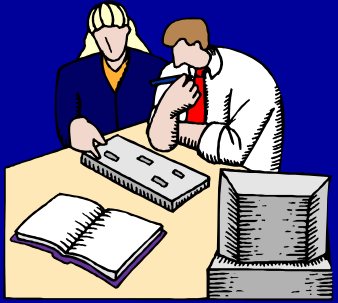


Creating and Celebrating One Community

Lisa Fiore, Jewish Family & Children's Services of Middlesex County



A J V S

E-Lights: Association of Jewish Vocational Service Professionals

An electronic publication of AJVSP – an affiliated professional association of the Jewish communal service association

A Project of National Significance from the US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Development Disabilities, has been awarded to JFVS. The "JFVS One Community Integration Project" assists disenfranchised persons with developmental disabilities, who are committed to their faith, in becoming part of all aspects of community life. The scope of the two-year project includes working with faith-based, non-traditional service providers that have never served persons with disabilities to serve persons with developmental disabilities of their faith and other faiths.

JFVS is partnering with the New Jersey Developmental Disabilities Council and The Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities, University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. Adults with developmental disabilities, their family members, and the project partners will form an advisory board for this project and assist project staff in reaching out to non-traditional service providers, the faith-based community, and volunteer organizations to increase integration into the community utilizing natural supports. JFVS has a long history of working with persons with developmental disabilities through the

B'Atzmi program, a social program for young Jewish adults with developmental challenges. These adults and their families were the impetus of this project because of their experience with isolation and lack of acceptance from the faith-based community. It is recognized that the faith-based community could be an excellent source of direct service and natural supports.

Projects of National Significance are awarded to "cutting edge" projects for the development of information and referral systems; educating policy makers; federal interagency initiatives; enhancement of participation of minority and ethnic groups in public and private sector; initiatives in developmental disabilities; and transition of youth with developmental disabilities from school to adult life. Projects are expected to increase community support and services, promote self-determination and productivity, and encourage interaction and collaboration among all sectors of the Developmental Disabilities field.

For further information, please contact Lisa Fiore, 732-777-1940 ext. 129.

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Career Counseling for Women Returning to the Workforce or Seeking Job Upgrade

