

Annual Report

— 2025 —





MISSION

Guided by Jewish values and culture, Jewish Council for Youth Services (JCYS) provides educational and recreational programs for Chicagoland’s children and, through board service, develops the next generation of Jewish civic leaders.

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A Message From Leadership

At JCYS, learning is an act of communal care. It is an expression of our core values—*tikkun olam* (repairing the world), *tzedakah* (giving and justice), and *chesed* (loving kindness)—brought to life through every child, educator, and family we serve. This past year was filled with moments that embodied these values, and we're proud to share the highlights with you.

Demand for our programs surged—especially for infant care, where interest lists reached unprecedented levels. Our commitment to lifelong learning extended beyond the classroom: our Board of Directors participated in the JCYS Leadership Circle, deepening their understanding of governance and service, while welcoming a new cohort of Designates. Their leadership helped transform Wild for JCYS at the Lincoln Park Zoo into one of our most successful events, raising over \$250,000 in sponsorships to power scholarships and drive program innovation.

In April, guided by the value of *l'dor v'dor*—building from generation to generation—we launched a strategic planning process that will clarify our vision and build on our 118-year legacy with intention and care. This collaborative process, set to conclude this fall, will ensure we continue to meet the evolving needs of children, families, and the greater Jewish community.

Thank you for believing in JCYS and investing in our mission. Your support exemplifies the values we hope to instill in every child we serve. We invite you to celebrate our collective impact, share your voice, and help shape the future we're building—together.

With gratitude and anticipation,

Samantha Jakubowski
Chief Executive Officer

Josh Beren
Board President



Early Childhood Education

With four family centers throughout Chicagoland, JCYS welcomes families of all faiths and backgrounds into a warm, inclusive community where little ones, starting at 6 weeks old, are known, loved, and celebrated.

Our play-based, Reggio-inspired approach builds confidence and imagination. Each day, children live Jewish values like *tikkun olam* (repairing the world), *tzedakah* (giving and justice), and *chesed* (loving kindness) through lessons, connection, and purposeful play.

We care for the whole child: helping them develop emotional intelligence, strong problem-solving skills, healthy bodies, and a lifelong love of learning—tools that stick with them far beyond preschool.



Summer Camps

Summer at JCYS is a chance for kids to play hard, explore freely, and share unforgettable moments with friends. From swimming and outdoor play to city adventures and creative projects, our camps give children ages 6 weeks to 13 years the space to grow, connect, and discover new interests, all while staying grounded in the same values that guide our school-year programs.

WICKER PARK & HIGHLAND PARK

Infants – PreK
Sunflower Camp

LINCOLN SQUARE RAVENSWOOD

Infants – 5th grade
Sunflower Camp, Big City Day Camp

BUFFALO GROVE

Infants – 8th grade
Sunflower Camp, Lil' North, North Suburban Day Camp

JCYS PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

June 1, 2024 – May 31, 2025



School Year
Programming

507
KIDS



Summer Camp
Programming

650
KIDS



Wild for JCYS

On May 4, over 200 community members came together at the Lincoln Park Zoo for Wild for JCYS, raising more than \$315,000 to support early childhood education, summer camps, and leadership development.

More than a fundraiser, the night was a reminder that strong communities start early and last a lifetime. Guests explored the lion exhibit after hours, shared stories of transformation, and rallied together during a high-energy paddle raise. It was a joyful, unforgettable night, and it's only possible because of donors like you. Together, we're creating spaces where children and adults find purpose, connection, and a true sense of belonging.

Thank you for standing with us, and for going wild.



Leadership Circle

This year, our Leadership Development Committee reimagined what it means to build a strong, engaged Board of Directors. In a world that demands thoughtful, responsive leadership, JCYS is meeting that need head on.

Through a series of impactful learning sessions, our leaders deepened their knowledge, sharpened their skills, and aligned more closely around our mission.

Highlights included:

- **Working Effectively as a Board and Committees** with Alicia Oberman, Senior Advisor, Board Leadership at Leading Edge
- **Reimagined Finance Training** with Katie Nowicki, Vice President of Leadership Development and Jason Zenner, Treasurer
- **Strategic Event Planning** with Phyllis Tabachnick, Past President
- **The Board's Role in Strategic Planning** with ABW Partners

We're proud of the leaders who showed up, leaned in, and continue to move our mission forward with clarity and purpose.



