

Ferd & Gladys Alpert  
Jewish Family & Children's Service

# transformations

fall 2017 | a tradition of helping people during challenging times in their lives

H. IRWIN LEVY  
AND MARK LEVY  
Honored as  
Advocates of the Year



**in this issue**  
A Sneak Peek Inside Our Agency  
The Power of One  
2 Families, 2 Loved Ones



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# Message from AJFCS President

## Keith B. Braun, Esq.



**A**s I write this message, we have just welcomed the new year with Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, and gratefully said goodbye to Hurricane Irma and all of the chaos she created.

The hurricane showed AJFCS and LJRFS at their best. The well-established policies and procedures resulted in “not missing a beat” in both preparing and comforting our clients during a difficult period. I am proud of the work done and dedication shown by our CEO Jenni Frumer, senior management team, and staff of outstanding professionals, which made me very proud to be President of AJFCS.

Earlier this summer, longtime board member Hope Silverman and her husband Gene graciously hosted an event in the Berkshires on behalf of the Jewish Federation of Palm Beach County. Highlighting the work of AJFCS and LJRFS, Hope and Gene invited our CEO, Dr. Jenni Frumer, and our Clinical Director, Dr. Elaine Rotenberg to address this gathering of Palm Beach County residents who summer in the Berkshires to learn about the agency that serves as the “hearts and hands” of the community. The attendees appreciated the opportunity to hear about the agency and asked about engagement

opportunities, such as mentoring, volunteering, teaching, visiting Holocaust survivors and other ways to support local clients with needs. Mazel Tov Hope and Gene.

We are delighted to be honoring Irwin Levy and Mark Levy, the first father-son team to receive the Advocate of the Year Award. Irwin and Mark are true giants in our community - visionaries and philanthropists who have built, supported and led all of the organizations and agencies in our local Jewish community as well as internationally. We know the community will celebrate both of them at the November 30th luncheon.

Through the Life and Legacy Program, we continue to focus on securing endowments and substantial financial resources that will sustain AJFCS and its programs into the future. We have reached our first year goal of obtaining 18 signed letters of intent to leave a legacy. Further, another eight donors have verbally pledged to do so. While this is a good start, our work has just begun.

I would like to thank the members of our board of directors. Our board is deeply committed to ensuring that our programs are meeting the needs of clients, and consistently lend their time, talent, expertise and financial support. I am proud to work alongside them.

We never lose sight of our responsibility to serve our community, and we know there is much work to be done. We ask each of you to do your part. Please consider becoming engaged in one of our 29 programs that help strengthen our community. We always welcome your visits, your volunteer participation, and, of course, your generous philanthropic support.

# Message from LJRFS President

## Carolyn Gleimer Silbey



**A** new year at the Melvin J. & Claire Levine Jewish Residential & Family Service brings new opportunities and renewed commitment to continuing the tradition of transformation informed by Jewish values, compassionate care and excellent quality residences.

The recent Hurricane Irma brought with it a number of challenges - and our wonderful staff was prepared well in advance with contingency plans. The Apartment Program (which experienced loss of electricity for several days) residents were moved to our Group Homes. Our entire agile and talented LJRFS staff mobilized quickly, in many cases leaving their own families and homes. Ensuring our residents' safety and comfort was their top priority. I'd like to recognize and thank them for their diligence and commitment.

We are delighted that two new residents have joined our Apartment Program and note that they both hail from geographic locations outside of south Florida. Thanks go to the families of our residents who are responsible for "spreading the word" among their friends and neighbors about the exemplary care their loved ones receive. As a result of their efforts, along with increased marketing and visibility, more interest is being generated from families throughout the country. We are

proud that our residential services are recognized as some of the best nationally and that our stellar reputation continues to spread.

Earlier in the summer, our Group Home Program received a 100% approval rating from the statewide agency for persons with disabilities. Although it is a rare occurrence in the field, it is not rare at all for LJRFS to obtain a perfect score. Congratulations to everyone who works so hard throughout the year.

