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jfsakron.org

JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE OF AKRON

# CONNECTIONS

Newsletter for Friends of JFS Akron



A division of JFSA Cleveland



## From the Director's Desk

By Buffy Ramos LSW, Director of Older Adult Services

Dear Friends,

As I write this, it is a cold, wet, and gray day in Northeast Ohio. Admittedly, this is not my favorite time of year! However, looking on the bright side, Jewish Family Service is entering a very exciting season. Thanks to the many years of strong direction and influence of our past President, Dianne Newman, we are positioned very well as we usher in new leadership. Richard Zelin will be taking the reigns as Advisory Committee Chair at a time when JFS has offered more services and programs to the community than ever before!

Thanks to feedback from our older adult clients, we kicked off the fall with increased in-person programming. "Out and About in the Neighborhood" allows seniors to experience their community, together, in new and different ways. The "Breakfast Buddies" club will invite older adults to visit new and different local breakfast venues; who doesn't enjoy a good cup of coffee or tea at a new place? As always, you can count on the Zoom programming you have grown to love, as well as technological support to join us on-line. The Silver J Ticket transportation and homeware service continues to be a stabilizing support for many in our 62+ community. Finally, we continue to provide older adult assessments and consultation services, free of charge, to our older adults and their families.

Now is the perfect time to get involved with JFS as a volunteer! We continue to be in need of "Volunteer Computer Coaches" to work with our folks on tech skills. If technology is not your thing, we also need folks to deliver meals at the holidays and/or provide friendly visits to our home-bound folks. Don't hesitate to reach out and learn more about opportunities to get involved with JFS!

## JOIN OUR CAMPAIGN!

Individuals and families who come to JFS Akron for help do not pay for most services. Most are funded by public and private foundations, and through the generosity of individual donors through annual fundraising efforts. Without these funds, JFS Akron could not continue this important work. Help ensure that no one is turned away in their time of need. Give to the JFS Akron Annual Campaign.

**Scan the QR code to make your on-line gift today!**

**You can also send a check to:**

JFS Akron, 750 White Pond Dr., Akron, OH 44320.



SCAN ME!

JFS Akron is a division of  
Jewish Family Service  
Association of Cleveland.

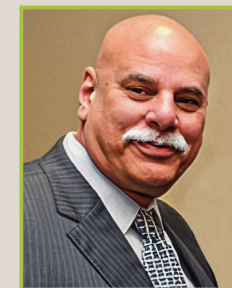


Dianne Newman

## Welcome New Leadership

By Dianne Newman, JFS Akron Advisory Board

After serving for the past 8 years as president of the JFS Akron board (and now advisory board), I am passing the torch to a previous president, Richard Zelin. Rich has been as involved and invested as I have been in this wonderful agency, and I look forward to his future leadership! It's been an exciting time in the JFS Akron family. Connecting with Jewish Family Service Association of Cleveland in 2018 opened up new doors for us. We can now secure Claims Conference funding for our survivors; we can access Medicare and Medicaid (and thus third party payers); and we can tap into the knowledge and expertise of Susan Bichsel PhD, JFSA Cleveland's dynamic president and chief executive officer.



Richard Zelin

I look forward to staying involved with this outstanding agency and with Buffy Ramos, our superb Program and Services Director! *Thank you all for everything you've done to make Akron's JFS the strong, impactful organization that it is. The future is very bright for the agency and will continue to serve the community for many years to come.*

If you haven't had the opportunity to visit Akron JFS recently, please stop by and see what we are up to! There are many ways to get involved and we would love to make new friends to the agency. Whether it be visiting a survivor, volunteering to deliver meals during the holidays, or just learning more about new services and supports, we want to hear from you!





# J Silver J Ticket

Home Health & Transportation Services

## DID YOU KNOW?

JFS Akron's Silver J Ticket transportation program assists seniors in getting to their medical appointments or to synagogue services? This is a free service, generously supported by Jewish Akron's Albert and Janet Schultz Foundation for Jewish Life. In addition, JFS offers discounted home care, through Lily Home Care Service, for people in need of short term assistance and support in their homes, also supported by the Schultz Foundation for Jewish Life.