Board of Directors

Central to JCYS's mission is our commitment to nurturing the next generation of Jewish professionals dedicated to community service and philanthropy. The vision and dedication of our Board of Directors—past and present—have played a vital role in shaping our success and strengthening our impact.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Josh Beren, President
 Max Fargotstein, President-Elect
 Carly Newman, Immediate Past President
 Benjamin Altshul, Vice President of Development
 Katie Nowicki, Vice President of Leadership Development
 James Arogeti, Vice President of Strategy and Innovation
 Ian Shaffer, Assistant Vice President of Strategy and Innovation
 Jason Zenner, Treasurer
 Zack Karmin, Secretary
 Rachel Seserman Patzik, At Large
 Suzanne Herschman Secler, At Large

BOARD MEMBERS

Jessica Bernstein
 Roni Cohen
 Robert Friend
 Laura Gottlieb
 Lianne Epstein Jacobs
 Noah Jaffe
 Courtney Rosenfield Kalter
 Leah Knobel
 Bradley Levin
 Morgan Marcus
 Jordan Multack
 Mike Neff
 Josh Olian
 Madeline Remish
 Dan Thalheimer

DESIGNATES TO THE BOARD

Allie Dresner
 Seth Greenberg
 Ryan Hess
 Ellie Kirshenbaum
 Adam Vishny

JCYS PAST PRESIDENTS

Alan Altheimer*	Eli E. Fink*	Howard M. Landau*	Philip P. Sachs*
Joseph P. Antonow*	Robert B. Fridstein*	Leonard Laser*	Monte H. Sadler*
Douglas S. Banzuly	Jeffrey Friedman	Jon A. Levey	Robert L. Sampson*
Louis Behr*	William H. Friedman*	Moses Levitan*	Herbert T. Schaffner*
Edwin A. Bergman*	Judge Hugo M. Friend*	Philip A. Lieber*	M. King Schrager*
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Joseph L. Block*	Richard Glabman	David R. Loewenberg*	Chester H. Schultz*
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Melvin A. Blum*	Steven Glick	Eric M. Maletsky	Joseph D. Shane*
Henry Blumberg*	Edwin C. Glickman*	Frank G. Marshall*	Michael Shaw
Judge Jacob M. Braude*	Milton D. Goldberg*	Lawrence J. Menaker	Lawrence W. Skebelsky*
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Marshall L. Burman*	Steven P. Gomberg	Brian Netzkzy	Kenneth I. Solomon*
Archie H. Cohen*	Lee M. Gordon	Carly Newman	Alan P. Solow
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James H. Colitz	Harry N. Gottlieb*	Judge Hugo Pam*	Phyllis Tabachnick
Robert G. Davidson	Millard J. Grauer*	Norman Perlmutter	Adam Tarantur
General Abel Davis*	Jeffery M. Heftman	Harry Z. Perel*	Sidney J. Taylor*
Tommy DeGarmo	Governor Henry Horner*	Daniel R. Pollack	Calvin J. Tobin*
Rand A. Diamond	Ezra E. Jaffe	Allan J. Reich	Steven J. Topel
Richard H. Eckhouse*	Lisa Jericho	Philip E. Ringer*	Irine Sorser Turin
Edmund K. Eichengreen*	Michael Karmin	Allen L. Rogoway	Liz Roberts Turnipseed
Raymond Epstein*	Sidney M. Katz*	S. Eugene Rosenbacher*	Howard F. Wallach*
Morris E. Feiwell*	Daniel A. Kaufman	Al H. Rosenberg*	Robert T. Weil
Thomas T. Field	Jason Keith	Lester J. Rosenberg*	Harry Weisberg*
Brian Fields	Jay L. Kraus*	Michael Rosenberg	Richard D. Winter*
Caryn Fields	Lazarus Krinsley*	Issac S. Rothschild*	Gary J. Wool
	Paul R. Kuhn*	Ira W. Rubel*	Alan M. Yaffe*

JCYS DIRECTORS FOR LIFE

James R. Anixter	Marvin Kamensky*	Bernard G. Sang*
Scott C. Anixter*	Alyssa Knobel	John I. Schlossman*
Steven Anixter	David E. Kohn	Frederick R. Schwimmer
Bruce R. Bachmann*	Henry S. Landan*	Ronald S. Sonenthal
Daniel L. Benton*	Hilton R. Leibow*	Ben F. Stein*
Donald Borzak	Shirley Leibow*	Harry Steiner*
Merrill E. Brown*	Max L. Loewenberg*	Jon Vegosen
Charles S. Desser*	Robert K. Meltzer	Ted Wagner
Mildred Desser*	Dr. Jacob Meyer*	Elmer Wedeles*
Howard L. Ecker	Steven H. Podolsky	Lawrence J. Weiner
Sidney Epstein*	Nancy Pollack	
Herbert B. Fried*	Joshua D. Rinkov	Nisson S. Pearl
Arthur M. Friedman	Viki Rivkin	<i>(Executive Director Emeritus)</i>
Herbert J. Friedman*	Susan Rochlis*	
Howard Friend	James L. Rolfe	
Mark L. Goldberg*	Robert Rosenbacher	
Mark Goodman	Sidney Rosset*	

*indicates deceased

Financial Data

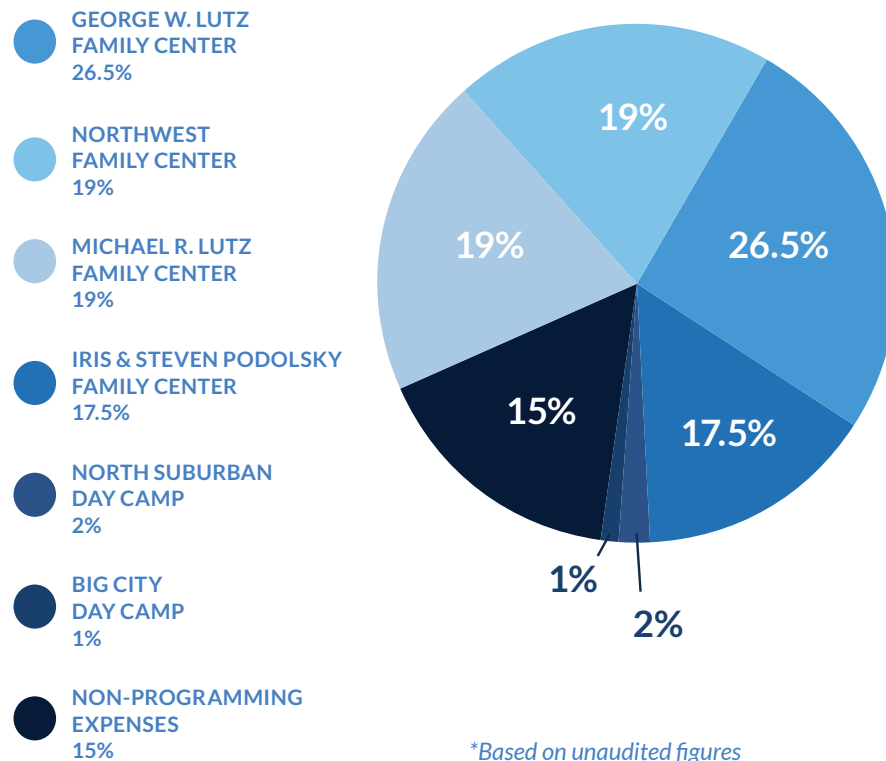
June 1, 2024 – May 31, 2025

TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES **\$12,505,219***

DISTRIBUTION OF OPERATING EXPENSES

Direct Program Expenses 85%
Non-Program Expenses 15%

DIRECT PROGRAM EXPENSE DETAILS



TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE **\$13,013,316***

SOURCES OF OPERATING REVENUE

Programming fees & other 93%
Public Support 7%

PUBLIC SUPPORT DETAILS



Scholarship Impact

Summer 2024 & School Year 2024 - 2025

\$116,717

TOTAL SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS AWARDED

\$1,762 AVERAGE FULL YEAR AWARD PER CHILD **\$3,506** AVERAGE FULL YEAR AWARD PER FAMILY

SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED TO

75 CHILDREN 32 FAMILIES

Legacy & Leadership Giving

VISIONARY CIRCLE

Thank you to the donors who are part of JCYS's planned giving program.

