond measure,

Wendy Schiffman Wilsker
Chief Advancement Officer

We launched the Caring During Crisis campaign to ensure that JF&CS could continue to provide vital services to vulnerable populations across the lifespan; adapting and expanding those services to meet the unprecedented needs brought on by the pandemic. Thanks to your generosity, the campaign raised over $1M! We are grateful for your partnership, proud of what we have accomplished together, and appreciate your continued support as we address the many complex effects of this crisis.

Total raised: $1,115,727.37

Donors: 782
New Donors: 33%

"Throughout the pandemic, JF&CS has stepped up to meet the critical needs of our community. The network they have created in the Jewish community and beyond has been essential to delivering services quickly and efficiently. They are helping to ensure no one falls through the cracks. We are proud to support their efforts. They are helping to make certain that even as we face great challenges, we always care for one other."

—Rabbi Marc Baker
President and CEO, Combined Jewish Philanthropies

JF&CS is grateful to Combined Jewish Philanthropies for their continued support, partnership, and inspiration.

Thank you for calling.

How can we help?

JF&CS: 781-647-JFCS (5327)
Access our wide range of programs and services.

CJP SeniorDirect: 800-980-1982
Find resources designed for older adults.

Disability Resource Network: 781-693-5640
Get help navigating supports for children and adults with disabilities.

JF&CS Emergency Financial Assistance: 781-693-1388