

# JCHC Chronicles

## Letter from the President New President Wears Many Hats



Recently I had the privilege of sitting down with many of the Presidents and Vice Presidents of the tenants associations at the various JCHC communities. Shortly before this meeting, I asked our CEO Harold Colton-Max what topics I should cover. He gave me a few bullet points and then added, "...but really, you're the star of the show." Among other things, the assembled leaders wanted to know more about who I was. So I thought it appropriate in my inaugural

*JCHC Chronicles* article to spend a few moments introducing myself since the majority of you were not at that meeting.

On most days, I wear several hats. I wear a family hat, a professional hat, a philanthropic hat, and, when I have time, a social hat. My day starts with my family hat. Shortly after I wake up in the morning, my three children (my 4-year-old daughter, 2-year-old son, and 7-week-old daughter) generally wind up in my bed. It's a great jumping off point for every day to remind me why I do what I do.

*"The most important feather in my philanthropic hat is the JCHC."*

Once I leave my house, I put on my professional hat and begin my job. For lack of a better description, I manage residential apartment buildings. These buildings are very similar to the buildings that house the JCHC communities so I am very familiar with the day-to-day operations of your buildings. In the course of my day I meet with tenants, vendors, municipalities, and various other individuals to discuss whatever topics are relevant. I undertake each of these meetings with one goal—to keep my tenants happy. If my tenants aren't happy, then I have not done my job properly.

The most important feather in my philanthropic hat is the JCHC. As President of the JCHC Board of Trustees I preside over the Board responsible for the overall governance of all of our communities. Just as in my professional life I believe that my job is to keep my tenants happy, my job as President of the Board of Trustees is to continue to improve the quality of our residents' lives. As I told the leaders at my meeting the other night, we are a very hands-on Board. We try to listen to our residents and address any needs they may have, be they physical changes to the buildings or development of new programs. I do not want our Board to be a top down organization that creates programs or implements change simply because it is what we think our residents want. Instead, I want to work with the residents to implement desired changes.

To that end, shortly before I left the meeting the other night, I told the Presidents and Vice Presidents that I would always listen to what they had to say and would take matters brought to the Board's attention under advisement. I urge all of our residents to participate in the various tenants associations so that your voice can be heard. While I can't always promise that we will be able to address every request that comes our way, I hope that you always feel that we are operating with your best interests at heart.

At the end of each day I again find myself wearing my family hat as I sit at the dinner table talking about what each of us did that day. While I always feel that my son and older daughter have the most fun, I think that I have the most rewarding days – which is frequently why I don't have time to put on the social hat. Quite frankly, I'm too tired.

Sincerely,  
*Jay Murnick*  
President, Board of Trustees



Posing outside Lester Senior Housing following its 10th anniversary celebration are left to right: Hanover Township Council Member and former Mayor Ronald Francioli; Former Hanover Township Mayor Sal Iannaccone; donors Margaret and Martin Heller; JCHC Chief Executive Officer Harold Colton-Max; UJC of MetroWest Executive Vice President Max Kleinman; and JCHC Board President Jay Murnick.

## A 'Decade of Excellence' Celebrated at Lester

To recognize what a one-time board president called the "shining embodiment of all our dreams," the Jewish Community Housing Corporation of Metropolitan New Jersey officially celebrated the 10th anniversary of the opening of the Lester Senior Housing Community in front of a standing room only crowd comprised of residents and their families, board members, donors, and present and past officials of both Hanover and the United Jewish Communities of MetroWest.

In celebrating a "Decade of Excellence," speakers spoke about how the Whippany senior living community, owned and operated by the Jewish Community Housing Corporation (JCHC) of Metropolitan New Jersey, has changed over the years and become more than simply a place to age.

"What is Lester today?" asked Chief Executive Officer Harold Colton-Max. "It's the same six-story structure with the same 175 units – 120 independent and 55 assisted living – and we provide the same great amenities. We've made some changes, but what has really changed you can't see. The residents have transformed it into a true community where they share simchas and help each other through difficult times."

