

Caring for Individuals & Families in Need: Donor Impact Report November 2022

We are deeply grateful for your support of Federation's Individuals & Families in Need Fund and the trust that you have placed in us with your donation. Your gift continues to ensure that thousands of community members across Greater Washington can live with dignity and independence. Thank you for your partnership as we care for those who depend on us and pursue a vibrant Jewish future for our community. We could not do this work without you.

We are pleased to share the update below on the impact of your gift. Thank you for allowing us to serve as your partners in philanthropy.

Gil Preuss
CEO
The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington

2020 – Today: Meeting Evolving Communal Needs

While the financial vulnerabilities facing many community members arose well before the COVID-19 pandemic and its ensuing economic crisis, it was clear that, for many, COVID-19 significantly exacerbated challenging situations. **Your support empowered Federation to address these needs swiftly and comprehensively** using a variety of tactics to understand the changing circumstances, including convening community leaders and ongoing data collection.

In 2017, the Jewish Community Demographic Study, funded by the Morningstar Foundation, revealed that nearly 5,000 households in the Greater Washington Jewish community reported being unable to afford an unexpected \$400 expense, and that three percent – about 4,000 local Jewish households – received needs-based government assistance. Many in this group received assistance from Federation's human service partners with vital support from Federation and our donors, and from local, state, and Federal entities. But in 2020, the pandemic's impact left nearly 30% more Jewish DC, MD, and Northern VA households unable to afford an emergency \$400 expense.

Locally, just as we saw nationally, the economic impact of COVID-19 was significantly greater on certain segments of the population. In the summer of 2020, Federation partnered with Brandeis University researchers to conduct a targeted local community study on these impacts. This survey found that:

- 41% of those just able/not able to make ends meet before COVID-19 reported that, since the crisis began, their jobs were affected negatively with impacts including reduced hours, pay cuts, furloughs, or layoffs.
- 45% of those living in an unstable financial situation prior to the pandemic experienced further deteriorating financial situations and struggled to make ends meet.
- Respondents between ages 18-34 were 50% more likely to report being lonely often or all the time.
- Amongst Jews under 40, an estimated 21,600 individuals raising young children found it especially hard to cope during the pandemic, while an estimated 11,000+ non-parents under 40 reported being lonely often or all the time.

At the same time, across Greater Washington, Feeding America reported that 199,850 children faced food insecurity in 2020, up by 92% from 2018.

With your generous support and leveraging our 95 years of experience of seeing Jewish Greater Washington through times of calm and crisis, Federation worked swiftly to raise essential funds and to develop and implement a multi-faceted approach to help those in need. During the first year of our

COVID-19 response effort, Federation developed new programs and partnerships to provide direct assistance to individuals and families facing hardships, including through financial support distributed by rabbis and other partners throughout the region.

It is an understatement that your support saw our community members through one of the most difficult moments in their lives.

Today, that generous support, coupled with Federation's data-informed approach and deep communal relationships, ensures we can continue to evolve our strategy in line with our community's changing needs.

Your Impact: By the Dollars

Between 2020 and 2022, Federation invested an incremental **\$3,498,772** to meet the needs of individuals and families. This support includes but is not limited to:

- **\$729,689** in cash assistance grants for 1,263 individuals across 92 Greater Washington zip codes, to make up for lost wages, cover rent and mortgage payments, pay for groceries and basic supplies, improve access to mental health services, and assist with job and loan applications. Of dollars granted to individuals during the height of the pandemic, 40% was used for rent or mortgage payments and 33% for food assistance.
- **\$1.2M+** in cumulative funds to support the growth of 703-J-CARING: the Jewish Community Support Line, launched in partnership with JSSA. This investment includes the new Care Navigator Program, additional funds allocated to addressing food insecurity, and work to build broader communal awareness of available resources. To date, 1,249 callers have received Support Line assistance. The Support Line is also seeing a significant increase in its weekly usage, fielding 50% more calls as of October 2022 than two years ago.
- **\$1.4M+** in scholarships and grants provided to 2,000 families across Greater Washington to empower their children to attend summer camp. Nearly 60% of campers who received these scholarships would not have otherwise attended. 88% of recipients who planned to return to camp the following year anticipated needing aid again.

Of course, while vital, crisis response is not the same as long term strategy. Moreover, the ongoing challenges facing individuals and families in need may be distinct from those during a crisis – and longer lasting for some more than others.

Where We Go From Here

In 2021, Federation convened professionals and lay leaders from across local organizations to evaluate the nature and challenges of evolving poverty and economic insecurity within the Jewish community, and to develop an integrated approach to meeting these broad challenges. Research has shown that those facing poverty or economic insecurity within the Jewish community tend to have multiple needs. As we considered our challenges and potential responses, we knew we needed to implement a variety of approaches. This continuing work includes:

- 1) **Supporting and expanding resources and access to them:** While there are significant resources available to our Jewish community, including the 703-J-CARING Support Line, too few people are aware of them. We are investing in both the expansion of resources and furthering awareness to increase their utilization.
 - a. Through our funding of **Care Navigators** – an enhancement of the Support Line – JSSA professionals provide in-depth case management support for individuals and families who



require substantive assistance and navigation of resources. The system creates a blueprint for integrated case management across the community to address complex situations in the short-term, and in the long-term, to help us learn how to solve for the root causes of economic insecurity.

- b. We must also **address local food insecurity**. Federation is working with several partners to both provide immediate assistance to those suffering from hunger who may not seek other types of assistance, and simultaneously create an entry point for those seeking food assistance to also access broader services.
- 2) **Collecting and utilizing data:** We are collectively working to increase our existing data collection and gather new information to get a clearer sense of those in need, including family structure, geographic location, and underlying factors leading to economic vulnerability, among others. This data will be essential to informing and strengthening our ongoing and new efforts.

Thanks to your generous support and other investments in our Individuals & Families in Need Fund, including matching funds from the Jewish Federations of North America, **Federation has raised \$6.83 million for this work as well as other emergency response efforts to COVID-19 since 2020 and will continue to advance these mechanisms in 2022 and beyond.**

We are committed to the continued evolution of our strategy and pursuit of our goal: to ensure that all Jewish community members facing economic vulnerability can receive support from within the Jewish community. We look forward to future discussions and to sharing periodic updates about this work with you.

In their own words: how you've cared for our neighbors in need

"This wonderful project [703-J-CARING – the Jewish Community Support Line] underscores what it means to be a community that cares for one another. The service system can be complicated, fragmented, and intimidating. When people ask for help, it should be as easy as possible to receive it. 703-J-CARING creates a central resource to connect people to the services that will address their needs."
— Todd Schenk, CEO, JSSA

"Having this financial aid helped me keep my housing for at least a couple more months as I convalesced from medical issues. I am so grateful to my community for helping me." — Anonymous

"I am so grateful for the financial aid and the knowledge that there is an organization supporting us as we raise Jewish children. We will remember Federation." — Jessica K., Scholarship Recipient Parent

"We really appreciate the support the Federation gave us this year. Being unemployed since November put camp in question, but I am so glad that the financial assistance came through to make it happen for our daughter." — Camp Scholarship Recipient

Thank you

Your support and leadership continue to directly help people in our community. From direct cash assistance to creating wider access to, and knowledge of, critical resources, and many other wonderful programs you made possible, you are making an incredible difference in the lives of others when they need it most. Thank you for being an incredible partner.