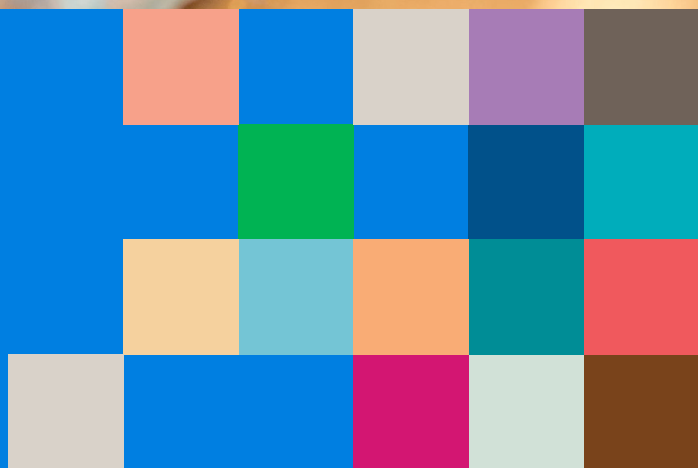




SPRING 2024 • ISSUE 12

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A Message From Your LJCC CEO

FINDING CENTER: A Year of Growth and Community at Levine JCC!

DEAR LEVINE JCC MEMBERS,

When I arrived at the Levine JCC in February of 2023 I was intrigued to learn about that year's annual theme; "Find Your Center." Little did we know the profound resonance it would carry throughout 2023, not only for me as the new CEO but for the entire Charlotte Jewish community.

The theme's significance expanded beyond my personal journey, touching the lives of numerous others who discovered their center within our vibrant community over the past year. As we reflect on this transformative period, let's explore some remarkable highlights that define our collective experience:

1. **Community Growth:** Welcoming 1,800 new JCC members, our community has flourished, embracing diverse perspectives and backgrounds.
2. **Summer Camp Adventures:** Engaging 350 first-time campers in activities ranging from swimming and singing to sports and Israeli crafts. These newcomers formed lasting connections with the 850 returning campers, fostering a sense of unity.
3. **Team Expansion:** Our JCC staff team grew by 350 members, including dedicated summer camp counselors, lifeguards, and swim instructors. This expansion underscores our commitment to providing exceptional experiences.

Annie
Keith

704-944-6800

annie.keith@charlottejcc.org

Amidst the vibrant tapestry of events, we hosted nearly 4,000 community participants, contributing to the success of special events like the Charlotte Jewish Film Festival, the Levine JCC Kids Triathlon benefiting pediatric rehabilitation services, and the annual Purim Carnival. Additionally, our dedication to education shone through as we reached 4,911 students with the Levine JCC Butterfly Project, imparting crucial lessons from the Holocaust.

In these challenging times, our JCC has become a haven for positivity and meaningful impact. Despite the weight on our hearts due to the crisis in Israel and the prevailing Antisemitism, we recognize our pivotal role in the lives of families and individuals. The JCC stands as a pillar of support, offering health, wellness, social and emotional connections, and meaningful Jewish experiences.

As our JCC family continues to grow, it's heartening to know that word of mouth remains the primary reason people join us. Whether it's the allure of our world-class facilities, the camaraderie on our new pickleball courts, the creativity in ceramics classes, the energy of JFORCE, the energy at Camp Mindy, the competition on the basketball court, or simply the joy of making new friends, individuals *find their center* here.

When we surveyed our community, the feedback directly from our members resonates deeply:

77% Jewish Identity:
77% feel a stronger connection to their Jewish identity.

90% Community Well-being:
An impressive 90% believe the JCC significantly contributes to the well-being of our local community.

As CEO, these sentiments are a testament to the unwavering commitment, passion, and dedication of our exceptional staff and board. One member's heartfelt words encapsulate the essence of our community:

"I love the inclusive and supportive community culture that has been created here. I feel at home, and I feel that I am accepted and belong. I love the staff who are always friendly and helpful. Everything offered at the JCC is very well done."

These words affirm our mission to build a welcoming and inclusive environment. I am proud to be part of a community that embraces diversity and fosters a sense of belonging.

At the end of our 2023 Annual Meeting, we announced our theme for 2024, "We're All In!" As I look around our campus each day, I see so many of you "All In" for health, wellness, culture, camaraderie, and support. For our staff, this year's theme beckons us to renew our commitment to your growth and success. Together, we're on a journey that builds on the foundation of community, inclusivity, and meaningful experiences that define the Levine JCC.

With gratitude,
Annie Keith
CEO, Levine JCC

Annie Keith

A Message From Your Board President



Lisa Strause
Levinson

ljccpresident@charlottejcc.org

"Enriching lives
and building
relationships
through
quality Jewish
experiences."



