



2ND QUARTER NEWSLETTER

A Message from our CEO

Dear Friends, Partners, and Supporters,

As we move through the heart of the year, I'm proud to share some exciting highlights from the second quarter here at Jewish Renaissance Foundation (JRF). These past few months have been filled with growth, community engagement, and meaningful impact across all of our programs.

We celebrated the end of the school year with our **school-based programs**, applauding the incredible achievements of our students and staff alike. From academic milestones to personal growth, our team has gone above and beyond to create a safe, supportive, and empowering environment for the youth that we serve.

This quarter also featured some special events that brought our community together in powerful ways. **Our Dadventure Celebration Event** was a moving tribute to the vital role dads and father figures play in our families and communities. Meanwhile, our **Earth Day and Opening of our Community Garden** brought neighbors, volunteers, and staff together to beautify our shared spaces, plant for the season, and reaffirm our commitment to sustainability and health.

Internally, we've taken time to invest in the people who make this all possible—our staff. We aimed at building leadership, fostering wellness, and strengthening teamwork. It was inspiring to see such strong engagement at our annual **Staff Picnic**, a well-deserved day of fun, laughter, and collaboration.

I also want to take a moment to highlight a few of our **Staff Superstars**—individuals who consistently go above and beyond in service of our mission. Their dedication, creativity, and compassion are a testament to the heart of this organization. Keep an eye out in this newsletter for their stories!

Finally, we're thrilled to announce new funding from the **Connie Dwyer Breast Cancer Fund**, which will allow us to expand our impact in the coming months and focus on breast cancer screening, diagnosis and treatment. This support is not just a win for us—it's a win for the communities we serve.

Thank you to our community partners, funders, and agency collaborators. Your belief in our mission continues to fuel our progress. As we move into the next quarter, we remain committed to creating positive change—together.

Warm regards,
Ms. Jaime Rivello
Chief Executive Officer

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ABOUT JRF

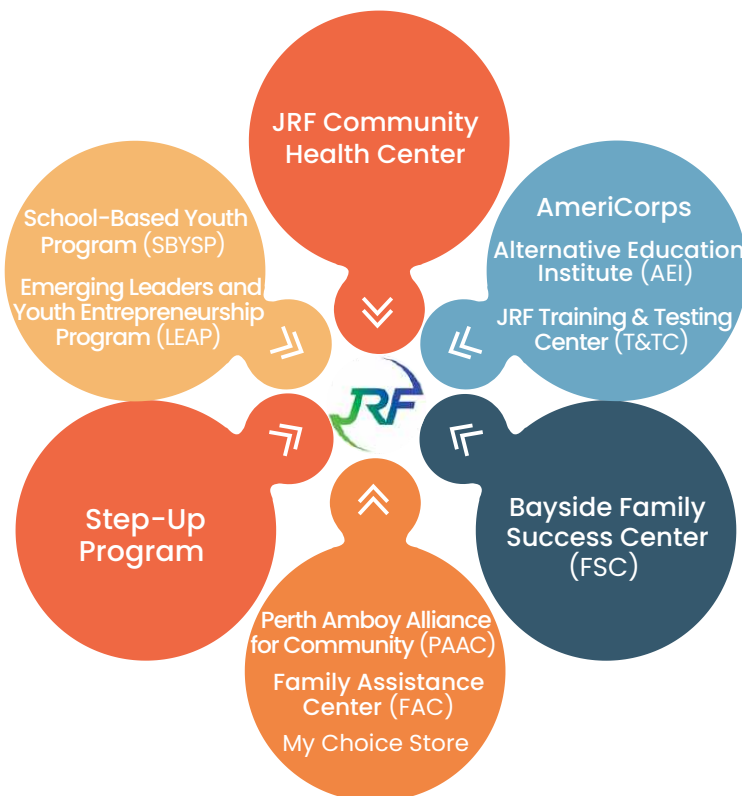
Our Mission

The Jewish Renaissance Foundation (JRF) is a non-profit nonsectarian organization founded by individuals who feel compelled to act upon the teachings of the Jewish faith. We believe as citizens in a democratic society, we must respond to the needs of our neighbors and share our talents and resources. The JRF is committed to helping individuals/families become healthier and stronger.

We serve the City of Perth Amboy, Edison, and surrounding communities in Middlesex County.



