

JFS Volunteer Newsletter

Lives Transformed. Hopes Realized.



Upcoming Dates

20th Anniversary
Sunday, April 21 4-6pm
RSVP Now!

Victory Day Celebration
Sunday, May 12 2-4pm @
JCC
Read more on page 2

JFS CELEBRATES Its 20th Anniversary

Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County is marking 20 years of service to the community on Sunday, April 21, with its "Constellation JFS" 20th Anniversary Celebration, to be held at the University of Michigan North Campus Research Center from 4-6pm.

JFS will be honoring persons and organizations from all parts of the community that have helped it to grow from one family's effort to help refugees from the former Soviet Union to the full-services, professional and accredited social service agency that it is today.

For additional information, contact Cindy Klein at cindyk@jfsann Arbor.org or 734-769-0209.

PPiC Corner

On February 25th, the Partners in Care Concierge (PiCC) volunteers of JFS met at the agency together for the first time! After getting to know each other a bit and trading "war stories", we got down to the business of learning about future plans for PiCC from Sarah Okin of the Amster Center and Diane. Feedback was solicited from the volunteers for revisions to the standardized paperwork that is utilized for every medical appointment we participate in.

PiCC is a program of medical accompaniment for older adults. These specially trained JFS volunteers accompany clients to visits with their health care providers - it could be a primary care physician, an optometrist, dentist, podiatrist, etc. The goals are to provide safe transportation; another 'set of ears' to hear information being shared by the provider; written documentation to refer to later; help navigating in unfamiliar buildings; and advocacy with the providers on the client's behalf. All older adults don't need a service such as PiCC; but for those who do, they consider it a "lifeline and a blessing". If you're interested in participating in the PiCC program please contact Diane at diane@jfsann Arbor.org.

By Diane Fenske

Call 734-769-0209

"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."

-Gandhi



Ongoing Volunteer Opportunities

- Friendly Visitors
- Conversation Partners
- Resettlement Volunteers
 - Arabic Speakers!!
- Employment Volunteers



GenChat

Are you finding it hard to connect with your tech-savvy grandchildren? Is your family thousands of miles away? GenChat makes it possible to Skype, face-time, or iChat with your relatives that you don't get to see very often. A JFS trained volunteer will come to your residence with an iPad so you can "chat it up" with your loved ones. There is no charge for the video visit.

We need volunteers. Please contact Kate Thomas- Palmer at kate@jfsannarbor.org or 734-769-0209 to sign up for the training or if you would like to "chat it up" with your family.

The first volunteer training is **Wednesday, April 24, 2013 at JFS from 7:00pm to 8:30pm**. The program kicks off May 1, 2013.

GenChat is funded by the Community Impact Grant Program of the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor

Victory Day Celebration

Victory Day Celebration is scheduled on **Sunday, May 12 at JCC from 2pm to 4pm**. It is a very important event for Russian speaking older clients who lived, fought and survived World War II. Based on some information from previous years, around 70 people are anticipated to attend the celebration.

Help needed: 2-3 volunteers on the day of the event with set up, clean up and general help during the party and maybe a couple of days before with picking up food donation, taking some non-perishable items to JCC.

If you are interested, please contact Marina at marina@jfsannarbor.org or 734-769-0209.

PATH Opportunity

PATH stands for partnership, accountability, training and hope. It is the cash assistance program designed to help people eliminate barriers that prevent them from working, and giving them tools to be successful in employment.

We are developing a "PATH" program orientation series. The content includes: work readiness information, cultural topics, such as public safety, hygiene in America, how to use public systems in America, etc...

We are seeking volunteers who would be interested in developing the content and also a multimedia format to use for our client's to complete independent study of the material. This can be as simple as developing a PowerPoint on the information. The orientation material will be used for new clients as a part of their PATH program orientation and cultural orientation.

If interested, call 734-769-0209 and ask for Tywanda or Lindsay.

Highlighted Volunteer: Henry



Henry is our highlighted volunteer! Since the first day of volunteering, he's been here every day. He gives his everything to the students and goes out of his way to help them in whatever is needed. His sense of dedication and integrity lead to an offer of a job as our citizenship instructor. He still volunteers and works with the ESL students whenever he is free. He is an asset to the ESL program, to JFS, and to the students.

Thank you Henry!

Website Improvements



As of today, you may notice some changes to the volunteer section on our webpage. Check it out; let us know what you think. We now have a volunteer corner which is our highlighted volunteer of the month, archived newsletters and more...

As of April 1, 2013, all new volunteers will be required to go through an online orientation to JFS. It is located on the page "How to Become a Volunteer". It is relatively quick to get through and could be beneficial to our current volunteers.

We appreciate your opinion!

Thank you Economic Students!

The ESL program has been fortunate to have undergraduate students from the University of Michigan volunteer as part of their economics course. Professor Jan Gerson of the University of Michigan's Economics Department teaches a companion class to Principles of Economics that includes community service. In addition to traditional reading assignments about the benefits and costs of programs providing community services and learning how to show these benefits in a model, students volunteering in the community. This firsthand experience serves as a "text" for the class, allowing students to learn about community service and the role of volunteers. In addition, they experience what it takes to make community service effective, and observe mankind's capacity for kindness and resilience in the face of adversity.

Students work with refugees and other international students to help them with English and to help them adjust to a new country and a new culture. Students have told Jessica Vinter, the ESL Program Coordinator, how valuable their time at JFS ESL has been. Several students have continued to volunteer and work with students from around the world because the experience has been so rewarding. Trevor Dworetz is a continuing Econ volunteer. He said, "I began to volunteer at JFS because it was a requirement for my Econ 108 class. However, my experience was so enjoyable that I have continued to volunteer even though my Econ 108 class is over. While my role at JFS is to help the students learn English, I find myself learning so much from them. The students are all eager to learn, cooperative, and humorous. Their great attitudes make for a fun and productive time, and I look forward to volunteering at JFS as long as I am in Ann Arbor."

Jessica said that the students' contribution has been invaluable. "They work very hard to individually assist each student to help them feel comfortable and confident in their ability to communicate in English. For the students, to see young people who are genuinely concerned about their lives and their education helps them feel that they are a part of the community."



Henry, volunteer and Citizenship teacher poses with an ESL student. (left)

Laura, a volunteer, takes a break from tutoring an ESL student. (right)



We want to hear from you! If you have any personal stories, pictures, etc... that you would like to share in the next newsletter email Chelsea at chelsea@jfsannarbor.org. If there is something you think could be improved or if there is a topic you think should be included in this monthly newsletter, let us know. **WE APPRECIATE YOU!**

Editor- Chelsea Yarbor MSW Intern
Supervisor- Diane Fenske Geriatric Service Coordinator