



R i c h m o n d

Care • Counseling • Adoption

Annual Report
2022 - 2023



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Dear Friends,

These days it seems like every passing year is JFS' most exciting, most challenging, most important. All of our programs are growing.

Memory assessment services, our newest offering, provided 419 people experiencing cognitive decline with diagnoses and care recommendations.

We welcomed more than 100 Ukrainians to Richmond without the federal support we relied on during our last resettlement effort.

Connecting Hearts has received two substantial multi-year contracts from the Virginia Department of Social Services to provide adoption services for children and teens in foster care. We're adding staff to provide those expanded services to help find families, homes, and better lives for kids currently in foster care.

Partnership the Richmond Memorial Health Foundation and the Bob and Anna Lou Schaberg Foundation allowed us to support our In-Home Care Aides by increasing their compensation, offering specialized training, and providing a dependable system of backup transportation. Ultimately, this investment in our caregivers allows JFS to serve more seniors who need help living independently in their own homes.

The population of older adults in Richmond will keep growing for another 30 years, but the number of agencies accepting Medicaid for

home care or counseling keeps dwindling. We must build our capacity to meet the needs of low-income seniors now and in the future.

To enhance our spectrum of care, we also collaborated with Beth Sholom to create Kirva Hospice, which is now serving patients with dignity, kindness, and respect.

Last year was a time of growth, but also a time of sorrow as we said goodbye to many outstanding members of the JFS family: Jacqueline Viener, Joan Goodstein, Marjorie Davids, Sheldon Shapiro, and Linda Mays. Their memories, leadership, and generosity bless JFS and all we serve.

The first President of JFS in 1849, Fanny Heller Straus, probably couldn't have imagined 2024, electric cars, or cellphones. But we're sure she could envision her fledgling Jewish Family Services celebrating 175 years.

Our tradition of service and compassion has already survived world wars, economic crises, and global pandemics. Any one of these events would stop most, yet they've fueled our work.

We invite you to join us, North America's oldest Jewish Family Services, as we begin to celebrate our 175th Anniversary. JFS history is Richmond's history. It's women's history. It's Jewish history and American history. It's our history, and it's your history too.

Gratefully,



Dr. Michael Mandel, President

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael Mandel".



Wendy Kreuter, CEO

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Wendy Kreuter".

Resettlement

JFS has helped more than 100 Ukrainians fleeing war at home start new lives in Richmond this year. Two of them, Irina and Rustam, generously agreed to share their stories. They have been lightly edited for clarity.

Irina's Story

The history of our acquaintance with our sponsors began in 2008. I was asked to host a family from the United States through the Peace Corps program. It was a young couple, Laren and Michael. They first lived with us, and then on their own, for more than two years.

We became very good friends with them and spent a lot of time together traveling and sharing our culture. When the time came to say goodbye, it was very sad to see them leave. But, when they gave birth to their first child, they flew to visit us! We had a very good time. Before the war, we stayed in touch for 15 years.

When we had nowhere to live, they invited us to their home. Unfortunately, only my youngest daughter and I were able to come, but we flew to the USA on December 18, 2022, almost a year after the war began. Laren, Michael, their three children, their parents, friends, even their co-workers are all very supportive of us! My daughter and I are very happy that we can be safe.

Like everyone else, we pray for Ukraine and hope for victory. My daughter and I both draw, and we sell our works. We participated in Arts in the Park with the help of JFS. I've offered workshops and master classes on Petrykivka painting, a traditional Ukrainian style. Like many Ukrainians in Richmond, I love to share our culture and our country!



IRINA AT ARTS IN THE PARK



RUSTAM OUTSIDE THE JFS OFFICE

Rustam's Story

I lived under occupation near the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant. Conditions left much to be desired. No one was allowed out of the city.

We had a curfew after 7:00 PM. If you didn't make it home in time, they could shoot you, throw you in a pit and beat you. They could do anything.

After almost a year, I decided to try to escape through Russia. I took a big risk, but I made it out. I got to Europe, lived a couple of months in Sweden, but soon understood that I needed to move on.

My friends were also looking for a sponsor and talking to JFS. They told me that JFS might be able to help me too, and that America was a good option for me.

