

JFSMatters

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of Boeing Puget Sound	

SPECIAL INSERT

Tributes

CLIENT-CENTERED SERVICE

Meet Our New Intake & Assessment Specialist



Stephanie Goldfarb

Stephanie Goldfarb always knew she wanted to be in a helping profession. She began her career in rehabilitation counseling, dedicating herself to helping people with both physical and psychiatric disabilities to live and work as independently as possible. This spring, Stephanie came to JFS as the new Intake & Assessment Specialist. She is working closely with Rachael Kwong, Director of the SAJD Supported Living Program, to develop an easy, user-friendly, welcoming entry point for people turning to JFS for help. Here are some edited excerpts from our conversation with Stephanie and Rachael.

WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF THIS APPROACH?

SG: We want to deliver more integrated care by providing a single entry point for most JFS services. This means making sure someone calling for help can get the information they need from me and can avoid bouncing from

“Navigating the social services system can be overwhelming. Sometimes it feels like floating helplessly in a sea of information.” – Stephanie

department to department and voicemail to voicemail. It means returning calls within one business day as a sign of dignity and respect for the person in need.

RK: Stephanie has a landscape view of the agency’s resources as well as a strong understanding of services in the greater community. She’s able to assess the overall needs of prospective clients and has the qualifications to recommend them for enrollment in our services, and when appropriate, to make relevant referrals outside our agency.

(Continued on page 3)



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EXECUTIVE NOTE

BY RABBI WILL BERKOVITZ, CEO



Will Berkovitz

One of the great things about coming to JFS three years ago was inheriting a legacy of quality and professionalism. The quality of our staff and programs was — and is — recognized by our clients and other social service providers. Our reputation has always been strong, and we have always had a wide and diverse group of generous volunteers and donors who are committed to our mission of serving the vulnerable.

We are fortunate to have an extraordinary Board of Directors who are tremendous thought-partners and bring wisdom, intelligence and passion to their stewardship.

They believe in the expertise of our professional staff, and they govern accordingly. In all roles and at all levels, our staff puts the client at the center of the work. They are uniformly committed to helping vulnerable people improve their lives and to providing the highest quality of service in pursuit of this goal.

One of the unifying principles that runs from the front line staff to the Board is a belief in the “J” in JFS. And though we are not all Jewish — and those of us who are, are not all the same kind of Jewish — these shared values bind us together and enhance our ability to serve many different kinds of people, in many different ways. That diversity is our strength.

“May the dignity of your fellow
be as precious to you as your own.”

– Wisdom of Our Ancestors/Pirke Avot

One of our core values is to be client-centered. That is more than a structural commitment. It’s a promise to honor the dignity of each person who turns to us for help. And it’s what it means to put the “J” in JFS — to always see the unique face and experience of the person in front of us. Our decision to evolve to more centralized intake is one new way that we are putting that value into action.

When any one of us faces a life challenge, when we are in a fragile state, the last thing we want is to feel like we’re a number, navigating a voicemail menu. This is even truer for the most vulnerable among us, for whom this is an all too common experience. Someone in crisis needs human contact.

Someone at risk of eviction, an adult child helping an aging parent who has just taken a fall, a woman fleeing domestic abuse — people in any of these situations need a “no friction” experience. They need access to help, guidance in deciding what to do first, and someone to validate their experience by listening sensitively and responding respectfully.

Our new Intake & Assessment Specialist Stephanie Goldfarb is here to make sure that every person who calls hears the caring voice of someone with the expertise to respond to their particular situation and needs. Because “dignity” is serving our clients in a way that reflects how we would like our own mother, son, spouse or self to be treated.

WHAT TYPES OF CALLS DO YOU FIELD?

SG: As we develop this approach, I'm speaking with people who are seeking housing and food assistance; seniors or those who need help with an aging loved one; people seeking counseling or addiction services; individuals and families looking for supported living services for those with persistent mental illness or cognitive disabilities; and, providers from outside agencies hoping to connect clients with JFS.

Some people are in the information gathering stage — like when an adult child calls about an aging parent. Sometimes people have an immediate need, like help with utility costs or eviction-prevention funds. And sometimes, people just need to vent. They may need intensive next steps, but people often tell me

“Many people are so grateful to get a return call, to feel that human touch and common courtesy.” – Stephanie

that simply being heard makes a difference.

