



FAMILY MATTERS

SUMMER 2011

A Fresh Start

Jana Ramos moved from New York to Florida a year and a half ago because she wanted a better life for her children. Jana hoped that the sunny climate in Florida would be a positive change for her three daughters, aged 2, 8 and 11. The move was prompted by an uncomfortable living arrangement and a deteriorating marriage. Jana was ready to make a fresh start.

After arriving in Orlando, she found work at the daycare center at a local church. The job saved her money in childcare costs because she was able to bring her children to work, but it was still not enough to cover expenses. Child support payments only amounted to \$25 per month and Jana was barely surviving.

A neighbor in her apartment complex noticed that Jana was behind in the rent and struggling with her bills. She knew that JFS was part of the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) and suggested Jana contact JFS for assistance.

HPRP is a government program created in 2009 to help prevent individuals and families from becoming homeless or help those who are experiencing homelessness

to be quickly re-housed and stabilized. With the onslaught of foreclosures at record highs, the threat of homelessness was, and still is, very real to countless individuals.

In March of 2011, Jana enrolled in the 6-month Family Stabilization Program at JFS. She participates in weekly meetings with her social worker, Dianne Daza, and attends workshops to help her with budgeting, vocational training and life-coping skills. "Even though it's sometimes hard to find a babysitter, I look forward to my Wednesdays at JFS," states Jana. "I am learning so much about how to make good decisions in life."

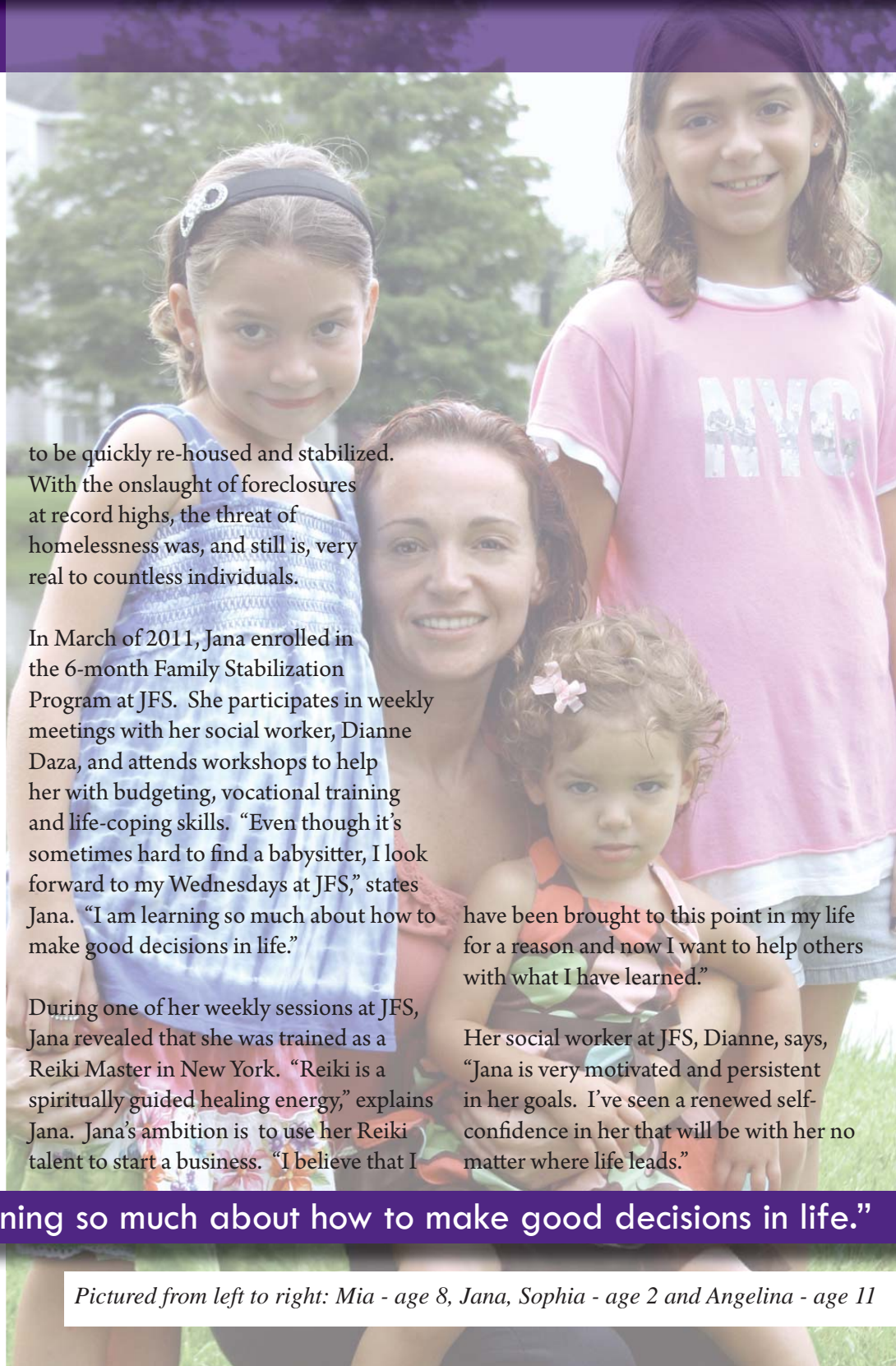
During one of her weekly sessions at JFS, Jana revealed that she was trained as a Reiki Master in New York. "Reiki is a spiritually guided healing energy," explains Jana. Jana's ambition is to use her Reiki talent to start a business. "I believe that I