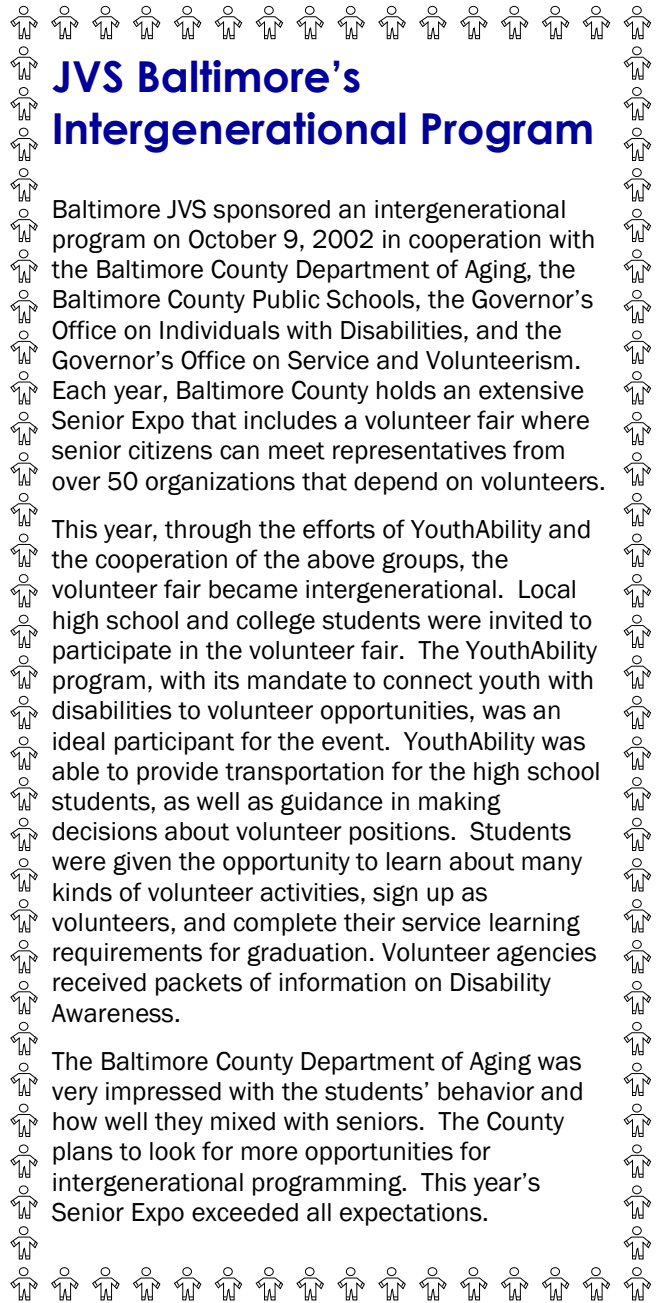
Bobbi Yanke, JVS Los Angeles

The November 6, 2002 Conference Call topic was "Career Counseling for Women Returning to the Workforce or Seeking Job Upgrade." The telephonic meeting was facilitated by Bobbi Yanke (Los Angeles; 818/464-3222), and participants included Martha Plotkin, George Zeller, Judy Sachs (Boston; 617/451-8147) and Nita Leff (Cleveland, 216/378-3428).

JVS Los Angeles described Wo-Mentoring as a successful mentoring program for women. Now in its fifth year, Wo-mentoring is designed specifically to help women who are in transition take control of their lives. Each mentee is paired with a professional from the same or related field for one year. Acting as a role model, mentors provide advice, coaching, networking opportunities, and encouragement. The goal of the program is for each mentee to achieve at least one career milestone within the year.

Further discussion dealt with the need for expanded visibility and outreach in the various communities. Additional dialogue addressed the impact on client numbers by the plethora of easy access to career information online and the many free services offered by Work Source Centers. Collaboration seems to be the wave for the future... Boston, in conjunction with local temples, is planning a series of panel discussions. The first will be "Business Ethics in the Jewish Community." Los Angeles has also partnered with several local temples to provide a series of panel discussions and seminars by professionals on workplace issues. Los Angeles has also facilitated several successful job fairs.

Topics suggested for future teleconference calls were "Mature Worker Issues" such as ageism, what next after retirement, and re-entry after retirement due to stock market loss and "Brainstorming" to explore possible new programs geared to stimulate interest in JVS services.



JVS Baltimore's Intergenerational Program

Baltimore JVS sponsored an intergenerational program on October 9, 2002 in cooperation with the Baltimore County Department of Aging, the Baltimore County Public Schools, the Governor's Office on Individuals with Disabilities, and the Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism. Each year, Baltimore County holds an extensive Senior Expo that includes a volunteer fair where senior citizens can meet representatives from over 50 organizations that depend on volunteers.

This year, through the efforts of YouthAbility and the cooperation of the above groups, the volunteer fair became intergenerational. Local high school and college students were invited to participate in the volunteer fair. The YouthAbility program, with its mandate to connect youth with disabilities to volunteer opportunities, was an ideal participant for the event. YouthAbility was able to provide transportation for the high school students, as well as guidance in making decisions about volunteer positions. Students were given the opportunity to learn about many kinds of volunteer activities, sign up as volunteers, and complete their service learning requirements for graduation. Volunteer agencies received packets of information on Disability Awareness.

The Baltimore County Department of Aging was very impressed with the students' behavior and how well they mixed with seniors. The County plans to look for more opportunities for intergenerational programming. This year's Senior Expo exceeded all expectations.