I am extremely grateful for that advice! I arrived at the beginning of May this year. I've already managed to get a driver's license and all the necessary documents.

JFS also helped me find a car for free, which helped me quickly find a job and begin to assimilate in the United States. I couldn't believe my luck for a long time!

Right now, my number one goal is finding a good job so I can stay and succeed. I hope everything works out for me. In America, all dreams come true! I'm sure of it!

Care

Jessica Samet, former JFS Board member, is also a member of another group: the “sandwich generation,” squeezed between caring for children and elderly parents simultaneously. Her long-time position as a social worker for the Alzheimer’s Association has given Mrs. Samet unique insight into caring for elders in particular.

So, when her mother moved to a memory care facility, she watched for signs of loneliness or social isolation.

“She’d been there for probably six months when we realized she really needed some additional support, some socialization, some interaction,” Jessica shared. “The care at the facility is fantastic, but she needed a friend.

Mom’s not a big group-joiner. She needed somebody to spend time with her, engaging in the kinds of activities she wanted to do.”

When the topic of home care came up, Jessica’s first and only choice was JFS. “Within a day or two, the caregiver connected with my mom beautifully.”

“My mom doesn’t have insight into her illness - she doesn’t understand the dementia she’s suffering from,” so she needs encouragement to complete personal care tasks. But ultimately, Jessica said, “The JFS caregiver is Mom’s friend. She comes and visits her and they eat together, play games, go on walks. It really is working well.”



JESSICA SAMET TELLING HER STORY

Counseling

Dr. Sydney Fleischer has a bright, cozy space in JFS’ Patterson Avenue offices, but her favorite place to meet with her counseling clients is in their own senior living facilities.

92-year-old Davis began counseling with JFS after the death of his wife. He’s often joined by his daughter, Eugenia. When asked about Davis’ career, Eugenia responded, “That’s a little complicated. He’s done a lot of things in the church world.”

To say Davis did “a lot” is still an understatement. He worked in Presbyterian education, publishing, and ministry everywhere from the historically Black Stillman College in Alabama to the Manhattan publishing house HarperCollins.

Dr. Fleischer calls Eugenia “a perfect



DR. SYDNEY FLEISCHER AND CLIENTS
EUGENIA BEHIND HER FATHER, DAVIS

caregiver/friend/daughter. She’s very interested in what I have to say, in helping make things happen.”

“Dad has always been an advocate for counseling, even when we were growing up. It’s been a great comfort to him, having Sydney visit,” Eugenia shared. “I think this has been even more helpful for me than it has been for Dad. This is uncharted water for me. And there have been many times when I don’t know what to say or how to handle a situation. So it’s been good to be able to discuss issues with Sydney and learn how to best support Dad.”

“Sometimes she even has a list,” Sydney teased. “But Davis is always open to it, which is why it’s been so successful.”

Connecting Hearts

Every year as part of National Foster Care Month, JFS Connecting Hearts partners with WTVR CBS 6 to dedicate evening broadcasts to telling the stories of Central Virginia's foster families. This year, one of the families featured was Denise and Dennis Webb and their foster son, Damonte.



DENNIS, DAMONTE,
AND DENISE WEBB



a certification as an Adult Daycare Worker, and gotten a job. He's also been able to maintain relationships with his biological family and a former foster parent who is important to him.

"He's doing great, he really is," Mrs. Webb said. "He's at a point in his life where he's just trying to figure things out. Our job is to reassure him with support and love and patience. Those are the key ingredients to being a foster parent."

going to be our child," Mrs. Webb told CBS 6. Damonte has "aged out" of the formal foster care system, but Denise and Dennis still play a significant role, offering him a safe place to begin building his adult life.

Since living with the Webbs, Damonte has gotten his driver's license, earned

Several years ago, Damonte was featured in an awareness campaign spreading the word about children in foster care looking for a loving family. "I watched his video, day in and day out, and I said, I really feel that he's

Volunteer



MELANIE AND STUART FELDSTEIN

Couples share many things in a marriage, but Melanie and Stuart Feldstein share something unique: a mutual passion for volunteering at JFS! They've generously shared their time and skills for more than thirty years.

When asked why volunteering is such a big part of their lives, Stuart shared, "Because we are second generation. Our grandparents came here from Ukraine and Russia." Melanie quipped, "God's got eyes. We're only here because of our grandparents. It's an important opportunity to give back."