have been brought to this point in my life for a reason and now I want to help others with what I have learned."

Her social worker at JFS, Dianne, says, "Jana is very motivated and persistent in her goals. I've seen a renewed self-confidence in her that will be with her no matter where life leads."

"I am learning so much about how to make good decisions in life."

Pictured from left to right: Mia - age 8, Jana, Sophia - age 2 and Angelina - age 11



HARRIETT'S CANCAN



This past spring, JFS hosted Harriett's CANCAN, honoring Harriett Lake and her "can-do" attitude. Nearly 170 guests were in attendance at Maison & Jardin, enjoying the evening and talking with Harriett. A special VIP champagne reception was held for sponsors, who were entertained and delighted with a CanCan dance performed by two Orlando Ballet students.

To honor Harriett's contributions to JFS and the community at large, Board member Craig Pearlman presented her with the JFS Chesed Award. Chesed is the Hebrew word for "kindness" and is a central Jewish value.

The crystal award in the shape of a hand holds a globe and makes reference to *tikkun olam*, repairing the world.

A self-proclaimed philanthropy junkie, Harriett has made JFS one of her core charities. "I'm proud to be one of their largest supporters," she claims.

Overall, the event raised more than \$110,000, which benefited JFS programs and services, including stocking the pantries to feed hungry families in the Central Florida area.

EVENTS



VOLUNTEER BRUNCH

JFS recognized the selfless acts of its volunteers by hosting a brunch at Brio Tuscan Grill in the Winter Park Village. Volunteers at JFS donated over 8,000 hours of their time last year. Various volunteer activities include helping stock food in the pantry, delivering meals to homebound elderly and working on campaign committees.

Volunteers are vital to the operation of JFS. If you wish to volunteer your time, please call 407-644-7593, x 227.



WOMEN'S FORUM

This interfaith outreach program uses a group format to educate and support women. Monthly lunchtime workshops help women prepare for opportunity and change, develop skills, build confidence and experience the warmth and companionship of other women. Special evening forums are held periodically at local venues.

Register for the next Women's Forums:
8/24 "Crafty Couponing Tips" 12pm
9/21 "Ask a Nurse" 12pm

**Register online at jfsorlando.org
or call 407-644-7593, x 227**



SHARSHERET FOCUS GROUP

In collaboration with Sharsheret, JFS recently conducted a focus group to understand the un-met needs of Jewish women with a personal history or family connection to breast and ovarian cancer. Jennifer Miller, who is the National Director of Programs & Education at Sharsheret, led the focus group. Participants shared their thoughts on religious, spiritual, social and medical needs lacking in the community. Look for new initiatives in response to this issue coming to our area in the future.

EVENTS

FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION: THE LEGACY OF ONE

Each one of us has the ability to change the world in small ways. Even the smallest, most simple act of kindness can make a difference in someone's life.

Come celebrate with JFS at the Orlando Marriott/Lake Mary Hotel on October 23, 2011, at the annual Evening of Valor. This year's theme, From Generation to Generation: The Legacy of One, honors the concept of how one person can do a good deed and start a ripple. JFS will pay tribute to two families with the George Wolly Community Leadership Award, recognizing parents who, through their actions and commitment to community, are positive role models, teaching those values to their children, who in turn conduct acts of kindness.

This year is even more special as it marks the 10th anniversary of the leadership award in memory of George Wolly, a man who dedicated himself to the mission of the agency. The award strives to recognize individuals who emulate George's vision of community, commitment and volunteerism in social service-related functions. This year's honorees are Linda and Bruce Chapin and family and Sunny and Lester Mandell and family.

Sponsorship opportunities are available. Perhaps host a table, send a message of congratulations or for more information of how you can be involved, contact Es Cohen at 407-644-7593, x241.

DINING AROUND TOWN IS BACK!

One lucky winner will receive a \$100 gift card from each of these 13 area restaurants!



