

Philanthropy Matters

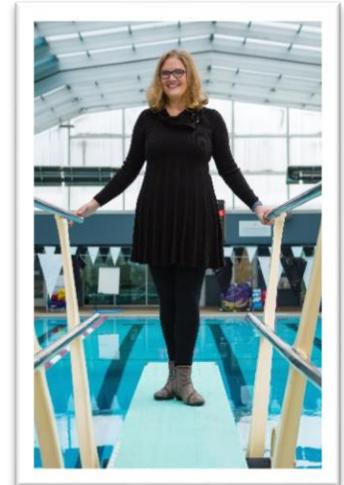
We Share Your Passion! January 2021



Greetings,

I am delighted to share with you the post campaign results of the Asheville (North Carolina) JCC 's first comprehensive campaign in twenty years.

I have asked Ashley Lasher, JCC Executive Director (pictured here), to talk about how the JCC is doing today, three years after the campaign and the exquisite building additions and renovations were



completed.

Some background

DVA conducted a campaign planning/ feasibility study in the fall of 2014. Formal preparation began in early 2015 and we conducted the campaign through 2016. The primary component of the campaign was the opening of a new year-round aquatics complex in November 2017.

The JCC is one of the JCC Association's smallest agency. Its' main building is approximately **25,000 sq. feet**, built in 1994. Prior to that, they operated in a small house named Hilda's House. Their primary programs are a regionally recognized pre-school, outdoor aquatics program, the highest rated day camp in western Carolina and a variety of adult education and social engagement activities. It has a tremendous reputation in serving Jewish and non- Jewish families throughout greater Asheville.

The campaign's vision was bold. Their strategic planning objective was to provide even better programs and a more welcoming environment for people in every generation throughout Asheville. The campaign began in the 75th year of its presence in Asheville. The primary building enhancements were renovations and redesign of its' current building and land acquisition to build a new year- round aquatics complex.

Tomorrow's JCC campaign's initial target was \$7M an extraordinary amount for the J. The prior campaign in 1992-94 raised approximately 1.3M. The key gift and strategy that fueled this campaign was a dollar-for- dollar match for every campaign gift from the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation. The initial foundation connection was developed by the Executive Director, Lael Gray with a family member of Mort Mandel who lives in Asheville. **The campaign raised over \$8M.**



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The case for support was powerful and equally as bold which attracted a dynamic group of campaign leaders and a proudly committed Executive Director which motivated donors to contribute gifts at their largest level ever. *If you would like a copy of the campaign case for support, please contact me.*

From Ashley: JCC Today

1. *What projects were completed during the campaign? Have the new additions created a greater presence in the Asheville community? The new pool complex benefited from a unique arrangement with Asheville High School, has that relationship proven to be successful?*



This capital campaign built a new year-round aquatics facility, a new early childhood education wing with seven new/renovated classrooms, a new lobby addition, and renovated the existing youth programs wing, multi-purpose seminar rooms, board room, and social hall.

Impact

These new additions have been impactful in important ways. Our school-aged programs (summer day camp, after-school, and now virtual school-day programming) now have dedicated spaces for the first time. Because they are not sharing spaces with adult programming, once COVID allows, adults will have dedicated spaces for arts, culture, and social programming. This will enable us to expand both youth programming and adult programming simultaneously.

The year-round aquatics facility has opened the JCC to many new individuals and communities. We are now proud to have a vibrant year-round lap swimming membership base in addition to our loyal summer recreational swimming members. We previously had a small, summer-only youth swim league.

Our new aquatics facility enabled us to offer year-round swim team and become a USA Swimming Club. The swim team has been so popular that we now have over 50 swimmers between the Gefilte Fish (elementary) and Smokin' Salmon (teen) teams, both with waiting lists. We have also hosted UNC-Asheville's diving team, been a training site for USA Elite Triathlon athletes coached by an Olympic coach, and swim teams from many local and regional schools and clubs.

Arguably most importantly, our swim lesson participation has grown exponentially, from roughly 12-20 students with only two instructors to 150+ children annually with multiple instructors. We are also the only facility in the area offering formal springboard diving lessons with a certified USA Diving coach. The aquatics facility also currently offers training and certification in lifeguarding/CPR/First Aid to young adults entering the workforce. We know that the Talmud obligates us to teach our children how to swim, and the Asheville JCC is doing exactly that.

