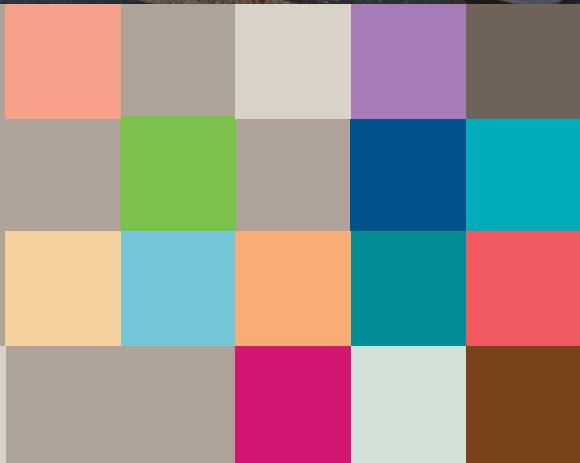




Staff participants at the 2021 LJCC Turkey Trot

### WINTER 2021 • ISSUE 10

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## A Message From Your LJCC CEO



Peter  
Blair

704-944-6800

peter.blair@charlottejcc.org



We aren't interested  
in going back, we're  
interested in going  
forward to something new,  
a life that wouldn't have  
been possible without the  
unexpected disruption  
we've all faced.

OVER THE COURSE of the past many months, I've woken up with the intention to come to the J to work out. While the intent has been there, the psychology of the moment has taken hold and I've yet to return to my daily workout. For many of us our "hiatus" from our Pre-COVID lives has had a similar pattern. We've questioned when we can "return to our lives", we've analyzed the risk associated with attending a Broadway show, a concert from our favorite band, a Panthers or Hornets game, or a trip to the David Silverman Fitness Center. These choices are punctuated by a deep desire to "get back to life" as we knew it in 2019. We've literally spent nearly two years engaged in this internal debate.

Throughout the past nearly two years, the Staff of your Levine JCC has been engaged in the same internal debate each day. They've analyzed the risk their behavior poses to their families', they've altered their patterns, and they've endured the same stress we all have through many days, which have blurred into months, and now years. I'm continually inspired by their dedication and their passion for our J.

Here at your Levine JCC, we've dedicated ourselves to finding unique and creative ways to continue to serve our community. We've transformed our facilities into places where we can gather safely – whether it was the Barbara Levine Parking Deck's transformation to a Fitness center or hosting JRide, JStage, and JDance at the Dorothy and Herman Poliakoff Athletic Pavilion. Our Staff have found more ways to pivot than we ever imagined possible. They've pondered new ideas, produced new programs, and persevered through unforeseen challenges. They've done just what we endeavor to do – they've enriched lives and built relationships through quality Jewish experiences.

Throughout these past many months, we've undoubtedly heard the exclamation – "When can we go back to living like we did before the pandemic?" While that is an understandable desire, we've chosen a different approach. We aren't interested in going back, we're interested in going forward to something new, a life that wouldn't have been possible without the unexpected disruption we've all faced. While this in no way mitigates the deep impact of COVID on our lives, the loss of too many lives, the unanticipated end to far too many businesses, and the impact on our mental and physical health, a forward looking perspective is in some ways a reflection.

I hope that when we take time to reflect on this time in our lives that we can all take a bit of perspective on what we've learned. Personally, I have a renewed appreciation for what is important in life – the health of my family and friends – and that time with them is what is most important. I've learned that we can't be mentally healthy without our community, for the health we gain from personal interactions cannot be understated. I've a renewed appreciation for the importance of critical dialogue and truly listening to an alternative perspective.

And, quite possibly of greatest importance, I've learned that there is no time like the present. For that reason, I'm ready to dive in, I'm set to move forward to something new, and I have goals for myself that I'm committed to achieving.

