

Branching Out

Inspiring Families Inspiring Hope

Gifts Support Food Pantry As Needs Grow

“This is a cause that really suited my husband,” says Gay Kornblum of her late husband’s passionate interest in the Jewish Food Pantry. “Harvey had a soft spot in his heart for people who are hungry and suffering.”

With a \$1 million gift, Harvey Kornblum helped to significantly endow the operation in 2003, and it was named the Harvey Kornblum Jewish Food Pantry in his honor. Her husband’s unwavering support for the food pantry was fortuitous, Kornblum says. “The need wasn’t as great then, but it has dramatically grown.”

In 2009, a grant from the Harvey Kornblum Foundation provided for additional staff to extend food pantry hours to five days a week. “With these expanded hours, we are able to serve more clients,” says Joan Robinson, MSW, MAEd, Program Manager, Harvey Kornblum Jewish Food Pantry. More than 5,000 families were clients of the pantry in 2010, Robinson notes.

The foundation grant also funded two drivers to deliver food and personal care items to homebound older adults and the frail elderly. “With that help, we were able to make over 8,600 deliveries in 2010,” Robinson says.

A recent Kornblum Foundation gift will underwrite a full-time inventory specialist and part-time clerical assistant. “We are so excited about getting these posts filled and functioning,” Robinson says.

“We believe so much in the food pantry; it’s a hands-on type of service. The staff and volunteers are so committed to their work,” says Gay Kornblum.

“Hunger is a universal problem. We are in a position to help in this community and we want to be a leader and hope that others follow,” says Michael Silver, Chairman of the Board of the Harvey Kornblum Foundation.

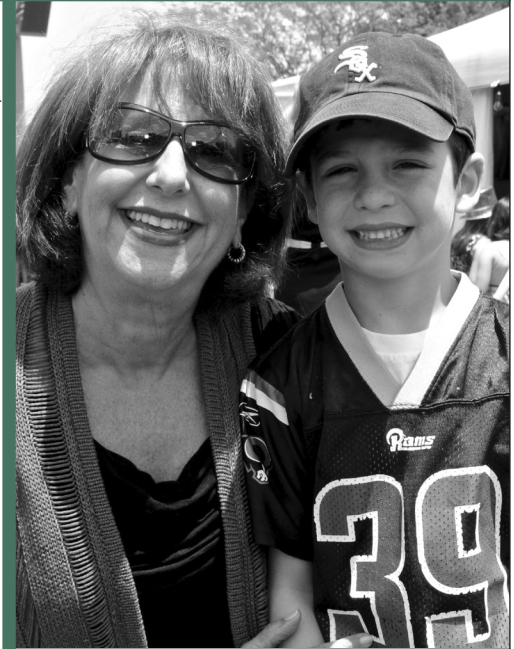


PHOTO BY RICK ROVAK

JF&CS Board member Karen Suroff and her grandson were in the audience cheering JF&CS and Circus Flora, where **Feed the Pantry-Feed the Soul** celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Harvey Kornblum Jewish Food Pantry. The event raised \$100,000 to provide food for children and families in need.

JF&CS Expands Services, Helps More Kids

Almost every parent is well aware of the emotional roller coaster that defines the teenage years. But it takes a professional to determine when temperamental and erratic behaviors are more than just typical teenage angst.

When a student at one site became so emotionally distraught that he was unable to function, couldn’t settle down and refused to attend school, he clearly needed professional assessment.

“Nobody knew what to do,” says David Weiner, LCSW. “He suffered from extreme anxiety and some depression and it was tough for him to talk about sensitive issues.”

In his role as a JF&CS school-based counselor, Weiner developed a relationship with the boy and through regular meetings discovered how to help him process what he was experiencing.

Thanks to the \$1.044 million in contracts awarded to JF&CS by the St. Louis County Children’s Service Fund, the agency is able to provide these kinds of assessments and corrective therapies at no cost to the families. “With these funds, we have expanded clinical hours at both Jewish Community Center campuses and are able to provide clinical services at all the Jewish day schools, as well as at selected St. Louis County public schools,” says Mary Hoke, Ph.D., Assistant Executive Director, Programs. “These funds help us create an environment where children can optimize their development and be successful at home and at school.”

Have You Remembered JF&CS in Your Estate Plan?

**Your planned gift will ensure our ability to serve those in need in our community.
Please call Barbara Barnholtz, Director of Development, 314-812-9365.**



Executive Buzz

In 2010, JF&CS experienced growth in both staffing and budget. At the same time, we initiated new collaborations and

partnerships to help more people. Placing these types of decisions front and center is a critical role for the board, staff, volunteers and donors as we look at defining the most important needs, the populations to be served and the difficult decision of how best to proceed.

As our agency continues to experience increased requests for help in almost every one of our programs, we need to address the topics of how and where to set limits to growth. Our Board has begun to focus on this subject. We are acutely aware of our role in both the Jewish and general communities, and the fact that we are the only Jewish Family & Children's Service in Missouri. These are big responsibilities.

The Harvey Kornblum Jewish Food Pantry now serves 4,800 people each month as the impact of the economic downturn continues. Our counseling program maintains a long waiting list for those seeking appointments. The Child Abuse Prevention Program is scheduling months ahead and already looking at requests for the coming school year. With additional resources, we could make a case today for expansion of both our Homemaker Program and Community Chaplaincy Outreach services.

Over the months ahead, your thoughts will be most welcome as we engage in these discussions that will have such an impact on our community.

L. Louis Albert

Positive Attitude Turns Life Around

"We connect our clients with additional community resources that will give them the support they need to get through a crisis."

Sometimes it takes just one setback to start a downward spiral into economic and emotional despair. And for one mother of two pre-teens, it was. Shortly after her husband lost his job and left the family, this now-single mother was let go from her job as a teacher.

"When she turned to JF&CS for help, she was determined she would be strong for the sake of her children," says Fran Kravitz, financial assistance social worker. "And she really has pulled her life together through her resolve and positive attitude, along with our help."

JF&CS's financial assistance program helps to cover basic necessities. Concurrently, the client's social worker educates her in budgeting and household accounting

and offers the kind of guidance that leads to self-sufficiency.

"This is exactly the kind of situation our financial assistance program is designed for," Kravitz says. "We also connect our clients with additional community resources that will give them the support they need to get through a crisis."

Kravitz calls this woman "a real inspiration." Although she lost her house, the family has settled into an apartment and readjusted their lifestyle. She remains positive as she continues to search for a teaching job.

"This woman has patched a living together substitute teaching, tutoring and working in other educational areas and is able to manage under difficult circumstances. This is really a story about courage," Kravitz says.

Homemaker Helper Gives Peace of Mind

At 86, Sarah enjoys water exercise. She also loves to get out and socialize at the JCC where she can stay connected to the Jewish community. But with age comes certain physical limitations, and it has become impractical for her to remain alone in the home in which she reared her children.

Enter the JF&CS Homemaker Program. This service is really a lifeline for the elderly who wish to remain independent in their own homes, but who need minimal assistance with chores such as light housekeeping, preparing meals, laundry and getting out to appointments, shopping and the grocery store.

"It is so important for older adults to stay connected and maintain their lifestyle, and that's what we provide," says Shelby Dersch, a JF&CS social worker.

This client has a daughter who sees to her mother's needs, but her job requires travel and she worries when she's not home. "With a homemaker helping her mother three days a week, she has peace of mind as well as respite from her role as primary support," Dersch says.

Over two years, the caregiver and client have become friends as well as companions, enjoying each other's company and learning from each other. "Sarah has been able to stay active because we can provide a positive and stable situation," Dersch says. **For more information on the Homemaker Program, call Shelby Dersch, 314-812-9377.**

Behind the Scenes at JF&CS

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