



A Volunteer Talks Turkey

“My own love language is providing food and nurturing people with meals,” **JFCS volunteer Elana Cohn-Rozansky** said. She has played an outsized role in JFCS’ annual Thanksgiving Food Box program for more than a decade and jumped aboard to help again this year.

“JFCS’ food box program speaks to me on a personal level,” Elana said. **“Food insecurity is one of the significant problems out there, in our community and in the world,** that I believe we can successfully solve.”

And JFCS’ nearly 200 food boxes filled with Thanksgiving staples and treats, plus a gift card, is one significant step toward a local solution.

Elana wears many hats. A grandmother of two, she teaches 8th-grade Jewish Studies at Portland Jewish Academy, and she is the school’s service learning coordinator. In that capacity, she partners with many organizations – Jewish and non-Jewish – throughout greater Portland, JFCS included.

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On JFCS’ holiday menu: stability and hope

Details inside on pages 4-5

“*Thank you and the JFCS for the wonderful gifts of turkey and additional foods, and the gift card.*

These helped to make this Thanksgiving season one of the happiest ever!

I am so very grateful.”

- Thanksgiving food box recipient



FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

Dear Friends,

Many of us have our minds and hearts on Israel and on those here in Portland with connections to the country and its people who include personal friends and family members. It can be hard right now to anticipate the uniquely American holiday of Thanksgiving.

JFCS continues to plan for its annual **Thanksgiving Food Box program, now in its 23rd year**. It ensures that **hundreds of people in greater Portland** receive a festive and hearty holiday meal.

We at JFCS are so grateful to our **many community partners** and **steadfast volunteers**, making sure **this year's expanded program** meets the need.

This newsletter also highlights:

- JFCS' additional mental-health services opportunities
- Family-to-Family, a gift-card program for the December holidays
- More volunteer opportunities for you and family members of all ages

Thank you, JFCS community, for counting on us to satisfy your holiday hunger and meet the needs of your heart.

Warmly,



Bill Treuhaft
Board President



Susan Greenberg
Executive Director

THANK YOU TO OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

JFCS is so grateful to our community partners that are joining forces to ensure a lovely Thanksgiving feast for as many people as possible:

Cedar Sinai Park
Congregation Beit Haverim
Congregation Beth Israel
Congregation Neveh Shalom
Congregation Shaarie Torah

Congregation Shir Tikvah
Eastside Jewish Commons
Mittleman Jewish Community Center
Portland Jewish Academy

SAFEWAY 

 **Fred Meyer**

NEW SEASONS
MARKET

TRADER JOE'S



“The Thanksgiving Food Box program is just one of many support programs JFCS offers, and I want to help make a dent in the workload of this huge endeavor,” she said, adding, “I like to think I have a logistics super-power: I am naturally geared toward logistically complex stuff and simplifying it.”

Elana spearheads organizing food box items from JFCS’ 14 partners, the number of which has increased over the years, and ensures communities provide their assigned non-perishable – canned sweet potatoes, cranberries, stuffing, gravy mix and chicken broth – well prior to the Thanksgiving Food Box program’s bustling packing and delivery day. This year, it occurs on Sunday, November 19, at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center. **For more about how you can get involved, please turn to p. 5.**

In addition to working with partners like synagogues and other Jewish communal organizations, Elana also involves her middle school students to perform key tasks as the donations pile up at PJA before meal fixings are carted next door to the MJCC on packing day.

Elana has helped streamline the Thanksgiving Food Box program as it’s grown, thanks to “a solid swell of support” from both Jewish groups and those outside the community, such as grocery stores and retailers, she said. Recently, JFCS began including a \$25 gift certificate in every box, so recipients can choose family favorites to add to their holiday meal.

“Elana is the engine of the Thanksgiving Food Box train,” said Susan Greenberg, JFCS executive director. “Her role is significant, helping grow the program, thus the number of people fed.”

Elana deflects the compliment: “The key part is providing food to those who otherwise wouldn’t have access to a holiday meal at Thanksgiving.”