IS THERE ANY CONSISTENT THEME TO THE CHALLENGES DIVERSE PEOPLE FACE?

RK: Vulnerable people — especially if they are in crisis — often lack the social supports and networks needed to navigate challenges. They don't have a roadmap and don't necessarily have people in their lives to help them create that map.

And there are factors that can exacerbate seemingly manageable issues. A very low-income person doesn't usually have the flexibility that a professional has to take time

off to deal with problems. Let's say rent is going up. That low- or very low-income person might not be able to schedule time to deal with finding a new apartment. If someone has a disability and a service animal, they might not be able find a rental that takes animals. So there are real challenges, and oftentimes, the people who call JFS just don't have anyone else to help them figure things out.

 **Need help? Contact Us!**
Stephanie Goldfarb
sgoldfarb@jfsseattle.org
(206) 461-3240

Rachael and Stephanie have a combined 21 years of experience, so we asked them about changes they've noted in human services.

PROMISING TRENDS

- Technology, pharmacology and medicine are improving diagnostics and treatment for people with mental health and cognitive issues.
- Societal understanding of and response to addiction, mental health, aging and disabilities is improving.
- Stigma is reduced and cultural norms change as more people become willing to ask for and receive help.

CHALLENGING TRENDS

- The lack of affordable housing and livable wages for people at the lower end of the economic ladder.
- An insufficient number of support groups for family and friends affected by addiction.
- A shortage of mental health providers and facilities prepared to deal with acute issues.

REFUGEE SERVICES

Resettlement Is a Journey

We first introduced you to the Al-Shammaris in April (blog.jfsseattle.org/refugee-children-become-american-students/). This Sunni-Shia family was forced to flee Iraq in 2014 as sectarian violence increased.

Dheyaa and Rasha, along with their children — 15-year-old Maryam, 14-year-old Ali and 7-year-old Aya — fled Baghdad and spent two years as urban refugees in Turkey. While we often picture camps with tents or other makeshift shelters, today, two-thirds of refugees worldwide live in urban areas.

The Al-Shammaris were in limbo while the Department of State conducted the extensive review required for entry to the U.S. Adult refugees are prohibited by Turkish law from working, so Maryam and Ali had to find jobs and missed two years of school. Because of her age and special needs, Aya stayed with her parents while her siblings worked.

When the family finally arrived in the Puget Sound region, they were greeted at the airport by JFS staff and taken to their furnished apartment. On the first evening, staff and volunteers provided a culturally-appropriate meal as both a

welcoming gesture and a comforting reassurance.

Since that first night, the Al-Shammaris have been working to learn a different language, culture and way of life. Kids tend to adapt first and fastest, so a mere four days after arriving, Maryam and Ali started school again after their long hiatus.

Dheyaa and Rasha are both enrolled in half-day English as a Second Language (ESL) classes at Highline College. A soccer coach in his home country, Dheyaa is now in a job training program at Taylor Farms in Kent. Both husband and wife are working with JFS Employment Services to secure longer-term jobs that will help them establish their financial footing.

Resettling refugees arrive with a substantial burden since they must pay the U.S. government back for the cost of their airfares. For the Al-Shammaris, this means their fresh start in America began with a debt of around \$6,250. And if they are not able to begin payments after the six-month grace period, trouble can snowball. If refugees get in arrears,

“Their fresh start in America began with a debt of \$6,250.”

their newly established credit can be severely compromised — affecting housing, employment and access to public benefits. The sooner people get jobs and the longer they retain them, the better their chances are to establish stable lives.

JFS clients typically receive medical case management and cultural orientation — a broad set of instructive services to help people understand basics like how to use public transportation, open a bank account, enroll in school and navigate the grocery store.

Following this initial orientation, the Al-Shammaris are now benefitting from another JFS offering: extended case management. This service provides people additional practical assistance as they make the adjustment to American life. Relatives often help smooth the transition for new arrivals, but for people who do not have social networks here, extended service is critical. And this is all the more true for the Al-Shammaris who need guidance to successfully navigate the complex system of medical, developmental and educational services that Aya needs.