Our Programs & Locations



JRF Community Health Center

1931 Oak Tree Road, Lower Level
Edison, NJ 08820
(732)482-9600



Family Success Center

Bayside Family Success Center
500 Dobranski Avenue
Perth Amboy, NJ 08861



533 New Brunswick Ave.

Perth Amboy, NJ 08861
The home of AmeriCorps, AEI, T&TC, FAC including My Choice Store, and PAAC.



Administrative Offices

1090 King Georges Post Road
Building 7, Suite 704, Edison, NJ 08837
(732) 324-2114

To learn more about our programs please click on the links below to visit us on:





EMPLOYEE UPDATES

JRF Superstars

Quarterly Superstar
(APRIL - JUNE 2025)

Dania consistently goes above and beyond. Her dedication to the P.A.A.C. program, ongoing support for FSC programming, ability to coordinate complex initiatives, foster teamwork, and adapt to changing needs, reflects her strength as a leader and team player. She is truly a Superstar!



Dania Arias
Program Manager
Perth Amboy Alliance for Community (PAAC)

Quarterly Superstar
(APRIL - JUNE 2025)

Diane consistently demonstrates compassion and dedication by advocating for patients, connecting them with resources, and offering translation support when needed. In addition to her Medical Assistant duties, she takes on extra administrative tasks and is always ready to support her team with a positive, reliable spirit. She is always one of the first to step up when help is needed—she is truly a Superstar!



Diana Hidalgo
Certified Medical Assistant
JRF Community Health Center

Quarterly Superstar
(APRIL - JUNE 2025)

Merelin played a vital role in the success of the Organizational Standards Project through her accuracy, organization, and ability to meet tight deadlines.

Beyond the project, Merelin continues to be a reliable and valued team member—always willing to lend a hand, answer questions, and support colleagues whenever needed. Her ongoing efforts and collaborative spirit truly makes her a Superstar!



Merelin Moreno
Data Specialist
ADMINISTRATION

At the NFTE Mid-Atlantic Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge on June 16, 2025, Precious Ojeda, our LEAP Coordinator and School-Based Program Assistant, was honored with the **Emerging Teacher of the Year** award!

This award recognizes Precious's unwavering dedication to coaching and mentoring the next generation of changemakers. Her passion, leadership, and heart have made a lasting impact on our students, our agency, and our community.

On behalf of the School Base team:

"Precious is a person who truly dedicates herself to the well-being and success of the students that she works with. She uses motivational interviewing and a creative approach to inspire students to think outside the classroom and pursue their true passions. Each of her students succeeds through developing a relationship where they feel truly cared for and able to self-actualize their goals while building confidence and receiving her guidance."



Precious, your work changes lives - and we couldn't be prouder!



Promotions

ADVANCEMENTS AT THE JRF

- Rosanna Nunez - Lead Family Partner to Program Manager.
- Katherine Jaquez - Case Manager to Lead Family Mentor.
- Elizabeth Fernandez - Intake Coordinator to Family Mentor

Welcome

NEW FACES OF THE JRF STAFF

Anniversaries

DEDICATION THROUGHOUT THE YEARS

5 years	10 years	15 years
Jaimé Rivello	Vanessa Ferreira	Jenny Alvarez
Luz Rosa		Sherrí Goldberg
Dr. Saini		Kristi Zayas
Wendy Medina		
Dania Arias		



Christy Wallace
Certified Dental Assistant P/T
JRF Community Health Center



Saidy Cedano
Youth Development Specialist
School Base Youth Services Program (SBYSF)



PROGRAMMING UPDATES

School Based Youth Services



Emerging Leaders Program



In May, **Emerging Leaders** discussed their summer initiative, focusing on key details such as dates, locations, and materials needed. Collaboratively, the Emerging Leaders also brainstormed media production ideas to help raise awareness and promote their summer initiative, demonstrating their commitment to teamwork and community. ***This year's initiative focuses on mental health and well-being activities with a series of events throughout the summer.***

Youth Entrepreneurship Program (YEP)

In May, YEP members completed their cost structure slides, recorded final pitches, and submitted their business plans to NFTE—marking a major milestone in their entrepreneurial journey. Their hard work and dedication earned them a spot at the regional competitions, where they pitched for seed capital and educational opportunities before a panel of expert judges and volunteer entrepreneurs.

