**JFS CEO Report for 9/26/2024**

For the month of August into September

**Appreciation!**

Recognition for the continued advice and input from Ann on our Program Deep Dives. Thanks to Alyssa and Peter for identifying some great candidates to serve on the Audit Committee – it is specialized expertise and difficult to find. Shout out to the RISE team for a successful audit!

**Our Story**

This is a story from something I recently experienced:

*I attended a professional meeting recently and was seated next to a woman from another nonprofit. I noticed she smiled when she saw where I worked. We had a pleasant conversation about her agency and ours and settled in for the presentation. As we rose to leave the meeting, she leaned in and shared with me. She just wanted me to know that when she was a child, her parents moved to the suburb of a large city, without realizing they were the only Jewish family in the neighborhood. She made friends with a girl at school, who invited her home with her one day. When the friend’s mother learned of her last name, and realized she was Jewish, she said “You’re dirty” and shut the door on her. She didn’t understand- she had taken a bath. The bus had left, she didn’t know where she was or how to get home. She wandered around until she found a policeman who helped guide her home. Her parents contacted Jewish Family Services in the area. She and her family received services that were “life changing.” She said she didn’t know where she or her family would be without the support and counseling they received.*

*It moved me so deeply – to think of this vitriolic display of anti-semitism and abuse. It also is yet another reminder of the profound impact we can have on people’s lives.*

**Since last we left – the Headlines**

Headlines

* Our wait list for counseling is down to zero- we are now actively advertising to bring in new clients.
* **Strategic Planning** – some highlights
  + **Program Deep Dive**- we have completed the review of all programs. A full report on these analyses (creating/ensuring a financially sustainable model) will be presented at a future board meeting.
  + **Kent/Sussex** –
    - We are currently in the process of meeting with government officials, business leaders, other nonprofits, religious and community leaders, and our Advisory Counsel members (individually). Each meeting leads to more contacts and information.
    - We are learning the “Sussex way” and taking our time to get to know people, and for them to know us. We have begun the hiring process for additional therapists.
    - Next step- based on program deep dive and results of our information gathering, choose the general location and size of new office space. Goal to open: June 2025
  + **Development** – Idlewild, our consultant that specialized in helping nonprofits build out the Salesforce platform, is winding down on their initial project with us to clean up the database. Next steps will be to add in some of the features that will be advantageous for us, and consider integration issues with our volunteer database and mailing software.
  + **Marketing** – Committee has met and are working towards creating and prioritizing a Marketing & Communications Plan.
  + **People Power** 
    - **Staff:** We are up to 87 people, with recent hires in RISE, Counseling, and support services. Staff picnic on 9/20 and Staff wellness retreat is scheduled for 10/17. Training topics for Leadership Team have been identified for every other month.
    - **Volunteers:** A new volunteer management system has been put in place, and we are in the final stages of rolling it out. It will allow for better reports, broader information, and with (with some effort) interface with Salesforce.
    - **Board**: Elevator speech complete.
* **Development** – (in addition to Strategic Goals above)
  + Launching the Fall Friends Campaign!
  + New Development Manager Stacey Wintjen has been busily working with our consultants cleaning up the database and generating lists for the campaign, along with reports. Stacey’s mom served as JFS Board President in 2012.
* **Program** –
  + RISE (Refugee Integration and Support Effort) has completed its goal of resettlement and placement of 80 families early! It continues to support families through our Émigré and special population funding, to work with those families who have already been here past the 90 day resettlement timeline.
  + **NCC Back to School event**: Successful. Assisted over 80 families in need. Donors supported the event by donating $$ and school suppliers. We had over 100 people who showed up for the event. Kids were able to revive school supplies e.g. back pack, pencils, notebooks, wipes, sanitizers etc.
  + **Kent County PSSF** Staff partnered with boys and girls club to support 25 identified families in need.
  + **Fellowship**
    - First cohort close out after 2 years.
    - Total 6 licensed: Susan, Marsha, Katie, Mary, Zach, Neyssa. All still connected to JFS and partners. Zach is at Child Inc.
    - Ana, Thalia, Liz, Jenevive, Samyia are scheduled to take the exam in the next 3 months.
    - Moon and Jordan are moving on. Not licensed yet.
* **Operations** –
  + The Newark office is OPEN! We plan on having an Open House/Celebration in late October or early November- it is in the planning stages. This office will be used for both RISE Case Managers and therapists. It is located on Chapman Road near University Plaza. More details to come.
  + The new phone system has been installed, alleviating the need for many of the extra cell phones. However, there is an issue with our ability to text we are working on.
  + We have a new Volunteer Management software program. This will be easier to use, has more functionality, and allows us to generate needed reports to funding sources. Supervision of Vlad, our Community Outreach Manager, has been moved under Wendell Covell, who is focused on Support Services (where many volunteers are needed) and southern expansion. Vlad will also be working closely with the Development office, the RISE team, and developing “one off” volunteer opportunities.
  + The Power BI project is working well – we’re still in the process of looking at how to import data from multiple sources in order to more easily generate reports.

**Upcoming Board Meeting**

Special items include a focus on philanthropy, understanding where JFS is compared to benchmarks, federal, state, corporate, foundation and individual trends in giving and our strategic goals for raising funds.

**Final Notes:**

This year started with a high of the 125th, and so far all has gone according to plan. Our focus remains on ensuring that 2025 will be a successful and financially solid year, especially given that the Community Reinvestment Fund (the $3.5m “earmark” funding for Fellowship) is ending now, and much of the other COVID relief funding is drying up (American Rescue Plan Act or ARPA). It will be imperative that we scale back where we need to, expand in areas that help create financial sustainability, and continue to serve more people with quality services. The November election with have a huge impact on funding priorities.