JVS Baltimore Provides Services to Teens

Jennie Z. Rothschild, Ph.D., Executive Director

JVS is a partner in a unique Baltimore project for Jewish teens. The Jewish Outreach Intervention Network (**J.O.I.N. for Teens**) is a collaborative project of JVS, Jewish Family Services, the Baltimore Jewish Community Center, and the Jewish Big Brother-Big Sister League. J.O.I.N. provides teen outreach in the community, recreational and social activities and programs, prevention education workshops in the schools, mentoring services, a 24-hour teen hotline, community and professional education, consultation and collaboration with community schools, and special events, such as the JVS Summer Job Fair.

This year's program will be offered in two parts. In February, JVS conducted a forum that addressed the parent's role in a teenager's summer job experience. Later in the spring JVS will organize a Summer Job Fair that will include a workshop on job search skills and information about local employers. In preparing for the Job Fair, JVS staff will contact appropriate businesses from our extensive list of employers, Board members, and the community-at-large in order to identify employers interested in hiring teens for summer positions. Based upon the interest shown in last year's pilot program, JVS expects over 100 teens to participate in the Job Fair.

ASSISTING PEOPLE WITH MULTIPLE AND SEVERE DISABILITIES TO ACHIEVE SUCCESSFUL EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

Conference Call Summary:

The conference call began at 2:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time. Lisa Fiore stated that she was about to start a grant-funded program for persons with developmental disabilities. The program, called Community Integration Project, is to assist consumers to integrate more fully into their communities, in both the social/recreational and vocational realms. She stated that she was looking for suggestions as to how other JVS's were achieving community integration with individuals with developmental disabilities. Several examples were given:

- Community exploration/Job Shadowing: Phyllis Grady described the community exploration activities of day program participants, designed to assist the consumers to view the community from a world of work perspective. Laura Jones discussed how this worked very effectively with students with special needs, to assist them to identify areas of vocational interest. Phyllis, Laura, and Perry Ohren discussed ways to contact employers to open up their work sites to these visits. Laura stated that she felt most employers were very receptive.
- Community-based assessment: Lydia Gray described the community-based assessment program, which allows participants to try out various jobs in order to identify vocational strengths and interests, as well as to identify support needed for vocational success.

Strategies used to assist persons with multiple and severe disabilities to obtain employment were discussed. There were several pre-placement activities mentioned:

- Community-based assessment, also called job trials
- Job shadowing
- Life Skills training: Yona Frishman described a Life Skills training program offered at the Toronto JVS. This program teaches employability skills to

prepare participants for success on the job. Some areas covered include employer expectations, hygiene and attire, punctuality, and many others. It is offered as a group program, and participants meet weekly for two and one-half hours for six weeks.

- Vocational profile, initially developed by UCP, assists persons with barriers in communication, mobility, or manipulation to identify vocational interests and skills.

We discussed the difficulty of assisting individuals with multiple and severe disabilities to obtain employment, particularly in this very slowed economy. All callers agreed that the economy has affected employment outcomes for consumers. The importance of job carving was discussed; however, none of the callers felt that they were having a great deal of success in this area at this time. Dave stated that a former Rehabilitation Counselor owns a small grocery store in Baltimore, and she is willing to carve out jobs for consumers. All agreed that changing attitudes of employers toward people with severe disabilities was critical, and that the more visible we are the more progress we will make in this area.

Yona stated that in Toronto the sheltered workshops have all closed. The importance of developing enclaves was discussed. Dave mentioned that in Baltimore call centers were important enclave sites for persons with physical limitations, as well as customer service telephone work.

Assisting consumers to maintain employment was addressed, as well. Lydia described the job retention services offered in Detroit. The state Voc Rehab agency will pay for the service for one year.

Finally, Yona stated that the Toronto Rehabilitation and Training department would like to change their name, and she asked for suggestions. If you have any suggestions for her please let her know!

Interest-Free Student Loans

Laurie Turner, Jewish Community Services of South Florida

Applications are available for interest-free student loans from the Jewish Educational Loan Fund (JELF). Funding is available to qualified applicants who plan to attend an accredited undergraduate, graduate, or vocational program in September 2003.

This "last-dollar financing" is intended to bridge the gap between a student's financial resources and the cost of attending school. Therefore, applicants must demonstrate that they have sought and received financing from all other resources, including other loans and scholarships, family contributions, and personal earnings.

