

# jarc news

Enriching Lives. Erasing Barriers.



## STAFF AND PERSON SERVED BECOME FRIENDS AND FAMILY

For Ridgeside Home Manager, **Joe Lail**, JARC isn't just his place of employment. The people in his care are his family.

**"We see each other every day, we help each other, we support each other. We're brothers and sisters. I'm looking forward to growing old with these people,"** said Joe.

According to the families of those in Joe's care, the feeling is mutual. **Paul**, who lives at the Ridgeside Home is particularly close with Joe, as are Paul's siblings, Craig, Rick, and Kathy.

**"In many ways, Joe has become Paul's best friend. Paul likes to tell us stories about Joe and the things they have done together.**

This is the first time in Paul's entire life that he calls the place he lives, home.

Home was always where our mother lived until he moved to JARC. The entire family is so happy with the program and Paul's overall development and happiness," Craig said.

Everyone living in the Ridgeside Home has a developmental disability and is deaf. JARC has two deaf homes and serves 12 people in this population.

When talking to Paul's brother Craig, it is obvious that Joe being deaf has no impact on his communication with families.

**"Joe is the best at communicating with the family about their progress and needs. He initiates and answers texts promptly, even on days when he's not working. He is kind and a compassionate problem solver,"** said Craig.

Joe's kindness has put families at ease, especially since the pandemic began. Paul and his siblings had a particularly difficult time recently, as their mother was quite ill and reaching the end of her life. Paul's sister Kathy, shared her very touching account:

**"He made sure that Paul was able to say his goodbyes and helped us to help Paul. I know that when Joe brought Paul to visit our mom and she saw how adjusted he was, it gave her peace.**

Up until that day she had worried incessantly. She worried that Paul would think we had forgotten him. When she saw the rapport between him and Joe, and his willingness to go back to the Ridgeside Home, she stopped worrying.

For that, I will be forever grateful. That is why instead of flowers at her funeral, we asked that donations be made to JARC."

Joe's humble approach to work and his level of compassion are comforting to everyone that knows him. JARC is so lucky to have him as part of the team.

*Do you know someone like Joe who is kind-hearted and looking for a great place to work?  
Please contact [hr@jarc.org](mailto:hr@jarc.org) to inquire about employment opportunities.*

# VOLUNTEERS KEEP PERSONS SERVED SAFE, HEALTHY, AND FED

JARC's priority has always been keeping the people we serve safe, healthy and happy, and our staff members work day and night to achieve that goal. When the around-the-clock focus shifted to adjusting to the new reality of the "Stay Home. Stay Safe" order, we needed extra help – and our selfless and generous supporters didn't think twice about stepping up to the plate!

Russell Elkus and Tracie Fienman are just two of the many volunteers to donate their time and energy delivering 155 meals each day to JARC's Kosher homes.



Russell

A Chicago-based recent college graduate, Russell Elkus chose to head back home to Metro Detroit to be with family in early March. The "Stay Home. Stay Safe" order had just been put in place in Michigan, leaving many at-risk persons in need due to the inability to leave their homes. After spending a few days searching for volunteer opportunities, Russell got a call from his cousin Ron Elkus, recommending the newly developed Kosher Meal Delivery Program at JARC. Having had no prior experience with the JARC community, Russell showed up on March 20th for his first day of delivering meals, and in the following weeks that turned into spending nearly every weekday delivering meals to JARC homes.

Russell described his experience as, "If you have the time and opportunity, there are so many ways to help your local community. What I enjoyed the most about the JARC program was that they were so considerate in creating clear instructions and driving directions for houses in an order that is most efficient for the drivers."



The Fienman Family

Tracie Fienman, a wife and mother of four, has been familiar with the JARC community since her time at Hillel Day School. She heard about the opportunity with the JARC Kosher Meal Delivery Program and felt it would be an extraordinary teaching moment for her kids.

"I think what makes this opportunity with JARC so special is that you are able to help the people they serve directly. Especially with my kids, it's nice to physically see the people they are helping. It prompts them to learn these lessons early on," Tracie said of the program. "The more you give, the more you get in return. Especially at a time like this when you feel so helpless, this program really gives you an opportunity to go out and help others in a safe manner."