These days, Stuart helps out the finance department; Melanie is busy welcoming new arrivals from Ukraine. She was also involved in JFS' last major resettlement effort in the late 80s and early 90s! "Today's refugees have very different situations

and challenges," she said. "Back then, there were national groups and the government helping us. Now JFS does far more for new arrivals."

They both bring their humor, joy, and gratitude whenever they volunteer. "We like meeting new people," Melanie said. Stuart followed up, "We like that we can help somehow."

"What we do comes so easily to us," Melanie continued. "Like driving. It's easy for us, but if you don't have a car, everything is difficult. To us it's a little thing, but it makes life easier for someone else."

Life & Legacy

Elizabeth Thalhimer Smartt, JFS President '13-'15, shared her memories of Linda Mays, OBM, former JFS Board Member and Life & Legacy donor, at the celebration of Linda's life this year. Elizabeth graciously allowed us to excerpt her remarks here.

Linda emailed me this poem in April 2019. I replied, "I like the idea of an invisible cloak. I think I need one."

We really became friends 12 years ago when we served on the board of JFS together. When I became President of the Board 4 years later, I had a kindergartener and a baby, and realized I was in over my head. So I wrote Linda an email, knowing about her knowledge of leadership and organizational development, and asked if we could please take a walk to chat. I was delighted when she said yes. Our first walk lasted two hours.

Her words were golden, rich with wisdom, deep with layers of experience, gracious, and supportive. She interwove case studies with personal stories, with emotions, with quotes of first-class leadership advice. Linda had this incredible way of being a cheerleader, teammate, and coach at the same time. We lifted each other's spirits. And we'd always find a way to laugh.

When I crossed the finish line at JFS, Linda was there – smiling her effervescent smile – with the most thoughtful gesture I could have imagined. She knew I had a small pewter plate that was given to my grandmother after her JFS presidency ended in 1948. Linda had an exact replica made with my name and presidency dates. The plates now sit side by side on my bookshelf. It was classic Linda: thoughtful, classy, smart, and gracious.

Over the past couple years as she struggled with multiple myeloma, I wished I could wrap Linda in the invisible cloak of love, healing, and protection. Linda didn't give up. This was as true during her illness as it was throughout her life.

Sweet Linda, I wish – in John O'Donohue's beautiful words – "may there come across the waters / a path of yellow moonlight / to bring you safely home."



LINDA MAYS* AND ELIZABETH SMARTT

Beannacht / Blessing

by John O'Donohue

On the day when
the weight deadens
on your shoulders
and you stumble,
may the clay dance
to balance you.

And when your eyes
freeze behind
the grey window
and the ghost of loss
gets into you,
may a flock of colours,
indigo, red, green
and azure blue,
come to awaken in you
a meadow of delight.

When the canvas frays
in the currach of thought
and a stain of ocean
blackens beneath you,
may there come across the waters
a path of yellow moonlight
to bring you safely home.

May the nourishment of the earth be yours,
may the clarity of light be yours,
may the fluency of the ocean be yours,
may the protection of the ancestors be yours.

And so may a slow
wind work these words
of love around you,
an invisible cloak
to mind your life.

JFS is proud to be the oldest JFS in North America, and we are equally proud to recognize those who've made Legacy gifts to JFS, [Transforming Lives and Strengthening our Community](#).

Anonymous (18)
Scott W. and Nancy R. Belleman
The Bendheim Family
Sam W. Coleman III
Frona and Alan Colker
Judy K. Crocker
Bonnie and Mike Eisenman, Jr.
Ronald and Benita Felmus
Marilyn Lipsitz-Flax and Robert Flax
Dr. Sydney Fleischer and Dr. Mike Camp
Dr. David and Robyn Galpern
Mark and Ashley Goodstein
Marc Greenberg
Bernie Henderson
Ronne* and Cecil Jacobs
Faith Kallman
Retta Leigh Keil
Neil and Lynn Kessler

