

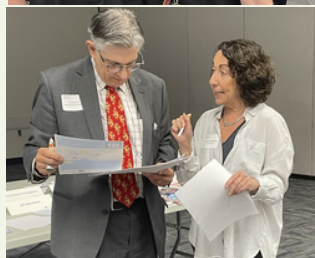
GROTTA FUND FOR OLDER ADULTS NEWSLETTER

EDITION 2 FALL 2024

18 SPRING 2024 NEW GRANTEES STRENGTHENING CONNECTIONS AMONG OLDER ADULTS IN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY AND BEYOND



NEW GRANTEE ORIENTATION AND LEARNING SESSION SEPT 2024



Helping to strengthen and promote social connections among older adults in the Jewish community became the priority for Grotta's Spring Funding cycle. This focus was inspired by emotions we all felt after October 7 and findings from the Federation's Community Study. The 18 approved grantees will provide services to help older adults live better lives, including education, intergenerational projects, volunteer engagement, meals and conversations, outings and new technology.

Grants totaling \$321,000 are supporting new and expanded opportunities for older adult engagement within a single synagogue or organization and through collaborations. These grant recipients are from single organizations:

- NCJW - Essex County Section
- Oheb Shalom Congregation, South Orange
- JESPY House, South Orange
- Temple Beth Shalom, Livingston
- Congregation Agudath Israel, Caldwell
- JCC Central NJ, Scotch Plains
- Congregation Shomrei Emunah, Montclair
- Temple B'nai Or, Morristown
- Daughters of Israel, West Orange
- JCC of MetroWest, West Orange
- Congregation Ohr Torah, West Orange

These recipients are collaborating with other organizations:

- Jewish Service for the Developmentally Disabled
- Temple Emanu-El Westfield
- Conversations to Remember, Pine Brook
- JFS- Central NJ, Elizabeth
- Congregation Ohr Shalom, Summit
- Chabad of Randolph
- JCC of MetroWest- Melton Program, West Orange

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Grantee Project Updates - Small Grants ending May 2024

In Spring 2023, the Grotta Fund awarded eight grants totaling \$204,300 for projects designed to engage older adults in meaningful activities and reduce loneliness. Programs ranged from intergenerational mentoring to art and technology training to a grandparent program. In every site visit, grantees expressed how pleased they were to offer these new activities and provide opportunities for community members to make new friends.



FOCUS HISPANIC CENTER, NEWARK

In December 2023, Grotta council members observed Focus older adults engaging in a technology training project. Following the visit, the Focus staff asked to learn about the October 7 massacre in Israel. In response, we arranged for Martin Yafe, Federation's Global Connections Director, to speak in his native Spanish language to the attendees. Following a brief overview of the 2,500-year history of Jews in Israel, he related the story of Oct 7th.

Participants were grateful and surprised. Several shared with us their misconceptions about what happened on October 7. One person said, "I thought that Israel started the war." Others noted that their news sources were limited to social media and they were confused about the facts. All agreed to spread their newfound understanding to family and friends.

JCC- SCOTCH PLAINS GRANDPARENTS PROGRAM

The JCC offered eight months of intergenerational, educational and social programming organized by a volunteer committee of 14 grandparents for grandparents (primarily ages 62-72), with the goal of strengthening family connections, building social connections, and increasing community engagement.

- 350 grandparents attended a special Shabbat.
- 235 grandparents participated in Jewish holiday celebrations, social action projects or movie screenings.
- 97 grandparents attended more than one program.
- 101 grandparents attended their first Grandparent Circle program this year.

Kudos to the JCC for making excellent and enjoyable use of this \$5,000 grant!



TECHNOLOGY TRAINING WITH OLDER ADULTS, PARTNERSHIP WITH VARIOUS UNIVERSITY TRAINEES.



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STRATEGIC INITIATIVES - FOOD INSECURITY AMONG OLDER ADULTS IN ESSEX COUNTY

FOOD SECURITY COALITION EFFORTS IN NEW JERSEY

"Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life." World Food Bank, 1996



In late 2023, the Grotta Fund made a major commitment to elevate awareness and make inroads in addressing food security among older adults. Grotta's two-part approach:

- Promote a food collaborative in Essex County, with county-wide convenings.
 - In February 2024 and again in May 2024, more than 60 attendees from various Essex County municipalities, food pantries, hospitals, educational institutions, county agencies and others representing more than 30 organizations, attended the launch of the **Food Health and Equity Coalition (FHEC)**. FHEC is led by MEND-NJ.
 - Participants are developing a County-wide plan of new initiatives and projects leading to improving food access and community health with subcommittees including one on older adult issues.
 - Grotta members are pleased with Grotta's support of these convenings and plans to address older adult issues.
- The Older Adult subcommittee intends to launch a needs assessment survey to inform recommendations for further projects.

GROTTA JOINS THE FOOD ACCESS FUND (FSAF)

Launched in late 2023, the NJ Food Access Fund (FSAF), aims to strengthen the food security system in New Jersey. Led by The Tepper Foundation, this first-of-its-kind effort was created in collaboration with the New Jersey Office of the Food Security Advocate (OFSA) and state agencies and is funded by the Tepper Foundation, the Community Foundation of New Jersey, Novo Nordisk, the Taub Foundation, the **Grotta Fund for Older Adults**, the Campbell's Foundation, the O'Toole Family Foundation and the Schumann Fund for NJ. In addition to providing funding support, Grotta participates in selecting the grant recipients. Food Security Access Fund supports organizations in two ways:

- Grant Navigator Support: Human capital support to identify and unlock relevant grants to support their work in building food security.
- Capacity Building Support: Financial assistance for organizations and coalitions to expand the research, data and evaluation projects that identify new paths to end food insecurity. In 2024, the Fund launched Harvest the Future grant efforts to support innovative programs.



OFFICE OF FOOD SECURITY ADVOCATE (OFSA)

Mark Dinglasan, director of OFSA, and his capable researchers, leaders and coaches held a sold-out conference of more than 300 attendees, in the fall of 2024, entitled Garden State Conference on Food Security: Setting a Table for All, for Always. The day included an array of cross-sector conversations and networking to advance the collective work of improving food access and address the root causes of food insecurity. The state demonstrated its ongoing commitment to promoting dignity in the methods by which food is made available to those who need it. Check out more details here:

- Conference video: <https://youtu.be/YsFokcWl6Hs>
- Mark's capable team <https://www.nj.gov/foodsecurity/about/team/>



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AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY LEADERS LEARNING TOGETHER



SHARING SESSION AT THE JEWISH FEDERATION - JAN 2024

Age-Friendly community leaders shared and celebrated their successes, learned about new publications of our work and welcomed new leaders. Communities are engaged in intergenerational efforts, sending informational newsletters, expanding volunteering opportunities, and partnering with local non-profits and libraries.



COMMUNITY LEADERS GATHER IN SOUTH ORANGE - JUNE 2024

Sheena Collum, Mayor of South Orange, welcomed the Age-Friendly leaders with her usual enthusiasm. Attendees toured the new Baird Community Center which serves residents of all ages. The learning session highlighted a statewide study's findings of key concerns of the state's older residents. Also, Maurice Brown, Essex County Director of the Division of Senior Services highlighted the importance of a county's involvement in this work.

NJ'S FIRST AGE-FRIENDLY BLUEPRINT

In May 2024, after more than two years of work, the state published its first Age-Friendly Blueprint. Sarah Adelman, New Jersey's Department of Human Services (DHS) Commissioner, announced and shared the publication at a gathering in Teaneck with many Age-Friendly leaders in attendance. The publication, created by an Executive Order issued by Governor Phil Murphy, provides a framework of efforts to enhance the lives of older adults in the state, and follows New Jersey becoming an AARP-designated Age-Friendly state in 2022. While Grotta was not involved in the Blueprint planning committee, the state's elected officials in DHS are aware of the Grotta Fund's interest in promoting aging and developing a master plan on aging in NJ.