These Regional Finals are part of **NFTE's (National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship) Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge**—an eight-month series of local, regional, and national business plan and pitch competitions that culminate in a high-stakes national championship in New York City, where thousands of students showcase their innovative ideas.



Regional Competition 2025



YEP Students Shine Bright at Regionals - In June, both former and current YEP students shined bright at the NFTE Regional Competition for their outstanding work, contributions, leadership, and commitment to this program. They have left an everlasting mark not only on the City of Perth Amboy, but in the Youth Entrepreneurship program itself. Congrats to all our former and current students on their awards. We're proud of each one of them and can't wait to see where their talents take them as they prepare for Nationals in October 2025.

Nicole Nunez, YEP student - 2025 Regional Challenge Finalist!

Rosalie Delgado, YEP alumna - Host of the Regional Competition!

Charlize Leon Mata, YEP alumna - Judge of the Regional Competition!





PROGRAMMING UPDATES

School Based Youth Services



Pathways to Professionalism: Workplace Readiness Event - May 20

Students received community service hours for this resume building and workplace readiness workshop. Students openly discussed interviewing strategies and the difference between hard and soft skills in the workplace and were also broken into groups, practicing their mock interviewing skills. This was a great opportunity for SBYS students to engage and have professional conversations outside the traditional school settings. Students were encouraged to respond to their peer's questions – all while enjoying some agency provided snacks.



Celebrating the Journey: A Joyful Send-Off for the Class of 2025

What a powerful and memorable way to close out the school year! We extend our deepest gratitude to the incredible staff, dedicated administrators, and exceptional students who helped make the end-of-year celebration truly unforgettable.

To the resilient and inspiring Class of 2025 – your growth, determination, and heart have shined brightly all year long. The JRF is so proud of everything you've accomplished and can't wait to cheer you on as you enter your next chapter in life.

Wishing everyone a safe summer filled with well-deserved rest, meaningful reflection and celebration of your achievements!

Stepping Up & Blooming Bright at Kean



Step-Up Stepping into the Future!
Kean University College Tour



On April 23rd, the students from our Step-Up Program took another step toward their future as they continued their college tour journey – current stop: **Kean University!** They had a wonderful time exploring the campus on a beautiful spring day, with trees in bloom and dreams in motion. Students also learned valuable info about admissions and financial aid – knowledge that brings them closer to college success!



- **May 6 - Healthy Tech Habits: Mental Wellness** - Students discussed how healthy tech habits can support mental wellness, self-care, and creativity.
- **May 13 - College Readiness: Budgeting** - Students explored budgeting tools and strategies to support financial goals in high school and beyond.
- **May 22 - El Coro Luncheon** - Students shared lunch, planned end-of-year activities, and contributed to a photo "Memory Wall."
- **June 19 - Hershey Park and Beyond** - Students participated in an incentive trip to Hershey Park for their year-long involvement in community service, college readiness, enrichment, and peer support activities.





PROGRAMMING UPDATES

Community & Family Services

Middlesex County Nonprofit Voices for Change: Engaging Gubernatorial Candidates - May 28



The Jewish Renaissance Foundation (JRF), in partnership with local nonprofit organizations across Middlesex County, hosted an impactful Voices for Change event at the Reformed Church of Highland Park. The event brought together nonprofit leaders and engaged participating New Jersey gubernatorial candidates in meaningful discussions on pressing issues such as health equity, social and criminal justice reform, affordable housing, and food insecurity within Middlesex County, NJ. All declared gubernatorial candidates were invited to participate. Accepting the invitation for a moderated discussion included Steve Sweeney, former NJ Senate President, Sean Spiller, NJEA President /former-Montclair Mayor, and Steve Fulop, Mayor of Jersey City (photographed above from left to right).

Special thanks to our co-sponsors for the event: **Greater Middlesex Habitat for Humanity, NJPCA, coLAB Arts, RCHP Affordable Housing Corporation, LWV (League of Women Voters) of Greater New Brunswick Area, NAACP, and Housing and Community Development Network of NJ.** Also, thank you to the candidates, to George Street Playhouse, Bushwick Sounds, Pastry Lu, and to everyone who showed up ready to spark change!



Dadventure 2025 was a blast!

In April, fathers and father figures and their children came together for a morning full of fun, food, and unforgettable memories! From energetic obstacle courses to a surprise conga line, there was never a dull moment. Families fueled up with breakfast, followed by Jersey Mike's and pizza for lunch, and even walked away with some awesome giveaways and prizes.