Over these past many months, our Levine JCC Family of Staff has never stopped working to ensure that the programs, classes, and services you love are here and ready for you. We're ready, we're set, and here we go! Come back to your Levine JCC, tell us about your goals so that we can partner with you to achieve them, and as the kids say – Let's Go-oooo! Here comes 2022 - Ready – Set - GOals!

- Peter Blair

## A Message From Your New Board President



Lisa Strause  
Levinson

I AM HONORED to be the next president of the Levine JCC. As I prepare for my upcoming term, I am excited to share my vision forward with you. #ReadySetGOals.

### #Ready

As a Charlotte native, I am proud to be a part of our ever-growing and diverse Jewish community. Our community has grown in ways that my younger self could have never imagined! This is my second time serving on the LJCC Board. While previously serving on the Board from the mid-90s through 2003, I chaired our day camp committee and proudly watched camp grow from indoor classrooms, to a beautiful state of the art day camp facility. In 2017 I returned to the LJCC Board and deepened my investment in our community by also serving on the Board of the Jewish Federation. I'm ready to ensure our LJCC and Shalom Park remains a vibrant center for Jewish life in Charlotte.

### #Set

Let me begin with a huge THANK YOU to Raizel Kahn, our outgoing president. When Raizel was installed in December of 2019, like me, I know she had goals, hopes, and a vision for her presidency. Once March of 2020 came upon us, her plans quickly and dramatically changed. I have had the privilege of getting to know Raizel and work alongside her over the past two years. Due to Raizel's unwavering commitment, determination, and leadership with our Board of Directors and our CEO, our LJCC is stable, strong, and flourishing. I am set to build upon the foundation set by Raizel's hard work and successes we move forward. The LJCC



COMING  
SOON!

staff has worked tirelessly to create a safe environment without losing focus on the importance of building community. I am grateful to the staff for their commitment and passion to our members first. As we move forward, I can't wait to see what exciting innovative programs and experiences the LJCC staff will create. They've truly #set us up to grow as a community. I look forward to seeing you in a class soon!

### #GOals

As a former Board member, I was part of the leadership that wrote our LJCC mission statement, "Enriching lives and building relationships through quality Jewish experiences." My first goal is to ensure that all programs reflect our mission by infusing more Jewish content and culture into all of our programs. We are fortunate to be a part of a unique campus system, Shalom Park. I look forward to working with the lay leaders of the other institutions on the Park. It is my goal to create stronger relationships, deepen our collaboration, and ensure efficiency through shared resources in programming and experiences when synergies that benefit the community exist. I also look forward to working with our Board of Directors, and Peter to continue to ensure the continued financial stability of the LJCC. I can't wait to welcome back our members, welcome new members to our community, and to take part in some of our favorite classes and programs, while enjoying new experiences in 2022! So, join me -- get #ready, get #set, let's #GOals!

- Lisa Strause Levinson

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

## A Message From Your Outgoing Board President



Raizel Kahn

AS MY TERM AS PRESIDENT of the LJCC board winds to a close, I look back in amazement at the rollercoaster of unprecedented events of the last two years. As I leave the presidency, I am filled with gratitude, pride, and excitement for the future of this agency.

At the start of 2020, the LJCC Board adopted an ambitious strategic plan which we had spent most of 2019 developing. We came in focused on the executing goals of that plan. The LJCC was thriving and we were excited for the major initiatives we had mapped out.

And then Covid hit.

All of our worlds were rocked. Suffice it to say, the goals we set at the beginning of the year were out the window. Our CEO, Board, and staff jumped to action in response to the crisis. We set new objectives, based around the survival of the agency and we remained committed to executing upon our mission of enriching lives and building relationships through quality jewish experiences.

I am incredibly proud to say that, while we may not have executed the original strategic plan, this organization, guided by Peter, the Board, and our incredible staff, built a bridge to the other side of the pandemic. We became more agile, we evolved, and we survived. We came together as a community. And we are emerging stronger than ever.

