



B'nai B'rith  
Senior Housing  
Network

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# SENIORITY REPORT

## Inform

We want to do our best to stay in touch with you. Please remember to send pictures and updates on the events in your building!

## Sign Up

Reading the Seniority Report is a great way to stay informed on what we are doing here at CSS as well as having a pulse on aging in general. To sign up for this resource simply [Click Here](#)

## Contribute

Want to contribute to the next issue of Seniority Report? Email us your own story or suggestions at: [seniorservices@bnaibrith.org](mailto:seniorservices@bnaibrith.org)

## Follow Us



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EDITOR: Amanda Spiwak



Service project volunteers with SBP building affordable housing.

## B'nai B'rith Managers and Service Coordinators Meeting—First In-person Meeting in Two Years

By Janel Doughten, Associate Director, Center for Senior Services



This past June 22-24, after two years of holding all of our B'nai B'rith Senior Housing Network training conferences virtually, the managers and service coordinators of the B'nai B'rith Senior Housing Network met in person for three days in New Orleans.

The Annual B'nai B'rith Managers and Service Coordinators meeting kicked off on Wednesday, June 22 with two service projects. Participants volunteered with B'nai B'rith disaster relief partners the Program of All-Inclusive care for the Elderly in the Greater New Orleans area (PACE Greater New Orleans) and SBP, a nonprofit

based in St. Bernard Parish that helps to rebuild homes after disasters and builds affordable housing that is hurricane resistant.

At the PACE Center, volunteers stuffed and distributed emergency preparedness kits, participated in activities and helped the staff serve lunch for the elderly clients. The second group that volunteered with SBP helped to install the sub-flooring at an affordable housing site in New Orleans.

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## B'nai B'rith Managers and Service Coordinators Meeting—First In-person Meeting in Two Years

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On Thursday, June 23 and Friday, June 24, the conference training sessions included updates with staff from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Social Security Administration, the New Orleans affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness and our own B'nai B'rith staff Janel Doughten and Evan Carmen, as well as other experts in the affordable senior housing industry. Many of the sessions focused on how to continue navigating the Coronavirus Pandemic and best practices for the future.

This annual training meeting was created for the on-site building staff of the B'nai B'rith Housing Network properties, focusing on issues that impact day-to-day activities of staff and residents in our affordable housing buildings.

We look forward to continuing a mix of virtual and in person training meetings for the rest of 2022 and 2023.



The B'nai B'rith Managers and Service Coordinators meeting.



Service project volunteers with SBP building affordable housing.



Service project volunteers at the PACE Center.



Stuffing emergency preparedness kits for the clients of the PACE Center.



Service project volunteers working on an activity with the clients at the PACE Center.

## Emergency Preparedness

By Janel Doughten, Associate Director, Center for Senior Services



Active shooters, wildfires, hurricanes, medical emergencies, even a global pandemic! We hope they don't happen, but

sometimes they do. We cannot control whether a disaster will occur, but what is in our control is preparing ourselves for an emergency.

As the largest national Jewish sponsor of affordable senior housing, our housing conferences usually include at least one session on Emergency Preparedness for the buildings, since emergency preparedness is an ever-evolving topic. Learning from those who have dealt with fires, extreme weather or even intruders entering the buildings helps the whole network prepare for any emergency.

In 2019 the annual Managers and Service Coordinators meeting was held in Puerto Rico, two years after Hurricane Maria devastated the island, so we were able to learn how an entire island the size of many U.S. states deals with a large-scale disaster. Seeing what happened and listening to other senior housing providers, the Red Cross, medical

providers and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development staff helped our housing network staff develop emergency plans for worst case scenarios of large-scale disasters.

However, most building emergencies are on a smaller scale, so learning how to prepare staff and residents for those emergencies is just as important. A large part of emergency planning is preparing staff and residents for being the first person on the scene and what to do, such as how to call 911 and give pertinent information. Although everyone likes to think they have more of the fight, than flight instinct, not everyone reacts the same way during an emergency. Having a plan in place and rehearsing that plan retrains the brain to stay calm and focus.