A big thank you to our amazing event coordination partners: **South Amboy YMCA, Perth Amboy Police Dept., Perth Amboy Recreation Dept., Elevate and Enhance, and AmeriCorps.** Our tabling partners—**City of Perth Amboy, Middlesex College, NJ4S, Gateway, Horizon NJ Health, JRF Community Health Center, and Empower Somerset**—provided valuable resources.



A Heartfelt Celebration for Moms - May 8th

On May 8th, we partnered with Middlesex College and our PAAC program to host a warm and relaxing self-care event for mothers, in celebration of Mother's Day. We treated 17 moms with a full meal and thoughtful goodie bags. While our moms enjoyed time for themselves, 20 children created handmade paper flower bouquets, making it a joyful day of appreciation and creativity.

Book Club - June 10th

FSC joyfully hosted its first Book Club, where seven adults gathered to explore **"The Four Agreements"**, a book about personal freedom, wisdom, and transformation. The warm, welcoming atmosphere encouraged open dialogue, empathy, and connection. Meanwhile, thanks to PAAC, children enjoyed nearby activities, allowing parents to fully engage in the experience.



Spreading Easter Joy at the Choice Store - April 2025

Thanks to the incredible support of our partners at **Replenish and the Community Food Bank of NJ**, we were able to bring extra joy to the families we serve this Easter. In April, we proudly distributed 42 chickens and 15 hams—a total of 57 holiday meals—for families to enjoy and share during their celebrations.

In addition to the food distribution, we held a raffle giveaway, where six lucky families received special prizes—including two beautifully arranged Easter baskets that brought bright smiles to both kids and adults alike!

A heartfelt thank you to our amazing partners and to all of our Choice Store families. Your presence, participation, and community spirit are what make this program so meaningful.





PROGRAMMING UPDATES



at the Community Garden



What a day to remember! On Tuesday, April 22nd, we officially opened the Community Garden within the NRTC PAAC neighborhood in celebration of Earth Day! 🌍

Thank you to everyone who helped make it such a beautiful success—from residents, community leaders, and partners to our staff and our amazing School Base and Step-Up high school students who joined us on spring break! Your time, energy, and bright spirits truly brought the garden to life. The sun was shining, the love for the earth was overflowing, and the community came together in the best way.

Special shoutout to our amazing partners and supporters: the City of Perth Amboy, DCA, the NRTC Team, and Sabert—thank you for helping make this vision a reality.

🌍 April Highlights

Senior "De-Stress & Paint" Workshop – teaming up with Hackensack Medical Center to host a relaxing paint-and-sip session tailored for our senior community.

Lead-Safe Homes Initiative – conducting its first two in-home inspections in the PAAC neighborhood!

🌸 May Moments

Spring Financial Peace University Begins with an informational session that led into three hands-on workshops focused on how to budget, save, and reduce debt with confidence.

Mother's Day Self-Care Spa Event partnership with the Family Success Center (FSC), where 11 moms came together for a soothing DIY spa session.

☀️ Joys of June

Financial Peace Graduation – Five community members completed the full Financial Peace University course.



Mother's Day Zumba Bash Party featuring self-care goodie bags, a fresh fruit bar, and over 20 raffle prizes! 60 mothers danced, celebrated, and were honored for all they do.



Neighborhood Clean-Up & Mini-Grant Win - June 7
PAAC partnered with the City of Perth Amboy Green Team to host a neighborhood clean-up. With over 15 dedicated volunteers, including students and neighbors, the day ended with cleaner streets—and a \$500 mini-grant from the Clean Communities Initiative in recognition of our shared impact.



🍓 Strawberry Farm Field Trip - June 1

PAAC Community Garden families kicked off the summer with a sweet visit to a local strawberry farm. Eight families enjoyed berry picking and a seasonal festival with over 15 outdoor games and a petting zoo.



PROGRAMMING UPDATES

JRF Nurses on the Move: 153 Health Screenings & Counting!

From April 1 to June 30, the **JRF Community Health Center's** dedicated community outreach nurses were hard at work bringing vital health services directly to the people. In partnership with local organizations, they attended 14 health screening events across Middlesex County—making wellness more accessible for those who need it most. Thanks to strong collaborations with partners like **Raritan Bay YMCA, Iglesia Ciudad de Refugio, Greenway Family Success Center, Imani & Amandla Housing, Edison Housing, and St. Paul the Apostle Senior Housing**, our nurses provided 153 health screenings to community members.