Appropriately, the theme of this year's annual meeting is *"Our Vision Forward... #readysetGOals."* We spent most of 2021 rebuilding and recovering. Now, thanks to the innovations and tireless work of our amazing staff and board, and the incredible generosity of our community and the Leon Levine Foundation with the wildly successful Million Dollar Campaign, we find ourselves in an astonishing place: ready to thrive in our new "normal." Members are returning. Programming is growing again. It is an exciting time for the LJCC. It's an exciting time to set new goals. Our resilience has strengthened us and know we can take on any challenge. The future is very bright.

## J Story

*If not for the J...*

### Swim Success at Camp

This past summer was our first experience with the JCC and their summer camps. I had heard that the JCC had a great swim program, so I was excited for my four-year-old to participate. Prior to starting at camp Katan, Oliver was wearing 2 swim blocks to assist him in the pool. He could jump in and put his face in the water, but he did not have much water confidence and always wanted his swim block on. We couldn't get over the progress Oliver made in 6 weeks. He had so much confidence and always wanted to go under water and get things from the bottom of the pool. When we took our family vacation in August, after camp was over, Oliver was a full-blown swimmer. No blocks needed. He could go across the pool unassisted and he was even doing freestyle strokes. It was amazing to watch this transformation and we have Camp Katan to thank. We hope to join the JCC's winter swim team this year to keep the skills fresh!

- MEGHAN MCCLURE LLUBERAS



# JTHANKS

## Honoring our Valuable 2021 Sponsors

Thank you to the following companies and individuals for sponsoring annual Levine JCC events and seasonal programs.

Your support deepens our investment in the community and brings social change for generations to come.

**Cultural Arts**

**BROUGHT TO YOU BY**

**HADASSAH**

**Jewish Federation of GREATER CHARLOTTE**

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Charlotte Jewish Preschool  
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Jewish Federation  
OF GREATER CHARLOTTE

## Kids Triathlon

### PRESENTING SPONSOR



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## Annual Golf Tournament

### EVENT SPONSORS



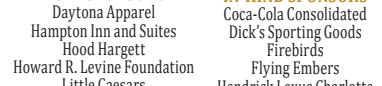
### EVENT CO-SPONSORS



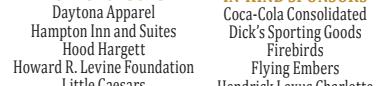
### PATRON SPONSORS



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### IN-KIND SPONSORS





# ALOOKBACK

*year in review*

JANUARY 2021 ······ DECEMBER 2021

## Looking Back at the Past 12 Months

Despite the challenges - look at all we achieved in these past 12 months. We did this together, as a community. Thank you! **Let's #ReadySetGOals in 2022!**

## By-the-Numbers:

**7250** Personal Training Sessions

**OVER 6000** Meals Delivered to Seniors

**3500** Students Attended Butterfly Project Workshops

**3102** Charlotte Jewish Film Tickets Sold

**2509** Group Exercise Classes

**2123** Tennis Lessons

**1076** Private Swim Lessons

**1068** Water Aerobics Classes

**1045** Hours of Swim Practice

**OVER 1000** Staff Zoom Meetings

**593** Adult and Youth Tennis Classes

**467** Group Swim Lessons

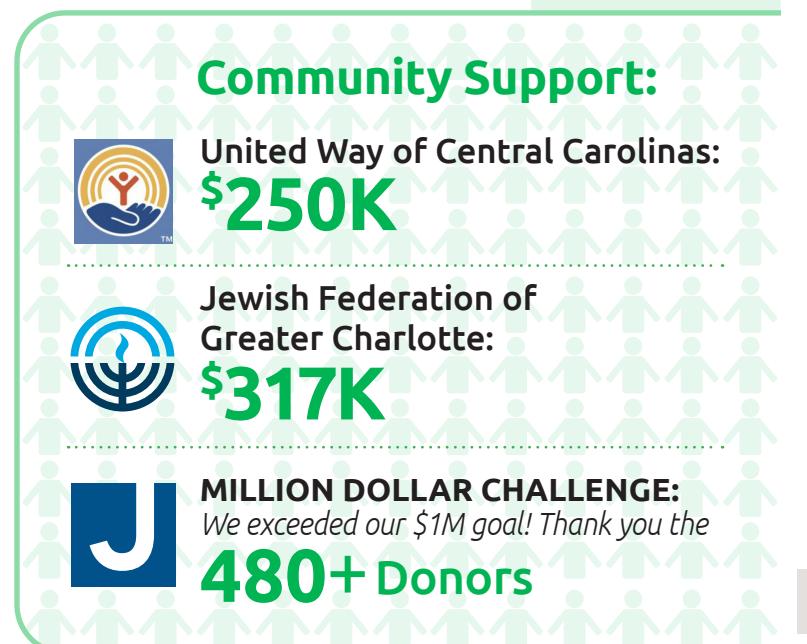
**350** Oasis Virtual Programs

**150** Adults & Youth Volunteered

**130** Camp Mindy 365 Campers

**65** In Person Oasis Classes

**7** Socially Distanced Shows



***Together, we kept the balls rolling.***

# Capital Campaign Update

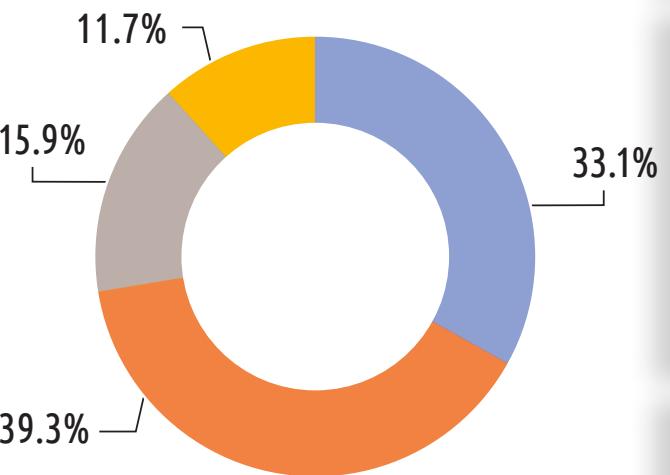
Our final facility investments from the JBuild Capital campaign, including the **Adult Locker Room Renovations**, are slated to begin in **2022**, and we are actively working towards new facilities for our **Camp programs** and **Pickleball**. These new and improved facilities will enable us to serve more families and offer new programs.



# Annual Report 2020

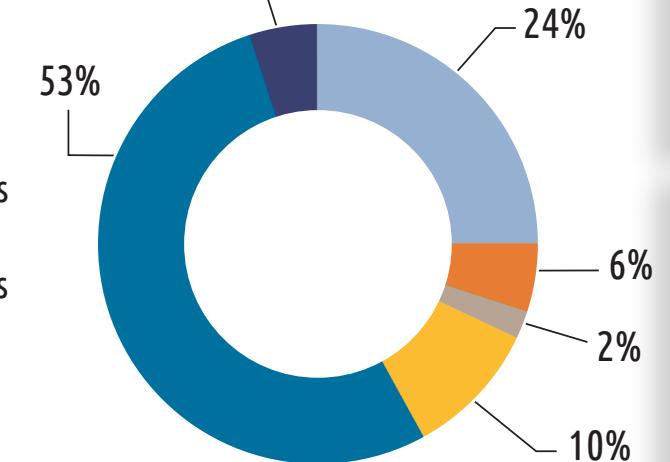
## REVENUES

- Programs
- Membership
- Community Support
- Miscellaneous



## EXPENSES

- Summer Services
- Seniors & Adults
- Community Service & Events
- Family & Early Childhood
- Health, Recreation & Fitness
- Cultural Arts



# Building a Foundation For Our Community's Future.



*Questions? Contact LJCC CEO  
**Peter Blair**  
704-944-6800  
[peter.blair@charlottejcc.org](mailto:peter.blair@charlottejcc.org)*



## 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Tournament Supports Senior Programs

**ON MONDAY, MAY 24,** 110 golfers enjoyed The Sam Strause LJCC Invitational 14th Annual Golf Tournament at TPC Piper Glen. Returning to the tournament after the cancellation of the 2020 tournament due to COVID, our community once again gathered for a fun-filled day of golf to support our senior programs at the Levine Jewish Community Center. More than \$38,000 was raised for the Levine JCC OASIS Senior Enrichment program and the Alene and Sam Strause Family Endowment for the Levine JCC.