Bahama Breeze
Big Fin Seafood Kitchen
Bonefish
Brio Tuscan Grille
Cheesecake Factory
Emeril's
Hue Restaurant
Oceanaire Seafood Room
P F Chang's
Roy's
Ruth's Chris Steak House
Season's 52
T-Rex

Tickets: \$25 each or 5 for \$100
Buy online @ jfsorlando.org
or call 407-644-7593, ext. 241

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS

JFS is fortunate to have individuals and organizations in the community that help us fulfill our mission. While we can't recognize everyone in this issue, we would like to give a special shout out to a few organizations that have embraced JFS and provide support on an ongoing basis.

Each month Brio Tuscan Grill provides complimentary catering for the JFS lunchtime Women's Forum. Trays of delicious hot pasta and fresh tossed salads are delivered from the Winter Park Village Brio.

Bagel King donates yummy wraps, sandwiches and salads for various JFS events and meetings throughout the year.

At a recent Open House for JFS' Southwest Orlando office, Peach Valley Cafe offered complimentary goodies for our guests and has committed to host future JFS events.

JFS looks forward to future collaborations with these outstanding organizations.

UPCOMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER

28 Rosh Hashanah Meal Delivery

OCTOBER

23 Evening of Valor

24 Get Caught Caring Toy Drive Campaign Begins

NOVEMBER

23 Thanksgiving Meal Delivery

DECEMBER

8 Night Golf

11 Kinder to Kinder

20 Christmas/Hanukah Meal Delivery

Planning a party or special event? Consider renting Tzedakah Centerpieces from JFS. The centerpieces are "tastefully" decorated with food items and are a novel conversation piece. Each rental helps stock the JFS food pantry, which feeds hungry families in Central Florida. Call 407-644-7593, x 250 for rental pricing and to reserve.

PROGRAMS



ROTH FAMILY KIDSKONNECT TESTIMONIALS

"I love this group. It has really helped me a lot. Now I sleep better, cry less and talk things out with my parents." ~6th grade student, Odyssey Middle, February 2011

"I am so thankful that this program has improved my daughter's behavior problems, schoolwork and interaction with teachers. She has shown me that she can achieve and be successful." ~Parent of 3rd grade student, Nap Ford School, February 2011

"Thank you for working with Mason. I could definitely see that your program made an impact." ~4th grade teacher, Bear Lake Elementary, March 2011

KidsKonnnect is the only program in Central Florida that addresses the needs of children experiencing family disruption. In-school support groups empower children to cope with the realities, stresses and emotions of their families' changes in a safe and supportive setting.

COUNSELING NOW WORKING WITH VETERANS

According to the Brookings Institution's Iraq Index, 30% of the US troops deployed develop serious mental health problems within three months of returning home from deployment. "Combat stress" results from the intense mental and emotional work required when facing danger on a consistent basis. "Soldiers in active duty are on high alert 24 hours a day for long stretches, with little sleep and unable to attend to personal hygiene," states Susan Weissmann, Clinical Director at JFS. "It's not unusual for the body and mind to get overwhelmed and break down, resulting in various disorders."

Combat stress not only adversely affects the lives of veterans, but their families as well. Weissmann says, "Families are systems, and what changes one member in some way changes all the members."

The Center for Counseling, Growth and Development (CCGD) at JFS is a resource for families dealing with the stressors of a family member returning home from the military. The licensed mental health staff received 36 hours of training at UCF to gain certification for specialized treatment of veterans and their families.

"Having trained staff working outside the Veterans Administration (VA) provides additional confidential resources for people in the military," states Weissmann. "The culture in the military is that you don't seek help. It's felt that a history of psychotherapy in the family can negatively affect a soldier's rank and reputation. Since JFS is not part of the system, their anonymity remains intact."

Families and individuals affected by the aftermath of active combat duty are encouraged to seek help. CCGD offers results-oriented therapy in a caring environment. Various forms of insurance are accepted and JFS is working on procuring Tri-Care as a provider, so that veterans can receive free mental healthcare. The office also works with the uninsured on a sliding scale basis. For a consultation, please call 407-644-7593, ext. 231.

NEED A RIDE?

As people age, their vision and reactive skills decline, which often restricts or completely removes their driving abilities. **Currently, there are approximately 8.4 million older adults who depend on others for their transportation**, according to the Administration on Aging.

In association with Mears Transportation, JFS operates Reliable Independent Drivers for the Elderly (RIDE). The program provides transportation to medical appointments for older adults or disabled individuals who have no other means of transportation. If you know someone who could use a RIDE, contact 407-644-7593, x 239.

got lunch?

Families whose children receive free or subsidized breakfast and lunch at school are faced with difficult times during the summer months. JFS' two pantries remained extra busy during June and July, supplying the community with more than 20,000 meals. Yet, hunger is a year-round concern. To help stock the pantries with nutritional essentials for growing children, JFS asks for community support. Consider bringing a bag of groceries to JFS or mailing a donation to help feed hungry families. \$18 provides a week's worth of lunches for a child.



