

Federation funding matches or exceeds last year's



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A new streamlined allocations process has enabled the Jewish Federation of Monmouth County to reduce paperwork and ease the pressures on its partner and beneficiary agencies, while enhancing the focus of the grants and allocations made by the federation on strategic impact in the community.

Agencies receiving grants were notified of their awards for 2012 on Jan. 24; all nine applicants received as much funding for 2012 — in some cases, more — as they did last year, said federation executive director Keith Krivitzky.



Students at work in the technology lab at Solomon Schechter Day School of Greater Monmouth County, a recipient of a local allocation from the Monmouth federation.

“For the first time, we separated the windows for local funding and for funding overseas projects,” said Krivitzky. “Additionally, funding for day schools — totaling more than \$115,000 — was included as part of the local allocations, since it is a component of the impact we have in Monmouth County, and an additional \$8,000 was allocated for need-based Jewish camping and Israel experience scholarships.

“Since scholarships are one of the most direct ways we can have an impact on lots of individuals,” he said, “it makes sense that it be part of allocations. Now it has much more strategic value.”

The money raised and allocated by the federation for local agencies — according to Krivitzky, more than \$560,000 was dispersed in this round of allocations — are intended to aid people in need in Monmouth County, provide Jewish educational opportunities, support Jewish continuity, and fund community programs for people of all ages.

Additionally, the federation is preparing to launch a program in the spring offering small seed grants for innovative, short-turnaround projects.

“If an agency has a great idea for a community-building program that seeks to actively engage Jewish life in the county, and perhaps collaborate with other organizations, we can award some small but not insignificant grants,” Krivitzky said.

Improving the allocations process is an important step in increasing federation’s impact, said president Joseph Hollander.

“We shortened the length of the process and focused on key information we need from partners to determine the impact they are having, and intend to have, in the community through their programs,” he said. “We want to be strategic with the impact we encourage in the community, and be able to measure the return on federation’s and the community’s investments.

“We are attempting to be responsive to our donors and constituents,” continued Hollander, “and to ensure that the dollars we are entrusted with are used wisely. In line with this, we have also moved more of our allocable dollars out of the budget and into the process.

“This allows us to review, discuss, and evaluate the total sum of dollars invested in the community through federation.”

Robert Gutman of Ocean Township, chair of the local allocations committee, said that streamlining the allocations process — which is overseen by Jonathan Barofsky of Ocean, vice president of allocations — made it more productive and less laborious.

“By refining the process, we were able to focus our time and energy on reviewing the merits of the applications and the best way to distribute the funding we are entrusted with,” Gutman said.

“It’s an important function of federation that allows laypeople to really understand what the agency is doing and why,” said Beth Krinsky of Manalapan. “We have to raise more money because the needs are really great in our community. We are more directed in what we do; now the allocations are project and program oriented instead of just randomly giving out dollars.”

As federation expands its reach, the need to raise more funds increases, Krivitzky said. “The amount of money we raise has a direct impact on the dollars we can distribute and the impact we have,” he said. “In order to make smart investments for our Jewish future, we are asking questions like: ‘What do we want Monmouth County’s Jewish community to look like in five to 10 years? What kinds of philanthropic investments do we need to get there?’”

The nine recipient agencies are Rutgers Hillel, New Brunswick; Hillel Yeshiva, Ocean Township; Solomon Schechter Day School of Greater Monmouth County, Marlboro; Yeshiva at the Jersey Shore, Deal; Friendship Circle of the Chabad of Western Monmouth County, Manalapan; the Center for Holocaust, Human Rights & Genocide Education at Brookdale Community College, Lincroft; JCC of Western Monmouth, Manalapan; Jewish Family and Children’s Service of Greater Monmouth County, Asbury Park; and the Jewish Heritage Museum of Monmouth County, Freehold.

Other programs funded were an expansion of the PJ Library program in Monmouth County — whereby families with small children receive free Jewish-themed books and music — and the Rutgers Hillel Center for Israel Engagement.

The federation did not publicize the amount of the individual grant awards, since the entire allocations process is not yet complete.

The JCC of Greater Monmouth County in Deal, which is going through bankruptcy, did not apply for allocations, though provision was made to enable funding should a viable operating plan emerge. Two other agencies that received federation funding last year, Ilan High School in Elberon and Village for Healthcare and Rehabilitation of Workmen’s Circle (which is in the planning stages at a site in Freehold Township), also did not submit applications this year.