In the New Year, we reflect on the past, look to the future and begin again. I want to share a wonderful quote that I believe depicts the promise of a New Year.

“We will open the book. Its pages are blank. We are going to put words on them ourselves. The book is called ‘Opportunity’ and its first chapter is New Year’s Day.” Edith Lovejoy Pierce

Opportunity comes in many forms. It arises when someone retires from a position or leaves a position. The door is open for new talent and ideas to improve our work. This past year we have on-boarded talented individuals in all our departments. Fourteen new office-based staff and many new direct care staff were hired. Opportunity arises when we have the chance to acknowledge the skill and expertise of our existing staff, by creating growth opportunities for them at the agency. This year 8 individuals were recognized with new roles. It is incumbent upon us to seek new funding opportunities to sustain our work. This year we have already been successful in obtaining new funding sources and will be submitting additional requests to new foundations.

Working together with partners is always an opportunity to enhance and potentially expand our services. We have fostered our existing partnerships and created new ones (e.g. MedStar and Catholic Charities, as well as new employers). Restructuring the agency and our lay leader structures creates opportunity to enhance the work that we are doing. This year we restructured the placement of Marketing, Access and Resource Development. We have already seen successful outcomes. Our Board Governance Committee worked on the consolidation of our 3 Councils into one JCS Advisory Council. We have experienced better attendance and more engagement from our Council members.

There is so much opportunity out there for our clients, ourselves and our agency. May we fill the chapters of the book of Opportunity for ourselves and for the agency with success, pride and fulfillment.

Until next time,
Joan
By Carol Sandler

As an expressive arts therapist for children, adults and families, Tikvah Womack says she does art, music, and poetry with her clients “within a therapeutic modality setting.” Her clients come to JCS needing therapy; Tikvah considers how treatment can be deepened and encourages clients to express themselves. Some write poems, others describe nature, paint or draw. If clients are reluctant to engage in these activities, Tikvah will pursue other methods. She says: “I trust the process, it’s more a gift than a skill.”

At JCS since March, Tikvah formerly worked at Family and Children’s Services, and at Hope Health Systems; she has a Master’s degree in Expressive Therapy and Clinical Mental Health Counseling from Lesley University. JCS appealed to her because, she says: “I was looking for a change and stability, for an organization that was grounded and allowed employees to focus on “the work” (referring to the priority being on the clients), and of course the Jewish population appealed to me. Everyone is warm and welcoming, I love my team and have great supervision, which means a lot.”

Weekends are spent with her husband, three-year old son, and brand new baby boy who was born in December. She takes a weekly dance class, occasionally writes poetry for “self-reflection,” and works at Family and Children’s Services part-time, counseling and running groups for families who were formerly homeless and now in “transitional housing,” such as shelters.

All Staff Meeting:  
Tuesday, February 5, 2019 • 8:30-10:30am

A representative from the Grassroots Intervention Center will teach us important facts about addressing suicide.

- Learn 3 basics steps to prevent suicide
- Become familiar with suicide assessment tools
- Learn and practice postvention techniques such as the ability to support the community/survivors of suicide
Welcome Our New Hires!

Jean Davis  
**Director of Economic Services**

Stacey Atkinson  
**Service Coordinator**

Brittni Barcase  
**Health Educator/Social Media Specialist**

Ben Temin  
**Career Coach**

Eugene Shaw  
**Direct Support Counselor**

Naomi Pinson  
**Grant Accountant**

Ann Steinberg  
**Direct Support Counselor**

Edna Cisco  
**Direct Support Counselor**

Bracha Pensak  
**Direct Support Counselor**

Fran Block  
**Job Coach**

"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."

– Helen Keller
The Center for Jewish Education

AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE CLASSES

Basic Vocabulary • Grammar of ASL
Conversational Skills • Intro to Deaf Culture & Community

February 4, 11, 18, 25 • 7:30-9:00pm

For more info contact: Rachel Turniansky
rturniansky@cjebaltimore.org or 410-735-5022

Jewish Volunteer Connection

2019 NATIONAL MLK DAY OF SERVICE

A day that transforms Dr. King’s life and teaching into community action and brings people together.

Monday, January 21 • JCC Park Heights

JCS will coordinate the assembly of blessing bags from 1:00-3:00pm.
JCS Staff is authorized 30 minutes of community service time to participate.

Baltimore Jewish Council

MARYLAND JEWISH ADVOCACY DAY

Meet with your legislators to advocate on behalf of the Baltimore Jewish Community.

Wednesday, February 20 • 4:30-8:00pm • Annapolis, MD

Pre-Advocacy Day Training

Monday, January 21 • 6:00-8:00pm • Park Heights JCC

For more information got to: www.picatic.com/event1546876443028
DEALING WITH DIVORCE
3-Session Group for Teens

January 24   February 7   February 21 • 6:30-8:00pm
Rosenbloom Owings Mills JCC, 4Front Teen Lounge

HEARTSTRINGS
The Ties To Those We Love

A special program for children (8+) and teens who have lost a loved one to cancer
Tuesday, January 22 • 6:30–8:00pm • Hopewell Cancer Support

SHIFTING FROM SCHOOL TO ADULTHOOD

4-Part Workshop for Parents and Caregivers of Children with Disabilities
Thursdays in February • 1:00-2:30pm • Weinberg Park Heights JCC

JCS COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE for Eligible Jewish High School Seniors

• Students from a single-parent home
• Students with a diagnosed learning disability

Application Deadline is April 1.
In order to reflect up-to-date nomenclature, the cluster formerly known as “Special Needs” will now be referred to as “Support Services to Individuals with Disabilities” (SSID). The SSID outcome area celebrated Chanukah with a holiday party at which clients and staff had an enjoyable time.

