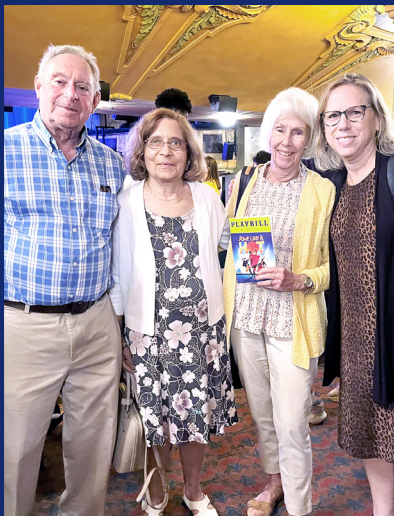


Gems

Kaiserman JCC
Philly



ANNUAL UPDATE

5783 (2022-23)

What a year!

A Look Back

This was a very busy year at Gems, going back to in person programs, expanding our Bucks County program, and working on our merger with the Kaiserman JCC. This was an active year in the world as well, from the coronation of King Charles, changes in the American legal system, and the continuation of the war in Ukraine. Now that the Jewish year is almost over, it is time to reflect on our work and look forward to a new era for our organization.

Rabbi Tarfon, a long ago Jewish scholar, said: *"the day is short, and the work is plentiful, and the laborers are indolent, and the reward is great, and the master of the house is insistent."* (Pirkei Avot 2:15) Rabbi Tarfon, who focuses on spiritual life, describes a very basic situation, whether it is professional, personal, or communal. He reminds us that there is always more to do to ensure the world will be a better place. Rabbi Tarfon also tells us: *"It is not your duty to finish the work, but neither are you at liberty to neglect it."* (Pirkei Avot 2:16) Note the words here, duty and liberty. Our being in the world comes with responsibilities and we should do our best to fulfill these, regardless of whether we can accomplish it all.

With this in mind, I want to share some of our accomplishments from this year and our aspirations for the upcoming year. Wishing you a happy and healthy new year, full of activities and new encounters.



I look forward to seeing you at the JCC in September for our Taste of gems program.

Rabbi Moriah SimonHazani
Executive Director

Staff Reflections

Orit Dolgushev and Greta Wrigley joined us last summer as program managers. Their involvement has had a wonderful impact on the program and our participants.



Orit Dolgushev

Orit writes: *"I have been with Gems for just over one year now. I started when the Covid pandemic was still going on. Our members were feeling reluctant to come out to classes in person. We continued to adapt to the needs of our population and went on to have diverse virtual programming, helping members to avoid isolation. In addition, we offered hybrid courses such as the Banned Books class with our community bookshop owner who came to speak in person. Some members joined us via Zoom as they could not travel to our location."*



Greta Wrigley

Greta writes: *"I am proud to be a part of Gems, and now by extension, the Kaiserman JCC. I am committed to community building through learning and experience, and see it as my role to bring this about through diverse programming that supports older adults maintaining active and engaged lives."*

Main Line – Program Highlights



Zoom allowed us to bring speakers from all over the world. One example was our political affairs global round table discussion titled, International Perspective on the War in Ukraine. We had panelists joining us virtually from Israel, Germany and Canada. In addition, last fall we offered The Great Outdoors class. We walked through various destinations during the course



and explored places such as Stoneleigh Natural Garden, Haverford College Trail, Cynwyd Heritage Trail, and more. We traveled virtually to China, Amsterdam, and to various museums around the world. We also celebrated Israel's 75th anniversary with special classes about Israel's politics, led by an Israeli

expert straight from Israel. During the summer months, we were able to take local trips to small museums around town and discovered places we have never been to. We also resumed our trips to New York City to see a Broadway show. The hit *Some Like it Hot* was a great success.

Lastly, we hosted a program which had over thirty people in attendance in person! As the COVID crisis subsides, we are seeing that more and more older adults are expressing the need to come out and socialize, seeking fitness, well-being, and intellectual stimulation to enrich their lives in retirement. As one member put it: "I like meeting new people during courses, classes, and events that Gems provides for us."

Bucks County – Program Highlights



The Bucks County Gems program has expanded its opportunities for lifelong learning and connectedness. With our members increased comfort level to be at in person programs, we are now offering two days of classes per week instead of one, with three to four different offerings in person. Over the last year, we have collaborated with a variety of community organizations including The Bucks County Kehillah, local



Bucks County synagogues, and 55+ communities.

A highlight of the Bucks County Gems program this year is our *Gems On The Go: Movie & Brunch Program*. We had an increase in attendance for each event. We had over forty people attend our last event. These programs foster

diverse discussions, connection and community building.

An added focus this year is our outreach to 55+ communities. We hosted a successful event at the Regency at Yardley which included breakfast, schmoozing and a lecture on the British Invasion of the 1960's. We hope to expand and develop this type of programming over the next year.

Merging with the Kaiserman JCC



Besides developing and running our local programs, we worked on our merger with the Kaiserman JCC. In the beginning of the year we identified a partnership with another not for profit as a great way for us to expand our

services to the community. We believe that through this merger we will be able to offer a holistic well-rounded program that will include enrichment, wellness, fitness programs, and more, geared toward older adults. We hope that this will bring a new audience to our new hub, *Gems at the J*. This hub, and its variety of services for our population, will enrich our community offering a meaningful way for people to age in their homes with dignity and purpose. We have already started the collaboration with the JCC and will share more information about the programs in the upcoming months. I would like to thank our board and our team for working extensively on this project. We couldn't have done this without their tireless efforts.

Welcome to the Kaiserman JCC –

A message from Alan Scher CEO



Preschoolers high five active older adults leaving a fitness class in the hallway as they walk toward their gym class. Teenagers partner with older adult mentors to

fashion theatrical oral histories unspooling shared stories of identity. Generations volunteer together, learn together, play together vibrantly. At the Kaiserman JCC, we aspire toward this vision of community in action. Last year, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of our institution. We adopted a new strategic plan and recommitted to the essential work of our mission – creating fulfilling connections, enhancing lives, and fostering Jewish peoplehood. Our new partnership with Gems is the embodiment of this work, and we could not be prouder and more excited to serve as the home for your Gems at the J program. Together, we will broaden our service reach this year, deepen and enhance the experiences we provide, and enrich all aspects of our endeavors. Come join us in this next chapter as a participant, as a supporter, and as a leader. I look forward to meeting you all at the Kaiserman JCC in 5784!



Our Members Speak:



"Sometime ago I discovered the Golden Slipper Gems program at Shir Ami. Gems offers a variety of topics for mature seniors - religious, historical, musical, travel and notable figures to name a few. Thank you to Gems for broadening my horizons. An extra bonus for me is the new friendships I have acquired. Thank you and keep up the good work."
— Kathy



"I always look forward to the days when I attend a Golden Slipper class. What could be better than learning together, socializing, and finding out information that I might not have known before attending the class. It is a win win situation."
— Margie



"My motivation to sign up for classes with Gems stems from intellectual curiosity. I love the opportunity to constantly learn new information and make connections between different topics. I am enjoying the social context Gems is able to provide."
— Christopher



**Come visit us
at our new location!**

**Kaiserman JCC
45 Haverford Road
Wynnewood, PA 19096**



To support us please mail your donation to our office at:
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