



## Press Release

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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#### **DR. JENNIFER ASHTON SPEAKS VIA SATELLITE AT FERD & GLADYS ALPERT JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE INAUGURAL “ROAD TO RESILIENCE” LUNCHEON ON MARCH 12, 2020**

**WEST PALM BEACH, FL – March 16, 2020** – The inaugural “Road to Resilience” luncheon hosted by the Ferd & Gladys Alpert Jewish Family Service (Alpert JFS) on Thursday, March 12, 2020, at Wycliffe Country Club in Wellington, FL, drew a caring crowd of more than 200 people to witness a “satellite fireside chat” between Dr. Jennifer Ashton in New York and Dr. Elaine Rotenberg in Florida. Their conversation focused on the need to shine a light on mental illness, addiction, and suicide, debunking myths and removing the stigma attached to behavioral health challenges, so those affected can feel more comfortable seeking help and support.

Diane and Robert Herzog, title sponsors of the event, and steadfast supporters of Alpert JFS’ Jewish Addiction Outreach & Support program, together with Patricia Rosen, publisher of Sober World Magazine, chaired the event designed to educate the community, raise awareness, and provide services for those with mental health challenges, inclusive of addiction and suicide issues. The platinum sponsor was Atria Villages of Windsor Senior Living. Vivian and Erwin Lieberman, Origins Behavioral Health, and the George & Martha Rich Foundation were silver sponsors.

All attendees received a complimentary signed copy of Dr. Ashton’s book, “Life After Suicide,” thanks to underwriters Jan Burke, a REALTOR® at Coldwell Banker, and Allison Negri, owner of ComForCare Home Care. The book recounts how she and her children picked up the pieces after an unfathomable family loss. Its eye-opening view into how suicide affects those left behind offers hope.

At the event, Rabbi Andrew Rosenkranz of Temple Beth Torah in Wellington, who serves on the Alpert JFS Addiction Task Force, welcomed the audience; Alpert JFS president Michael A. Lampert, Esq. introduced CEO Marc Hopin, who presented the agency video and four of the organization’s many dedicated professionals who work tirelessly to make a difference for local families who are hurting; two of the event chairs shared personal stories of their roads to resilience, highlighting the need for confronting addiction in the Jewish community head-on. Additionally, a hand-crafted red glass vase by local artist Steve Funk was raffled off.

Among the guests were respected community leaders State Attorney Dave Aronberg, Chief Deputy Michael Gauger, and leaders from synagogues and Jewish communal organizations.

Responding to questions posed by Rotenberg, Ashton disclosed what helped in the early aftermath of her ex-husband’s suicide, how she was changed by the trauma, the keys to her resilience, how medical professionals can help address mental health, and her opinion of the media’s ability to raise awareness of mental illness.

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Dr. Ashton is the chief medical correspondent and health editor for ABC News and “Good Morning America,” and a board-certified Ob-Gyn. She attended Columbia College, Columbia University as an undergrad, and received her medical degree from Columbia University, College of Physicians and Surgeons. Ashton also earned a graduate degree in Human Nutrition and is board-certified in obesity medicine. She has authored five books, has an active medical practice in Englewood, NJ, and when not working can be found training for triathlons.

Dr. Rotenberg, clinical director of Alpert JFS for the past 27 years, is a licensed clinical psychologist, is a key architect of Palm Beach County’s Action Alliance for Mental Health. She provides clinical oversight and establishes standards of best practice for the 26 programs at Alpert JFS. Rotenberg spearheaded the creation of a coalition to introduce the international evidence-based Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) program throughout Palm Beach County and is a much-requested speaker who presents on a variety of topics throughout the U.S.

Event proceeds will benefit the Alpert JFS Annual Fund to assist those struggling with addiction and mental health challenges and support other programs and services provided by the agency.

Alpert JFS offers various support groups and program of the agency, including the only Survivors of Suicide Group for those mourning the loss of a loved one who died by suicide; the only weekly Jewish Family Addiction Support Group for families dealing with a loved one suffering from addiction; and Mental Health First Aid training, designed to give the average person the skills necessary to respond to someone who is developing a mental health problem, or experiencing a mental health crisis.

Established in 1974, Ferd & Gladys Alpert Jewish Family Service (Alpert JFS), is a nationally accredited service provider for children, adults, seniors, and Holocaust survivors. The non-profit, non-sectarian organization is a trusted leader, with a team of more than 175 highly skilled professionals delivering high-quality care to community members. Alpert JFS works to ensure the well-being of children and families, independence of older adults, and quality of life for individuals with disabilities. For more information, visit [www.AlpertJFS.org](http://www.AlpertJFS.org) or phone 561-684-1991.