A Year of Commitment, Growth, and Gratitude at Levine JCC

AS WE ENTER ANOTHER SPRING SEASON, I find myself reflecting on the journey we've taken together at the Levine Jewish Community Center (JCC). Last year, I shared the mission that guides our every decision: to enrich lives and build relationships through quality Jewish experiences. This mission drives our dedicated board of directors, and this year, I am proud to declare that we are fully committed!

I am deeply honored to have been asked to extend my term as board president for an additional year. Your confidence in me fuels my commitment to the continued success and growth of the Levine JCC.

Looking back at the past year, we welcomed Annie Keith as our new CEO, a dynamic leader who seamlessly integrated into our community. In her first 120 days, Annie listened, learned, and began shaping our board and staff. Together, we move forward, putting the challenges of the pandemic behind us and focusing on future growth and development.

Our incredible board, a group of dedicated lay leaders, held its first retreat in over a decade in early 2023. This retreat laid the foundation for strategic board meetings and thoughtful discussions about our future path. In the upcoming year, my commitment is to foster further board development and provide pathways for volunteers to become engaged future leaders. *We're all in!*

Last summer, the board committed to enhancing quality Jewish experiences across all programming arms of the Levine JCC. This commitment, now more critical than ever, aligns with our mission to be a beacon of light in the face of rising antisemitism and global challenges. We will stand firm, be the light, and continue our unwavering commitment to Jewish values. *We're all in!*

One significant initiative to elevate our Jewish experiences involves dedicating a full-time staff member to Jewish programming. Anna Gunsher, Senior Programming Officer, has planned engaging and educational programs, supported by our newly formed Jewish Engagement committee. Chaired by Karen Maniloff, this committee comprises board and community members, all eager to contribute to meaningful Jewish experiences. *We're all in!*

As 2024 continues, I envision a vibrant community actively participating in fitness classes, on the tennis or pickleball courts, at enriching adult programs, athletic events, and the fantastic offerings from our revamped Art & Culture department. Let's be present, engaged, and part of the tapestry of community life. **BE ALL IN!**

With gratitude,
Lisa Strause Levinson
President, Levine JCC Board

Lisa Strause Levinson

We're In!

Capital Campaign Update



COMING SOON!

JBuild Projects Summary

HERE'S A LOOK BACK at the past eight years of projects:

IN THE WORKS FOR 2024 >>>

OUTDOOR COMPLEX RENOVATIONS!

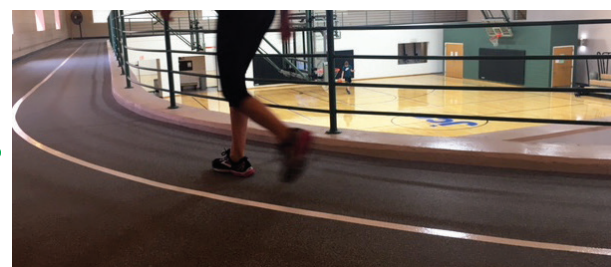
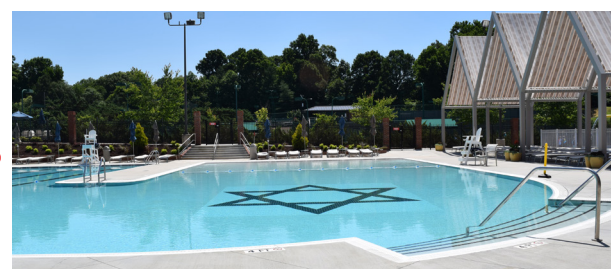
- ✓ Pool Enclosure
- ✓ Re-Plastered Pool
- ✓ Renovated Pool Bathhouse Bathrooms
- ✓ New HVAC System
- ✓ Updated Lighting
- ✓ Racquet Sports Social Area, including:
 - A Unisex Restroom • Shade Structure
 - Patio Furniture • Flooring • New Fencing

NEW >>>

- ✓ Pickleball Courts
- ✓ Outdoor Aquatics Complex Zero Entry Swimming Pool
- ✓ State of the Art Cardio Equipment
- ✓ Splash Ground Floor
- ✓ Camp Mindy Playground
- ✓ Family Locker Rooms

RENOVATED >>>

- ✓ Adult Locker Rooms:
 - Fully Renovated Showering Area
 - New Flooring, Lockers & Changing Areas (general side only)
 - New Women's Steam Room
 - New Locker Room Furnishings
 - Fully Upgraded Massage Room
 - Fully Renovated Adult Restoration Rooms (both locker rooms)
- ✓ Men's Steam Room
- ✓ Repainted the Alvin E. Levine Gym & Jogging Track
- ✓ Alvin E. Levine Staircase Improvements
- ✓ Indoor Pool HVAC Upgrade & Replacement
- ✓ Gorelick Hall:
 - New Stage Curtains
 - LED Stage Lights
 - Additional Speakers, Monitors & Microphones
- ✓ Upstairs Fitness Studio



NEW!
January
2024

Levine JCC's Adaptive Swim Program

Adaptive Swim Lessons

Therapeutic and calming, water provides feelings of weightlessness, relief from pain, improved balance, range of motion and strength, coordination, and may help reduce sensory overload.

Our new Adaptive Swim Program use modified/adaptive techniques to accommodate an individual's abilities, needs, and goals by placing an emphasis on swimming skills and water safety. Specially trained and certified instructors work with the individual and family to set obtainable goals relating to pool/water safety, swimming skills, and/or adapted stroke techniques to ensure their success in and around the water.

To make an inquiry or book a session, please email:

JSwimSchool@charlottejcc.org

Nate

The J pool has been Nate's "happy place" since before he could walk. Nate started taking swim classes as a baby at the J in the parent and me classes, and has not left the pool since. The J pool has been one of the most consistent places of happiness and fun for Nate his whole life. When Nate was 4 years old, he was diagnosed on the Autism Spectrum. One of the hardest things for us was to find a physical activity for Nate (who loves to be physically active and has a hard time being on a big team). We tried some group sports, but the larger group setting was just not for him.

Nate went from the baby and parent classes, to some private lessons and then when he was old enough

he attended the preschool group swim lessons. Nate loved swimming, but he eventually aged out of group swim lessons and we thought Swim Team might be too much for him (too many people and too loud). We realized that the only way to keep Nate in the pool year round was going to be private lessons. One of the cool things that we learned is that the J was actively training their swim staff to teach adaptive swim, which is helpful to teach swim to children and young adults with special needs.

Nate can be found at the J in swimming lessons at the pool a couple of afternoons a week during the school year. In the summer months he can't wait for the outdoor pool to open, and he fell in love with the waterslide last summer.

The J is such a special place for our family. It is a blessing to have such an inclusive facility that employs instructors and encourages employees to take special classes to learn how to teach kids and young adults from all backgrounds and abilities. It is clear that the J is all in and we can't wait to see what the future years bring.

—Adina
(Nate's mom)

Thea

Since Thea joined the Levine JCC in the Fall of 2022, it's been an incredible adventure for our family. From her initial struggles with doggy paddles to mastering smooth strokes, it's been a joy to witness her progress. The coaches at the J have been instrumental. They've been there every step of the way, offering encouragement and guidance. Their patience and support have helped transform Thea's confidence in the water. They've turned her "I cannot's" into "watch me's" and her pool jitters into pool parties! Swimming has been more than just a sport for Thea, it's taught her valuable life lessons. The coaches have instilled in her a sense of perseverance and resilience, which she carries with her beyond the pool deck. We're excited to see where Thea's love for swimming takes her next. With the continued support of the coaches at JCC, we're confident she'll continue to grow and thrive both in and out of the water.

— Florence (Thea's mom)



**NURTURING
WATER
THERAPIES**

Merrin Teen Professional Fellowship

An 18-Month Professional Development Program for JCC Professionals Who Work with Teens

THE MERRIN TEEN PROFESSIONAL FELLOWSHIP is based on the idea that the key to creating a vibrant future is connecting our teens to meaningful Jewish experiences today.

This 16-18 month long fellowship provides an intensive, transformative professional development program to JCC professionals who are early in their career and wish to dig deeper into their professional journey. It supports their growth within the JCC Movement, their work with teens, and their advancement as a Jewish communal professional. There are four core areas of focus for the cohort:

- Jewish Literacy
- Understanding Adolescence
- Networking
- Leadership Development

The program includes several in-person seminars, including one that takes place in Israel.

Since 1999, more than 125 Merrin Fellows have completed this professional development program, and hundreds of thousands of teens have been influenced by their important work.



Caleb Seidler
Levine JCC Family and
Community Life Coordinator

This past February, I had the opportunity to attend my second seminar for the Merrin Teen Professional cohort, this time at the JCC Association in New York. It was a wonderful opportunity where I was able to connect with other JCC's teen professionals from all across the country, as well as all the staff that works at the JCCA. I look forward to bringing back some of the knowledge I gained at this conference from groups like Honeycomb and the Jewish Education Project, to further enhance teen programming at the JCC as well as for this summer with our Teen Camp.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?
Contact Caleb: 704-944-6844
caleb.seidler@charlottejcc.org

Invest in Your Community SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AT THE LEVINE JCC

SPONSORING AN EVENT AT THE LEVINE JCC goes far beyond financial support - it's about making a meaningful impact in your local community. By becoming a sponsor, individuals and businesses can actively contribute to the growth and vitality of Charlotte. Plus, there are some fantastic perks in store, like boosting your brand recognition, community engagement, and knowing you're making a real difference. Become a sponsor today of one of the Levine JCC's main events that take place every year.

