



NETWORK
of Jewish Human
Service Agencies

VISION

NJHSA
Annual Conference

2020

CONVENE. CONNECT. COLLABORATE.

Achieving Diversity as a Jewish Agency Board: Part II

July 23, 2020

An abstract graphic on the left side of the page consists of several concentric, broken blue circles of varying radii. The circles are composed of multiple segments, creating a fragmented, spiral-like effect. Four small, solid blue spheres are scattered within the circular patterns. The background is a dark, textured grey.

Achieving Diversity as a
Jewish Agency Board:
Part II

Susan Friedman
Jane Matlaw

WHY BOARD DIVERSITY?

Research Finding:

- Systems perform best when internal diversity reflects the diversity of the environment
- A nonprofit with a homogenous board can suffer from debilitating tactical myopia.
- Demographic diversity serves as a symbol of the organization's values.
- **CAVEATE: Diversity looks different for every organization - ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL!**

WHAT
COMPRISES
DIVERSITY FOR
THIS
CONVERSATION?

Men, Women and/or Other with differing ...

- Race
- Ethnicity
- Culture
- Sexual identity
- Disability
- Age AND
- **Religion**

HOW DOES BOARD DIVERSITY ADD VALUE?

- Brings multiple perspectives to the table
- Opens doors to community stakeholders
- Models inclusion to the agency's staff
- Encourages collaboration and partnerships
- Increases organizations "fundability"
- **Particularly critical in light of COVID-19 and Black Lives Matter - Diverse Board members can help translate for the Board the needs and concerns of community(ies) the agency serves**

PROGRESS
TOWARDS
DIVERSITY:
THE DATA



WHAT IS
WRONG
WITH THIS
PICTURE?



“Diversity is good. Pass it down.”

BOARD DIVERSITY BY THE NUMBERS

- Leading with Intent (Board Source Study of 1,700 Board Chairs and Agency CEO's) highlights a serious imbalance with regard to race and age:
 - 84% of nonprofit board members reported as white and
 - 83 % are over the age of 40.
- **No data for Boards of Jewish Agencies**

THE ELEPHANT IN OUR BOARDROOMS



How do Jewish Agency Boards diversify while retaining their Jewish identity?

JEWISH HUMAN SERVICE AGENCIES AND DIVERSITY:

THE CURRENT ENVIRONMENT

- Most Jewish Agencies are no longer serving exclusively or even largely Jewish clientele
- The demands of funders, cultural competency and positive community relations necessitates a diverse staff
- Anecdotally we know that Jewish agency Boards have not diversified their members

WHAT DEFINES A
JEWISH AGENCY
AS "JEWISH"?

ONE SIZE DOES
NOT FIT ALL

Is it that...

- Primary funding comes from Jewish Federations, funders, donors?
- Jewish census (client and staff) is substantial in size and scope ?
- Agency's mission, vision and policies are defined in terms of Jewish values?
- Programs and services are in part or wholly designed for the Jewish community?
- Agency is branded as a Jewish Human Service Agency ? **AND/OR**
- **Agency Leadership is Jewish?**
 - Board
 - CEO

WHY DIVERSIFY YOUR JEWISH BOARD?

ASK YOUR BOARD
TO CONSIDER...

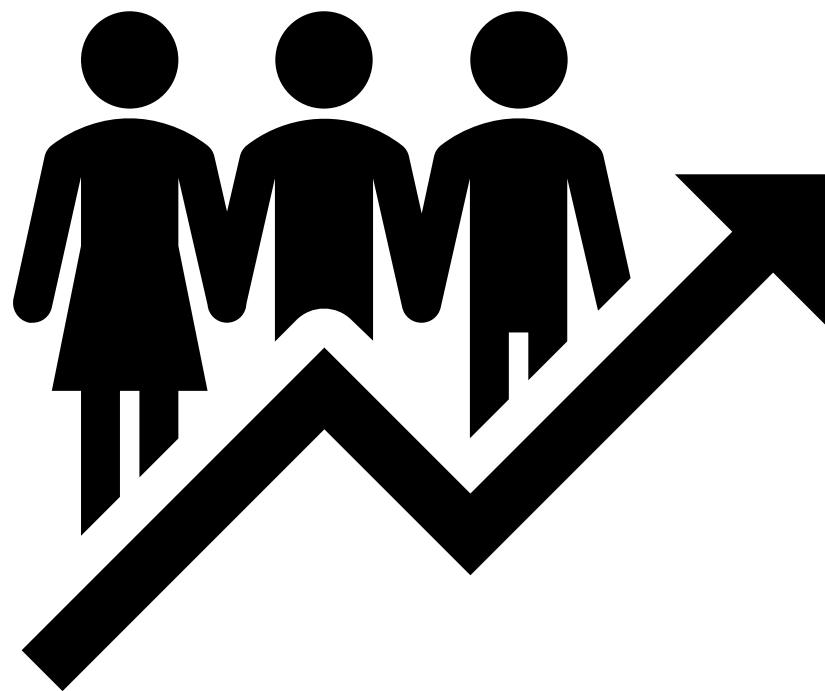
- Is your organization's reputation negatively (or positively) impacted by your Board's current composition?
- If someone were to make assumptions about your organizational values based upon your board composition what would they be likely to think?
- How well are you bringing your clients'/communities perspectives, needs, feedback and priorities into your strategic boardroom discussions?
- Do you ever feel you are making decisions without fully understanding how may affect those you serve?