These events are a powerful reminder that when community partners unite, healthier futures are within reach—and JRF is proud to meet people where they are.

As we reflect on these accomplishments, we also want to honor the incredible nurses who make this work possible:



During **International Nurses Week** (May 6–12), we celebrated Luz Rosa, Lynne Morgan, Liliana Rodriguez, Mary Cruz, and Laurise Farrar—our real-life lifesavers. Their compassion, resilience, and unwavering commitment are the heartbeat of our health center. Whether delivering care, educating the community, or supporting behind the scenes, their impact is immeasurable. Thank you, nurses, for everything you do—today and every day—to keep our community healthy, strong, and supported.

Celebrating Community Care



JRF Community Health Center

📍 1931 Oak Tree Road, Edison, NJ

☎️ (732) 482-9600

Open Monday - Saturday!



The Connie Dwyer Breast Cancer Foundation Awards \$10,000 Grant to the Jewish Renaissance Foundation

A testament to the shared commitment of improving access to vital services for women facing breast cancer.

Middlesex County, NJ – (5/26/2025) The Jewish Renaissance Foundation (JRF) is proud to announce it has been awarded a \$10,000 grant from the Connie Dwyer Breast Cancer Foundation (CDBCF), supporting efforts through May 2026. This generous funding will strengthen breast cancer screening, diagnosis, and treatment services for patients at the JRF Community Health Center (JRF-CHC) in Edison, NJ.

The grant will support healthcare providers at JRF-CHC by ensuring they have the necessary tools and resources to deliver comprehensive care to women facing breast health challenges. With this support, we can continue addressing disparities in healthcare access for underserved populations.

“This funding is a testament to our shared commitment to improving access to vital services for women facing breast cancer,” said Sarah Roberts, Director of the Connie Dwyer Breast Cancer Foundation. “We are confident these funds will make a positive difference in the lives of the individuals you serve, and we are proud to support your ongoing efforts.”

“We are honored and deeply grateful for the support of the Connie Dwyer Breast Cancer Foundation,” said Ms. Jaime Rivello, CEO of the Jewish Renaissance Foundation. “Their dedication and partnership allow us to continue providing high-quality, accessible care and to make a meaningful difference in the lives of women in our communities.”

The Connie Dwyer Breast Cancer Foundation is dedicated to ensuring that all women have access to breast health care, particularly those in underserved communities. Through partnerships with hospitals and community organizations, CDBCF provides funding for state-of-the-art diagnostic equipment, patient care, and community health programs. For more information about CDBCF, go to www.cdbcf.org.





OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN



Click on the QR code for more information:
Haga clic en el código QR para obtener más información:



To apply, contact/Para solicitarlo, póngase en contacto con:

Jordi Jimenez-Marté
AEI Education and Career Readiness Assistant
(732) 324-2114 ext. 125 or jordi.jimenez@jrfnj.org

The Alternative Education Institute (AEI)

The Alternative Education Institute (AEI) program is a comprehensive educational program delivered in a non-traditional learning environment to help youth with parental consent between the ages of 16 – 17 and adults earn their **New Jersey State High School Equivalency Diploma**. Upon completion, the AEI program will continue to assist its students with entrance into post-secondary education, trade school and/or employment.

The Alternative Education Institute offers the following free educational services in English:

- AEI General Program (for participants 16 years and older)
- Every Tuesday Evening, **5:00 PM – 8:00 PM**

Eligibility Criteria:

- Must live in Middlesex County
- Must be enrolled in school or any other educational program
- Must be able to provide us valid documentation
- Must have access to an electronic device and internet

Instituto de Educación Alternativa (AEI)

El programa del Instituto de Educación Alternativa (AEI) es un programa educativo integral que se imparte en un entorno de aprendizaje no tradicional para ayudar a los jóvenes con el consentimiento de los padres entre las edades de 16 a 17 años y a los adultos a obtener su **Diploma de Equivalencia de Escuela Secundaria del Estado de Nueva Jersey**. Al finalizar, el programa AEI continuará ayudando a sus estudiantes con el ingreso a la educación postsecundaria, la escuela de oficios y /o el empleo.