MESSAGES

JFS BOARD PRESIDENT, TAYLER GOLD



New Beginnings...

After 18 wonderful years of service, Barry Kudlowitz has retired and will be starting a new chapter in his life. Barry has helped grow our agency into what it is today. JFS is distributing more meals, offering more counseling sessions, and helping more families keep a roof over their heads than ever before. Barry has helped grow our agency more than five times from what it was when he took over the position in 1993. JFS will forever be indebted to Barry for his leadership and commitment to our mission. Personally, I can't thank Barry enough for his guidance during my tenure on the JFS board of directors. The board of directors wishes Barry nothing but happiness in his retirement.

Eric Geboff has joined our JFS family as our next Executive Director on August 1st. Eric will be the fourth director in our 34-year history. Eric has big shoes to fill, but we are confident that he will help us grow for years to come. Eric has been in the Orlando community since 1994. Eric served as the Executive Director of the Jewish Federation of Greater

Orlando for 10 years and most recently was the Executive Director of the Seminole County Public School Foundation. The board of directors is excited to welcome Eric to JFS and wishes him success!

BARRY KUDLOWITZ

Over the last two decades, I have watched JFS grow from a staff of six with a \$300,000 budget to a staff of 28, including 7 contract professionals, with a budget of over \$1.6 million. To help meet the growing needs in our community over the years, we instituted new programs and services and our departments grew.

The years at JFS have provided me with many memories that have shaped my philosophy. I will share one of the memories that stands out most in my mind. Several years ago, I attended the dedication of Catholic Charities' new building. Bishop Wenski was giving the dedication and remarked, "Catholic Charities makes Catholicism look good." I thought to myself, "I hope our community feels that JFS makes Judaism look good. After all, JFS' mission is based on Jewish faith and tradition... to make a difference for all people in need." In hindsight, I can say that JFS has remained true to Jewish values and to our mission, and that the community as a whole appreciates our contribution.



We often ask you, the community, for financial support to help us in our mission. These requests are more than about money. They are about how the money can be used to help children and families. Every meal makes a difference, as does every counseling session, KidsKonnnect group or volunteer activity. Whether it is paying rent or visiting someone at the end of life, it all makes a powerful impact.

Sure, my job is asking you to support JFS. But what I am really asking, is for you to become part of our dream to build a caring community with dignity and respect for all individuals. Some of you may feel this is idealistic and naïve. However, for the 20,000 lives JFS touches each year, this dream is a reality.

I am retiring, but I will not be leaving this wonderful community. This is my home. I am not sure what the next chapter of my life may bring, but I will continue to be involved. All I ask is that you, too, make mankind your business and by your actions be a beacon of hope.

Thank you for the memories.

Introducing JFS' new Executive Director, ERIC GEBOFF



JFS is proud to welcome Eric Geboff on board as the new Executive Director. Eric is leaving his position at The Foundation for Seminole County Public Schools after serving as their Executive Director for the last six years. He brings with him 25 years of non-profit development, planned-giving and financial management experience.

Eric is a familiar face in the Jewish community, having served as the Executive Director of the Jewish Federation of Greater Orlando for 10 years. He is a member of the Association of Fund Raising Professionals, Planned Giving Council of Central Florida, Consortium of Florida Education Foundations and various civic organizations.

Jewish Family Services
of Greater Orlando

The George Wolly Center
2100 Lee Road
Winter Park, FL 32789



Southwest Orlando Office
11184 S. Apopka Vineland Road
Orlando, FL 32836

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Jewish Family Services' mission is to provide vital, high-quality and innovative social services to people in need.

SAVE THE DATE

2011 EVENING OF VALOR

**From Generation to Generation:
The Legacy of One**

Sunday, October 23rd

5:00pm - 8:30pm

Honoring

Linda and Bruce Chapin & Family
and
Sunny and Lester Mandell & Family

Orlando Marriott, Lake Mary

For more information contact es.cohen@jfsorlando.org

Please consider
giving a life-saving gift
TODAY!

You may call us at 407-644-7593,
send a check in the envelope enclosed
or make a secure online gift at jfsorlando.org.
Thank you!

SIGN UP FOR OUR
E-NEWSLETTER: info@jfsorlando.org

JFS CONTACT INFORMATION:

MAIN OFFICE:	407-644-7593
COUNSELING:	EXT. 231
DONATIONS:	EXT. 241
VOLUNTEERING:	EXT. 227
CENTERPIECES FOR TZEDAKAH:	EXT. 250
EMERGENCY SERVICES:	407-644-2985
WEBSITE:	www.jfsorlando.org

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WITH JFS:

