



Jen (left) with her family

Jen's story: *A former client gives back*

A cool 5' in height, Jen has kept her cool in her first 54 years, when times are good and also when times are tough. "I feel like I'm kind of a fighter," she says, referencing her stature, her gender and her faith.

Originally from Philadelphia, Jen for decades made ends meet – even if only barely – through art. Video montages, fiber arts, dance, performance art, iron sculpture, even flora. "Living Room," her undergraduate school thesis, consisted of found furniture like sofas and tables that she planted with herbs and annuals and photographed at various stages of growth.

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THANKSGIVING
FOOD BOXES

&

FAMILY-
TO-FAMILY

**On JFCS'
holiday menu:
stability and hope**

Details inside on pages 4-5

Letter from our President

Dear friend,

So moved was Jen, she gave back.

Her family had fallen on tough times and turned to JFCS for help. Once back on solid footing, Jen returned to JFCS, this time as a donor.



I hope you are as touched by her story in these pages as I am.

Providing stability and hope in tough times is the guiding theme of JFCS' Community Support Services program (previously Emergency Aid). During the past year, we have helped hundreds of people from all faiths and backgrounds.

Our important work continues this holiday season, with JFCS' Thanksgiving Food Box – in its 21st year! – and Family-to-Family programs.

One client who received a box the Sunday before Thanksgiving filled with traditional meal fixings let us know how important it was. **"The Thanksgiving box was delivered yesterday by two very sweet volunteers, and I want to thank you for making this possible. It comes at a time when we will most appreciate the help."**

It is JFCS' honor to help. Also in these pages are details about our holiday giving programs, how you can volunteer for them, and how you can support them. Thank you for being part of JFCS.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Larry'.

Larry Holzman
Board President

Fast forward to 2016. A transplant from the Bay Area to Portland and now with a husband and a young child who is neurodiverse, Jen dubs this time “my family’s frog in a pot period” that included the loss of health insurance.

“We basically crossed the mountains into Oregon with three suitcases in our beat-up Prius and lived in a friend’s basement while homeschooling our daughter,” Jen said of their hardscrabble start here.

The family secured Medicaid, but took eight months to find consistent employment; money set aside for food began to dwindle.

“We started to go to food banks after the 15th of the month,” she said. “I pared back all that I could,” said Jen about any possible expense.



Jen and her family

“I received such honor and *kavod* (respect, or self-respect) from the gift cards I received when most in need. I wanted to give that back.”

- Jen

Seeking low-cost therapy to help her get through this time, Jen came to JFCS. She immediately began receiving one-on-one mental-health care, and her clinician suggested she also seek CSS support.

This lifeline helped her, her husband and their daughter slowly leave behind subsistence living and return to the middle class, from whence she came, Jen explains.

So grateful was she for JFCS’ help, she began purchasing a few grocery gift cards. Recently, she brought them to JFCS, for those in need – and desiring to make their own food selections – as she once had been.

“There’s a certain amount of humiliation in having to accept a ready-made bag of food,” Jen said. By contrast, gift cards provide respect and dignity.

On JFCS' holiday menu: stability and hope

Thanksgiving Food Boxes

In this 75th year, JFCS celebrates another milestone, too: More than 20 years running the Thanksgiving Food Box program.

More than two decades ago, JFCS established – and has made a tradition – providing Thanksgiving meal fixings that help feed at least 600 clients and their families across our four programs: Holocaust Survivor Services, Counseling, Community Support Services (formerly Emergency Aid) and Disability Support Services.

JFCS' annual **Thanksgiving Food Box program** is possible thanks to tremendous community support that includes individuals, companies and institutions. JFCS' volunteers, members of local synagogues, partner grocery stores and retailers, and the MJCC-PJA all join forces so JFCS can do for the next 75 years what it has done since 1947: Provide stability and hope.



Family-to-Family

One client calls JFCS a “beacon.” While the holidays can be a trying time for many, JFCS wants to provide some light. Family-to-Family is JFCS' way of doing this. Clients experiencing tough times receive gift cards in advance of the holidays in December, so they can meet their own needs. Gift cards most often go toward the purchase of items like household goods, clothing, and toys for children.

“Thank you so much for this gift. I wasn’t sure how I was going to pay bills and ensure my children were able to open something at Christmas. I am in tears.”

– 2021 Family-to-Family gift-card recipient

Gift cards will be distributed the week of Monday, December 5, leading up to Hanukkah that begins Sunday, December 18.

“Since my son was just a few years old we have appreciated the opportunity to support the community by volunteering at the Thanksgiving Food Box program. We love seeing all the completed food boxes at the end of our volunteer session.”

- Justin Zellinger, JFCS Board member



How you can help

☑ Volunteer to deliver food boxes

On **Sunday, November 20**, JFCS is providing Thanksgiving meals for families in need - 150 boxes, which means a holiday meal for about 600 individuals. Each box includes food items collected by community partners. Clients also receive a gift card so families can add their own favorites to their holiday meal. Volunteers pack and deliver the boxes - brimming with a turkey, potatoes, yams, cranberry sauce, pumpkin pie and more - to those in need.

This crucial program is heavy on both cheer and reliance on volunteers. If you have volunteered for this high-energy and community-oriented program, please do so again! If this is your first time, we hope you'll join us!

To sign up to deliver **Thanksgiving Food Boxes** visit:
jfcsportland.galaxydigital.com

☑ Donate to Family-to-Family

JFCS adds joy to holiday celebrations by providing gift cards to clients so they can meet their own needs, most often by purchasing household items, clothing, and toys for children. If you would like to increase others' joy, please visit
www.jfcs-portland.org/holiday-giving-2022/

To donate to both holiday programs, please visit
www.jfcs-portland.org/holiday-giving-2022/
or scan this QR code →



VOLUNTEER FOR JFCS



Volunteering is an integral part of supporting JFCS. Our volunteers reach every corner of the community, and, thus, the hearts of our clients. We are so grateful to those who give JFCS their time and energy. This is all part of JFCS' commitment to the values of *tikkun olam*, repairing the world, and *tzedakah*, selfless giving.

One of JFCS' biggest, ongoing volunteer needs is to provide transportation for clients.

To learn more about how you can help,
visit jfcsportland.galaxydigital.com



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<https://www.facebook.com/JFCSPortland>



<https://www.instagram.com/jfcs.portland/>

JFCS' ONGOING EVENTS

Community Connection

Open to all and moderated by JFCS' clinical director, this group meets online many Fridays at 10 a.m. It is a space for anyone in the community to connect with others and share what's on their mind. The schedule is available at jfcs-portland.org.

Grief Connection

This is a group for sharing experiences with grief, connecting with others and learning strategies of moving through loss. It meets online the first Friday of every month at 10 a.m. For more information, visit jfcs-portland.org/grief-connection.

Cancer Support Group

Created to support anyone with a cancer diagnosis, this group meets on Zoom the second Wednesday of every month at 11 a.m.

Disability Mental Health Spotlight

Join our Counseling and Disability Support Services programs for an ongoing series of mental health groups for members of the disabled community.

For JFCS' entire support group calendar, visit
www.jfcs-portland.org/services/counseling/calendar

Tikvah Social Group

Tikvah is DSS' social group for adults with disabilities, ages 18 and older. We welcome anyone with any kind of disability including, but not limited to, mental-health disabilities, physical disabilities, and intellectual/developmental disabilities. Contact Shayna at ssigman@jfcs-portland.org to receive Zoom links and to address any access needs.

Coming Together

A monthly virtual get together for parents of people with disabilities to share their thoughts and feelings. **The next meeting is Wednesday, December 7 at 7:00 pm on Zoom.** Email Shayna Sigman at ssigman@jfcs-portland.org for more information or to register.

75
YEARS

Stability & Hope
Then. Now. Always.



JFCS

Jewish Family & Child Service

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