The volunteers not only supplied meals to the people we serve, but also to our amazing in-home staff. "Sending thanks to the JARC office and all of the wonderful volunteers for delivering lunch and dinner to us here at the home. We thank you and

appreciate all that has been done to accommodate the persons served and staff during this state of emergency!" said Latrice Hartley, Manager of the Laker Home.

*If you'd like to help those we serve, contact Jessica Tierney at 248-940-2607 or [jessicatierney@jarc.org](mailto:jessicatierney@jarc.org)*

*Thanks to our partners that helped us gain personal protective equipment and other pandemic essentials!*



# OVERCOMING OBSTACLES WITH OPTIMISM

We all know stories about people overcoming life's obstacles. Brooke Dunn is the perfect example of someone whose life is now thriving after some very difficult hardships.



Had **Brooke** not become part of JARC, she may not have progressed as far as she has. Brooke has been able to accomplish major milestones, and her optimistic attitude continuously makes a positive impact on everyone she meets.

Her journey with JARC began during her childhood in Metro Detroit, where she worked closely with our support staff as a young adult. After moving out of town and back to Metro Detroit again, she suffered the loss of both of her parents within a short, two-year period. It was during that difficult time that Brooke found her place in the JARC community. This was nearly six years ago, when she was 20 years old. When they visited the Gilbert Home, Brooke and her extended family felt the sense of community and values which fit their own, making the move to a JARC home a natural fit.

Since moving to JARC, Brooke's goals have included learning new skills, finding new interests and ultimately earning a full-time job. In 2014, her motivation brought her to the post-secondary school Visions Unlimited. Due to the pandemic, the Visions Unlimited program was forced to transition to a virtual platform, just months before her graduation.

While she missed the face-to-face interaction that she had enjoyed, Brooke changed her perspective and connected virtually with teachers and classmates. Her intrinsic motivation helped earn her a Certificate of Completion from Farmington Hills Public Schools in June, and she looks forward to applying her skills in the workforce once the pandemic restrictions are lifted.

Gilbert Home Manager Tiara Owens stated, "Brooke is a very strong individual. She doesn't let the rough times get to her and has adjusted very well to all of the changes this year has brought." Tiara and Brooke are close in age and have formed a close bond. They can often be seen working out together, playing games, and talking, all of which have been key ingredients to her happiness at JARC.

Brooke's motivation and positive attitude have been an inspiration to other members in the JARC community. At JARC, we appreciate every individual that has helped to better our community – whether they donate, volunteer, work on our extraordinary team of staff, or they receive our services. Brooke exemplifies the values set forth by JARC, and she works hard to set an example for others.

*If you would like to support individuals like Brooke that are living in the JARC community, please visit us at [jarc.org/give](http://jarc.org/give) or call 248.940.2617.*

## CELEBRATING JARC STAFF

Every year, the **Joyce Keller & Michael A. Walch Staff Recognition Fund** hosts a staff recognition luncheon. It's something that our staff members look forward to and our way of celebrating the amazing staff that keep JARC strong. With the pandemic changing much of what we do, this event was no different. So, we got creative – this year's event was held on August 11th and featured a drive-thru food truck along with masked and gloved volunteers handing out pop, snacks, and a gift to each employee.

The lunch was followed by a virtual call where awards provided by the **Janis & Larry Shulman Staff Award Fund** were presented to outstanding staff members. Congratulations to this year's winners! Now more than ever, we are so incredibly fortunate and grateful to have such devoted staff to care for the people we serve!

**Marilyn Sisler Memorial Award for Excellence in the Provision of Direct Care Services**

Sandra Baldwin & Stella Swift

**Anna Slomowitz Memorial Award for Excellence in Management**

Rochelle Grubb & Latrice Hartley

**Joseph Tanzman Memorial Award for Excellence in Administrative Services**

Jenny Kabert

**Joyce Keller Strengthening JARC through Creativity**

Jessica Tierney

**Culture of Gentleness Award**

Ceira Way

**Leadership Award**

Shaindle Braunstein



# JARC'S Virtual And Physically Distant Programs

Scavenger Hunt

Meditation

Social Hour

Shabbat Car Picnic

Challah Baking Tutorials

Exercise Sessions

Puppet Show

Craft Projects

American Sign Language Classes

Art Classes

Edible Art Activities

Pet Visits

Games

Live Music

CARE-avan Parade

Dance Parties

Bingo

Yoga

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