To qualify, applicants must be part of the Jewish Community and have resided in Dade County for the past year. Applicants must also be a U.S. citizen or legal resident. Priority is given to applicants who attend state schools. The application must be submitted and a personal interview with Jewish Community Services (JCS) completed by April 15, 2003.

For an application and information in the Miami-Dade area, contact: Ms. Laurie Turner, Jewish Community Services of South Florida, 11155 S.W. 112th Ave. Miami, FL 33176, lturn50@aol.com.



JVS Detroit Receives Empowerment Zone Grant

JVS Detroit was recently approved for a \$166,000 grant by the Detroit Empowerment Zone Development Corporation to provide down payment assistance and homeownership counseling to individuals residing in Detroit's Central Empowerment Zone. Empowerment Zones were created by former President Clinton to create self sustaining, long-term economic development in areas of pervasive poverty, unemployment, and general distress.

As part of the grant, JVS will provide \$3,000 to 50 Empowerment residents for the down payment on a home. The agency will also offer homeownership counseling, including a series of classes on home maintenance and financial strategies to balance a household budget, manage bills and recognize predatory lending practices. A key component of the program entails consistent follow-up with homeowners over several years to assist them in avoiding foreclosure on their home, a common problem among low income individuals.

"The Empowerment Zone Grant essentially removes the two major barriers to homeownership: the funds needed for the down payment and the strategies required to maintain a mortgage," said JVS Detroit President and CEO Barbara Nurenberg. It also enables JVS to expand its existing Downpayment Assistance Program and build new partnerships in the community."

Since 2001, JVS Detroit has helped more than 200 families achieve the American dream of homeownership with no money down.



JCS' Matzah, Mitzvah & More

As Passover, 2003 quickly approaches, Jewish Community Services of South Florida (JCS) is once again asking for support to help provide traditional Pesach food to frail, elderly homebound individuals throughout Miami-Dade. This year's goal is to continue expanding this program to not only provide special food packages for Passover, but for all of the Jewish holidays throughout the year.

Last year, JCS delivered more than 1,000 Passover food packages, containing traditional Pesach foods, to individuals throughout Miami-Dade. Additionally, 1200 packages were distributed to senior care facilities and nursing homes for their Jewish residents to help them celebrate Passover. Through the generosity of the community JCS was able to provide Seders for special needs groups, such as the developmentally disabled.

"The financial support that we receive from the generosity of our community, combined with the needs of the recipients will determine what we will be able to provide in each holiday food package, and how many packages we can deliver," said Co-Chair, Ruth Zelcer.

This year JCS has been given a unique opportunity. A portion of every dollar raised will be matched by a generous grant from the Feinstein Foundation.

"The frail, isolated and poor homebound Jewish elderly are counting on you to help JCS bring the hope of Passover to them on this occasion and throughout the year," said Matzah, Mitzvah & More Co-Chair, Iris Roth.

If you would like to make a contribution to Matzah Mitzvah & More, or other funding opportunities, please call JCS Resource Development, (305) 899-1587.

Jewish Community Services of South Florida is one of the largest, most effective and influential social service agencies in Florida, and the largest Jewish-sponsored agency in the Southeast. Serving more than 30,000 clients annually, JCS reaches out to people of all denominations who are in need – the unemployed, homeless, refugees, frail elderly, physically and developmentally challenged, families in crisis, substance abusers and children who are victims of neglect and abuse.

JVS Chicago Develops Niche Program

Responding to the influx of clients with creative talent who are engaged in a job search, JVS Chicago has formed a new networking/support group. Counselors recognized a growing number of clients who had issues about their identity and needs which were impacting their career direction and job search. The group explores the myriad of challenges for those who are motivated by creativity in the work world.

On February 3, 14 professionals such as artists, photographers, musicians and graphic designers gathered to launch the inaugural session of this pilot project. Discussions revolved around: how to choose work that will encompass and express their individual passion; whether to compromise in a career choice in order to pay the bills; how to adapt to decisions made by managers that don't coincide with your vision; and how to express and integrate your talent when self-marketing and networking.

Three more sessions are planned to further the process and explore other relevant issues, provide additional networking opportunities and educate participants on the essential tools of job searching for the creative. Feedback will be solicited to evaluate the group experience, how it impacted individual campaigns and how to facilitate the group's agenda and direction in the future.

JVS MetroWest Develops Interactive Job Search Courseware

JVS of MetroWest, New Jersey has recently added a Job Search Skills Training Program to its repertoire of CD-based courseware. The new program, which complements courses in customer service skills training for the retail, hospitality and healthcare industries, is designed to provide an engaging and highly interactive CD-ROM/Internet based multi-media educational experience for unemployed or incumbent workers. This innovative approach will enable job search skills to be taught to a single client or to a group of clients who can study and progress at their own pace. Instruction may be provided as self-study or distance learning, through a “blended learning” combination of distance learning and classroom training, or as a classroom-led experience.

Learning occurs through a number of components built into the CD. First, the **Lecture Room** serves as a virtual classroom, and contains a videotaped lecturer presenting the course material. Scenarios and role plays illustrate concepts and stimulate thought. The interactive **Textbook** contains text, voiceovers, checklists, self assessment inventories and animations to reinforce the content presented in the lecture and to add supplemental information. The **Bulletin Board** and **Chat Room** provide environments where the learner can pose and answer questions, conduct research, and chat with other participants and the instructor or facilitator about course related topics. The chat room also provides the opportunity to schedule on-line real time classes that can be instructor led with student participation and interaction. A customized log-in feature captures information about the specific course modules studied and the amounts of time spent in each section, allowing the instructor or course administrator to easily monitor a learner’s progress through the course. The instructor can add helpful comments and grade completed **Assignments** and **Tests**, which the learner can view at his or her next study session. The instructor or administrator may be accessed by email to respond to questions, problems or computer issues, in real-time during scheduled Chat Room hours, and through in-person group or individual meetings. Each course is organized through the syllabus from which students can access the lecture and textbook, and can view their notes, assignments, grades, and messages from other course participants. In addition, students can gather information they may wish to refer to later from any portion of the course and capture it into their notebooks. Participants in the program work with a CD that will allow access to the program on their home computers, at their local libraries or in the computer lab or classroom.

The program covers the follow content areas: introduction to career development and employability skills; self-assessment; decision making and setting career goals; career research; job search skills and strategies; resume preparation; interview skills and strategies; interview critique and follow-up. Each of these eight modules requires the successful completion of Assignments and Tests and

takes about two hours to complete, depending on the language level of the student and not including optional chat room sessions. Non-native speakers of English may take longer to complete each module if they require repetition to master the material.

All JVS courseware also addresses basic literacy skills so that students improve their listening, reading, writing, basic communication and computer skills while they learn specific course content. The courses incorporate fifteen of the sixteen components of the skills wheel developed by the National Institute for Literacy for its Equipped for the Future adult education framework.

JVS MetroWest would like to thank Wayne Laviolette and JVS Detroit for their thorough and helpful review of the material presented in this course. Anyone who would like additional information on this or other JVS MetroWest courseware can call or email: Nancy Fisher, Director of Education and Training at 973-674-6330 or ntfisher@jvsnj.org.

Developing Employer Relations a Key Effort for JVS Minneapolis

*Andrea Brener-Brose, Employer Development Manager
abbrose@jvsmn.org*

JVS Minneapolis has been innovating ways to create new opportunities for employment. The latest brainchild is in the form of enhanced business-to-business communication that comes from understanding the needs of employers. Enter Andrea Brener-Brose, Employer Development Manager at JVS Minneapolis.

Brener-Brose’s charge is to market JVS Minneapolis with a whole agency/whole business approach. By taking the time and effort to understand each employer’s needs and business goals, JVS Minneapolis is not only in a position to meet those needs, but also to identify needs proactively. The benefits work both ways. As Brener-Brose spends more time understanding the needs of employers, she is able to showcase the abilities of JVS Minneapolis as a valuable business partner. It’s a win-win.

As employers get to know JVS and as JVS comes to understand the issues with each employer, doors open. Work sites, collaborations, training programs, call centers and a long list of other potential services can be developed to fit specific needs and business goals. The bottom line for JVS is very exciting. By positioning JVS Minneapolis as an integral business partner, JVS Minneapolis is helping to create opportunity for participants.

Prior to this new initiative, case managers were handling the relationships between JVS Minneapolis and employer partners. Restructuring how employer relations are handled does three important things. First, it sends a message to business that developing relationships are of primary concern. Second, it allows JVS Minneapolis to showcase the depth and breadth of the entire agency rather than simply on a program level. Third, it helps to facilitate the work of case managers, allowing them to optimize outcomes.

As economic news and belt tightening continue to present challenges throughout the country, Brener-Brose is confident that enhanced understanding and the ability to deliver critical services that meet real needs, will help to secure opportunity for participants and strengthen the services at JVS Minneapolis.

President's Column

Based on conversations that I've had with many of you since the New Year, I know that we are all working long hours to help our Agencies do more with (much) less. Clearly, it is easy for us to fall into mutual commiseration sessions about our Agency's fiscal woes. We are much better off, however, taking advantage of our relationships to talk about what we are trying in our respective communities to meet the needs of people with increasing needs amid shrinking resources.

Clearly, continuing to provide needed services will be a major theme of the upcoming AJVSP/IAJVS conference in Los Angeles, June 1-3, 2003. Scheduled sessions as well as informal opportunities for networking among our colleagues will enable us to share ideas and brainstorm strategies to streamline services at a time of intense need. Gathering at the conference will also give us an opportunity to discuss in person, the proposed merger of AJVSP and IAJVS. You will soon receive a copy of a document that outlines the proposed merger and works toward a realignment of two organizations into one stronger one. Even with approval of this proposal, outstanding issues will remain. Your input will be most helpful in our efforts to further staff, leadership and organizational development.

As out of town travel budgets are of great concern, Claudia Finkel has announced that staff of LA JVS are more than willing to house AJVSP members as needed to hold down conference expenses and allow more staff to attend. With all of this said, I hope that as many of you as possible will come to the conference.

Along these lines, Linda Ehrenreich from Pittsburg has agreed to join the AJVSP/IAJVS Conference Planning process to enhance the agenda for AJVSP members, with additional sessions geared more for a professional development track. Possible topic areas that have been bantered about during informal discussions include:

- Care for the Professional – Avoiding Burnout
- Values Clarification for Middle Managers – Where Do You Want to Go With Your Career?
- Successful Outcomes in the face of Barebones Budgets – Working with People with Challenging Needs Within a Group Process
- Staff Retention Strategies
- Support Services to Help Seniors Age in Place
- Communication Issues as Middle Managers

Please contact Linda by phone (412) 422-7200 or email lindae@aol.com with your input on these ideas and/or to suggest others. It would also be helpful to notify Linda and me if you think you might attend, so that we can best address the needs of the AJVSP membership in our conference planning.

I look forward to seeing many of you in a few months. I close with best wishes for rapid resolution of our budgetary constraints and abundant strength until we do.

Leah Rosenbaum

(248) 559-5000 or Irosenbaum@jvsdet.org

JVS San Francisco and Levi's

Leah S. Abrams

As a result of the Levi Strauss layoffs of garment workers in the San Francisco Bay Area, JVS has partnered with Levi's, Asian Para natal Advocates (APA), City College, and the Employment Development Department (EDD) to offer vocational training, Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL), and job placement and retention services to these laid off employees and their extended families and community. Acknowledging that these individuals, most of whom are monolingual Cantonese speakers, would require more than just new jobs in a failing industry, Levi's looked to JVS to provide its former employees and members of their community with training and employment services and to APA to provide social services.

Levi's provided a consultant to assist with outreach and program start-up, and JVS went to work to hire a full-time staff member devoted to the project. Fifty people attended the initial orientation for the program and thirty are currently enrolled. The program participants, primarily women, have all been in the country for more than five years and, having worked for Levi's for several years, were surprised by the layoffs. Their primary barrier to finding new employment is their language capacity, so they have the option of studying in JVS' VESL program for 16 or 32 weeks, depending on their English level at enrollment. After completing the VESL program, clients have the option of enrolling in one of JVS' long-term training programs such as Office Technology (OT) or Computer Aided Drafting & Design (CADD), or they can attend a City College program.

JVS staff handles all of the new client intakes, the necessary paperwork for EDD, unemployment insurance (UI) paperwork, assessment, follow-up, and assistance setting up employment-related appointments. In addition to the training services, APA staff is available to talk with clients at JVS twice each week about non-employment issues. The most popular training areas that the current students are pursuing include custodial training at City College and hotel work. In response to the interest in hotel employment, JVS has added a PC Introduction course and hotel-related vocabulary. While the eventual goal is to get program participants working again, they are encouraged to go through the full training first so that, when they are job ready, they can compete for higher level positions in careers with more stable futures.

Spring Conference Call Schedule: New Issues, New Ideas

An exciting second round of AJVSP Conference Calls has been scheduled for the spring. It will address areas of interest and concern for JVS agency departments, particularly related to issues of reduced funding and having to make do with fewer dollars to accomplish our many tasks.

The conference calls present us all with an excellent opportunity to discuss and share ideas, develop new relationships with colleagues, and gain information that we can use as we face new challenges and new initiatives. We are once again fortunate to have excellent facilitators to lead these calls. Please reserve the dates of the calls that are of interest to you and join your colleagues in an informative discussion.

Please note: Watch for call in numbers that will be sent via email.

Call Schedule:

Issues of the Mature Job Seeker

3/25 @ 2:00 EST—Meryl Kanner (MetroWest), facilitator

This session will address the following frequently encountered problems, situations and topics:

- My work experience makes me overqualified for positions, but I need to work
- Older workers cannot compete with younger workers
- How do I convince an employer that my skills are really transferable when I am trying to change careers?
- What data should and should not be included in a resume?
- Dealing with issues of depression, and helping clients to seek out health care professionals
- Involving spouses in the process
- Group program development for the older worker population

Disabilities and Employment Outcomes

3/26 @ 2:00 EST—David Humes (Baltimore), facilitator
Dealing with the problems of successful employment outcomes for a disabled population

Financial Aid for College Students

4/1 @ 2:00 EST—Toby Bresky (Cleveland), facilitator
In these days of constantly rising tuition, cuts in Federal and State spending, plant and business closings, and the increasing need for advanced education, how are we assisting our Jewish Community? Discussion will cover the following:

- Need to get the family and students to prepare for the financial aid process earlier
- Need to acquire additional family named scholarships from members of the Jewish Community
- Need to learn how to tell the story
- Need to work with Jewish families on issues of financial aid, career choices, internships, job shadowing and mentoring

Community Technology Centers

4/9 @ 2:00 EST—Leah Abrams (San Francisco), facilitator
Bringing technology services into the general community and partnering with other agencies to make services successful.

Recruiting and Retaining Qualified Candidates When You Ain't Got No Bucks!

4/15 @ 2:00 EST—Shannon Johnson (Cincinnati—HR Manager), facilitator

Participants in this session will discuss the challenges of hiring and retaining well-qualified professionals and para-professionals on a limited budget.

Micro-Enterprise

A session on micro-enterprise led by Inna Kinney of Columbus will be scheduled. Watch for details.

E-lights Editors:

Elizabeth Toups and Leah S. Abrams of
JVS San Francisco.

To submit articles for future newsletters,
please email Elizabeth at
etoups@jvs.org.

Thanks to everyone who contributed to
this issue of e-lights!

Save the Date!

The annual IAJVS Conference
Annual Conference will be held
June 1—3, 2003
Merv Griffin's Beverly Hills Hilton
Los Angeles, CA

Details will be announced soon!