BECOME A SPONSOR TODAY!

Annual Levine JCC Kids Triathlon

The Levine JCC Kids Triathlon (LJCC Kids Tri) is about more than just good, fun athletic competition - it is about giving back. Children of all ages, athletic abilities and cultural backgrounds participate in swimming, biking and running for a cause: raising awareness of and funds for pediatric rehabilitative services at Levine Children's Hospital and the Adaptive Sports and Adventures Program, and adaptive and special needs programming at the Levine JCC.

**12th Annual LJCC
Kids Triathlon**
Sunday, May 19, 2024
2pm • Levine JCC



Annual Sam Strause LJCC Invitational Golf Tournament

The Sam Strause LJCC Invitational Golf Tournament benefits the Levine JCC OASIS Program. The adults in OASIS benefit from active enrichment programs touching families and individuals in profound ways that truly make a difference in peoples' lives. Every dollar raised at our tournament directly supports Kosher lunches, meaningful programs, and funds for transportation. For many, the Levine JCC is their primary connection with the Jewish community.

**17th Annual Sam Strause
LJCC Invitational
Golf Tournament**
Monday, August 12, 2024
Raintree Country Club



Charlotte Jewish Film Festival

The goal of the Charlotte Jewish Film Festival is to engage diverse communities through curiosity, conversation, and culture with entertaining and thought-provoking Jewish Films.

*2024/2025 Sponsor
Info Coming Soon!*

To learn more about becoming a sponsor, email Anne Douglas at AnneDouglas.Miller@charlottejcc.org

If not for the J...

J Story

I can't express what it meant to me when Oasis delivered a huge package of delicious kosher foods to my home during the time when I was mourning my daughter's passing and cooking was out of the question. The loving thoughtfulness of that arrival meant more than you will ever know. Although I will be moving away from Charlotte soon, I will never forget how lucky I was to discover Oasis and the Levine JCC. Your thinking of sending me that remarkable package of lunches and dinners is typical of the wonderful work that you do.

– JOAN SPECTOR
Oasis Member



Special thanks to



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Create Your Jewish Legacy A FCJC program

Through the Charlotte Create Your Jewish Legacy Program, you can make a difference in our community for years to come. Please consider joining the many who have already committed to leave a Legacy Gift ensuring that generations of Jewish families continue to have a strong and vibrant community to call their own. Endowment funds will help provide for continuous growth and long-term capital improvements.

Thank You ...to our LJCC Legacy Donors

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Anonymous (5) | David Jacobson | Melissa & Steven Raphael |
| Wilma & Gerson ל"ר Asrael | Raizel & Brian Kahn | Wendy ל"ר & Sandy Rose |
| Judy & Stan August | Dana & Andrew Kapustin | Jennifer & Andrew Rosen |
| Michele ל"ר & Harvey Barer | Nancy & Robert Kipnis | Chantal & Ilya Rubin |
| Gail & John Baron | Lorrie & Barry Klemons | Michael Scharf |
| Meredith & Michael Baumstein | & Family | Elaine & Marty Schefflin |
| Lois & Sanford Benjamin | Elise & Jaime Kosofsky | Larry Schwartz |
| Philip M. Berman | Sara & Jonathan Kulbersh | Lynne & Morey Sheffer |
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| Jena Coen | Adina & Joshua Loewensteiner | Stephanie & Gary Starr |
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| Jodie, Michael, Elyssa | | |
| & Alex Iagnocco | | |

ל"ר Of Blessed Memory
(updated 08/02/2023)

For more information, or to learn how you can be a part of this wonderful and important initiative, please contact:

Annie Keith • 704-544-6800
annie.keith@charlottejcc.org



Sandra and Leon Levine Jewish Community Center
5007 Providence Road, Charlotte, NC 28226
704-366-5007 | charlottejcc.org

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We Stand With Israel



[CLICK HERE FOR ISRAEL SUPPORT RESOURCES](#)



• EDUCATION • DONATION • ADVOCACY

Our community stands as a testament to the strength that comes from standing together in solidarity for Israel. As we navigate the complexities of this crisis, we recognize the importance of staying informed and connected. The above link serves as a central hub, bringing together a wealth of resources and information that empower us to better understand, advocate for, and stand with Israel.

**Thank you for being part of this community.
Together, we stand strong.**

*Shalom Park remains in a heightened security posture in coordinated efforts to ensure the safety of everyone.

