



IMMEDIATE PRESS RELEASE

JFS of Metrowest
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**JFS of Metrowest to Celebrate Outstanding Community Leaders
at 31st Annual Seize the Dream Gala on May 6, 2021**



In celebration of their 50th wedding anniversary, former JFS board member Chester Black and his wife Diane gathered with their six children, their spouses and their 23 grandchildren at the JFS Children's Clothing Closet for a Ready-to-Wear packing event (September 2019)

Framingham, MA – February 11, 2021 – Jewish Family Service (JFS) of Metrowest is pleased to announce that the 31st annual Seize the Dream Gala will be held virtually on Thursday May 6, 2021 at 6:00pm, featuring:

Recipients of the
JFS Max Michelson Humanitarian Award
Diane and Chester Black

and

Celebrating
JFS' 300+ Volunteers
*Accelerating Social, Academic and Health Equity
through the Power of Volunteerism*

Seize the Dream honors area leaders and volunteers who have demonstrated an unfailing commitment and personal dedication to supporting vulnerable children, families and older adults in the local community and beyond. This year we honor those who are working to accelerate social, academic and health equity in our community and it is a privilege to recognize these exceptional individuals.

Chester and Diane Black believe in the “power of volunteerism”, and devote their time volunteering for organizations to help improve the lives of others.

The Blacks have quietly made a significant imprint in the Metrowest community, leading by example to foster community engagement with their children and 23 grandchildren.

JFS has had the privilege of the Black’s volunteerism through both their long-term service on the JFS Board of Directors and Chester’s commitment as advisor to the CEO. In 2015, as co-chair of the JFS first all-women’s event, Diane hosted an evening to identify new women to volunteer and lead the JFS mission. It was then, that the idea for the JFS Children’s Clothing Closet was conceived. To date the Closet proudly distributes over 3,000 pieces of clothing to local families. The goal of the Children’s Clothing Closet is to provide a response to the seasonal clothing needs of elementary-aged children in the Metrowest community.

In 2016 the Blacks created the **Chester and Diane Black JFS Lecture Series on Volunteerism and Civic Engagement**, to sponsor a speaker at the JFS annual meeting. Since its inception, the series has welcomed four speakers inspiring Staff, Board and meeting guests to harness the power of volunteerism, which allows JFS to Accelerate Social, Academic and Health Equity in the community.

In celebration of their 50th wedding anniversary in September of 2019, Chester and Diane created a beautiful and moving event in connection with the JFS Children’s Clothing Closet. Together, with their entire family, each grandchild came ready to fill bags with brand new clothes and shoes they had purchased for 23 JFS clients. Bags, adorned with letters of well wishes from the grandchildren, were distributed to JFS clients in the Metrowest area just in time for back to school.

Leading by example, the Blacks have inspired their family to engage in JFS too. After a grandson’s Bar Mitzvah JFS received a donation from the thirteen year old and a note stating, “your work is inspiring”. At Hanukkah, shortly after that clothing closet event, two grandchildren purchased gifts for recently arrived Jewish Ukrainian refugees, trading notes and holiday wishes.

This year when the pandemic prevented JFS from proceeding with our Backpack event, it was four older granddaughters who took the lead. Each Teen Lead was responsible for creating and executing a plan to collect school supplies and recruited family and friends to fill 20 new backpacks at their individual events. From their volunteer efforts, JFS was able to provide over 250 backpacks full of school supplies to children in our community who need it most.

When Chester and Diane accepted the honor of the *Max Michelson Humanitarian Award*, it was with the caveat that Seize the Dream 2021, not only honor them but also celebrate all the volunteers of JFS. Our volunteers are the energy behind the JFS programs that serve over 5,500 individuals in the community. Each year JFS relies on the partnership of over 300 volunteers, who donate over 5,000 hours, to make a significant impact.

In celebration of these extraordinary community partners, this year’s Seize the Dream Gala will be held virtually and available to all who wish to attend and will include an online and silent auction with many unique and exciting items.

To learn more, please visit [JFSMW.org](https://www.jfsmw.org).

About Jewish Family Service (JFS) of Metrowest

JFS is a community-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that is dedicated to Accelerating Social, Academic and Health Equity, serving over 5,500 people within the Metrowest and Greater Boston regions each year. The proceeds of the Seize the Dream event support a wide variety of programs including academic tutoring for at-risk children, nutrition assistance for low-income families, and support services that enable frail older adults to live independently. JFS' sound fiscal management practices have earned it a [4-star rating from Charity Navigator](#), America's largest independent charity evaluator. To learn more about JFS, visit JFSMW.org.



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