Dr. Beverly and Sidney Koerin
Wendy Kreuter
Sheryl Luebke
Sandy Marks
Linda W. Mays*
Kathy Mays-Coleman
Martin J. and Kimberly H. Miller
Abby W. Moore
Richard and Jessica Samet
Ann M. and W. Jerrold Samford
Susanne L. Shilling
Sandra Sisisky
Bobby Thalhimer
Morton G. Thalhimer, III
Alan and Gail Werner
Dean Whitbeck

*Of Blessed Memory

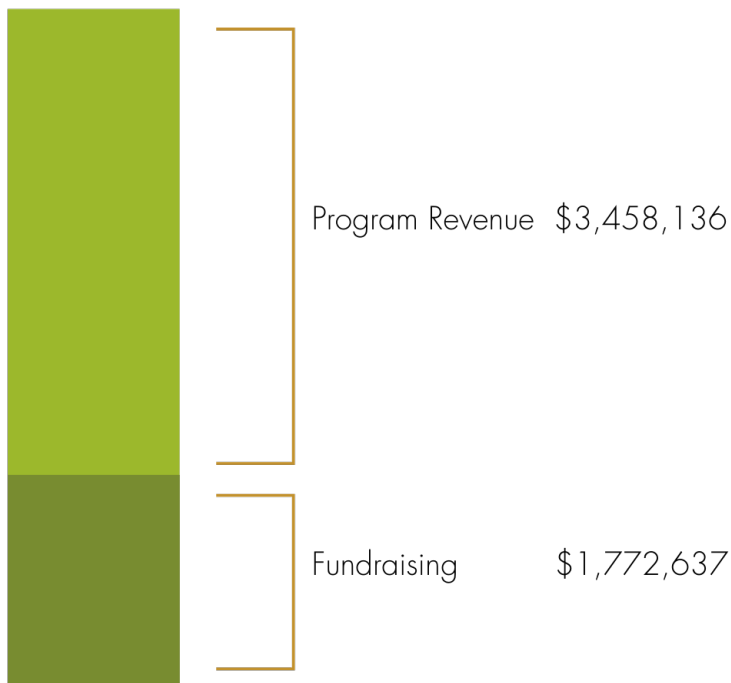


2022 - 2023 Happenings

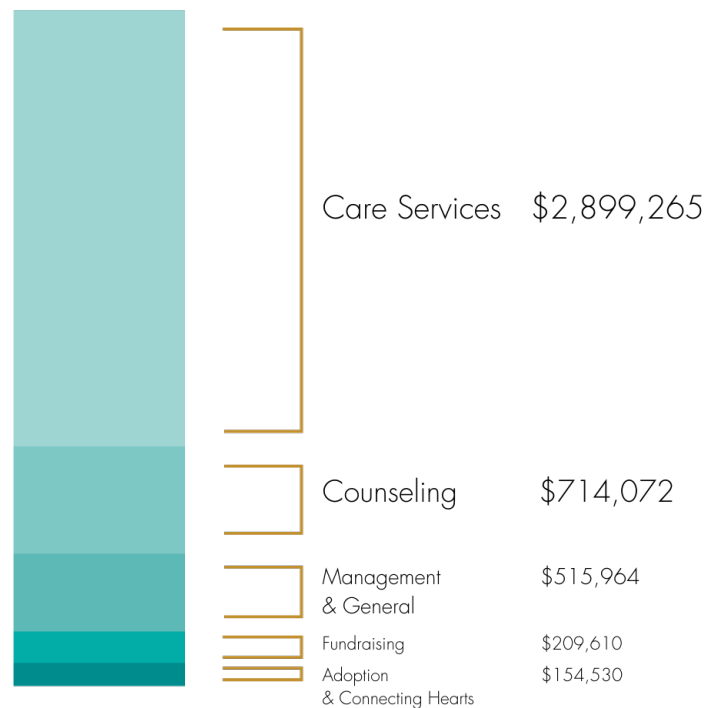


2021 - 2022 Financials

Revenue



Expenses





For 174 years - through pandemics, wars, and recessions - Jewish Family Services has served Richmond-area families and individuals of all ages, faiths, races, and incomes with exceptional care, guidance, and support.

Thank you for helping make it all possible.

JFS IS A PROUD PARTNER OF



www.jfsrichmond.org

6718 Patterson Avenue, Richmond, VA 23226
804.282.5644 · information@jfsrichmond.org

Transforming Lives. Strengthening our Community.