In 2015, Dolly and her husband Mort were considering their next chapter. Fifteen years her senior, Mort had recently retired and was volunteering in various local organizations, while Dolly continued working full-time at St. Francis Hospital. Both of them were healthy, going about their business as usual, until one day in early 2016, Mort returned home from a volunteer activity forgetful and confused. Dolly’s concern brought them to doctors’ appointments, tests, uncertainty, and more tests, ultimately leading to a diagnosis of dementia.

Dolly remembered learning about the JFS Village when she had done research the previous year and immediately called to sign herself and Mort up for membership. With her family working full-time, hours away, Dolly needed help and the JFS Village was the perfect solution. Dolly found kind, compassionate, and responsive staff and volunteers who drove Mort to appointments and helped her navigate the caregiver system. Eventually Mort’s condition worsened and hospice was called in September 2018. By that November, Mort passed away and Dolly was heartbroken. Sitting in JFS’ garden, where she and Mort used to spend time, Dolly got emotional remembering the support and condolence calls she got from JFS. “They were like sisters and brothers to me...who else would let you just cry on the phone for hours?”

Dolly is still an active member of the JFS Village and has recently joined the Caring Group, JFS’ monthly support group for widows. She hopes more people become aware of JFS services and reminds us all that “you don’t have to be Jewish to feel like family at JFS.”

Dolly is proud to volunteer with JFS’ Memory Café workshops! Join us Wednesday, July 17th at 1:30 at Congregation Beth Emeth to “explore” Gettysburg with volunteer Mary H.

Contact Karen or Joyce for more details.
Volunteer Spotlight

His story starts in Romania, then takes us to Israel, then to Columbia, before finally settling in New York when he was a teenager. Because of his own journey, Paul always had empathy for immigrant and refugee experiences. When a representative from Jewish Family Services came to his workplace in the early 1990’s to speak about Russian Jews being resettled in Delaware, Paul immediately got involved. Eventually, his family and work travels replaced his availability to volunteer; but when Paul retired four years ago, he remembered JFS and called to get involved again.

At first, Paul volunteered mostly with the JFS Village, driving older clients to the market and doctor appointments. Then, in early 2017, JFS’ Refugee Integration Support Effort (RISE) began and Paul found his volunteer passion project. He shared how much he enjoys this experience, helping people with their basic needs and navigating their new environment; Paul humbly admitted to literally following a bus to make sure the client got off at the correct stop and was on time for work. The RISE team and whole of JFS has been in awe of his dedication to volunteering; Paul is more than a volunteer for our refugee families and Village members – he is a guide, a mentor, a confidant, and a friend.

Paul’s volunteer service at JFS has also allowed him to reconnect with his love for art. His larger-than-life portraits have brought his two passions together: art and the human intersection. JFS is proud to have some of his one-of-a-kind portraits in our Wilmington office, bringing to life the beauty and diversity of those we serve.

Updates & Events

JCC Field Trip: The Barnes Foundation
Wednesday, July 17 from 10:30am-4:00pm
Enjoy a docent tour of the art museum and lunch on your own at the Reflections Café. Call the JCC to register: 302-478-5660

Ask JFS!
Join JFS on July 12th at 11am at the JCC Senior Center. “Conversations You Should Have With Your Family”

NO RIDES will be available on July 4th
Thanks for your understanding and enjoy the holiday!

JFS Mission & Vision
To strengthen individuals, families, and the community by providing counseling and support services, based on Jewish values.

Our vision is to use our evolving position as a key social service in Delaware to strengthen the support available to our most underserved populations.