We continue to be hard at work on ensuring compliance with DDA’s (Developmental Disabilities Administration) changing procedures and regulations.

Therapy Services is proud to announce that Shneur Marshall received his LCSW-C! We wish Rachelle “Shelly” Varon all the best in her retirement. We are actively working on hiring another therapist as well as a Medical Director.

The Pittsburgh tragedy hit our community hard. JCS staff—therapists, the media team and the Critical Incident Stress Debriefing team all “stepped up to the plate” to provide much-needed support.

And the times, they are a changing…

**Personnel Changes**
We welcomed Naomi Pinson into the department in November as Grant Accountant. She is busy getting up to speed on our biggest grant funded programs, residential and Support Services for Individuals with Disabilities and support services for Holocaust Survivors. In addition, she is beginning to work with Joan Drebing as we increase the number of our grant applications. On December 28, we bid farewell to Yelena Son, our Payroll Specialist, after 20 years of dedicated service. We are currently engaging in a search to fill the position, although Yelena’s skill will be difficult to replace.

**Get ready for timekeeping (Cloc Trak) changes soon!**
After several years using the same version of our timekeeping software, we will be upgrading. Among other changes, the v-track (telephone clocking) will be replaced with a cell phone app. Also, for Support Services for Individuals with Disabilities, we will be able to track direct care time by client in order to automatically address DDA reporting requirements. We expect this to save countless hours of manual tabulations which are currently performed. All system changes also require some changes on our part. Debra Weinberg is currently working with the vendor so that our conversion will be as easy as possible.

**New Donation Tracking Software (Salsa):**
After many years of using a home-grown Access database to track and report on donations to the agency, JCS purchase new software which should allow for easier processing, better reporting and more on-line capabilities. In addition to converting our data, we are taking the opportunity to review the donation workflow in order to assure that it is as most efficient as possible.

**Our Client Information System (Cerner) continues to change.**
Sometimes that is for the better and sometimes it is not. Abby Appelbaum and Joe Honsberger are leading a search and evaluation process to determine our best options for the future.
• **Service Coordination**

The cost of in-home personal care makes it difficult for our most vulnerable, low-income older adults to get the care they need to remain in their homes safely. JCS Service Coordinators provide these seniors with subsidies to get assistance with food preparation, laundry, house cleaning, etc. from community providers. Funding from the Conference on Materials Claims Against Germany & The Maryland Dept. of Aging subsidize the cost of in-home supportive care for Holocaust Survivors. For those who are not eligible for the above funding sources, JCS has received a grant from the Stulman Foundation which enables JCS to increase the amount of in-home personal care subsidies as well as the number of clients served.

• **Career Services**

Career Services recently held a workshop at Hopewell Cancer Support “Seeking Employment after Cancer: Resume Writing and Other Tips for Success” for those returning to work after battling cancer. A representative from Hopewell shared “Your presentation was wonderful, so full of important information and details to consider. Your warm and responsive style helped people to feel engaged and comfortable to ask questions and share concerns.” We have been asked to offer this service again in the future.

• **Employment Support Services**

Supported Employment is now **Employment Support Services**. The name change reflects the change in focus of the state agencies that help fund our services as well as how employment models are now defined. Instead of supported employment in general, clients are able to customize their own employment plan by choosing different community-based activities that are meaningful and promote employment as the end goal. Please remember to use the new name when discussing the services we can provide to those with physical, intellectual or mental disabilities.

**COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS**

Collaborative partnerships are a hallmark of the successful programs and services that comprise the Community Connections Outcome Area. We continue to deepen the strong partnerships we enjoy with organizations including Sol Levinson & Bros., Inc., Edward A. Myerberg Center, the JCC, LifeBridge, Seasons, and Gilchrist, as well as those with synagogues and local independent middle and high schools. We are excited, too, about some new and expanded partnerships that are helping us address important issues and we wanted to share a few with you.

• **Hopewell Cancer Support and our Mitchell David Center for Hope & Healing** are co-sponsoring “Heartstrings: The Ties to Those We Love” on January 22 for children (ages 8+) and teens who lost a loved one to cancer.

• **Jemicy, Odyssey, and Roland Park Country Schools** are among new sites utilizing the expertise of our Prevention Education Health Educators in providing programs that enhance the well-being and healthy decision making skills of their students.

• **MedStar Health, Catholic Charities, Maryland Faith Health Network, Baltimore Jewish Council, and JCS** are working together on a large community-wide forum to address behavioral health issues this May in conjunction with Mental Health Awareness Month. We are using this unique partnership to plan an innovative approach that will educate, raise awareness, diminish stigma, and reduce social and emotional barriers to seeking treatment. We will be excited to share the details once they are finalized.

As a reminder, both our community News & Notes e-newsletter, which you receive, and the JCS calendar on our website have information about upcoming programs that are beneficial for your clients (as well as friends and family). Please be sure to use these resources and to share the information.
HAPPY NEW YEAR 2019