The tournament, our most successful event in years, was led by co-chairs Arthur Lavitt and Andrew Rosen and supported by Levine JCC Staff Geneva Boxer and Melanie Hersch. Co-chair Arthur Lavitt was delighted that after a challenging year of being separated, “[The tournament] was the most successful year yet because the community came together to support the Levine JCC and our OASIS Senior Enrichment program.” The tournament is played in honor of Sam Strause, a founder of the tournament. He was a passionate advocate for senior programming to ensure that our community members age with dignity while staying actively engaged. Lissa Strause Levinson established the Alene and Sam Strause Family Endowment for the Levine JCC in memory of her parents, whose daily actions reflected their belief in taking care of members of this community.

The endowment ensures that these needs will be met for generations to come. Since the inception of the endowment in 2018, more than \$66,000 has been raised from tournament proceeds. The day started with an enjoyable boxed lunch provided

by Phil’s Deli. Participants had a chance to win a 2021 Lexus RX 350 sponsored by Hendrick Lexus Charlotte if they made a hole-in-one. While nobody won the car this year, other contests included longest drive and closest to the pin. The players enjoyed beverages provided by our sponsors Coca Cola Consolidated and Flying Embers. The day concluded with a delicious dinner by FS Food Group, raffle prizes, and an award ceremony for our top foursomes’ low scores of the day.

Josh Loewenstein provided his amazing auction skills to raise more than ever for the Alene and Sam Strause Family Endowment. We greatly appreciate all of our generous community sponsors (please see page 6 for a complete list).

Special thanks to our tournament volunteers and LJCC Staff on the day of the event. With their assistance and hard work, the tournament was an enormous success. Each golfer ensures the OASIS Senior Enrichment Program continues to touch families and individuals in intangible and profound ways that truly make a difference in peoples’ lives.

The tournament directly supports our seniors, ensuring they can gather to socialize, pursue intellectual stimulation, participate in physical and health programs, and enjoy kosher lunches together. For many, the Levine JCC is their only contact with the community. As one of our OASIS participants says,

*“I was moved to tears by the thoughtfulness of the JCC OASIS program. This program means a lot to me, as I count on the members of OASIS, and the excellent staff, all-inclusive, to assist me in keeping my nearly 80-year-old self in good health, both physically and mentally, which is exactly what the OASIS Program does for me.”*



## Levine JCC: One of Five Selected Agencies to Partner With BBYO to Address Adolescent Health

**IN A FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND PARTNERSHIP**, JCC Association of North America and the BBYO Center for Adolescent Wellness (BBYO-CAW), with support from the Jim Joseph Foundation, will collaborate to assess and support mental, emotional, and social health among adolescents.

The pilot initiative comes as mental health issues such as anxiety and depression have surged among adolescents who have been isolated from their peer groups as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The initial pilot will use resources from BBYO-CAW to assess and address the preparedness and ability of five Jewish Community Centers (JCCs) to support the needs of the youth they serve. All costs will be covered by the

**JIM JOSEPH FOUNDATION** Shimon ben Joseph participating JCCs are: Mayerson JCC (Cincinnati, OH), Bender JCC of Greater Washington (Washington DC), Michael-Ann Russell JCC (North Miami Beach, FL), Tucson JCC (AZ), and our own Sandra and Leon Levine Jewish Community Center (Charlotte, NC).