The arrangement with Asheville High School's swim team has certainly been a benefit to the JCC. We are proud to be their home pool! **Note: A new arrangement with Asheville High School led to the second largest gift from their pool fund to the campaign.**

2. *Understanding that COVID has impacted all, how have the new projects impacted program growth and membership growth?*

Neither programs nor membership are growing right now. However, the aquatics facility has certainly allowed us to reach new audiences, as mentioned above. And I have faith that the main building renovation will positively impact program/membership growth when it is safe for people to gather again.

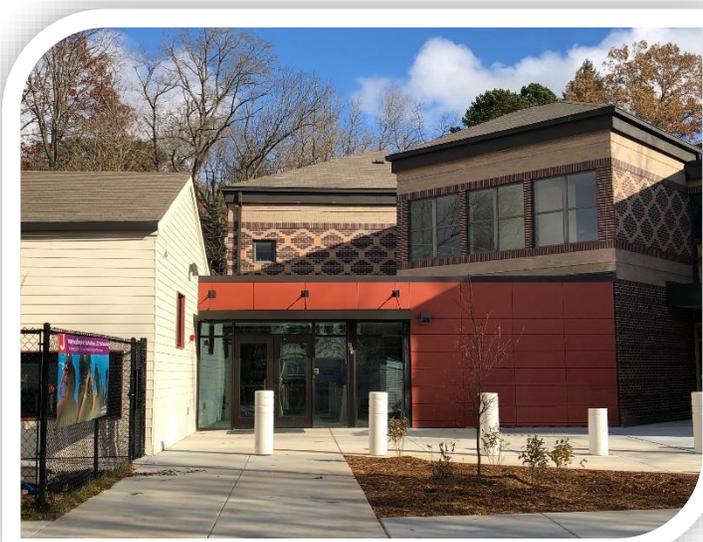
3. *Has the success of the campaign, largest FR project in JCC history, increased overall annual fundraising? Are board members more engaged because of what was accomplished? Have you been able to engage younger and newer board members/committee members? How have you remained connected with your major donors to the campaign?*

We have remained engaged with our major donors to the campaign through a variety of stewardship tools. We hosted luncheons and tours for them to see the facility that they helped build when it was still safe to do so and launched a virtual tour this winter for those who were not able to join us in person (click [here](#) for a video introduction and "thank you!" from the Executive Director, then click [here](#) for the virtual tour).

I maintain contact with donors, and the Development Director ensures that they receive regular updates/communications from the JCC. **Many major donors have given annual major gifts upon completion of their campaign pledge payments.**

Impact

We have absolutely engaged younger and newer board members over the past few years, and they are committed to the mission and vision of the JCC. They are often personally engaged in our programs, whether as early childhood or youth program parents or as pool members.



Annual fundraising totals are very different (**more than in the past**) right now than it used to. This is partly due to the capital campaign, partly due to the pandemic and our "emergency support fund" campaigns, and partly due to a new, engaged fund development committee.

4. *Is there a renewed enthusiasm about the role that the JCC plays in the community, general and Jewish?*

I hope so! We are providing the essential service of childcare (early childhood and youth)

and social distancing-friendly wellness and recreation aquatics programming. We are also providing virtual programming for adults and seniors, and very much look forward to providing those services in person again. We believe that doing this important work amidst great challenges and supporting families in their time of great need lays the groundwork for the JCC to have a strengthened and ongoing role in the community, general and Jewish.



DVA Final Thoughts

We often don't focus on the long-term impact of a successful campaign. If leadership builds on their campaign success, expect the following: Greater community impact and presence, leadership development and engagement, capacity building through annual support and major gift growth, stronger for the next generation and, membership increases and program expansion. Asheville is on track to achieve all of them!



Continue to enhance and grow your fundraising impact. We can help you with Feasibility Studies, Capital and Endowment Campaigns, Donor Surveys, Planned Giving, Major Gift initiatives and coaching and board/staff retreats. We use all the COVID-19 protocols.

Next Issue: What does 2021 look like?

Planned Giving: Unlock tremendous support from your membership and donor base, regardless of the size of your organization.

Stay safe. Stay healthy. Stay strong.



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Dawn Hensley, Editor

