

JFS receives grant to expand virtual support groups

By Sergio Carmona
Florida Jewish Journal

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Ferd & Gladys Alpert Jewish Family Service in West Palm Beach has presented “Coping with Our New Reality” virtual support groups.

A grant from the TD Charitable Foundation through the support of the Jewish Federation of Palm Beach County has enabled Alpert JFS to expand the virtual support groups to six gated communities from Boynton Beach to the northern part of the county as part of a new pilot program. The communities include three 55+ ones and three with a significant number of families with children.

“The residential community initiative for ‘Coping with Our New Reality’ will allow isolated groups to build community through interactive discussions,” said Marc D. Hopin, Alpert JFS’ chief executive officer, in a news release. “The connections forged among participants during these exclusive presentations will help create a sense of belonging and support system for residents.”

Michael Hoffman, the Jewish Federation’s president and CEO, said in the release, “As many struggle with anxiety, depression and isolation as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, we are honored to support our partner agency, Alpert Jewish Family Service, and its new initiative during this challenging time.”

“We are incredibly grateful that TD Charitable Foundation recognizes the critical need of supporting programs that help individuals who are in social isolation to make a connection and stay connected to their local communities, and manage the changes impacting their lives and the lives of their families due to COVID-19.”

The communities’ series of sessions are conducted virtually. Visit AlpertJFS.org or call 561-684-1991 for more information on the agency and support groups.



ALPERT JFS/COURTESY

Marc D. Hopin is the CEO of Ferd & Gladys Alpert Jewish Family Service, which has expanded its virtual support groups to six gated communities due to a grant from the TD Charitable Foundation through the support of the Jewish Federation of Palm Beach County.

L’Chaim

Your source for news and information on Jewish life, arts and culture in South Florida

JCC hosting virtual fall Jewish film festival

By Sergio Carmona
Florida Jewish Journal

The Adolph & Rose Levis Jewish Community Center’s Sandler Center in Boca Raton is providing an opportunity for movie lovers to watch more than 30 films online this fall.

The first-ever virtual Fall Judy Levis Markhoff Boca Raton Jewish Film Festival takes place from Sept. 29-Dec. 25. The Levis JCC Sandler Center-hosted program will feature Jewish-themed narrative, documentary and short films from around the world. The films featured in the festival include “I’ll Find You,” “Golden Voices,” “Incitement,” “Love in Suspenders,” “Holy Silence,” “Flawless” and many more.

“When, due to the pandemic, our fourth annual Judy Levis Markhoff Boca Raton Jewish Film Festival was forced to close even before it really began, we saw that our ticket holders and our community had a strong desire to continue engaging with our programming,” said Lesley Rich, the film festival’s program and production director. “As a result, we provided many of our films free of charge since March.”

Rich continued, “The fall virtual festival is a natural progression from that, and we are thrilled to be able to adapt and offer such a wide variety of films and special events this season.”

Wendy Honig, the festival’s artistic director, said, “Our patrons and ticket-holders will have the opportunity not only to enjoy thought-provoking and entertaining films from around the world, but they’ll be able to enjoy exclusive opportunities to participate in panel discussions, Q & A sessions with filmmakers and even a virtual cast party.”

“There will also be an opportunity



JUDY LEVIS MARKHOFF BOCA RATON JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL/COURTESY

The film “Golden Voices” will be screened during the virtual Fall Judy Levis Markhoff Boca Raton Jewish Film Festival.

“Our goal is always the same: to offer quality films and engaging programs, all with a Jewish theme or connection, to our community and beyond.”

— Lesley Rich

to preview the films up to 72 hours following the scheduled screening,” she continued. “While we’re very happy to be able to continue with virtual programming this fall, we are also excited to begin planning for an in-person festival, providing it is safe, for spring 2021.”

When asked what films and speakers she would most recommend for viewers, Honig responded, “We pride ourselves on providing a diverse array of films and subject matter ranging from poignant political documentaries

to romantic comedies and would be hard-pressed to recommend just a select few.”

“We hand-select each and every film and appreciate each one for their individual message,” she said.

Regarding the goal for the upcoming virtual festival, Rich said, “Our goal is always the same: to offer quality films and engaging programs, all with a Jewish theme or connection, to our community and beyond.”

“People are hungry for the kind of thoughtful, interesting and entertaining programming we’ve become known for,” Rich continued.

Rich thanks Judy Levis Markhoff and all of its sponsors and donors for allowing the festival to continue.

Tickets are \$10 for documentaries and \$12 for feature films. They are available for purchase at bocajff.org, where a full program guide including dates, showtimes, and a synopsis of each film is also available.

Contact Lisa Barash at lisab@bocafed.org or call 561-558-2514 for more information.