This initiative marks the first time JCC Association of North America and BBYO have joined forces to bring a BBYO-CAW program to the JCC field.

“JCC professionals are often on the front lines in observing what may be emerging issues affecting the well-being of adolescents,” said Doron Krakow, president and CEO of JCC Association of North America, adding, “This partnership is all the more meaningful in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. BBYO is the ideal partner for us, to ensure that we’ll be well-positioned to provide the services and support our teens may require.”

“BBYO has a wonderful relationship with the Levine JCC and we hold many of our weekly programs there, so we could not be more thrilled that they were selected as one of the five JCCs to participate in this initial pilot,” said Ellen Goldstein, area director, BBYO. “As we emerge from a year of disruption and isolation and face an increase in mental health and wellness concerns among young people, the notion that this initiative will help ensure safe environments for the teens in our care is a win for everyone involved.”

Drew Fidler, director of BBYO’s Center for Adolescent Wellness, said, “Given the expected post-pandemic influx of activity from audiences with these potential needs, we understand how important it is for JCCs to be organizationally ready to support the youth populations they serve. Our goal is for this partnership between JCC Association and BBYO-CAW to further enable our Jewish communities to be a place where young people can thrive mentally, emotionally and socially.”

Michelle Rusgo, the Youth Programs Coordinator for the Levine JCC and current Merrin Teen Fellow will act as the liaison between the LJCC and BBYO-CAW. “This is an amazing opportunity to bring the community together in order to build positive relationships between our staff and the teens we serve. The mental health of our youth and teens is what we need to focus on right now. This collaboration will help to create a successful plan to support our youth from the ground up.”

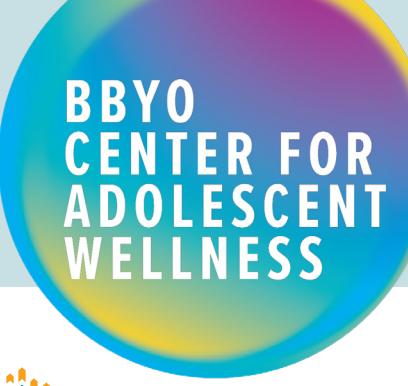
Using BBYO-CAW’s Youth Wellness Assessment tool, JCCs will better understand how their policies, procedures, and training create and ensure safe environments for young people. The tool incorporates best practices, local and national laws, and guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and American Camp Association.

After the assessment, BBYO-CAW will provide reports to each JCC, identifying both strengths and areas in need of improvement, and assist the JCCs in making changes and creating new policies and procedures to ensure safe settings. This pilot will provide BBYO-CAW with data to help refine the services it offers to all youth-serving organizations.

As part of its engagement, to occur through the summer and fall, BBYO-CAW will also provide two customized training sessions to each JCC. These sessions may cover such topics as mandated reporting, building and maintaining appropriate boundaries with children and adolescents, recognizing mental health red flags, and helping children and adolescents with mental health issues.



**Our own Michelle Rusgo,**  
LJCC Youth Programs Coordinator



# 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

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Wilma & Gerson Asrael  
Judy & Stan August  
Shellie ֲַיְהָ & Harvey Barer  
Gail & John Baron  
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Debby & Evan Weiss  
Joanna & Eric Wisotsky  
Kim & Marc Wojnowich

ֲַיְהָ Of Blessed Memory (updated 12/2021)



“Why do I support the JCC? Actually, I don’t. It supports me. It supports me mentally by always having a friendly face to greet me. The staff is always friendly and accommodating. The members are my good friends. It supports me physically by having a superb gym to work out, great tennis courts for my favorite sport, pickleball for when courts are not open, superb pools to swim and gather with friends (maybe getting french fries at the café). Yes, the J supports me very nicely.”

– BOBBY CAIN

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

**Melanie Hersch • 704-554-2051**  
[melanie.hersch@charlottejcc.org](mailto:melanie.hersch@charlottejcc.org)