He recognized those residents who have made a difference in initiating new programs over the years, including cognitive therapy computer and religious educational learning programs.

Recognized were the community's

key donors, the Heller and Weston families, and the community's original residents, who range in age from 84 to 101. This included Helen Heller, president of the Weston Assisted Living Residents Council, who said "I know I'm in a safe and secure place. The decade has been very blessed," and Mildred Feldstein, president of the Heller Independent Living Apartments, who was at the original groundbreaking and applauded the fact that "I don't have to cook, grocery shop or wash dishes. I don't have to order take out or eat alone."

Also presenting were current Board of Trustees President Jay Murnick and Janice Schofel, who was President at the time Lester Senior Housing was built and dedicated, and Max Kleinman, Executive Vice President of United Jewish Communities of MetroWest.

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The original residents of the Lester Senior Housing Community, opened in 2001.

## Letter from the CEO Coming Together To Beat an Early Winter Storm



From the outside looking in, I can sometimes see how someone might mistake the Jewish Community Housing Corporation as simply another player in the real estate business. We developed, own and manage five apartment buildings. We collect rent and pay our bills to keep the properties running, just like any good agent does.

However, the JCHC's mission is far greater than that. It is a sacred intergenerational trust that reflects the Fifth Commandment's exhortation to honor our parents: To be there for them as they were for us by providing quality housing with services for senior citizens. Yet another clear example of this commitment could be seen in the response to the recent fall snow storm.

Like many others in New Jersey and surrounding states, we lost power at Jewish Federation Plaza, our 135-unit apartment building in West Orange, late Sunday, October 30. With the exception of limited emergency generator power, there was no power in the building for the next 48 hours.

The JCHC staff sprang into action immediately. We brought in additional staff to make certain that our seniors and family members were informed about what was going on and could be provided with assistance if needed.

The next day, even though the roads were still difficult to travel, our staff showed up on time and performed their duties without complaint, even going the extra mile. Working in the dark, the dining staff prepared all of the meals and delivered them to residents, many of whom ate in the promenade which remained lit by emergency power. In addition, it was "all hands on deck" as the JCHC administrative staff assisted the Plaza team in putting out an extra meal of breakfast on Monday and Tuesday mornings.

Furthermore, the staff worked together to present an air of normalcy as we went ahead with previously planned JCHC University and other events, even adding some other activities along the way. All the while, we were continuing to keep residents and their family members informed as to the current state of power in the building, encouraging people to go with their family if possible.

When the power came back on at Jewish Federation Plaza on Tuesday night, we all breathed a sigh of relief. However, the storm was not done with us yet, as we lost power during the evening for a few hours the next night on Wednesday and Friday evening as well. Even during those trying times, the staff responded with grace which did not go unnoticed by the residents, with Plaza Tenant Association President Sandye Garrison noting that "The snow storm & power outage was handled with grace & compassion."

Fortunately, our other four buildings maintained power and were relatively unaffected by the storm. Still, the smooth continuation of operations at Jewish Federation Towers in Irvington, the Lester Senior Housing Community in Whippany, the South Orange B'nai B'rith Federation House and Village Apartments of the Jewish Federation in South Orange was a further testament to the emergency preparedness planning flawlessly designed and executed by the JCHC staff.

If the character of an organization is tested by how it performs under pressure, then I can emphatically say that the JCHC staff proven their mettle. I am proud to say that our seniors are in good hands.

Sincerely,

*Harold Colton-Max*

Harold Colton-Max  
Chief Executive Officer

## Resident Attends Leadership Camp

How do you get your fellow residents in a senior living community off the couch and actively engaged?

This was what Lavinia Walker and other seniors from around the country explored at B'nai B'rith International's senior leadership retreat. Lavinia, co-president of the residents association at the South Orange B'nai B'rith Federation House, was invited with resident leaders at B'nai B'rith housing complexes across the country to attend its six-day retreat at Camp Perlman in Starlight, Pennsylvania. There, in the clear, crisp air of the Pocono Mountains, Lavinia and the other seniors spent their time in sessions focused on topics ranging from non-verbal communications to use of the Internet to the importance of celebrating diversity.

B'nai B'rith, the largest Jewish sponsor of federally subsidized housing for the elderly in U.S., refers to the retreat – held every other year – as a unique blend of structured training and a summer camp experience. The seniors ate side-by-side with the campers attending Camp Perlman, participated in activities with them and, after spending much of the day ensconced in workshops, sat in overstuffed chairs around a fireplace, discussing the programs they had instituted back home.

"I shared some of the programs that have been successful here, like our fashion shows and ziti dinners," says Lavinia. "The facilitators were terrific. They discussed the definition of a leader – someone who is not a dictator and lets the group make decisions through consensus – and how to get more people involved. We discussed fundraising ideas, like approaching area businesses for help, and critiqued our community newsletters."

Discussions also focused on the usefulness of the Internet – although the general feeling among most of the seniors was that while they may own computers they don't feel particularly comfortable using the Internet. To remedy this, the facilitators offered a list of websites they felt would benefit both their associations and newsletters.

"Management here is very good and they provide us with so many things," she says. "We already do many of the things they suggested at the retreat for keeping people busy and active. But there were some good ideas thrown out. The retreat was well worth my time."

How can you support the JCHC?  
See the next page for details.

## "Friends of JCHC" Tributes | mazeltov, get well & in memoriam

From:	To:	Occasion:
Samuel Landsman		In memory of Paula Harris
Sara Rich		For a good New Year
Don and Tama Pasternak		In memory of Jacques Gozlan
Shirley and Ted Straus		In memory of Jacques Gozlan
Peter Rabbino and Hunter Reno	Bernard Rabbino	In honor of his birthday
Leslie and Eric Fishbein	Bernard Rabbino	In honor of his birthday
Andrew & Sharon Chavkin	Mr. and Mrs Richard Klass	In honor of Allison's Wedding
Andrew & Sharon Chavkin	Mr. Robert Goldstein and family	In memory of Judy Goldstein
Harold and Nomi Colton-Max	Merle Kalishman	Wishing a speedy recovery
Harold and Nomi Colton-Max	Jay and Jodi Murnick	In honor of birth of daughter Taylor Rae
Dan Kram	Jay and Jodi Murnick	In honor of birth of daughter Taylor Rae
Ben and Ruth Perlmutter	Jay and Jodi Murnick	In honor of birth of daughter Taylor Rae
Bernard and Tina Rabbino	Jay and Jodi Murnick	In honor of birth of daughter Taylor Rae
Marlene and Larry Ritter	Jay and Jodi Murnick	In honor of birth of daughter Taylor Rae
Dr. Josh Schor	Jay and Jodi Murnick	In honor of birth of daughter Taylor Rae
Pat and Bert Sebold	Jay and Jodi Murnick	In honor of birth of daughter Taylor Rae
Eric and Linda Barr	Jay and Jodi Murnick	In honor of birth of daughter Taylor Rae
Roberta & Walter Zweifler	Jay and Jodi Murnick	In honor of birth of daughter Taylor Rae
Roberta & Walter Zweifler	Norma and David Schechner	In honor of Bar Mitzvah of their grandson
Jay and Jodi Murnick	Rebecca Hoffman Pollack and Brian Pollack	In honor of their wedding

To purchase a tribute, please contact [marciaf@jchcorp.org](mailto:marciaf@jchcorp.org).

## JCHC Senior Communities Receive National Recognition and Honors

Jewish Federation Plaza, Jewish Federation Towers and The South Orange B'nai B'rith Federation House, three senior independent living communities owned and operated by the Jewish Community Housing Corporation of Metropolitan New Jersey (JCHC), recently received national recognition as a Community of Quality™ by the National Affordable Housing Management Association (NAHMA) for outstanding management.

"We are very proud of this recognition; it acknowledges that our affordable housing provides the very highest value to our residents," said Harold Colton-Max, Chief Executive Officer of JCHC. "For us, it is really a testament to our employees, who work at these communities every day and do whatever it takes to make our residents feel safe and at home."

This is the highest certification that can be bestowed upon an affordable housing property. It is intended to convey to the public, policymakers and government agencies that the affordable housing industry succeeds in creating housing that is safe, attractive, modern and well maintained, and that residents living in this housing are often aided in ways rarely

addressed in conventional rental housing settings.

To be honored as a Community of Quality, a facility must show a high standard of excellence in such areas as the way it is maintained and managed, the services it provides residents, and the experience and training of its personnel. NAHMA's inspection is extensive, with scores to achieve national recognition based on a facility's physical plant, employee credentials, financial management, programs and services, endorsements, and photographs and reports.

The three communities received outstanding ratings in community life initiatives that include the JCHC University lecture series, on-site wellness programs, and transportation to cultural and community events.

"There are thousands of providers of affordable multifamily housing in the nation," said

NAHMA President Dan Murray. "The Jewish Community Housing Corporation of Metropolitan New Jersey is among the select few that have achieved the highest standard of excellence in property management and in the provision of services to lower-income families. These services enable residents to attain high levels of self-sufficiency and success in their lives and for their families. The work done by the JCHC is also a credit to the communities it serves in northern New Jersey."

Lester Senior Housing Community and Village Apartments of the Jewish Federation offer market rate housing, and so are not eligible for NAHMA's Community of Quality program.

## Your Donations to JCHC to be Matched

You can support the JCHC through the Colton Challenge Grant in honor of the 15th Annual UJA Benefit Concert featuring world-renowned pianist Yefim Bronfman and the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra (to be held Sunday, April 22nd at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark).

All new and increased gifts from \$100 to \$10,000 that are made to the JCHC and other local agencies from December 6, 2011 to March 12, 2012 will be matched on a dollar for dollar basis. Visit [www.ucnj.org/benefitconcert](http://www.ucnj.org/benefitconcert) for more information or to make your contribution.

## Last Chance for You and JCHC to Benefit from the Tax Relief Act of 2010

This legislation allows individuals, age 70 1/2 or older, to distribute up to \$100,000 per spouse directly to charitable organizations, without incurring federal income tax on the gifted funds. Taking advantage of this time-limited opportunity may enable you to support JCHC, while satisfying your mandatory IRA Required Minimum Distribution (RMD).

### How to make your gift

- Check with your tax advisor as to whether the IRA charitable rollover is suitable for your particular situation.
- You may partially or wholly satisfy your 2011 IRA Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) through an IRA charitable rollover gift made by December 31, 2011.
- The rollover is capped at \$100,000 per spouse annually (\$200,000 per couple).
- The rollover applies to outright charitable gifts only.
- There are generally no Federal income tax consequences.
- State income tax may apply, depending on your state of residence.
- Please contact your own IRA plan manager (currently, there is no standard form for this rollover), trustee or administrator directly and instruct them to forward the check to:

**Friends of JCHC**  
750 Northfield Avenue  
West Orange, NJ 07052  
Attention: Harold Colton-Max, CEO

To learn more about taking advantage of the Challenge Grant or the IRA distribution, or to enhance your giving through employer matches, please contact Harold Colton-Max, at 973-530-3961 or [haroldc@jchcorp.org](mailto:haroldc@jchcorp.org). Thank you.

### Facts About JCHC

The Jewish Community Housing Corporation of Metropolitan New Jersey owns and manages 600+ apartments providing independent and assisted living for seniors who want to be surrounded by the many services, conveniences and individuals that add dignity and self-respect in a comfortable, traditional environment.

This includes senior housing at:

- Jewish Federation Plaza, West Orange
- B'nai Brith Federation House, South Orange
- Village Apartments of the Jewish Federation, South Orange
- Jewish Federation Towers, Irvington
- Heller Independent Living Apartments and Weston Assisted Living Residence at the Lester Senior Housing Community in Whippany

**Mail to:** Jewish Community Housing Corp of Metropolitan NJ | 750 Northfield Avenue | West Orange | NJ | 07052 or **Donate online at** [jchcorp.org](http://jchcorp.org)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ ST \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to give a gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to the Friends of JCHC to support the JCHC's work

Payment Options:

\_\_\_ Check made out to "Friends of JCHC" enclosed    \_\_\_ Visa    \_\_\_ Discover  
\_\_\_ Charge my credit card    \_\_\_ Mastercard    \_\_\_ American Express

Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Card holder's name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**Gifts to Friends of JCHC are fully tax deductible.**

## News from the JCHC Senior Communities

### Towers' Residents Receive Furniture

The New Jersey Affordable Housing Management Association (JAHMA) Foundation and Thomasville Furniture Galleries donated new furniture to two residents of Jewish Federation Towers who are in need of furniture for their homes as part of JAHMA's In Time of Need program.

The JAHMA Foundation recognizes that residents and their families can find themselves with a compelling hardship. The donation is part of the foundation's program of helping senior citizens living at a New Jersey Affordable Housing Management Association (JAHMA) member "affiliated property."

Among those items donated were a dinette set, sofa, chair and end table, dresser/mirror combination, small entertainment center, nightstand, futon and mattress. The facility had applied for this furniture on behalf of the residents.



Flanking Artur Zagorodnev, one of the two recipients at Towers who received new furniture, are (left) Mike Massood, CEO of Thomasville Furniture Galleries, and Dr. Bruce W. Johnson, educational consultant for the Social Services Division of The Michaels Organization.

Flax, a local Irvington business, provided the mattresses.

Mayor Smith; Mike Massood, CEO of Thomasville Furniture Galleries; and Harold Colton-Max, CEO of the Jewish Community Housing Corporation of Metropolitan New Jersey spoke at the very moving ceremony. As could be expected, the two recipients were moved to tears by the generosity of the donation.

### Health and Wellness Initiatives Targeted for Residents

Residents Sandye Garrison from Jewish Federation Plaza and Grace Collins from the South Orange B'nai B'rith Federation House, recently teamed up with Ann Marie Bass, Activities Coordinator at Jewish Federation Towers and B'nai B'rith, to attend the *Take Control of Your Health* training program.

The program prepared them to be peer leaders and instructors in classes to

help other residents manage their chronic illnesses. The workshops were held for 2.5 hours once a week for six weeks. *Take Control of Your Health* uses peer-led education to help individuals cope with symptoms, manage medication and make lifestyle changes.

Participants learn strategies for managing symptoms, working with health care professionals, setting weekly goals, problem-solving, relaxing, handling difficult emotions, eating well, and exercising safely and easily. Documented outcomes from the program include a reduction of health distress, increased confidence in managing chronic conditions and less fatigue.

This program is funded through a New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services grant and is a joint effort with the UJC of MetroWest Elder Care Services and the Jewish Community Center of MetroWest.

The first class is scheduled to begin soon. All classes will be led by a JCHC resident or employee trained as a peer leader.



### Village Residents Serenaded

Moonlight Serenade, a non-profit organization which raises money to bring professional musicians into senior homes and independent living facilities to perform classical music concerts, performed at Village Apartments.

Moonlight Serenade founder Claudia Baumgaertner Lemmerz, pianist, and Karen Pinoci, cellist, conductor and co-founder of the New Philharmonic of New Jersey, performed HERstory. HER story is a concert-lecture, which leads

the audience on a wonderful musical exploration of women composers spanning a period of three centuries.

The audience response was overwhelming. The residents enthusiastically responded to the classical music, as well as the information presented about the lives and loves of these dynamic, yet often overlooked, women composers.

**JCHC**  
 Jewish Community  
 Housing Corporation  
 of Metropolitan New Jersey  
 750 Northfield Avenue  
 West Orange, NJ 07052



Retired surgeon Dr. Robert Richter was commissioned by the JCHC to custom build new furniture for the chapel at Lester. Dr. Richter built a reading table, bookshelves and additions to the ark.