The High Holidays brought the opportunity for residents to attend services at area synagogues, and to join in the festivities at communal meals for Sukkot. Always a favorite activity - our residents also enjoyed a weekend trip at one of their preferred destinations - Orlando.

We are always grateful to engage outstanding professional volunteers, who enhance the lives of our residents by sharing their passions and talents. Recently, Rabbi Bernard Eisenman joined our cadre of enthusiastic and committed leaders. A rabbi for over 40 years with a background and affinity for working with adults with special needs, Rabbi is now offering our residents Judaic classes on an ongoing basis. This is in addition to a variety of other offerings, including book clubs, bowling, cooking, creative workshops and cultural arts performances.

Please reacquaint yourself with our LJRFS video which showcases our apartment community residents living their daily lives, socializing, studying in group classes, and performing in their own talent show. We encourage you to take a moment and view it on our website at [www.ljrfs.com](http://www.ljrfs.com).

With the advent of a new year our goal remains the same: that our programs not only exceed expectations, but transform the lives of those that call it "home."

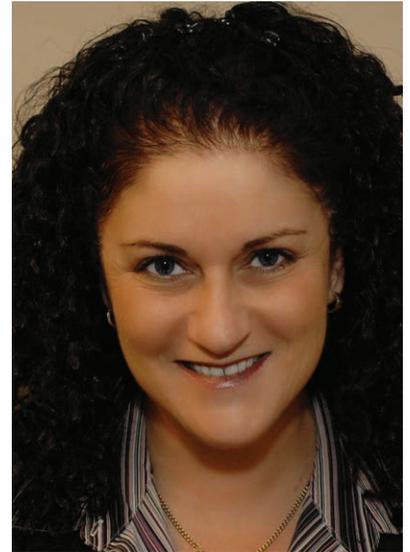
*Carolyn Gleimer Silbey*

Melvin J. & Claire Levine  
Jewish Residential & Family Service LJRFS



# Message from CEO

## Jenni Frumer, LCSW



Each day AJFCS receives phone calls from those with challenges. The callers may be requesting food, funds to help pay an electric bill and for help to cover their mortgage. Some individuals call because they have struggles related to depression and anxiety. Some parents call because their children are experiencing problems at school and wish for a mentor. Other families are struggling with divorce and newly blended concerns. Calls come from those with relatives who have disabilities, from older adults who want to remain independent in their own homes with help, from caregivers exhausted from caring for their loved ones with Alzheimer's Disease and Parkinson's Disease.

For so many, we are a safety net that changes a downward spiral and enhances the lives of those in our Jewish community. Our tenured and talented professionals are proud to assist. We step in when someone has nowhere else to turn. For many, we are their last resort, and for this reason alone, I believe the proverbial "buck" stops

with us as the Jewish community.

YOU help make this possible. Even with the most qualified and best professionals, if we did not have your financial support and volunteer hours, none of this would be possible. Of course we can only respond to the needs of the community if you respond in kind.

We take quite seriously our responsibility to take great care of all that's been entrusted to us, and we have brought all of our compassion and competence to bear this past year in using your gifts wisely. So this year, when you receive our traditional AJFCS Holiday letters, buried in your mailbox with the dozens of other solicitations you might receive each day, please think about the thousands of people AJFCS reaches because of your support. Collective dollars raised each year have impact! Every year, we are overwhelmed by the generosity of your contributions.

I urge you to join in sustaining and nurturing our Jewish Community. Rosh Hashanah brought an opportunity to reflect, refresh, renew, and look forward. We do this as individuals, families, communities, and organizations. It is the time we revisit who we are, why we are, what we stand for and the time to re-commit to making a difference in the lives of others.

Thank you, we are most appreciative of your support!