Want to learn more? Contact us at 330.867.3388.



## A DAY ON THE LAKE

On September 4<sup>th</sup>, JFS Akron older adult friends and staff took a boat ride on the Portage Lake Princess. Over 30 participants enjoyed a beautiful day on the lake, as the weather was warm and sunny, and the views were breathtaking. The boat trip was part of the Akron JFS Arts and Culture program, which includes offerings of arts and culture events, socialization opportunities, and other activities that bring older adults together for a fun and meaningful experience. Group transportation is sometimes provided when a large group is expected. Most events are free or with a suggested donation. The JFS Akron arts and culture program is generously supported by the Martin and Leah Bliman Fund for Older Adults.

Want to receive information about upcoming events? Contact us at 330.867.3388.

# DELIVERING Cheer & Joy

JFS Akron's 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Mitzvah Day was held on Sunday, September 29<sup>th</sup>. Friendly visitors brought cheer and warm new year wishes to older adults connected to JFS Akron. This year's project was a multi-generational effort, with toddlers, teenagers, college students and older adults involved! JFS Advisory Board members, staff, and volunteers including representatives from the Rubber City Jews, Kent State University Hillel students, Kent State University Gerontology Club students, as well as older adults joined in the fun. Deliveries of honey cake, challah, fresh flowers and more were made to 25 older adults living in the Akron/Summit county area.

If you would like more information about volunteer opportunities like this, please contact us at 330.867.3388.



Joshua Schaffer and Family



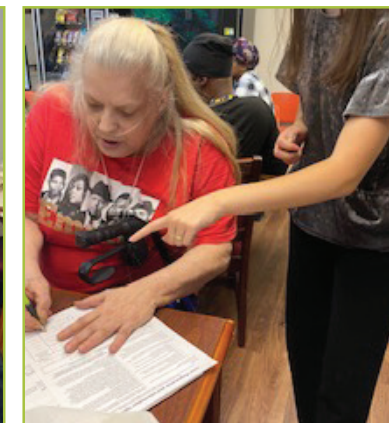
Saffron Rose and Mallory Shwab



Rachel Osherow (RCJ), Taylor Haines (KSU Gerontology Club), Grace Gerwony (KSU Gerontology Club), Valerie Becker (JFS Volunteer), Molly Markowitz (KSU Hillel), and Eliana Bennett (KSU Hillel)

\*Not pictured is Richard Zelin, JFS Advisory Committee, and Buffy Ramos and Caleb Ramos (Director of Older Adult Services and son) also made deliveries.

## IMPROVING VOTING ACCESS for Seniors



Ensuring that everyone has access to the right to vote is a critical responsibility, especially for communities facing barriers. Older adults and people with disabilities often encounter challenges such as limited transportation, lack of information about voter registration, or difficulty accessing absentee ballot materials. JFS Akron, in partnership with Summit Management, Inc., has been addressing these issues by visiting senior and disabled high-rise apartment buildings across Summit County. They've not only provided voter registration assistance and helped with absentee ballot applications but also engaged the community through events like BBQs and BINGO, making voter support more accessible and enjoyable for all residents.



### STAFF SPOTLIGHT Natalie Hercules

Natalie Hercules, past intern at JFS Akron formally known as Natalie Wammes, has been hired as the older adult caseworker. She will be focusing her time on older adult assessments and case management services, which include regular visits to the home, family consultations, and on-going information and referral services. Natalie will graduate with her master's degree in social work from the University of Kentucky (on-line) in December 2024. JFS Akron is fortunate to have such a caring, committed, and competent staff member whose compassionate spirit has led them to a career of service.

If you or someone you know is in need of an older adult assessment, consultation, or access to older adult services at JFS and in the broader community, contact us at 330.867.3388.