El Instituto de Educación Alternativa ofrece los siguientes servicios educativos gratuitos en Español:

- Programa de Sábado en Español de AEI (para participantes que hablan, leen y escriben español y tienen 16 años o más)
- Todos los Sábados por la mañana, de **9:30 AM – 12:30 PM**

Criterios de Elegibilidad:

- Debe vivir en el condado de Middlesex
- Debe estar inscrito en la escuela o en cualquier otro programa educativo.
- Debe poder proporcionarnos documentación válida
- Debe tener acceso a un dispositivo electrónico e internet.

Congratulations to the AEI Class of 2025!

On Friday, June 13, 2025, the AEI program proudly graduated 27 students at the Raritan Bay Area YMCA in Perth Amboy, NJ. The ceremony also included general testers and Edison Job Corps participants. Guests were welcomed by Jaime Rivello, CEO of the Jewish Renaissance Foundation, with remarks from Tawayna Bailey (AEI Director), Jesse Shadle (Deputy Director, Edison Job Corps), Khadijah Roundtree-Bruton (AEI English Instructor), and Wendy Medina (AEI Bilingual Instructor and emcee).



Graduate speakers included Susana Andreu Garcia, Sandrita Green Jamarillo, Allie Rafael Alcantara, and Josue Antonio Maradiaga Reyes. The keynote address was delivered by Ms. Altigracia Raydeniss Ruiz, Dean of the Class of 2025 and P.O.W.E.R. Coordinator at North Brunswick Township High School, delivered a personal and inspiring message to the students encouraging them to use this moment as a stepping-stone to wherever life takes them next, and to allow the momentum of this occasion to propel them into higher heights.

Finally, the time that we all waited for had come, the graduates received their certificates of completion, and in one final conferment, switched their tassels from right to left. Students marched off stage to the reception area and shared some refreshments with their guests.

In the words of Michael Josephson – "Take pride in how far you've come, have faith in how far you can go, but don't forget to enjoy the journey."



OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

A Tribute to Our Members

In April 2025, we received heartbreaking news that our beloved AmeriCorps program would be discontinued due to a \$400 million federal budget cut by the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE).

This unexpected decision forced us to say goodbye to our dedicated members, with their last day of service on May 9. However, in June, hope was restored. A federal judge ordered the reinstatement of AmeriCorps workers and funding—a victory for nonprofits and the communities we serve. We are cautiously optimistic and eager to welcome our members back. Through it all, our message to our AmeriCorps members remains the same.



AmeriCorps New Jersey

From the desk of CEO Jaime Rivello and the entire JRF team:

AmeriCorps members give more than just their time. They offer their talents, their passion, and their whole hearts to serve others – and that service matters.

They chose to serve – to uplift communities, stand with those in need, and dedicate themselves to something greater than any one of us. That choice is powerful. It leaves behind a legacy no one can erase.

Their commitment, resilience, and compassion have touched lives, lifted spirits, and inspired all those around them.

*On behalf of the entire JRF:
Thank you, AmeriCorps members.
Thank you for showing up with purpose.*

*Thank you for believing in the mission.
Thank you for being the heartbeat of this program.*

When a chapter closes, your impact continues – in the lives you've touched, the community you've built, and the strength you carry forward. Your service lives on.



Scan QR Code
to Learn More
and Start
Serving Today:





UPCOMING EVENTS

A Night of Impact and Celebration at the JRF's Annual Gala

Join Us for a Night of Purpose, Elegance, and Impact

You're invited to an unforgettable evening at the Jewish Renaissance Foundation's Annual Gala, taking place at the breathtaking

Park Chateau Estate and Gardens on Wednesday, November 12, 2025, at 6:30 PM.

This special night brings together community leaders, partners, and friends in support of our mission to serve more than 6,000 individuals in Middlesex County each year. As a cornerstone for programs in health, education, nutrition, family development, emergency support, and school-based services, your presence directly fuels the work we do.

The evening will include a cocktail reception, an elegant dinner, live music, and an award ceremony honoring local changemakers and JRF champions.

Tickets: \$250 per person

Don't miss this opportunity to make a meaningful difference while enjoying a night to remember.

Scan QR Code to Register:



and/or contact, Office Manager, Lissette Vargas Guzman at 732-324-2114.



Scan to access our program calendars for upcoming events:

