

# 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.

# Table of Contents

Message from Leadership	3
Early Childhood Education	4
Summer Camps	5
Wild for JCYS	6
Leadership Circle	7
Board of Directors	8
Past Presidents & Directors for Life	9
Financial Data	10-11
Legacy & Leadership Giving & Donor Honor Roll	12-13



## 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 Altschul, 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*
Jennifer L. Berman	David G. Futransky	Melvin K. Lippe*	David B. Schulman*
Joseph L. Block*	Richard Glabman	David R. Loewenberg*	Chester H. Schultz*
Henry S. Blum*	James J. Glassner*	Michael R. Lutz*	Harry L. Schuman*
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*
Daniel J. Brenner	Robert G. Goldstein	Henry S. Moser*	David B. Solomon
Marshall L. Burman*	Steven P. Gomberg	Brian Netzkzy	Kenneth I. Solomon*
Archie H. Cohen*	Lee M. Gordon	Carly Newman	Alan P. Solow
Stephen G. Cohn*	Norman Gordon*	Emanuel M. Newman*	Greg Stewart
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

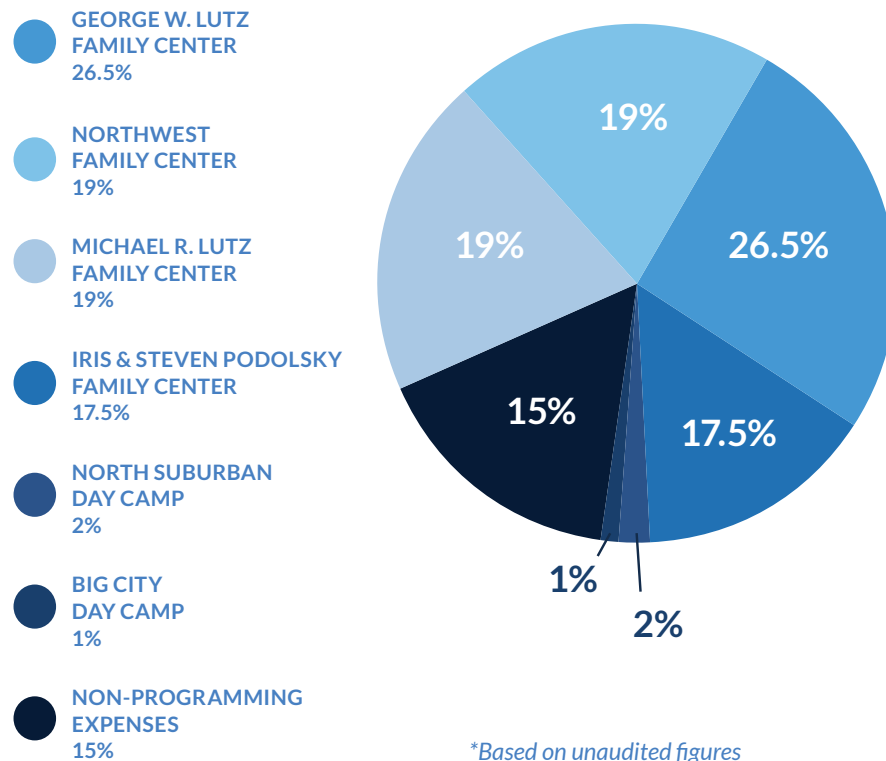
June 1, 2024 – May 31, 2025

**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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