As their parents go to class and work and care for Aya, Maryam and Ali are doing their jobs at school. Ali has future plans to try out for his school soccer team, and Maryam is earning good grades in her first American semester.

The family's journey is ongoing.



The Al-Shammari Family (Ali not pictured)

HOUSING STABILITY

Becoming a Homeless Woman

Depression and sciatica were the 'perfect storm' that took Michelle* from stable housing to becoming a homeless woman. Originally from Texas, she'd moved to the Puget Sound region to be with her family and was looking forward to continuing her employment as a teacher. Her battle with mental illness and the physical pain of her disease eventually become too much and prevented her from working.

"I saw my income quickly dropping and made the mistake of renting a room sight unseen," says Michelle. "The living conditions were unbearable, and I had to get out. I ended up making some bad decisions. I didn't realize I'd become a homeless woman that fast."

Michelle found herself living in a park in Port Orchard during the summer of 2014. Because of a lack of shelter options on the Kitsap Peninsula, she returned to Seattle. She bounced around from shelter to shelter for the next 12 months, which added to the stress of her ailments.

"Homelessness is extremely traumatic, especially if you are a woman," says Michelle. "You are very vulnerable to all sorts of situations, and it's very scary. It's hard to think straight sometimes. You really need to find some place safe each night."

In April of 2015, she found the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR).

DVR helps individuals with disabilities participate fully in their communities and become employed. DVR helped her with fees associated with updating her teaching certificate, and most importantly, referred her to JFS.

The case management team at JFS went through an assessment of her barriers to employment, and housing quickly rose to the top. Together, they helped Michelle fill out

"JFS played an instrumental role in getting me into more stable housing."

more than 60 applications for stable housing.

"There's a two to seven year waiting list for affordable housing in Seattle right now," says Christy Rosenlund, SAJD Supported Living Program Case Manager. "Once people are on the waiting list, they have to check in monthly, which can be extremely difficult for someone who has an unstable living situation."



Christy and Michelle worked closely together for the next four months and once housing was found, they turned to the JFS Emergency Services program for financial help covering her first month's rent.

"JFS does extremely good work," says Michelle. "They played an instrumental role in getting me into more stable housing. I'm finally starting to pick up the pieces and get my medical condition under control. Your home is your nest, your security. I'm so glad I've got a roof over my head."

Michelle has been in stable housing in the Central District for the past six months. She enjoys her new neighborhood and hopes to be able to return to substitute teaching in the near future.

**This client's name has been changed.*

"Your home is your nest, your security."

PROJECT DVORA

What is Abusive Litigation?

BY LIZ COLECLOUGH, DIRECTOR OF PROJECT DVORA

There is a common perception that abuse stops when a person leaves their coercive partner. While this is the case for some, it's hardly reality for all. Many survivors endure long legal battles with former partners who use the court system to maintain power and control. The extreme version of this is known as 'abusive litigation.'

IF THE SURVIVOR ISN'T A CRIMINAL, WHY ARE THEY IN COURT?

Manipulation of the legal system can occur in a number of ways. In civil court, these tactics most often appear in family law cases. When ex-partners share children, a custody dispute can provide a prime foundation for abuse of the system. Even with an established parenting plan, one partner can continuously file motions for clarification, requests to modify the plan, and even allegations of contempt. This can translate into hours of legal work and court appearances. The pattern can continue for years, resulting in a vicious and exhausting cycle for the protective parent who has left an abusive situation.



Liz Coleclough

THE FINANCIAL TOLL.

In many cases, financial control becomes a central tactic to maintain power in an abusive relationship. This imbalance of resources can have consequences long after the relationship has ended — especially when the controlling partner has greater ability to seek legal counsel. There is high demand for limited

free legal resources. The pro bono lawyers who are available do not always have the family law expertise that is most needed. Many clients end up representing themselves, resulting in a legal David and Goliath. The protective parent often becomes too emotionally and financially drained to use the legal system at all, even when needed — for instance,

to tighten a parenting plan or file a protection order. Continuous legal

work and court appearances can interfere with finding and maintaining a job, making it harder for the survivor to establish financial stability.

THE EMOTIONAL TOLL.

