

Help JFCS get its gobble on

As we look to the celebrations of Thanksgiving, Chanukah, Christmas, Kwanzaa and more, we know that for many, the celebratory spirit can be hard to come by.

Jewish Family & Child Service provides an antidote: this month, the agency continues its 21-year tradition of brightening the season for families and individuals of all ages, including greater Portland's Holocaust Survivors, experiencing tough times.

JFCS Thanksgiving Food Boxes and Family-to-Family programs give hundreds of people who are struggling hope and reasons to celebrate.

Food boxes

JFCS partners with many local synagogues and community organizations to collect nonperishable food items and \$25 gift cards for more than 150 households, which means Thanksgiving goodies for at least 600 people. Thanksgiving meal boxes include a turkey, potatoes, yams, cranberry sauce, pumpkin pie and more. Appropriate products are provided for vegetarians, those with gluten-free diets and those who keep kosher. JFCS staff and community volunteers help pack and deliver boxes. Please see below for details on how to donate and volunteer.

Family-to-Family

JFCS adds joy to holiday celebrations in December by providing gift cards to clients so they can meet their own needs, most often by purchasing household items, clothing and toys for children. Cards will be distributed the week of Dec. 5, coinciding with the runup to Chanukah (beginning Dec. 18) and this season's many festivities.

Want to help?

Visit jfcs-portland.org/holiday-giving-2022/ to make a secure donation to the holiday programs.

To volunteer on Sunday, Nov. 20, to pack food boxes at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center or to deliver the assembled food boxes to recipients, sign up at jfcsportland.galaxydigital.com/. If you have any questions, contact JFCS Volunteer Coordinator Sammy Monk at volunteer@jfcs-portland.org.

Apply for Sussman scholarship

Sussman Fund applications reopen this month for the 2023-2024 academic year.

The Sussman Fund was established in 1981 by Lilian and Gilbert Sussman to provide grants to Jewish students from the Portland metropolitan area toward their higher education. Students pursuing undergraduate studies toward a degree in an accredited college or university in the United States are encouraged to apply. Awards will be given to two to five recipients per year in the amount of \$1,000-\$1,800. Recipients will be notified in April 2023.

The application deadline is March 1, 2023. In addition to the application form, applicants must submit a resume or student employment record and two letters of recommendation. Apply at jewishportland.org/sussman. For questions, contact Rachel Nelson at rachel@jewishportland.org or 503-892-7415.



Students from the Mensch Learning Center stock a new Little Free Library.

Shaarie Torah dedicates diverse Little Free Library

On Oct. 30, students from Shaarie Torah's Mensch Learning Center helped dedicate a Little Free Library on the congregation's NW Portland campus.

Rabbi Gary Ezra Oren led the attendees in singing *Shehechyanu* (a prayer to mark special occasions) as the children "cut" the ribbon and then filled the library with books. As stewards of this library, the congregation is responsible for maintaining and stocking books that are focused primarily on diversity and inclusion. The initial supply of "Read in Color" books includes titles by authors Trevor Noah, Ibram X. Kendi, Hena Khan and Cherie Dimaline.

The congregation was approached by Positive Charge! PDX over the summer to consider becoming stewards of the library. The library is part of the Compassion Through Literature project conceived by PC! PDX in response to growing concerns over acts of intolerance being witnessed in schools, communities and on social media. PC! PDX, a nonpolitical, nonreligious, all-inclusive, humanitarian-focused organization, began this project with a simple idea: Could we encourage people to take a walk in someone else's shoes by sharing and reading books about You, Me and Us through diverse little lending libraries? Could such reading open the pages of their eyes

and hearts by increasing understanding, tolerance and compassion for each other while decreasing assumptions, stereotypes, fear and hate in

our world? More and more Diverse LFLs are being launched throughout the metro area, currently totaling 11. The goal is to locate them in LFL "deserts," places where there were known issues of racial, antisemitic or LGBTQIA+ hate incidents, and places where many people gather. All are located where stewards

showed a strong commitment to providing a vehicle of diverse voices to the communities around them. Find libraries at positivechargepdx.org/compassion.

Thanks to the support of Sallie Cohen and other members of PC! PDX, the new library at Shaarie Torah is open for business and welcomes donations of new or gently used books.

Mensch Learning Center students brought books and enthusiasm to the dedication, showing a deep understanding for the importance of expanding connections with other people through reading.

For information about the Mensch Learning Center (K-5th grade) or Mensch Academy (6th-7th grade) at Shaarie Torah, visit shaarietorah.org/youthed/.