On JFCS' holiday menu: stability and hope, now and always

Thanksgiving Food Boxes

More than two decades ago, JFCS established – and has made into a tradition – providing **Thanksgiving meal fixings that this year will help feed nearly 1,000 clients and their families.**

In its 23rd year, JFCS' Thanksgiving Food Box program is more robust than ever before. We've collected donated food and gift cards, packed up and delivered 150 boxes filled with a hearty, festive Thanksgiving meal. This year, the box count will approach 200 and the food will reach a larger swath of people in greater Portland.

"Food is always a need," said the representative of a new partner organization.

JFCS' annual Thanksgiving Food Box program is possible thanks to tremendous community support that includes JFCS' volunteers, members of local synagogues, partner grocery stores and retailers, and the MJCC-PJA. See the list of partner organizations on p. 2.



Family-to-Family

One client calls JFCS a "beacon." While the holidays can be a trying time for many, JFCS wants to provide the light of stability and hope. Family-to-Family is JFCS' way of doing this.

Clients experiencing tough times receive gift cards in the mail, 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 for making our holiday plentiful and wonderful. We so appreciate your gifts," said a Family-to-Family gift-card recipient.

This year, gift cards will be distributed the week of November 20, leading up to Hanukkah that begins at sundown on Thursday, December 7.



“The box is a blessing for us every year.”

- Thanksgiving food box recipient



HOW YOU CAN HELP

✓ Volunteer to pack and deliver food boxes

On **Sunday, November 19**, JFCS is providing Thanksgiving meals for families in need. Each box includes food items collected by community partners. Volunteers pack and deliver the boxes brimming with a turkey, potatoes, yams, cranberry sauce, chicken broth, pumpkin pie and more.

Most needed at this time: Volunteer drivers to bring these boxes to clients' doorsteps.

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 pack or **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-2023/

To donate to both holiday programs, please visit www.jfcs-portland.org/holiday-giving-2023/ or scan this QR code →



JFCS Support Groups

Join our ongoing, drop-in groups

Supporting our community in a time of war

So many are struggling as the war in Israel continues and antisemitism rises abroad and closer to home. We offer opportunities to support your mental health throughout the crisis. To learn about them, visit www.jfcs-portland.org/community-support/

Community Connection

Join JFCS for weekly conversations on Zoom. It is a space for anyone in the community to connect with others and share what's on their mind. This group meets many Fridays at 10am. No registration required. For dates and Zoom link, visit: www.jfcs-portland.org/services/counseling/calendar

Parent Support Group: Navigating Your Children's Mental Health Challenges

Join us the first Monday of each month to connect with other parents experiencing similar challenges and to learn more about relevant topics relating to mental health in children and youth.

Next meeting: Monday, November 6 at 7pm. For more information visit www.jfcs-portland.org/services/counseling/parent-support-group/

Cancer Support Group

Community is important. Cancer is lonely. JFCS has combined these two truths to create this support group open to anyone with a cancer diagnosis. No registration required. This group meets the 2nd Wednesday of every month from 6pm-7pm.

Next meeting: Wednesday, November 8 at 6pm. For more information and the Zoom link, visit www.jfcs-portland.org/cancer-support

Grief Connection

Join us for our monthly drop-in group for grief support and processing. No registration required. This group meets the first Friday of every month from 10am-11am on Zoom.

Next meeting: Friday, December 1 at 10am. For more information and the Zoom link, visit www.jfcs-portland.org/grief-connection

**For the full calendar of upcoming group sessions, visit:
www.jfcs-portland.org/services/counseling/calendar**



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SCHMOOZAPALOOZA

A PROM FOR SENIORS 60 AND BETTER



JFCS debuted *Schmoozapalooza*, its senior prom for older adults. About 70 people came to the MJCC dressed in style to boogie to Rat Pack, Israeli, Russian and party music. The afternoon fest also featured a photo booth, corsages, goodie bags and a lovely lunch. Said Holocaust Survivor and dapperly dressed Leonid Koshevoy:

“Thank you for the wonderful time. I am sure that everybody will remember this event for a long time. It is especially very important for those of us who do not have kids and relatives. We feel that we are still members of our community.”

This event was made possible thanks to a generous grant provided by:

CENTER ON HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR CARE
JEWISH FEDERATIONS INSTITUTE ON AGING AND TRAUMA



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