

GROTTA FUND FOR OLDER ADULTS NEWSLETTER

EDITION 1 DECEMBER 2023



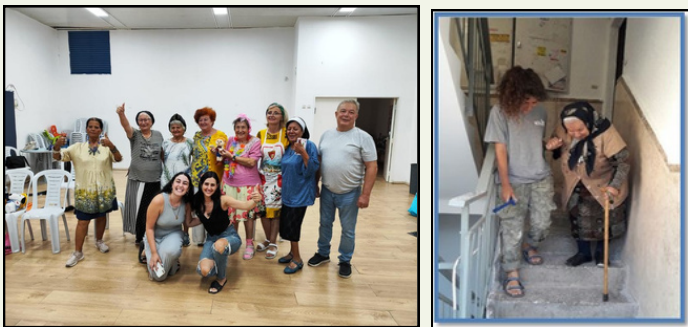
Pictured from left to right: Renie Carniol, Executive Director, Grotta Fund for Older Adults and Julia Stoumbos, Senior Program Officer of the Henry and Marilyn Taub Foundation, Charles Latini, Jr. President of APA-NJ

RENIE CARNIOL RECEIVES APA-NJ AWARD DECEMBER 14

The President's Award for Collaboration & Advocacy of the American Planning Association-New Jersey was awarded to Renie Carniol and Julia Stoumbos on December 14 at their Annual Awards Ceremony. The award recognized their leadership in age-friendly community planning and development in local communities and counties, supported by the two philanthropies. The efforts are promoting municipal planning with an aging lens, and influencing the way Master Plans are being developed. It is also spurring safety and build-community improvements. The association also noted that the work is encouraging more civic engagement, and volunteerism for all ages. The presenter highlighted the importance of this work's impact on the entire state. New Jersey has become the 9th state as an Age-Friendly state in the US. A new blueprint on aging will be published soon and funding will support new communities to follow the lead of the Grotta and Taub grantees.

For more information, Click here:
[file:///C:/Users/rcarniol/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/UCT2DZBL/PEA23%20Awards%20%20RC%20and%20JS%20\(002\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/rcarniol/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/UCT2DZBL/PEA23%20Awards%20%20RC%20and%20JS%20(002).pdf)

7 EMERGENCY GRANTS TO AID ISRAEL'S OLDER ADULTS



In response to the Israel-Hamas massacre of October 7, the Grotta Fund for Older Adults made a momentous decision to award grants to Israel. Funding of \$73,000 was awarded in November to seven non-profit organizations in the Negev. The support will benefit older adults displaced from their homes or communities, as well as assisting the elderly who are too frail to relocate. Other grants are engaging older adults in creative writing and acting at local theaters while addressing mental health issues. Two grants are enabling older adults to learn together, volunteer and foster new social connections. For a complete description of the grants, [CLICK HERE](#).



Pictured from left to right, front row: Judi Sills, Susan Kogan, Renie Carniol, Executive Director, Kala Paul. Back Row: Jeff Braemer, Ilene Isaacs, Carol Billet-Fessler, Cathy Kuttner and Roberta Schoenberg

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ANNUAL MEETING 2023 CELEBRATES \$7.2 MIL. IN GRANTS - 20 YEARS AT JCF



Pictured from left to right, front row: Judi Sills, Chair, Judy Siegel, Renie Carniol, Executive Director, Linda Ershow-Levenberg, Carol Billet-Fessler, Susan Kogan, Back Row: Josh Greenfield, Ilene Isaacs, Lenore Rattner, and Rachel Flajsing, Adm. Assistant. Council members not pictured: Jeff Braemer, Karen Brand, Jordan Glatt, Cathy Kuttner, and Roberta Schoenberg

SPEAKERS PRAISE GROTTA'S AGE-FRIENDLY IMPACT

The Annual meeting guest speakers, South Orange Township President Sheena Collum and NJ Advocates for Aging Well Executive Director of NJ Advocates for Aging Well Cathy Rowe underscored the impact of Grotta's multi-year funding to eight communities and the North Jersey Alliance of Age Friendly Communities.

"Grotta's support has encouraged greater inclusivity of older adults in master planning, expanded volunteer and civic activities and monthly targeted communications for older adults.. It has led to new benches and safety efforts. As a result, South Orange is experiencing an increase in older residents ,which is positively impacting our town.," expressed Sheena Collum.

At its annual meeting on December 7 , the Grotta Fund for Older Adults celebrated its 20 years of successes as a philanthropic fund of the Jewish Community Foundation (JCF). With assets of \$6.3 million, the Fund has awarded \$7.2 million in grants. to more than 85 organizations. Council members praised the two decades of funding for one-year grants as well as multi-year initiatives. In addition the Fund is becoming more focused on stewardship, learning and advocacy, with grantee sharing sessions, site visits, mentoring, and state policy efforts. To leverage our educational and evaluation efforts, the Fund is collaborating with other NJ funders on aging, and Rutgers University School of Social Work.

At the meeting, the successes of the eight-year long initiative, Age-Friendly community development funding efforts were highlighted.

In addition, a strategic funding effort which began in 2023, is fostering a new model of housing, the Assisted Living Program(ALP) in NJ.

Also new in 2023, is an initiative to improve food security among older adults. In the initial planning phase, a convening of food related organizations in Essex County will be held in February 2024. The Grotta Fund aims to forge collaborative partnerships with non-profit and for-profit organizations, other funders, and government entities and strategic solutions.