*Jenni Frumer*



AJFCS Honors

OF OUR  
**PILLARS**  
**COMMUNITY**  
H. IRWIN LEVY AND MARK LEVY



In 1951, when H. Irwin Levy and his new bride, Jeanne, moved to Palm Beach County, the towns were wide open, the potential untapped.

The county's population was 114,000 - compared to 1.4 million living here today. "There were probably 300 Jewish families in all of Palm Beach County," he says.

But for Irwin, the son of a wholesale shoe salesman from Scranton, Pa., who worked his way through law school at Cornell University, Florida was to be his spot on the map. This would be home.

Today, Irwin, 91, is one of Florida's greatest benefactors for Jewish education, social programs and the overseas rescue, immigration and absorption of imperiled Jews to safe haven.

A lawyer who eventually fell in love with the thrill of a tricky development deal, Irwin also built Century Village, the quintessential retirement community with a now-hefty Jewish population. Widowed in 1990 and now married to Ellen Levy, Irwin still works and travels. "I show up when I want," he says. "My son is the generation doing things now."

And Mark's been "doing things" for a while.

Now 62, Mark realizes he's been groomed for this leadership role since boyhood. Today, an estimated 250,000 Jews live in Palm Beach County alone. He grew up around Century Village, and even worked there as a kid. He still considers Century Village "the best real estate deal in town."

But in those early days, being a young Jewish kid could be difficult.

"The only thing we had was Camp Shalom," he says, laughing. "My parents were the leaders in the Jewish community that we all aspire to be."

For Irwin, this meant making sure Jewish businessmen considered Palm Beach County a good place to make a deal. "From the beginning, I wanted to make sure Jews knew they were welcome," he said.

And welcome them he did, to his Century Village developments. Irwin eventually built four of the developments, but his first was at the corner of Haverhill Road and Okeechobee Boulevard. When he took over the project in 1969, he and his team designed not just condos. They built a lifestyle, with plenty of social and educational activities. Eventually, political activism seeped in.

Today, Mark's married to Stacey Levy, another volunteer heavy-hitter, and the couple has a daughter, Jourdan Levy, who is soon to marry John Bizanes, and a son, Joshua Levy. Mark graduated from the University of Florida in 1977 with a bachelor's degree in history and, at his father's urging, started law school at Nova Southeastern University that year. After graduating in 1980, he too fell for the thrill of making a deal. He and his father have worked together ever since.

Mark calls his philanthropy and volunteer work his "other job." He served as board chair of the Jewish Federation of Palm Beach County from 2010-2013 - the first (and to date, only) second-generation board chair - following in the footsteps of his late mother. With him as chair, Federation launched a capital campaign to expand services into north county, buying the campus in Palm Beach Gardens where the Mandel Jewish Community Center and the Arthur I. Meyer Jewish Academy were built. Mark served as board chair of the Meyer Academy (then called the Jewish Community Day School), and his wife served as board chair of the Mandel JCC.

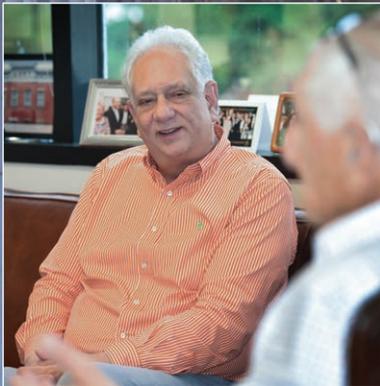
And like his father, Mark is active with the United Israel Appeal, working to continue Jewish rescue efforts overseas. Through the years, Irwin has helped secure \$1.5 billion in U.S. grants to relocate Jews from the Soviet Union, Ethiopia, and other countries.

This is a family that has done a lot, but Mark Levy knows there's work ahead. The agency's needs for Holocaust victims are increasing. Keeping up with the educational system costs money. Mental health is at the forefront. Elderly needs are exploding.

"That's what AJFCS does so well," Mark says. "It's not just for kids; it's for our entire community."