Abusive litigation is stressful. The outcome of a legal case is out of the survivor's control. It's challenging to see a harmful ex-

partner. Testifying in court in front of that abusive ex can be especially traumatic. It often requires revealing intimate or painful details in public, while enduring lies and accusations from the other party — all while maintaining composure to enhance credibility with the court.

HOW DO ADVOCATES HELP?

Knowing how abusive litigation can leave a person feeling drained, alone and powerless, Project DVORA advocates regularly accompany clients in court. Whether helping to navigate the complexity of the system or physically blocking a client's view of their ex-partner, the objective is to make the process as manageable

“Abusive litigation can be an extremely effective tactic to disempower someone — to re-traumatize and re-victimize them.”

as possible. The physical presence of an advocate who is exclusively available as a support can make a world of difference. It helps survivors remember they are not alone.

If you or someone you know is being abused, contact Project DVORA, (206) 861-3159.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

For complete details about these and other upcoming events, visit jfsseattle.org/calendar.

FOR THE COMMUNITY

Unless otherwise noted, contact familylife@jfsseattle.org or (206) 461-3240.

Kosher Food Bank

1st Wednesdays
August 3 & September 7
5:00 p.m.

Contact Esther Magasis,
emagasis@jfsseattle.org or
(206) 861-3174.

Caring for Our Aging Loved Ones Understanding Changes: Dementia, Delirium & Depression

Thursday, July 14
7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Sha'arei Tikvah Summer Shabbat Experience

Friday, July 22
5:30 p.m.

Yoga for Resilience & Compassion

Summer Series
Contact Project DVORA, (206) 861-3159.

SAVE THE DATE

Community of Caring Luncheon

MONDAY
APRIL 3, 2017

Sheraton Seattle Hotel

ENDLESS OPPORTUNITIES

Endless Opportunities is a community-wide program offered in partnership with Temple B'nai Torah & Temple De Hirsch Sinai. Events are open to the public and are at 10:30 a.m. unless otherwise noted. For more information and to RSVP:

Contact endlessopps@jfsseattle.org
or (206) 461-3240.

Project DVORA: Working to End Domestic Violence

Tuesday, July 19

A Look Back at the Lunar Orbiter

Thursday, July 28

The Maccabi Games: A Life-Changing Experience

Thursday, August 11

A Family's Journey to Escape the Holocaust

Tuesday, August 16

Hike Through Bridle Trails State Park

Thursday, August 25
10:00 a.m. – noon

VOLUNTEER TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE



Broadway Farmers Market Gleaning

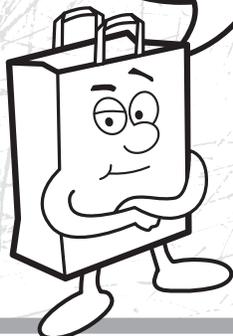
2nd & 4th Sundays
2:30 – 4:30 p.m.
ongoing through October

Contact Jane Deer-Hileman,
jdeer@jfsseattle.org or (206) 861-3155.
Visit jfsseattle.org/volunteer for more
volunteer opportunities.

Save the Date!
2016 Food Drive
October 2 - 23

2016 Food Sort
Sunday, October 23

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**We are grateful to the
EMPLOYEES COMMUNITY FUND
OF BOEING PUGET SOUND**

With a generous grant from the ECF, we purchased a van for the refugee resettlement team. The van streamlines the time it takes our staff to set up apartments for new arrivals by about 300 hours yearly. And we are using that time to give the nearly 300 refugees we resettle additional case management to help them successfully establish stable lives in the Puget Sound region.

THANK YOU!



MISSION

JFS helps vulnerable individuals and families in the Puget Sound region achieve well-being, health and stability.

APPROACH

Jewish history and values guide our work; therefore, we provide effective services to people of all backgrounds and also have a responsibility to meet the particular needs of Jewish individuals and families in the region.

Gail Mautner, Board President
Rabbi Will Berkovitz, Chief Executive Officer
Deborah Frockt, Editor & Writer
Leslie Sugiura, Writer

Jewish Family Service is a private, non-profit, 501(c)(3) social service organization. Contributions are tax-deductible under section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code.

jfsseattle.org
(206) 461-3240



There are so many ways you can volunteer to help. Call (206) 861-3155 or jdeer@jfsseattle.org.