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency webinar, "Until Help Arrives," many people think that emergency responders arrive immediately, but on average it takes at least six minutes. Therefore, bystanders need to help in emergency situations to keep people safe and alive until those first responders arrive.

In our buildings it is our staff and residents who are there until help arrives, and they need to know what to do in an emergency until those first responders arrive and also what to do when they get there. Having different scenario plans,

training on those plans and reinforcing that training is key, making sure that everyone knows their role. Based on the type of emergency, residents may be asked to shelter in place or to evacuate once first responders arrive on scene. Mobility, hearing, other health concerns and even language issues should all be accounted for in those plans as well.

It cannot be overstated that training is key to keeping calm and focused during an emergency. I know, as someone that prepares training on Emergency Preparedness, it helped me stay calm and offer help to someone that was lying unconscious in the street after an overdose. People were yelling, but no one was actually helping except one person who had called 911. My friend and I ran over to get the woman on her side, and then a few other people jumped in to help her until the EMT's arrived. It took over four minutes for the first responders to get there. In the meantime, we did everything to help her try to breathe, keep her heart beating and to hang on. From the trainings, I knew that we needed to help because it could be a while before first responders could get there, that the 911 operator would guide us through whatever we needed to do, and that sometimes it just takes one person to step up and take charge for others to follow.

### RESOURCES

#### Ready.gov and FEMA Resources

<https://www.ready.gov/business>

<https://www.ready.gov/business/implementation/emergency>

<https://www.ready.gov/business-leadersa>

<https://www.ready.gov/business-continuity-planning-suite>

[https://community.fema.gov/PreparednessCommunity/s/open-training?language=en\\_US](https://community.fema.gov/PreparednessCommunity/s/open-training?language=en_US)

#### FEMA Region 2 Webinars:

<https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/individuals-communities/preparedness-webinars>



## A Note From The Chair

*By Marvin Siflinger, Chair of Center for Senior Services*

Hello friends,

As the summer turns to fall, it's important to reflect on how our senior housing network has changed because of the pandemic. As everyone is aware, since 2020, our programming has been exclusively virtual. Ensuring participants' health has been our top priority. However, at the Center for Senior Services (CSS), after consulting with our buildings management professionals and service coordinators, we decided to hold our Managers and Service Coordinators Meeting in New Orleans. This was the first in-person CSS meeting since the Annual Conference on Senior Housing held in September 2019.

A Day of Service kicked off the meeting, where participants volunteered with B'nai B'rith disaster relief and Center for Community Action partners, including the Program of All-Inclusive care for the Elderly in the Greater New Orleans area (PACE Center) and SBP, a local nonprofit that builds affordable houses for low-income families. Volunteer work included stuffing and distributing emergency preparedness kits for the PACE Center or working with SBP on construction at an affordable housing site. B'nai B'rith welcomed the opportunity to continue these partnerships, which we established in the wake of previous natural disasters. Since many of our buildings have been recipients of aid from both the B'nai B'rith Disaster Relief Fund and Center for Community Action partners, it is a great way to learn more about those programs and give back to those partners.

At SBP, despite record breaking heat, 11 participants helped install the subflooring for a house in the lower 9th ward that will be made available for a low-income family. Volunteers at the PACE Center, in addition to preparing and distributing emergency kits, served lunch, played bingo with participants and helped make pillows.

Panelists at the training sessions were from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Social Security Administration (SSA), the New Orleans affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness and our own Janel Doughten and Evan Carmen, and other experts in the affordable senior housing industry. Topics included Social Security, emergency preparedness, mental health, leadership training, Congressional updates, HUD updates and more.

This meeting provided an opportunity for our housing network staff to network and learn from each other as we continue to navigate the pandemic and other issues that arise at the properties.

This month we will be hosting our Annual Housing Conference on Senior Housing virtually. This decision was made after speaking with our senior housing network. With prior virtual conferences being an enormous success, I have no doubt this conference will exceed expectations. We will concentrate on emergency preparedness and mental health based on where we are at in the pandemic, a path forward, while keeping the residents and staff safe. Specifically, what we have learned from the pandemic: how to reach out to socially isolated residents; techniques to better serve our residents after the pandemic is over; how to prepare for future pandemics if needed; how important it is to have contacts at HUD for on-site staff; and the critical role CSS staff can play with your buildings in an emergency. You could say the theme will be "Living with the Pandemic and Beyond."

