



## JFS AGENCY UPDATE November 2020



*Happy  
Thanksgiving*

FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT JFS



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### **“Looking for the helpers” From Steven Schauder, Executive Director**

In times of national crisis or tragedy, Mr. Rogers would turn to his young television audience and share a lesson from his mother. “When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, ‘Look for the helpers,’” he recounted. “You will always find people who are helping.” We are living through a once in a century pandemic, and while the hopes of a vaccine seem on the horizon, the long-term stress and anxieties placed on individuals and families is unprecedented. Now in its ninth month and surging, COVID-19 has changed how all of us live our lives. While so many of us have been forced to live in a cocoon, others among us—“the helpers”—have ventured out to provide for those in need in our community.

While we’re indebted to our healthcare professionals and first responders, there are so many additional individuals who have gone above and beyond to help others. Among the helpers are those people associated with our Finkelstein – Cohen Kosher Meals on Wheels Program (KMOV). I want to thank Ed Finkelstein for his continuing support of the program and Allen

Geckle, CEO of The Campus of the Jewish Home and Dennis Michaels, the Kitchen Manager for The Jewish Home for providing the food. But I really want to thank our volunteers. Week in and week out, these volunteers have ensured that homebound seniors receive fresh, healthy, low-sodium nutritious meals without any gap in service.

We thank: Heather Ashkenes; Larkin Berkley; Phil Bloom; Sally Jo Bronner; Randy Bronstein; Jill Carre; Robyn Chotiner; Malcolm Cohen; Sarah Coopes; Larry Freedman; David Gottlieb; Maggie Grotzinger; Nancy Herman; Jill Henig; Alexandra Hirsh; Gloria Kaplan; Marina Kogan; Ellis Rosenberg; Mike Shapiro; David Sherman; Julie Sherman; Christine Titih; Enid Wassner; Rachel Weinstock.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the herculean efforts of John Jantos, our KMOW Coordinator, during this crisis. John is a quiet leader, who leads with equanimity, humor, and is absolutely unflappable. John was a volunteer for 10 years with KMOW and assumed the coordinator position after he retired. John does whatever it takes to keep the program going and along with all of our helpers, it is the seniors of the community who are the beneficiaries. If you know of someone in need of the program, or would like to volunteer, contact John Jantos at 717-233-1681 or [jjantos@jfsfobhg.org](mailto:jjantos@jfsfobhg.org).

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### **JFS' Rachel Kuhr Honored by NASW**

Rachel Kuhr, Director of AdoptionLinks and Foster Care has received the Exemplary Service Award by the National Association of Social Workers PA-Keystone Division. This award is only given to the best and the brightest in the social work profession and it is a tribute to the outstanding work that Rachel has done in advocacy, program development, and overall social work practice.

JFS thanks Rachel for her long standing service to our community and for her commitment to provide the highest quality services to those families seeking to foster or adopt a child. We feel very fortunate to have Rachel as a Director and we thank her for promoting such a positive image for our agency through her work and her leadership.

- Our Adoption and Foster care is currently working with 49 families.
- We absorbed three families and three foster care placements from a local agency that was closing their Foster care program.
- We have four families who are seeking to adopt from foster care. One has been matched with four children in Texas.

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### **JFS Hanukkah Food Drive with Lee Casher and Save the Bananas**



As we prepare for Hannukah, JFS is planning a Food Drive. Rarely a week goes by without one or more families using our Food Pantry. The Pantry is open to the community and is on many community lists. Easily accessible in our lobby, it is divided into a kosher section, a non-kosher section, and has another section devoted to personal care items. Most of the products are donated by our local religious schools, families celebrating simchas and community food drives. We are especially grateful to the students at Temple Ohev Sholom who donate to the food pantry on a regular basis.

Last week, JFS made a large donation of some of the overflow items in its Food Pantry to Save the Bananas, which is the brainchild of Lee Casher. (See picture above). Lee, a personal chef who runs Lee's Good Eats, began Save the Bananas to get bananas and other fresh fruits and vegetables to community members who lack access to fresh produce. JFS plans to continue to work with Lee to make sure that the Jewish community is at the front lines of helping eliminate food insecurity in Harrisburg.

The Food Pantry is available to those facing temporary financial hardship or are in a state of long-term or permanent financial hardship. Our most needed items are: Tuna fish; canned fruit or canned vegetables; Peanut Butter; Cereal; Bar soap; Shampoo; Toothpaste; Toothbrushes; Tissues; Toilet paper; Paper towels; Sponges; Dish liquid; Laundry detergent.

Gift cards to Giant Foods help supplement our Pantry for perishable food items such as bread, meat, poultry, eggs, cheese, and milk. Donations and a portion of the proceeds from our Centerpieces for Tzedakah Project help us purchase these gift cards.

Everything and anything is greatly appreciated. Please call the JFS Front Desk at **717- 233-1681** to arrange a time when you can drop off food.

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