In the years to come, Mark would like to see technological improvements, more work with synagogues, and better inter-agency communication within the entire Jewish support system.

"One of the things we really want to do is not only grow our Federation resources, substantially, but also help guide our agencies."



Ferd & Gladys Alpert Jewish Family & Children's Service

# ADVOCATES

2017

# OF THE YEAR

Award Luncheon

Honoring our pillars of the community

## H. IRWIN LEVY AND MARK LEVY

**Thursday, November 30, 2017**

**11:30 am** Registration | **12:00 pm** Luncheon

Cohen Pavilion – Kravis Center for the Performing Arts, West Palm Beach

**Honorary Chair:** Gladys Alpert | **Co-Chairs:** Tony Lampert, Gary Lesser, Karen List

**RSVP by November 22, 2017**

For more information, please contact Linda Zwickel Solomon at 561-713-1914 or [LSolomon@jfcsonline.com](mailto:LSolomon@jfcsonline.com)

Proceeds benefit the Ferd & Gladys Alpert Jewish Family & Children's Service and the

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# Clients Get More than They Expect, *But Everything They Deserve*

**WITHIN AJFCS'** 23,000 square foot main office in West Palm Beach, some of the most incredible magic takes place in a small, 5 room corridor. That corridor houses AJFCS' Intake & Referral Division; a dedicated team of 5 master's level professionals turning 7,000 calls of chaos, confusion and distress into a streamlined, seamless solution of services and assistance for those in need.

For many individuals and families who turn to AJFCS during these challenging times in their lives, they come in expecting to receive one service, and end up benefiting from myriad programs addressing not only their needs, but the well-being of their entire family.

Meet Shelly...

Shelly is a 38 year-old, separated, Jewish woman. She is a high profile attorney in Palm Beach Gardens and the mother of an 8 year old daughter, Sara and 10 year old son, Max.

Shelly initially called AJFCS' intake department asking to see one of AJFCS' psychologists for a psycho-educational evaluation for ADD and learning problems for her 8 year old daughter. There had been a steady decrease in her school performance, causing Shelly to worry that her daughter had ADD or other learning disabilities. During the course of the Shelley's intake call and assessment, we learned that her daughter's behavior began to change after her father left the family. Leading up to this separation were many years of verbal abuse including arguing, fighting, and name calling.

We brought in Sara for psychological testing and learned that

there was no Attention Deficit Disorder, but there was a specific reading disorder, and more strikingly, clear symptoms of previously unidentified depression and anxiety.

As part of the feedback to Shelly, we were able to have Sara see one of our play therapists who was able to help the child through non-verbal means, and begin to express and cope with her feelings of having her Dad leave the family. Additionally, Shelly was referred for individual counseling where she could open up and talk about a long-standing pattern of both verbal and physical abuse that she had previously been ashamed to share because she was a well-respected attorney in the Jewish community. Shelly agreed to meet with the director of our Domestic Abuse program where she learned the signs, symptoms and patterns of abusive behavior. She attended a Domestic Abuse support group which gave her the strength to finally leave the abusive marriage.

Sadly, Sara and Max were now absent a "father-figure" and lacked another role-model in their lives. Shelly eventually agreed to have both of her children go into the Judith & Jack Rosenberg Mentoring 4 Kids Mentoring 4 Kids program to offset the lack of attention from not having a second parent in the home. Eventually, the Mom gained the strength to tell the children that she and her Dad were going to get divorced, which interestingly enough gave the children more clarity and eased their anxiety.

# A sneak peek inside our agency



“All of us  
will live a  
long life and  
grow old, if  
we are  
fortunate  
enough.”

—Gary Hoffman

## Opens Gary Hoffman’s eyes - and heart

This is how Gary Hoffman puts it. “I was ripe for the picking.”

A career lawyer outside Washington, D.C., with a resume of high-level patent and intellectual property litigation, Gary bought a place in Ibis back in 2004 - as a getaway.

