



219C Blackhorse Lane, North Brunswick, NJ 08902
1600 Perrineville Road, Suite 52, Monroe, NJ 08831
☎ 732.777.1940 ✉ office@jfsmiddlesex.org

For Immediate Release

April 18, 2023

Media Contact

Julie Rodriguez, Jewish Family Services of Middlesex County (JFS Middlesex), 732-777-1940
Shannon Craig Straw, West End Strategy Team, 202-674-5921

JFS Middlesex Joins National Effort to Raise Funds to Support 25,000 Holocaust Survivors Living in Poverty Across United States

Initiative spearheaded by Seed the Dream Foundation, partners with local community organizations has provided \$20 million to support Holocaust survivors since 2019.

North Brunswick, NJ – To mark *Yom HaShoah*, Holocaust Remembrance Day, JFS Middlesex has joined 40 community organizations across the country partnering with national funders, organizations, and stakeholders to raise money to support the 25,000 Holocaust survivors living in poverty in the United States.

“When we first heard about Kavod SHEF and its mission, we could not jump on board fast enough. A group dedicated to ensuring that the basic emergency needs of Holocaust survivors would be covered – in Middlesex County with nearly 200 survivors needing help? Yes, please. JFS Middlesex has one of the largest survivor populations in the State of NJ and with the steep cost of living in the state, our grant funding does not cover all of the needs of our survivors. From hot meals to dental care and hearing aids, transportation, home care and more, Kavod SHEF joins us in our commitment to ensuring our survivors are able to age comfortably and safely at home after a life marked by trauma and upheaval. We are honored to be a part of this incredible initiative,” said **Roni Salkin, Executive Director of JFS Middlesex**.

The Kavod Survivors of the Holocaust Emergency Fund (Kavod SHEF), which is a collaborative initiative spearheaded by **Seed the Dream Foundation** and **KAVOD - Ensuring Dignity for Survivors**, funds basic emergency needs, including rent, utilities, food, home care, transportation, and medical, dental and vision services. Since its launch in 2019, KAVOD SHEF has provided more than \$20 million to survivors across the United States.

“More than a third of the Holocaust survivors in this country are living in poverty, a situation only made worse by skyrocketing healthcare costs and the reality of an aging population,” said **Marcy Gringlas, president of Seed the Dream Foundation**, who is the daughter of Holocaust survivors. “*Yom HaShoah* is an annual reminder of the horrors of the Holocaust, the resilience of the Jewish people and our enduring obligation to support survivors in our communities today. But it can’t be our only reminder. As survivors age, we need to act quickly to ensure they are able to live their lives with the dignity they deserve.”

Participating community organizations, including JFS Middlesex, raise money locally, which is then matched dollar for dollar by a national fundraising coalition that includes more than 20 philanthropists and foundations including Sephardic Foundation on Aging, Jeffrey H. and Shari L. Aronson Family Foundation, Marcus Foundation, Shapira Foundation, Neubauer Family Foundation, and Paul E. Singer Foundation. All of the funds raised through Kavod SHEF go directly to survivors. In 2023 more than \$6 million will be allocated across the participating communities, including Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, Denver, Houston, New York, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Seattle, and Washington, D.C. A full list of the 2023 communities can be found online: <https://kavodensuringdignity.com/kavod-shef-initiative/>



219C Blackhorse Lane, North Brunswick, NJ 08902
1600 Perrineville Road, Suite 52, Monroe, NJ 08831
☎ 732.777.1940 ✉ office@jfsmiddlesex.org

“While we remember the atrocities faced by Holocaust survivors and shout ‘Never Again,’ too many survivors living here in the United States and the world are living in poverty,” said **Joel Greenberg, co-founder and board member of Seed the Dream Foundation**. “Each day, dozens of survivors die, but the requests for support continue to climb as living survivors face the increasing healthcare challenges that come with aging. The costs they face are insurmountable, compounded by the failure of those countries responsible for the Holocaust to provide adequate funding. We must act quickly to respond to this silent crisis.”

In the first three months of 2023 alone, Kavod SHEF fielded approximately 3,200 requests for help, as compared to the first six months of the program when they received approximately 900 requests for emergency aid. With skyrocketing costs for healthcare in the United States and the financial reality of the aging population, emergency medical services have started making up a growing proportion of the aid granted through Kavod SHEF. The emergency homecare services funded through this initiative have increased by 300% over the past three years.

“The issue is not going away and is not dwindling! Our Survivors are getting older and are having bigger financial stresses,” says **Amy Israel Pregulman, executive director and co-founder of KAVOD**.

“We have a shared responsibility to ensure survivors are able to live the last years of their life with dignity,” said **Talia Kaplan, executive director, Seed the Dream Foundation**. “By fostering partnerships between local communities and national organizations, funders and stakeholders, we are able to have a strong collective impact and work toward meeting these critical needs of Holocaust survivors.”

The Seed the Dream Foundation is a private-grantmaking foundation focused on improving educational access, engagement, awareness, and empowerment, including a special focus on Holocaust survivors. The foundation works to honor the lives and stories of those who were killed in the Holocaust and to ensure survivors are able to maintain their dignity in their later years.

Jewish Family Services of Middlesex County (JFS Middlesex) is a nonprofit, social services agency offering an array of essential programs to help people from all backgrounds.