

Jewish Family and Children's Service Joins With JEVS and HIAS to Aid Émigrés

JFCS' Resettlement Department, which has resettled thousands of Jewish refugees from the Former Soviet Union and eastern Europe during the Holocaust and at other times for more than a century, has been restructured into a three-agency collaboration to provide resettlement services at a single point of entry.

The new collaborative, the Jewish Agencies' Consortium for Refugee Resettlement (JACRR), includes JFCS, Jewish Employment and Vocational Service (JEVS) and HIAS and Council Migration Services. Sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia and housed at the JEVS' Center for New Americans on 1330 Rhawn Street in Northeast Philadelphia, it allows refugees to access all case management and

employment services through a central office. JFCS Resettlement caseworker, Temma Klibaner, now provides social work services at the JEVS site and can be contacted by calling (215) 728-4405.

JFCS continues to play an active role in reaching out to the area émigrés from the Former Soviet Union. The agency's Counseling Department still offers New American counseling services at our Northeast Philadelphia Office at 10125 Verree Road. This program provides a Russian-speaking counselor to help New Americans with their mental health needs.

JFCS' Services for Older Persons Northeast Philadelphia Office, 10133 Verree Road, provides a Russian-speaking social worker for counseling and case management for émigrés age 65

and older.

In addition, JFCS' volunteer program continues to reach out to the émigré community through its "Family to Family" program, Shalom welcome basket program, and other services.

Sylvia Thomas, who has directed JFCS Resettlement Services since 1979, retired this past fall and has assumed a consulting role for the next year during the transition.

The agency served as many as 1,500 people a year at the height of Soviet Jewish emigration. Known for its expertise, JFCS also aided in resettling Vietnamese refugees during and after the Vietnam War and refugee families from Kosovo during the height of the conflict in Bosnia in the 1990s. ●

What resettlement participants have to say...

Sometimes, the simplest words can say the most powerful things. These are a sampling of responses by New Americans during one of the many tours of Philadelphia's Jewish and civic sights sponsored by JFCS.



Above: Harold Sukonik (with arm extended), JFCS volunteer and member of the Board of Trustees, leads a bus tour of New Americans. Board officer Rober Horen, now vice chairman, also led many tours.

Right: Young émigrés enjoy the grandeur of City Hall during a tour.



"We are very happy to be in the country where you can realize your Jewishness. Again and again, we thank the Jewish community of Philadelphia for the help and concern."

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"It is a wonderful feeling to be free Jewish people, which we couldn't experience in Ukraine...."

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"Everything that was connected with Jewishness was persecuted by Soviet ideology. Only now we begin to understand who we are and where we belong. And we can be proud of it."

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"Today, once again we realize what America means! We felt your warmth and kindness. Not only you gave us bread and shelter, you organized a wonderful tour for us. Thank you for taking us to the city and getting us acquainted with Jewish culture and religion."

Chaplaincy Internship Integrates a New Dimension into Existing Services

Listening. Counseling. Caring. Healing.

These qualities clearly define the mission of rabbis – and chaplains. And in the best of all possible worlds, student rabbis would have vital exposure to chaplaincy within a hands-on context.

Thanks to the Carpenter Rabbinic Internship, sponsored by the JFCS Joan Grossman Center for Chaplaincy and Healing, several fortunate rabbinical students have just that opportunity. The E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation awarded JFCS a three-year grant of \$234,000 to create this internship program, which trains rabbinical students in the fine art of pastoral counseling.

“The board was very pleased to approve the grant for rabbinic chaplaincy internships,” says Joc O’Connor, executive director of the Foundation. “It is in keeping with our mission to further theological education across religious lines.”

O’Connor notes that the goal of the internship program was to train rabbis in chaplaincy issues which most will undoubtedly face as part of pastoral care. The Foundation approved of JFCS’ goal of helping to prepare rabbis for providing “skillful and compassionate responses” to those in profound spiritual need.

Lois Manowitz, vice president and chief operating officer of JFCS, says, “The Carpenter Rabbinic Internship has allowed JFCS to more fully integrate chaplaincy services into the traditional services of a family service agency – counseling and case management, care management for the elderly, and outreach to vulnerable and isolated persons in boarding homes, hospitals, nursing homes and the like. Social workers and

rabbinic students gain new perspectives in their work from each discipline, which allows an even broader understanding of the clients’ emotional and spiritual needs.”

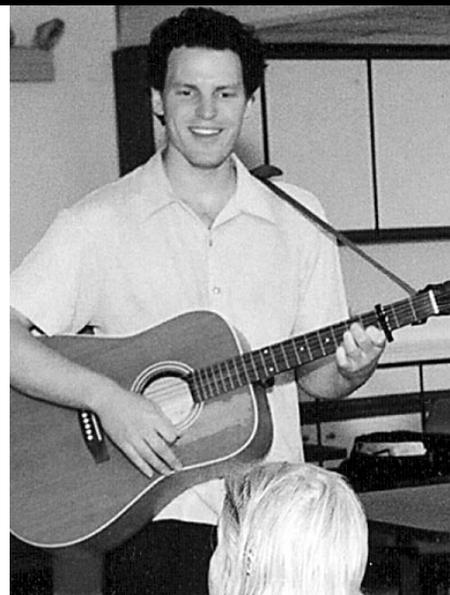
“The Carpenter Rabbinic Internship has allowed JFCS to more fully integrate chaplaincy services into the traditional services of a family service agency.”

The grant began last year. It allows four rabbinic internships per year, based on a very comprehensive application process. “The most exciting element is that rabbinical students have been placed in agency departments, ensuring that they get both a practical and comprehensive learning experience,” says Rabbi Elisa Goldberg, director of the Joan Grossman Center for Chaplaincy and Healing.

According to Rabbi Goldberg, having rabbinical students on agency counseling teams can be a terrific catalyst for conversations about spiritual issues. “It benefits the JFCS staff and JFCS clients, a well as the students, so everybody wins.”

One of those winners is a fourth year student at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College – Anita Steiner, a permanent resident of Israel and proud to be graduating from RRC on her 61st birthday next spring. Steiner, who plans to return to Israel and do chaplaincy work there, feels that her entire rabbinical training has been deeply enhanced by the chaplaincy internship.

“I was placed in JFCS’ Services for Older Persons program, and it was a wonderful, enlightening experience,” says Steiner, who was a Carpenter intern last year. “Along with supervision and review, there was always so much to learn from experience with the clients. Visiting people in their homes



Chaplain intern Benjamin Barnett entertains residents at a boarding home.

was such a valuable component – we could see their lives first-hand, and in some cases, also see their very real problems.”

For Benjamin Barnett, a third year RRC student, his internship this year has already been rewarding. “I see as one of the key elements of my future rabbinate the act of simply being present with another’s experience,” says Barnett. “Chaplaincy trains me, at the most basic level, to keep my heart open in the face of another human being’s struggle.”

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This rabbinical student also sees the tremendous value in exposing those on the brink of becoming rabbis to the world of chaplaincy. “As a chaplain,” explains Barnett, “I work to honor each individual’s experience, and

to offer a grounding presence of support, comfort and prayer.” ●

JFCS is now accredited for Clinical Pastoral Education, and is bringing in a supervisor from the Jewish Institute for Pastoral Care in New York. For more information on the Carpenter Rabbinic Internship and the Joan Grossman Center for Chaplaincy and Healing, call 215-646-2115.