Dr. Howard N. Allen
Maurice Fantus*
Millard J. Grauer*
Lisa Jericho
Alyssa and Jeremy Knobel
Iris and Steven Podolsky
Dan and Nancy Pollack
Susan Rochlis*
David* and Carol Schulman

**indicates deceased*

DESSERT ALUMNI CAMPAIGN DONORS

Gifts made from June 1, 2024 - May 31, 2025

\$5,000 +

James R. and Lesley B. Anixter
Janet and Steven Anixter

\$2,500 - \$4,999

Rand and Rhonda Diamond
Dana and Lee Gordon
Iris and Steven Podolsky

\$1,000 - \$2,499

Ian Alexander
Lisa Jericho
Brooke and Michael Karmin
S. James Perlow
Allan and Lynne Reich
Alan P. and Andrea Solow
Ronald and Kathy Sonenthal
Robert J. and Roberta Washlow

\$500 - \$999

Eric and Carolyn Birkenstein
Michael and Adriana Capone
Mark and Linda Goodman
Marla and Ezra Jaffe
Jon A. Levey
Betty & Thomas Philipsborn
Philanthropic Fund
Adam and Natalie Tarantur

\$250 - \$499

Melissa and Jeffrey I. Bleiweis
Amy and Daniel A. Kaufman
Alex Turin and Irine Sorser Turin

\$249 & Below

Sarah and Scott Hirsch
Nancy and Rick Kreiter
Wendy and Ben Roth
Marianne and Stuart Taussig
Gregg F. and Bruni Witt

WILD FOR JCYS SPONSORS

Sponsorships made from June 1, 2024 - May 31, 2025

King of the Jungle - \$25,000

Setna iO
Wintrust Financial Corporation

Pride Protector - \$10,000

Cisco Systems, Inc.
Greenberg Traurig, LLP
Levenfeld Pearlstein, LLC
Seyfarth Shaw LLP

Lion's Roar - \$7,500

Bob and Lynne Wolfberg

Savannah Champion - \$5,000

Josh and Samantha Beren
Bulldog Security
Corporate Valuation Services
Gilbert and Jacqueline
Fern Foundation
JMB Insurance
Jon and Sarah Karelitz
Karmin Family Foundation
Lewis Greenwood Foundation
Polk Bros. Foundation

David and Tanya Solomon
The Stankowicz Family
Phyllis Tabachnick
Wilkie Farr & Gallagher LLP
The Zegar Family Foundation

Safari Supporter - \$3,600

adNet Technology Management
Berger Schatz
Cresa
Duane Morris, LLP
FGMK, LLC
Daniel and Lianne Jacobs
Merel Family Law
Stewart-Miller, Inc.
Janet Winter

Paw Partner - \$2,500

Associated Insurance and
Risk Management Advisors
Beermann LLP
Joel and Linda Beren
BMO
Cagan Management Group Inc.

Hilary and Zach Galant
Maria Garvy
Hall Estill
Hoffenberg & Block, LLC
Ezra and Marla Jaffe
Samantha and Alex Jakubowski
Alyssa and Jeremy Knobel
and Family
Much Shelist P.C.
Old Republic National Title
The Scott Group
The Thalheimer Family

Cub Companion - \$1,250

Arrow Home Advisors
The Baird Foundation
Boiko & Osmani, P.C.
Elavon, Inc.
Jeremy & Danielle Neil
Schneider Deli
Ron & Kathy Sonenthal
Franny and Mike Zucker

Donor Honor Roll

To everyone who gave between June 1, 2024, and May 31, 2025—thank you.

Your generosity powers every program, scholarship, and moment of connection at JCYS.



View the full list of donors by scanning the QR code.



JEWISH COUNCIL FOR YOUTH SERVICES

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