Judi Sills, the Grotta chair, praised the Council's work in 2023, especially the special granting \$73,000 to assist Israel's older adults affected by the Oct 7 massacre. She thanked Grotta members who have offered guidance to grantees, participated in shared learning opportunities, site visits, and grant application selection and evaluation.



Pictured from left to right, front row: Cathy Rowe, Executive Director, NJAAW, and Sheena Collum, President of South Orange Township

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RECENT SITE VISITS

8 GRANTS - TOTAL \$200,000

SUPPORTING NEW ACTIVITIES TO SPUR FRIENDSHIPS AND SOCIAL CONNECTIONS, AND REDUCE SOCIAL ISOLATION



CHATHAM SENIOR CENTER - WRITING AND ACTING SOCIAL INTERACTIONS



FOCUS HISPANIC CENTER - NEWARK - TECH TRAINING



JCC SCOTCH PLAINS - GRANDPARENTS CIRCLE

THREE RECENT SITE VISITS

At the Chatham Senior Center, older adults are writing and performing personal monologues, stories and group mystery stories.

“Folks don’t want to leave when the session ends. New social interactions among strangers are flourishing. It is definitely building resilience, pride and smiles.” says Julie Reich, Executive Director.

At Focus, Hispanic Center for Community Development, older adults are learning new applications to connect with family, friends, and healthcare providers.

Maritza Arauz, Executive Director, reported, “Participants are describing how they are enjoying their tablets. It is leading to feelings of improved well-being, decreased loneliness and high satisfaction levels. Some participants found that even when they learn technology at a slower pace, it allowed them to renew old hobbies such as table games, reading, dancing, exercises and to immerse themselves in online activities.”

At the JCC, more than 500 participants are making new friends and renewing past ones, volunteering in meaningful ways, and enjoying intergenerational activities. This program has been especially appreciated post Oct. 7th.

“Many multi-generational connections are being developed in meaningful ways, and the best part is spending special time with my grandson making memories and sharing traditions.” says Debra Judd, participant and chair of Grandparent Circle committee.

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STRATEGIC INITIATIVES- HOUSING AND FOOD SECURITY

ASSISTED LIVING PROGRAM



JCHC-BNAI BRITH HOUSING, SOUTH ORANGE, NJ

In early 2023, Funds were awarded to support the expansion of a supportive housing model in New Jersey, Assisted Living Program (ALP).

“The JCHC has been able to get our new ALP appropriately staffed, register low-income residents living at two JCHC apartment buildings and start providing services to those who need them. We have offered classes, assisted residents with their Medicaid applications and signed up some residents who are paying privately.” reports JCHC staff.

A coalition of ALP providers, including JCHC, and funders are encouraging State agencies to simplify the approval process for new providers and to promote new ALPs. This will facilitate more older adults to receive enhanced services in their homes, while magnifying independence, improving mental health, and maximizing quality of life.

FOOD SECURITY AMONG OLDER ADULTS NEW INITIATIVE



According to the New Jersey Department of Agriculture, in 2022, 11.4 percent of households with an adult aged 65 and older living alone were food insecure.

To address this dire situation, the Grotta Fund is supporting a multi-year funding initiative, starting with a planning grant in Essex County and participating in a funder collaborative statewide. Our 2023 grantee, MEND-NJ, is forming a coalition of agencies and others to participate in a county-wide convening. From the collaborative input, it is expected that there will be an Essex County plan with goals, new initiatives and a specific working groups addressing older adults and impactful ways to improve food insecurity.

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UPCOMING GROTTA AND FEDERATION AGENCY PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES RELATED TO OLDER ADULTS



Exhibit Open March 14 to April 14 2024

In celebration of the Federation's Centennial year, submit your art for a Juried Art Exhibit at JSDD's Heidi Gallery between December 1, 2023 and January 12, 2024.



January 30, 2024, 8:00am Zoom call

Update on Israel Emergency Grants.
For more information, contact Renie Carniol or Rachel Flajsing.



January 23, 2024

The North Jersey Alliance of Age Friendly Communities will celebrate 2023 achievements. Meeting will be held at the Federation. For more information, please contact Renie Carniol.



February 2024

The JCC Memory Care Program is expanding to serve older adults with a wide range of memory impairments. For more information, please click here.



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 a philanthropic fund of the Jewish Community Foundation of Greater MetroWest (JCF), following the sale of the Theresa Grotta Convalescent Center and later a nursing home in West Orange, NJ.

Grotta's advisory council, comprised of lay community members, identify funding priorities and award grants on a non-sectarian basis, to local non-profit organizations in the Greater MetroWest area which includes Essex, Union, Morris, Sussex and eastern Somerset counties.

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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.
New name: The Theresa Grotta Center for Rehabilitation Services
142 beds for skilled nursing home and rehabilitation care.
Priority is caring for the elderly;
Becomes non-sectarian.
Men join the Board of Trustees.

1968



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

1993

The Facility is sold. From the \$6 million in proceeds, The Grotta Foundation for Senior Care is established.

2003

July 16th, 2003
The Grotta Fund for Senior Care of the Jewish Community Foundation (JCF-GMW) is established.

1993-2003, Grotta Foundation awards \$3 million in grants.

2023

GROTTA FUND
For Older Adults

Jewish Community Foundation
of Greater MetroWest NJ

2003-2023 Grotta awards \$7.2 million in grants to 85+ organizations.