

JFCS celebrates 'Generations' for 75th Anniversary

BY DEBORAH MOON

On May 18, Celebrating Generations drew 235 people to celebrate 75-year-old Jewish Family & Child Service and to support its four core programs: Holocaust Survivor Services, Counseling, Community Support Services and Disability Support Services.

The festive evening held at The Castaway began with a champagne toast from JFCS Board President Larry Holzman: "JFCS is here for the community because you are here for us. L'Chaim (to life)!"

Carolyn Weinstein, who co-chaired the event with Elana Stampfer Emlen, introduced a video commemorating the agency's evolution over its 75 years of providing stability and hope for the community.

"JFCS goes with the flow," said Weinstein. "Needs change, people change. They (JFCS) are very good at adapting to what the community needs."

The video (vimeo.com/824908963) gave an overview of those changes over three-quarters of a century starting as the Jewish Shelter House for orphans. Other needs



China Forbes of Pink Martini, left, sings a duet with Congregation Beth Israel Senior Cantor Ida Rae Cahana at Jewish Family & Child Service's "Celebrating Generations" Thursday, May 18, at The Castaway in Portland. The event celebrated the 75th anniversary of JFCS, which began as the Jewish Shelter House. Photo by Rockne Roll

the agency stepped up to meet included adoptions, Russian resettlement and the creation of what has become the independent Community Warehouse.

Now the agency focuses on the four core programs listed above.

"None of the accomplishments you learned about from the video would be possible without the staff," said Emlen.

Holzman, who is ending four years as JFCS chair, likewise praised the staff. "They have been able to implement my passions," he said, urging the community to continue its historic support of JFCS so the staff can continue to "help our most vulnerable."

Early projections after the event showed that JFCS far exceeded its fundraising goals at the annual event.

Holzman said, "When you find your passion and have the ability to effect change, you have no idea how gratifying it is."

By passionately sharing the story of the ways JFCS saves and changes lives, Holzman has inspired many donations, including two major, unsolicited ones from his family. His mother, Renee Holzman, issued a \$500,000 matching grant to support the agency's work

with Holocaust survivors; so far, more than \$330,000 has come in for the match, which continues until June 30. His brother, Jay Holzman, donated \$100,000 to enable the agency to hire a mental health counselor to work with children and families.

The counselor, Laura Cohen, LCSW, ACSW, has brought SPACE to family counseling. Cohen explained that SPACE is a treatment model that focuses on the parents of kids managing life with anxiety, something that has experienced a dramatic increase since the pandemic began.

The evening concluded with a soulful musical performance by China Forbes, who has fronted Pink Martini since 1995. Forbes described the set she performed to a standing ovation as being "inspired by the generations." She said it was an honor to be at the event and learn of all the good JFCS has done through the years.

To help that work continue, go to jfcsportland.org/giving/.



JFCS Board President Larry Holzman raises a glass to celebrate the agency's 75th anniversary at The Castaway Thursday night. Holzman will be stepping down after four years leading the JFCS board; a half-million dollar matching challenge grant from his mother, Renee Holzman, to support the agency's work with Holocaust survivors runs through June 30.