IS A FULLY
JEWISH
BOARD THE
LAST BASTION
OF JEWISH?

- Can Jewish Boards effectively diversify while retaining their Jewish identity?
- Is there the danger of a “tipping point?”

HOW TO
SUCCESSFULLY
DIVERSIFY YOUR
JEWISH BOARD:

A VIEW FROM THE
FIELD





SKILLS . JOBS . CAREERS

JVS Boston

Mission:

- Empower individuals from diverse communities to find employment and build careers
- Partner with employers to hire, develop and retain productive workforces

Last year:

- Connected **2,286** people with new jobs
- Partnered with **1,669** employers
- Graduated **380** people from skills training programs
- Prepared **106** students to enter college



SKILLS . JOBS . CAREERS

Skills training:

- Pharmacy technician
- Nursing assistant
- Biotechnology
- Healthcare information technology
- Food service
- Hospitality
- Bank careers

Education:

- High school diploma
- English for Speakers of Other Languages
- College access
- Employer-based training for incumbent workers

Job placement:

- MassHire American Jobs Center
- Immigrants & refugees
- Individuals with disabilities



JVS Boston



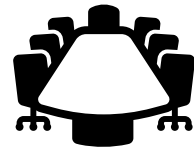
total budget: \$17,580,928



total number of clients: 17,186 served in FY19



total number of staff: ~155 FTEs



total number of board members: 34





SKILLS . JOBS . CAREERS

SOCIAL JUSTICE

JUSTICE

We remember and honor our Jewish legacy of Tikkun Olam (repair the world) and Tzedakah (justice, righteousness), always working for social justice through our words and deeds.

REPAIR
RIGHTEOUS

THE VALUE OF TIKKUN OLAM THE REPAIR OF THE WORLD

As Rabbi Jonathan Sacks writes, in giving meaning to the idea of Tikkun Olam, "As long as there is hunger, poverty, and treatable disease in the world there is work for us to do. As long as nations fight, and men hate, and corruption stalks the corridors of power; as long as there is unemployment and homelessness, depression and despair, our task is not yet done, and we hear, if we listen carefully enough, the voice of God asking us, as he asked the first humans, 'Where are you?'"

THE VALUE OF TZEDAKAH

Tzedakah is usually translated as charity, though it is derived from the Hebrew word meaning "justice" or "righteousness".

Jewish Vocational Service's particular focus on "skills, jobs and careers" is rooted in important Jewish teachings on the value of work.

Maimonides writes that there are eight degrees of tzedakah, one higher than the other. The highest degree is that of the person who assists another in finding employment and helps to release another from dependency and poverty to achieve independent self-sufficiency.

THE VALUE OF LOVING A STRANGER

Jewish Vocational Service's history of providing skills, jobs, and careers for Jewish and other immigrants also has an important and very relevant narrative, both because of the Jewish community's own immigrant experience in the United States, which helps the community understand other immigrants' challenges, and its long-standing values captured in Jewish text.

For example, not once or twice, but many times the Torah tells us: "Do not oppress the stranger." Indeed, we are urged to "love the stranger in our midst." Many interpret the word "stranger" to mean the newcomer, the refugee, or one who is outside the mainstream, and it is with this that Jewish Vocational Service's work welcomes and supports the "stranger", whether an immigrant, a refugee, a low-income individual, an unemployed worker, or someone with a disability.



United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley

Additional Resources

Books:

- White Fragility by Robin D'Angelo
- How to be an Antiracist by Ibram X. Kendi

Article:

- <https://libjournal.uncg.edu/ijcp/article/viewFile/249/116>

Podcasts:

- Unlocking W's with Brene Brown
- Brene Brown: Interview with Ibram X. Kendi on How to be an Antiracist
- Brene Brown on Shame and Accountability

Links:

- <http://jewishtgether.org> now hosts a web page with [resources on racial justice](#)



THANK
YOU

Susan Friedman, Board Dynamics Consulting
Boardynamics@gmail.com

Jane Matlaw, Chair, JVS, Boston
Jane.Matlaw@gmail.com



August 4 @ 1 p.m. EDT

**Vision 2020: Unscripted, Radically Honest
Conversations About Addiction - NJHSA Pillar
Collaboration Award Winner (JFCS Philadelphia)**

August 18 @ 1 p.m. EDT

**NJHSA Best Practice Pillar Award Winner-
Jewish Family and Child Service of Greater
Toronto - The Transformative Journey of
Building a Reimagined Supplementary Financial
Assistance: Optimizing a Mutual Framework**

Registration links can be found in our newsletters or on our website: <https://www.networkjhsa.org/>.