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GROTTA AND FEDERATION AGENCY PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES RELATED TO OLDER ADULTS

GROTTA SUPPORT OF NEXT CHAPTER- FEDERATION PROGRAMMING INAUGURAL EVENT: PROOF THAT CONNECTING WITH OTHERS JUST GETS BETTER WITH AGE



On Thursday, September 12, the Federation hosted its first Next Chapter event, an exciting new initiative. The “meet and greet” drew over 100 participants, spanning all five Greater MetroWest counties. This new initiative comes in response to the 2020 Greater MetroWest community study showing that adults 55+ are seeking increased involvement and Jewish community connection and recognized the Grotta Fund for its support and encouragement. Judi and Renie attended and were pleased to see such a positive response to the program.

Save the date for the next **Next Chapter on Monday, December 16, 7-8:30 pm**, in West Orange. Attendees will prepare sandwiches and other nourishment for donation to local Federation agencies while enjoying latkes and sufganiyot, meeting new people, and giving the gift of your time. Plus help bring joy to community members in need by donating holiday gifts for distribution through JFS Central. **Nourish & Nurture w/ Next Chapter** is a great way to get into the Hanukkah spirit.

GROTTA MEMBERS ARE INVITED: TRAINING TO REDUCE AGEISM



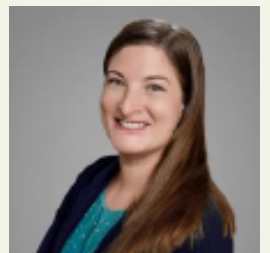
Please join Grotta's new grantees, our Age-Friendly leaders and others for a virtual training session on Ways of Reducing Ageism by “Reframing Aging,” with Katie Squires, PhD, Associate State Director, Advocacy for AARP NJ and a National Reframing Aging Facilitator, on Monday, December 16 at 11 am.

Across the country, organizations and advocates at the local, state, and national level are using the tools of the National Center to Reframe Aging to change the way they communicate about aging.

In this session, we will

- learn new terms for “older adults,” new phrases and ways of being more inclusive and welcoming
- discuss ways to embrace these tools and strategies to spread awareness of implicit bias toward older people, and influence policies and programs that benefit all of us as we age

The Center is dedicated to ending ageism by advancing an equitable and complete story about aging in America and is the trusted, leading source for communication strategies and tools to effectively frame aging issues.



CLICK TO REGISTER HERE: REFRAMING AGING



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TIMELINE OF OUR HISTORY AT THE GROTTA FUND

1916



Theresa Grotta Aid Society for Convalescents is created in honor of her 80th birthday

1923



Theresa Grotta Aid Society for Convalescents purchases and operates a home to care for Jewish women recuperating from surgery

1979

A building is purchased in West Orange, NJ, and the organization is renamed the Theresa Grotta Center for Rehabilitation Services. It includes 142 beds for skilled nursing and rehabilitation, with a priority for caring for the elderly. The organization becomes non-sectarian and men join the Board of Trustees.

1968



After several moves, the facility is located to 189 Mountain Ave., North Caldwell, NJ.

1993

In 1993 - The Facility is sold. The Grotta Foundation for Senior Care is established in South Orange, awarding grants to benefit older adults.

2003

The Grotta Foundation awarded \$3 million in grants, 1993-2003. July, 2003, The Grotta Fund for Senior Care becomes a philanthropic fund of the Jewish Community Foundation (JCF-GMW).

2024



Renamed: Grotta Fund for Older Adults in 2023. The Fund has awarded \$7.7 million in grants to 85+ organizations through MetroWest NJ, 2003-2024.

The Grotta Fund for Older Adults originated from the compassionate vision of Theresa Grotta and friends in the Greater MetroWest area more than a century ago. The legacy of her passion for improving the lives of older adults continues today as **The Grotta Fund for Older Adults**, a philanthropic fund of the Jewish Community Foundation of Greater MetroWest (JCF). Grotta's advisory council, comprised of lay community members, identify funding priorities and award grants to local non-profit organizations in the Greater MetroWest area which includes Essex, Union, Morris, Sussex and eastern Somerset counties, on a non-sectarian basis.