



The Jewish
Federation
OF EASTERN CONNECTICUT

2025-26 IMPACT REPORT



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The report that follows was compiled, edited, and typed by
the staff of the Jewish Federation.

We apologize for any errors or omissions.



The JFEC is a member agency of the
United Way of Southeastern Connecticut





Letter from the Executive Director

This year I would like to highlight our amazing partnership with the Secure Community Network that has been keeping us safe. Michael Shanbrom, our Regional Director has been sharing daily updates of anti-Semitic incidents affecting Jewish facilities in our region, reporting a 32% increase in reported violent incidents since 2025. He outlined SCN's core deliverables including security consultations, site assessments, training, emergency planning, and incident management, emphasizing the importance of access control and layered security approaches for Jewish organizations in Connecticut. We were very fortunate to receive a significant grant from the Tepper Family Fund to support the 13 Jewish institutions in our region to provide security guards at all events that hosted young children this year.

After 23 years of hosting Young Israeli Emissaries, we wrapped up this year with Daniel and Gefen. We were successfully accepted by the Jewish Agency for Israel to host an older Emissary who will move to our community in August and spend the next 2 years with us.

Our programming for young children has become so popular that we are expanding Liza Miller's hours to engage more families in the coming year with our PJ Library program.

The Jewish FilmFestival was a resounding success this year with 5 films screened at the Garde Arts Center. We hosted a beautiful Red Carpet event with wine and cheese to launch the Festival and a wrap up party to thank the planning committee at the home of Loretta Levy. It was amazing to see over 1,000 attendees interested in our Jewish films this year!

We are also hiring Adreishka Luciano-Hennigan full-time to grow her activities combating antisemitism and teaching our public high school students about the Holocaust with our Encountering Survivors program.

The biggest news of the year was the establishment of the Jainchill Family Fund that will support our senior activities and supporting those in need in our region. We are excited to offer more activities and excursions for our active adults as well as book club discussions, movie nights, and sporting events.

Marcia Reinhard is being honored for her 18 years of professionalism as the Assistant Director at JFEC. She has been involved with every major community event from Israel Independence Day to Holocaust Commemoration. She has supervised the Israeli Emissaries throughout her career. Most importantly, she plays a critical role of knowing everyone in the community at every Jewish organization. We are very excited to continue working with Marcia.

Rachel Levy

2025-2026 JFEC Organizational Chart of Staff

**RACHEL LEVY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

rachel@jfec.com

- **PHILANTHROPY & RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**
- **STRATEGIC & COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP**

**MARCIA REINHARD
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR**

mreinhard@jfec.com

- **YOUNG EMISSARIES**
- **YOUTH PROGRAMS**
- **COMMUNITY EVENTS**

**REBECCA REINHARD
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT**

rebecca@jfec.com

- **WEBSITE**
- **COMMUNITY DATABASE**
- **JEWISH FILMFEST**
- **ANNUAL CAMPAIGN**
- **FRIENDLY VISITOR PROGRAM**
- **OPERATION COOL DOWN**

**ADREISHKA LUCIANO-HENNIGAN
HOLOCAUST EDUCATION & PROGRAM COORDINATOR**

programcoordinator@jfec.com

- **COMBATING ANTISEMITISM**
- **ENCOUNTERING SURVIVORS**
- **GET ON THE BUS**
- **YOUTH & SENIOR PROGRAMS**
- **DIGNITY GROWS**

**LIZA MILLER
PJ LIBRARY COORDINATOR**

pjlibrary@jfec.com

**YOLETTE SENAT
REFUGEE COMMUNITY CASE
MANAGER**

caseworker@jfec.com

**TRACEY MARTINEU
BOOKKEEPER**

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**MIMI PERL
JEWISH LEADER, EDITOR**

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**DONA CASEY
SENIOR HOT LUNCH**

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**GEFEN KNIMACH
DANIEL SABAH
ISRAELI YOUNG EMISSARIES
(SHINSHINIM)**

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**LIBBIE DUSKIN
JEWISH COMMUNITY HIGH
SCHOOL FACILITATOR**

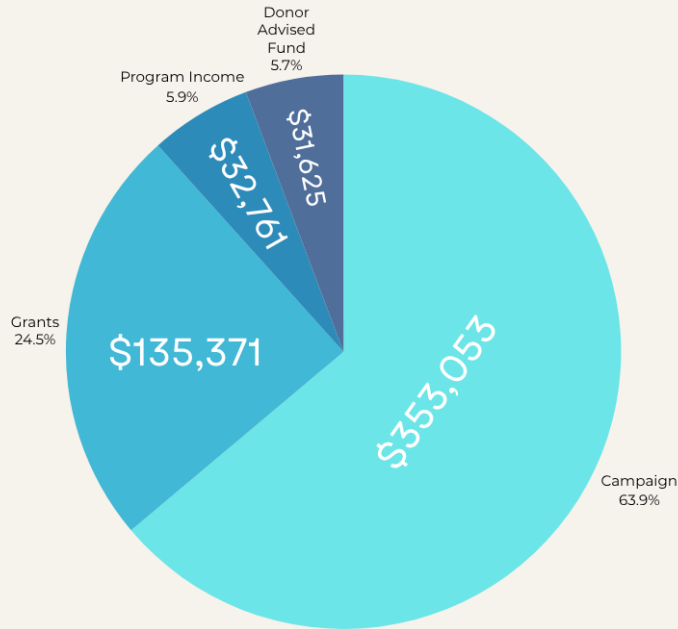
libbie.y.duskin@gmail.com

2025-2026 FINANCIAL REPORT

2024: \$523,600 Revenue

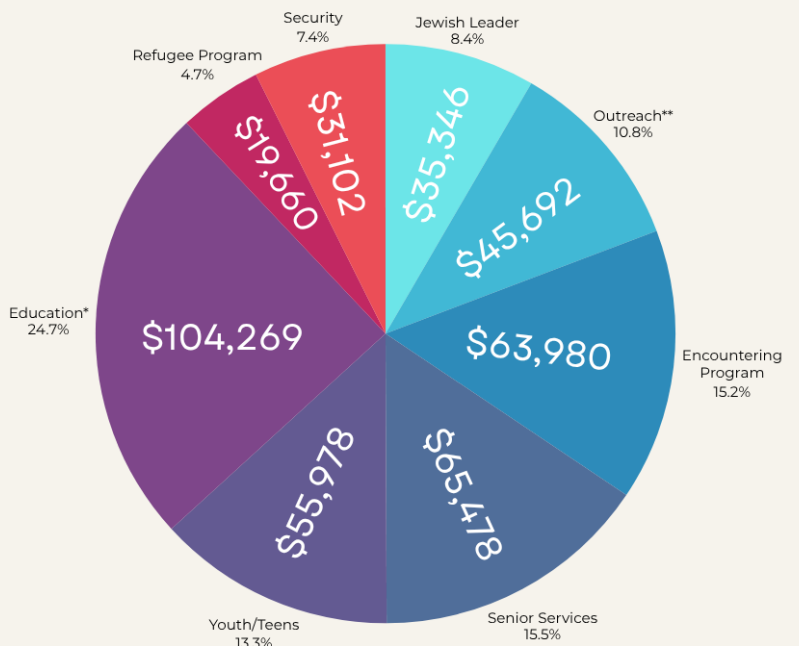
2025: \$535,982

2026: \$552,810



Program Allocations

\$421,505



*Emissaries & Israel Education

**Community Outreach, Film Fest, & PJ Library

Grants Received

2024: \$78,532

2025: \$133,442

2026: \$135,371

- **United Way** - Crisis Relief/Seniors
- **JFACT/DSS** - Haitian Refugee Program
- **JFNA/Tepper Family Fund** - Security
- **Frank Loomis Palmer Fund** - Encountering Program
- **Chelsea Groton Bank** - Encountering Program
- **Community Foundation of Eastern CT** - Tzuzammen and Dignity Grows
- **Repair the World** - Dignity Grows/Stress bags for Israeli teens
- **Harold Grinspoon Foundation** - PJ Library

Israeli Emissary Program*:

\$38,905

Special thanks to:

- Bruce & Lori Goldstein
- Camp Ramah
- Camp Young Judea
- Congregation Beth El
- Congregation Beth Shalom Rodfe Zedek
- Congregation B'nai Shalom
- Jewish Agency for Israel
- Kim & Kenn Fischburg
- Ocean Honda
- Peter Lewiss, Matthew & Florence Lewiss
- Steve & Debbie Daren
- Temple Bnai Israel
- Temple Emanu-El & ESEK
- Zeff Family Foundation

***Included in Grants**

Sign Up at
pjlibrary.org



Library®

Liza Miller, PJ Library Coordinator

2025-
2026

***PJ Library mails free monthly
Jewish children's books***

- Kids 0-8 receive an age-appropriate picture book
- Ages 9-12 get to choose their own book for PJ Our Way
- For every kind of Jewish- no matter their level of observance
- Strengthens children's connections to Jewish values
- **Our events build vibrant Jewish communities for local families**

Currently we serve a **total of 214 children!**

**168 children for PJ Library
Ages 0-8**

PJ Library families live in
39 towns in Eastern CT

Top 5 Most Popular Towns:

1. Storrs Mansfield
2. Norwich
3. Willimantic
4. Waterford
5. Colchester

**46 tweens for PJ Our Way
Ages 9-12**

PJ Our Way families live in
25 towns in Eastern CT

Top 5 Most Popular Towns:

1. Old Lyme
2. Waterford
3. Mansfield Center
4. Mystic
5. Norwich



Highlights of our Events 2025-2026

- Summer Splash Pad meet up
- Family Walks with Ice Cream after
- Rosh Hashana Jewish New Year Celebration
- Sukkot Fall Apple Picking
- Havdalah Sky at Mystic Seaport Planetarium
- Hanukkah Celebration
- PJ Jam- Joyful Jewish Kids Music
- Tu B'Shevat Jewish New Year of the Trees
- Hamantaschen Baking for Purim
- Passover PJ Style!
- Lag B'Omer Backyard S'mores & Yard Games



Follow us on Facebook & Instagram!

Thank you to the Harold Grinspoon Foundation
and JFEC for supporting this valuable program.

YOUTH GROUPS



Junior Youth Group

- Adreishka began assisting with Junior Youth Group in Fall '25 - to officially be Junior Youth Group Coordinator effective July 1, 2026
- 6 Events held throughout the year including bonfire kick-off, apple picking, Havdalah under the stars, bowling, mini golf, and a day out at Providence Place Mall. Inclement weather and other unforeseen circumstances caused some cancellations
- Our wonderful emissaries attended the events and added to the fun!
- Many thanks to parents who helped chaperone and drive when needed



Yachad BBYO

- Board met monthly to plan events and debrief about the previous ones
- Membership up a little bit this year from last year
- Held 8 events throughout the school year, not including senior send-off and elections in June
- Various teens attended 3 weekend conventions, 2 evening regional events and regional elections
- Celebrated many holidays together both Jewish and secular
- In this era of rising antisemitism, the teens are finding comfort and camaraderie in being together
- Yachad BBYO is a close-knit chapter where teens feel safe and secure and enjoy being one of many and not one out of many
- '26-'27 Board Members:
 - Sarah Kaplan - President
 - Anna Sheikowitz - VP Programming
 - Anna Goldfarb - VP Jewish Programming
 - Clarissa Mock - Communications
 - Daniel Sheikowitz - Treasurer

JEWISH COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL

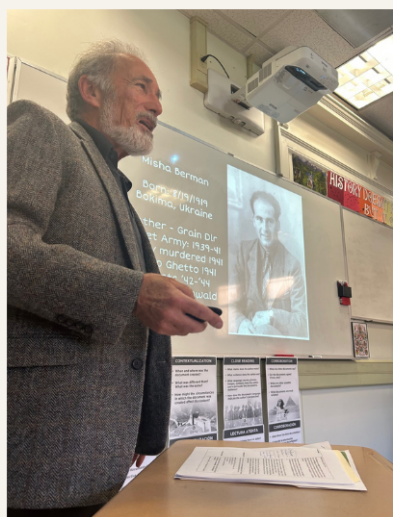


- Libbie Duskin - Coordinator
- Monday nights at Temple Emanu-El
- 12 students enrolled from Waterford, East Lyme, New London, & Ledyard
- Interactive programs & games with Israeli Emissaries Gefen and Daniel
- Jews & Allies with Jobs programming with Beca Reinhard, Dr. David Shiffman, Nathaniel Rowe, & Adreishka Luciano-Hennigan
- Philanthropy with Rachel Levy packing donations for menstrual poverty & stress relief boxes for friends in Israel
- Cooking activities with Ella Sackett and Marcia Reinhard
- ADL antisemitism discussion with Edina Oestreicher
- Visits from Jewish college students from University of Connecticut Jewish on Campus and Connecticut College Hillel
- Four graduates this year: Ilan Goldberg, Anna Goldfarb, Jenna Levine, and Emma Lutz

Call Rebecca at the JFEC office to register for next year!

STROCHLITZ HOLOCAUST RESOURCE CENTER: ENCOUNTERING PROGRAM

In August, we hired Adreishka Luciano-Hennigan to take on the role of Holocaust Educator & Combatting Antisemitism Coordinator. Her hard work and dedication revamped JFEC's Encountering Program and expanded it to meet the needs of Eastern Connecticut. With school sessions, library seminars, a trip to the Museum of Jewish Heritage in NYC, and ADL workshops, the program is stronger than ever with a total of **31 sessions that reached 1600 students, teachers, and local community members.**



- Helen Elperina taught 7 different sessions at Fitch High School, Lyme-Old Lyme Middle School, Lyme-Old Lyme High School, and Old Saybrook High School, reaching a total of 545 students. Reviving the Encountering program at Fitch High School, the program that her father, Oleg Elperin started and facilitated for over 12 years.
- Romana Strochlitz Primus taught 4 different sessions at Griswold High School, Waterford High School, The Williams School, and the New London Public Library, reaching a total of 180 students.
- Artie Dean taught 5 different sessions at Waterford High School and Clark Lane Middle School, reaching 250 students.
- Vivian Zoë taught 5 different sessions at Ledyard High School, Ledyard Public Library, Lyman-Allyn Museum, and Preston Library, reaching a total of 140 students and members of the public.
- Rosa Goldblatt taught 3 sessions at her house with 9 students from Plainfield High School, retelling the story of her father's life before, during, and after the Holocaust.
- JFEC's newest speaker, Norman Berman, spoke to 15 students at Norwich Free Academy.
- We also launched a Student to Student Program. The first of these visits was held at Ledyard High School with 20 students and 3 Jewish teen speakers.
- The ADL sponsored two workshops, one for middle school students and the other for high school students, where they talked about forms of antisemitism and how to identify & combat it. A total of 55 students attended.
- JFEC's Yad Vashem Exhibit spent a month at Lyman-Allyn and had over 2,100 visitors.
- To end the year, we partnered with Voices of Hope to bring 30 students to visit the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York.

SENIOR PROGRAMMING



Senior Hot Lunch

- Meals prepared by Dona Casey
- Partnered with TVCCA to bring weekly hot kosher meals to over 50 adults at both Temple Emanu-El and Beth Jacob
- Connected seniors in the community over events like Chair Yoga, Book Discussions, Music with Roz Etra, Bingo, and so much more
- Will continue throughout the summer with no interruptions and more fun activities!



Tzuzammen

- Monthly BYOM & BYOT lunches
- Meets on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at different restaurants
- Over double the attendance and participation compared to recent years
- Program aimed at connecting active adults, monthly chats on different topics, schmoozing, and the occasional field trip following lunch



Friendly Visitors Program

- Delivering Yiddishkeit, traditions, and joy to Jewish residents at long-term care facilities & private homes
- Our volunteers connected with and visited over 100 people around 3 holidays



Get on the Bus

- This program brings together adults in the community to various experiences by providing transportation and subsidized pricing for ticketed events
- Trips this year included a visit to New York's Yiddish Theatre to see Hannah Senesh live and a trip to the Boston Red Sox's Jewish Heritage Night

Annual report

Daniel & Gefen

Young Emissaries 2025-2026

RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS & SYNAGOGUES

- Ahavath Achim - Colchester
- Ahavath Chesed - New London
- Beth Jacob Synagogue - Norwich
- Sharah Zedek - Westerly
- Temple Beth Israel Preservation Society- Danielson
- Congregation Beth El - Waterford
- Congregation B'nai Shalom - Putnam
- Temple Bnai Israel/Religious School - Willimantic
- Temple Emanu-El/Religious School - Waterford
- Congregation Beth Shalom Rodfe Zedek - Chester

BUILDING BRIDGES

- Israeli Chef
- Hebrew Cafe
- Senior Lunches/Events
- Rotary Clubs
- Senior centers
- Public Elementary schools
- Public Middle Schools
- Public High Schools
- UConn Hillel

EVENTS

- October 7th Commemoration
- Yom Ha'Atzmaut
- Israel's Memorial Day
- State Capital in Hartford for Yom HaShoah
- Yom HaShoah community event
- Chabad events of Eastern CT
- Sisterhood events Temple Emanu-El
- Hadassah events

YOUTH AND TEENS

- Jewish Community High School
- BBYO events
- Junior Youth Group

HOST FAMILIES

This year, we were lucky to be welcomed by incredible host families who voluntarily opened their homes and hearts to us, making this journey truly unforgettable.

Daniel's host families -
Armi & Jonathan Rowe
Merrill Mazzella

Gefen's host families -
Barbara Sahagan
Liora & Nir Ze'evi

It has been a true honor to be the last Shinshiniot in this community, and we are deeply grateful for this unforgettable experience.

Thank you for being our second home - we will see you again



COMMUNITY OUTREACH



Operation Cool Down

- Provides air conditioners to seniors, families, and individuals who have a medical need
- This program is generously supported by individual donors as well as the Feltcorn Endowment Fund
- Last year we distributed 14 air conditioners to people in need!



Refugee Crisis Support

Yollette Senat - Refugee Community Case Manager

- Assists and provides clients with a variety of resources including:
 - children's childcare/school needs
 - health insurance applications/renewals and immigration documents requests
 - applying for social services benefits
 - finding healthcare providers, completing medical forms, contacting providers for appointments and referrals
 - job search and onboarding
 - housing search
 - paying bills and providing financial support for housing according to funding
 - translation and interpretation



Dignity Grows

- Provides monthly personal and menstrual hygiene products to women and girls who cannot afford them
- Bags packed by Jewish Community High School and by Senior Hot Lunch
- The bags were distributed between Rose City Learning Center and Clark Lane Middle School



Jewish FilmFest

- All 5 films screened in person at The Garde Arts Center
- March 8 - April 26, 2026
- Over 1,000 people attended



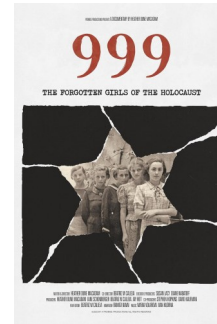
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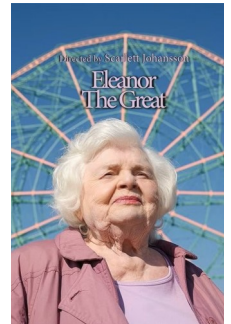
Holding Liat



Midas Man



999: The
Forgotten Girls



Eleanor the
Great

Committee Chair

Loretta Levy

Committee Members

Barry Feldman
 Myra Gipsten
 Steve Kaufman
 Gail Leeser
 Ron Leeser

Romana
 Strochlitz Primus
 Aaron Rosenberg
 Eileen Shapiro
 Scott Wolfe

Thank you to our 2026 Jewish FilmFest Sponsors!

Executive Producer

~Leiser Family Foundation
 ~Sayet & Seder
 ~Jonathan Gershon Stark

Directors

~Carol Curland
 ~Scott & Barbara Wolfe
 ~Kenn & Kim Fischburg
 ~Martin & Millie Shapiro

Leading Actors

~Attorney Richard J. Pascal, LLC

Supporting Cast

~Cecile & Barry Feldman
 ~Rabbi Aaron & Karen Rosenberg
 ~Rick & Myra Gipstein
 ~Karen & Stan Bloustine



The Jewish Federation OF EASTERN CONNECTICUT

THE **STRENGTH** OF A PEOPLE | THE **POWER** OF COMMUNITY

2025-26 Jewish Federation of Eastern CT Officers & Trustees

Officers

President - Scott Wolfe

Vice President - Peter Lewiss

Campaign Chair - Jenn Kronick Shapiro

Secretary - Ronald Leeser

Treasurer - Barbara Sahagan

Trustees

Daniel Bendor
Carol Curland
Steven Daren
Lauren Doherty
Helen Elperina
Roslyn Etra
Felice Farber

Evert Gawendo
Louis Lasko
Loretta Levy
Peter Malinow
Erica McCaffrey
Richard Pascal

Romana Strochlitz
Primus
Sarah Rogovin
Martin Rutchik
Jerome Schwell
Sema Stein
Gabe Stern

MISSION STATEMENT

The Jewish Federation of Eastern Connecticut is the community's convener, the umbrella, the hub. Federation connects you to everything available in our community, in Israel, and throughout the Jewish world.

We flourish as a community due to collaboration among all parties, including the Jewish Federation, synagogues, agencies, and others to collectively strengthen our community. Strong financial support ensures the sustainability of our community and that those who are struggling, both locally and abroad, have the resources to survive and thrive. Federation employs change and innovation to creatively meet the evolving needs of a diverse and multigenerational population.

>> You can reach JFEC Staff by phone or email <<

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