When he retired in 2013, he moved to Florida full-time. He knew he’d be doing something with his time. A retired man cannot live by golf alone.

And that’s when Gary, who’d been involved in charity and pro bono work all his professional life, started hearing more (and more) about Alpert Jewish Family & Children’s Service.

The more he heard, the more he really listened. “So I decided, “Let me go over there and meet with some people,” he says.

And now, because karma is karma and kismet is kismet, he’s in line to be president of the board in 2018.

“Ready or not, here I come,” he says. “Hopefully I’ll be lucky enough to do a good job.”

Not every volunteer role is a good fit for a 71-year-old retiree. He knows that. But what caught Gary off-guard - and what is easy to forget when you see the pretty side of Florida day in and day out - is that Palm Beach County isn’t all manicured lawns and tennis, then lunch.

“I live in a golf course community and my image of Palm Beach County was a golf course community,” he says. “I had no true appreciation about the depths of challenges faced by a number of people.”

After meeting with CEO Jenni Frumer, he said he was “blown away” by the programs and services the agency offers. He was also taken aback by clients’ needs.

Holocaust support. Mentoring. Mental health services. The agency’s bereavement support group hit with a punch. “I’ve lost a spouse, so I know what it’s like,” he says.

Since meeting with Jenni and hopscotching a bit to see the agency’s teams of professionals at work, Gary now tries to impress on his Jewish contemporaries the importance of recognizing these needs, and giving back. His wife, Hope, also does volunteer work with the agency. (Yes, after being widowed he was lucky enough to fall in love and re-marry in 2015.)

But for the agency, what are the issues of tomorrow? Holocaust survivors, the opioid crisis and eldercare worries him, a lot.

“People live well into their 90s now, and they need help,” he says. “All of us will live a long life and grow old, if we are fortunate enough.”

One of the things that surprised Gary, once he started poking around? The lack of public funding. The agency gets some income from fees, some income from grants, and very little income from the state of Florida. Most of what keeps AJFCS going is philanthropy.

That was a wake-up call.

“We need to start working on these problems now,” he says. “We can only make it happens with donations.

“If we don’t help, who will?”

# The power of **ONE** describes Harriet Samuels

**Her commitment to the work and mission of Alpert Jewish Family & Children's Service dates back many years and stretches from the greater Hartford, Connecticut area to West Palm Beach, Florida.**

She enjoys telling the story of meeting Neil Newstein (the former CEO of Alpert Jewish Family & Children's Service) many years ago when the agency was on Palm Beach Lakes Boulevard. Having served on the Board of Directors of JFS in Hartford, Harriet was already familiar with community needs and the "hearts and hands" agency that provides for them.

Harriet and Neil connected instantly, and Neil invited her to come as a guest to the next board meeting. There she quickly became acquainted with the landscape of the burgeoning Palm Beach County. "The rest is history," Harriet recalls. "I was asked to serve on the board and I have been involved since that very day."

Over the past years, Harriet has witnessed the explosive growth of Palm Beach County, and the significant growth of AJFCS, as it endeavors to keep pace with the diverse needs of the Jewish community. "My most important role - and the one I cherish - is to continue to tell so many friends, neighbors and acquaintances about the wonderful work the agency does for our residents. I have a huge sense of pride because AJFCS does such wonderful work," Harriet says.

Now an emeritus board member, Harriet has hosted a parlor meeting in her home every single year for the past 10 years (often it has been standing room only.) She actively seeks newcomers to the community- to welcome them, connect them with others, and introduce them to the many services and funding opportunities at AJFCS. "People are always surprised and impressed at the depth and breadth of the agency. Many times they end up becoming volunteers and supporters."

Harriet invited a guest to one of these parlor meetings and the two like-minded women developed a warm relationship. This guest was drawn to helping with a program called "Tikkun Olam at Home." She wanted to do her part in ensuring that needy clients receive assistance with basics like rent, electricity, medicine and food, and arranged for her credit card to be charged \$10 a month on an ongoing basis. Wanting her support to continue after she died, she left AJFCS a bequest of almost \$50,000. Her generosity continues.

The power of one.

One Harriet Samuels opening her home to newcomers. One bequest providing for clients in need.

What will your one act of generosity reveal?



# How will you be remembered?



**Ensure the programs you are passionate about live on for generations to come.**

Please remember  
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with a gift in your will, trust, retirement account or life insurance policy.

For more information and a confidential conversation, please contact  
Carolyn Yasuna, Chief Philanthropy Officer at 561.713.1899

Thank you to the following visionaries who, through their legacy gift, have ensured that the programs they generously support will be sustained in the future.

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To Do The **RIGHT THING**



Hiroko and Robert Davidow



A forgotten piece of land in a city near the Galilee is about to help Holocaust survivors in AJFCS' programs because of one family's story of love, loss, generosity - and a woman named Chaya.

"This could win you the Pulitzer," says Robert Davidow, coyly.

Frankly, we're not sure the prize committee has kept up its subscription to Transformations, but we do like the story line:

Man inherits land he never knew about in Israel, from relative he never heard of, sells it, starts endowment grant, and helps pay for agency's Eat and Schmooze lunches. And there's a Chapter 2.

"I don't have 'Bill Gates money,' but I find these little things that I can put in, say, 100,000 bucks and it throws off three or four thousand a year," says Robert, 70, a former management consultant who retired in 2002.

"I'm not gonna cure malaria or teach the world to sing, but I can make a difference in someone's life."

In this case, he and his wife, Hiroko, will be buying lunch once a month for the approximately 120 Holocaust survivors who rely on our Eat and Schmooze luncheons for both support and socialization.

For Robert, the meandering path to our agency's front door began with a phone call about three years ago.

Hello. Are you the nephew of William Laurence?

Yes.

Indeed, William Laurence had been married to one of his father's sisters.

Well, I'm from Hashava, an organization that tracks property in Israel once owned by Holocaust victims and finds the rightful heirs. And we believe you are one of the last living heirs of Chaya Henya Ziv.

Now, Robert has led a secular life and he knew there were Holocaust victims and survivors in his family, but he'd never heard of Chaya Henya Ziv.

Besides, this whole phone call was probably malarkey. Robert's a pragmatist who made his money advising insurance companies. "I was very suspicious," he says now.

But as he and Hiroko unraveled the story, it began to make sense.

In a nutshell: Robert's father was named Sol Davidow, and he had seven siblings - one of them a sister named Florence.

Florence married a man named William Laurence; the couple had no children.

William Laurence had a brother and a sister, and before the war - probably in the late 1930s - his father gave his sister a piece of land in the Israeli city of Afula.

That woman was Chaya Henya Ziv, and she was killed by the Nazis in the early 1940s while caring for Jewish orphans.

"So that land just sat there for all those

years," Robert says. "And now this property that none of us knew anything about is suddenly ours."

Chaya was dead. Chaya's brother was dead. William Laurence had died. Florence Laurence had died. And Sol Davidow and his seven siblings were gone.

The next of kin were Robert Davidow, his brother and a few of William Laurence's descendants. And that's why the phone call - out of the blue, three years ago - from Hashava, the Israeli Company for Location and Restitution of Holocaust Victims' Assets.

But what to do with the money? "I said, 'I shouldn't be getting money from Holocaust victims, I should be giving money to Holocaust victims.'"

And that's when he began to really listen to anecdotes about Holocaust survivors in Palm Beach County, how they are struggling, and what they need. "I was astounded," he says, adding he "didn't know any of this"

- South Florida's Holocaust survivor population is estimated between 12,000 to 18,000 and it's second in size only to New York's.
- Half of the Holocaust survivors are older than 88, half are younger.
- More and more children of the Holocaust are coming forward, finally recognizing what happened to them and in dire need of support services.
- Forty-two percent of South Florida's Holocaust population live below the poverty level.

And the loneliness?

"That really got to me," Robert says. "After I met with Joy Felton (Director of Major Gifts) and Jenni Frumer (CEO), I really got to thinking about the hardships and the isolation."

The Davidows pulled together the endowment arrangements for Eat and Schmooze, and when the couple went back to Greenwich - they spend half the year in Palm Beach and half the year in Connecticut - Robert told his Rabbi there the convoluted tale. And guess what?

Greenwich's "sister city" in Israel is Afula - not kidding - and the temple's major charity there is the Emunah Children's Center, a center that provides residential education and treatment for 200 at-risk children.

Miraculous! he concluded. Chaya died helping children! So Robert and Hiroko are kicking in for needed renovations at the children's facility, and a wing will be named after Chaya Henya Ziv.

"Hitler ended her life, but he could not end her good works," he says.

And that's the part where Robert Davidow tears up, every single time.

# AGENCY GROWS

## second generation program

to plan for a new era of Holocaust services



## Breaking News: Tami Lustig just hit 100.

Nah, Tami's not a centenarian. She's a young professional. But as director of Alpert Jewish & Family Children's Service's Second Generation and Caregivers Outreach and Support program - new this year - she recently reached 100 participants in her outreach work to get Holocaust families involved in the Second Generation (2G) survivors' program.

What is 2G? It's the gathering spot for individuals whose parents or grandparents were affected by the Holocaust. And it's a group of people with whom you can share similar stories.

Or not.

"The important aspect of this 2G outreach is to understand the needs of second generation Holocaust survivors and then arrange programs that will serve them," says AJFCS CEO Jenni Frumer.

Don't want to talk about your home growing up, but interested in mapping out the problems - and solutions - for today's second-generation survivors? Step on in.

Wanna sit and maybe have a chuckle about how your mother also squirreled food away before Rosh Hashanah? This group's for you.

Thinking about giving back and meeting a few of the agency's aging Holocaust clients? You want to learn about their lives before they're gone. Glad to have you.

"What I like to think about is that there's light at the end of the tunnel," says 2G veteran Frannie Sheridan, of West Palm Beach. "It's less about 'oy vey,' and more about, 'Look at how amazing it

is that we are thriving.'"

Frannie, an accomplished writer, actress and comedienne, has a unique Holocaust story all her own. Her first involvement with 2G was years ago at the Holocaust Centre of Toronto.

Today, occasionally working with Tami to get this 2G off the ground, she's reminded of why she loves this Second Generation support outreach group, and why it's so important for second- and third-generation survivors.

"There's a connection there, a commonality, a place to share that feels like a safe harbor," Frannie says.

In Palm Beach County, this important AJFCS program is paid for largely through a federal grant administered by the Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA). Additional funding comes from the Jewish Federation of Palm Beach County. And AJFCS is working in collaboration with NEXTGENERATIONS, a Boca Raton non-profit that collects families' Holocaust histories, project by project.

Jenni Frumer thinks recognizing the future needs of Holocaust families is perhaps 2G's most pressing business at hand. There's no crystal ball, so it's going to take talking, sharing - and planning.

"As older survivors leave us with their legacies and we get younger survivors, the needs will be different - and we need to recognize that," she says. "Tami has done an amazing job pulling in these 100 participants, but we know there are more out there."

Are you one of them? Call Tami at 561-713-1917 or email her at [tlustig@jfcsonline.com](mailto:tlustig@jfcsonline.com).

Made possible with funding from the Jewish Federation of North America Center for Advancing Holocaust Survivor Care and the Jewish Federation of Palm Beach County.



www.LJRFS.com

# 2 families, loved ones - One Unique Program

**Two families with completely different needs found safety and solace for their loved ones in the agency's apartment and group home programs, one couple even choosing Levine Jewish Residential & Family Service after an exhaustive nationwide search.**

For years, Manhattan attorneys Ellen and Ken Forrest knew they needed better living arrangements for a family member with special needs. The man needed independent living, but with support. He needed things to do, places to go. He needed to live among peers.

So they hired a headhunter, of sorts, to research programs across the country.

"I thought there would be like 20 places to look at," says Ellen, who found the Levine residential program two years ago. "But these places are few and far between."

What they found, she said, were plenty of places for alcohol addiction, drug problems, eating disorders.

But a safe, loving environment for someone living with cognitive conditions

that affect every day living? That was tough.

Finally, in Florida, at a pretty apartment complex in the heart of Palm Beach Gardens, she and her husband found the one place that really fit their needs: the Levine residential program.

"To me, it's a charmed existence," Ellen says. "It's a great team and a great living arrangement."

Residents of the apartment program live in their own apartments. They can walk to shopping, walk to the program's activity center, even take classes and hold a job. There are plenty of supervised activities and outings, and there's someone available, on site, 24-7.

"It's just very smart the way they have it set up," Ellen says.

Started in 1997, the Levine residential program that's run under the auspices of Alpert Jewish Family & Children's Service has two major components: independent apartment living and group home arrangements. The two group homes are staffed with 24-hour care and supervision, but clients have their own bedrooms, their own chores, their own schedules. Residents go on field trips and even take vacations.

Louisville clinical psychologist Dr. Steven Simon, 67, said the group home arrangement was the answer to his prayers, literally, after his mother died, leaving his mentally disabled sister Debbie without a place to live. Steven's wife is disabled, and having Debbie live with them wouldn't have worked.

Two years in, Debbie is thriving, he said, "finally living outside the family bubble."

"She's happy; I'm happy," he says. "This could not have worked out any better."

**"It's a great team and a great living arrangement."**

– Ellen Forrest

*From Bruce Kerman: Volunteer  
and Dr. Bob Schweitzer Award Recipient*

*My volunteering for AJFCS originated through Temple Judea's Social Action Committee 5 years ago. Rabbi Yaron has a saying for Temple Judea. Joyous Judaism Inspires Action. My enthusiasm generates from being a part of TJ, the social action committee has been involved with AJFCS' Food Pantry, processing food donations and helping with the holiday basket's that are delivered to families with food insecurities.*

*Then I was introduced to the Ambassador program, receiving information for the community. This goes hand in hand with visiting Jewish patients at Jupiter Medical Center. I find it extremely supportive letting those who face challenges know, that AJFCS is there as a support to our community. No matter what community, or the nature of your problem, the agency is there to help. It's nice to be able to direct the community to such a great source!*

# From our Volunteers of the Year

*From Phoebe Shochat:  
Volunteer and Linda White Award Recipient*

*The Alpert Jewish Family and Children's Service is known for helping people during challenging times in their lives. I, too, faced a challenge. My challenge was to find out how and where I could be of help to others. I found that place in the AJFCS brochure under the heading "Friendly Visitor."*

*At my first orientation seven years ago, I met Carolyn Yasuna, who was just starting work at the agency as its Development Director. Through the years, she has been a mentor to me, giving me the confidence to become involved in other programs as well. The people on staff with whom I have been involved are dedicated and caring. They make it a joy to be a volunteer. The Friendly Visitor meetings and the correspondence with case workers provide the means to improve relationships with clients.*

*I am grateful to be part of this wonderful agency. Thank you so much for acknowledging my participation by presenting me with the Linda White Award.*

For volunteer opportunities  
and information, please  
contact Traci Pincourt-Braun  
at 561-238-0259



“My heartfelt thanks to all of our 157 Chai members who make it possible to provide service to thousands of people with needs in our community.”

~Zelda Mason, Chai Society Chair



## AJFCS Chai Society\*

\*as of 8/30/2017

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