These meetings provide a great opportunity for the housing network to hear from leaders in the field on a host of issues that are critical to the residents who live in our buildings. To that end, I look forward to seeing everyone virtually at the Annual Conference on Senior Housing.

All the best,  
Marvin



## A Note from the Co-Chair

*By Abbie Stone, Co-Chair of Senior Housing Committee*

Greetings!

We have prided ourselves through the years in providing safe, affordable housing for seniors with a little extra touch. B'nai B'rith properties create a sense of community! We encourage residents to continue to live independently, socially interact and empower them to establish Resident Associations by attending the Leadership Retreat. Through these associations, the residents create a healthy living environment, develop open and transparent communication with on-site management and have a voice and ownership in their communities. The pandemic really challenged all that for all of us, on so many levels.

So much has shifted in the past two and half years. As with many of our housing communities, we all anxiously await when we can return to the carefree ways of living we experienced pre-pandemic. When I think back and contemplate the number of changes and losses, the ease in which we did things every day. I am grateful for the supportive staff at the Center for Senior Services (CSS) for providing best practices to minimize and mitigate the impact of the pandemic, as well as offering alternative ways to keep residents engaged socially, all the while physically distancing.

As we ease into living with COVID, we adjust to new ways of being. We have met virtually now, which surely allowed us to manage and stay informed from the comfort of our home screens, yet lacked that sense of truly feeling connected, that “reach out and touch you” that we all took for granted. At Tucson Covenant House, staff, management, board members and the Resident Association engaged in out-of-the-box thinking and tried our best to keep spirits up. The spread of the virus in a congregate housing setting was contained. Like all of us, we have wiggled, practiced being flexible and overcome frustrations, and we did all of this with grace and ease.

Moving forward, we anticipate having holiday meals with residents once again and offering social gatherings that are so crucial to the well-being of all of us, meeting the new residents that moved into the communities during the pandemic, and once again living with ease although, probably still wearing a mask.

In June, the Center for Senior Services held the first in-person conference since 2019 in New Orleans. Those in attendance acknowledged how much it meant to have a sense of normalcy back in their lives. Janel Doughten, CSS Associate Director, and Evan Carmen, CSS Legislative Director for Aging Policy, did an outstanding job in offering opportunities for participants to share the challenges and sacrifices we have all experienced. The group also completed two service projects, making a meaningful difference for all.

We all hope that our annual Housing Conference will be in person in the fall of 2023. Until then, we have one more opportunity to meet virtually. Just think, no travel hassles, no hotel reservations, no car rentals. Just you joining us from the comfort of your home!

### **SAVE THE DATE:**

- **Sunday, Sept. 18, 2022, 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. ET**

This is the meeting we all look forward to, when the Housing Committee reunites and gets to update all the wonderful accomplishments throughout the year.

- **Monday, Sept. 19, 2022, 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. ET**

Joint Training for Board and Staff of network communities.

- **Tuesday, Sept. 20, 2022, 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. ET**

Training for the Staff and Management Teams of network communities.

Participating in these conferences is not only fun and offers a chance to see what our peers are up to and learn new ways of achieving our mission.



# ON THE HILL



by *Evan Carmen*  
Legislative Director for  
Aging Policy

## Congress Appropriates Additional Funding for HUD Senior Housing

B'nai B'rith was pleased with the funds allocated for the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) senior housing program in the Fiscal Year 22 bi-partisan federal funding bill. This legislation assigned \$1 billion for the HUD senior housing program, which will provide funding for rental subsidies, service coordination and the construction of 2,200 new affordable housing units.

These funds are a vital tool to meet the needs of the growing number of seniors who need subsidized housing every year.

### CSS Meets with Congress

Throughout the spring and summer, CSS staff have been working with our friends at the American Association of Service Coordinators (AASC) to meet with congressional offices to advocate for full funding for HUD senior housing in the FY23 budget. As always rental subsidies, service coordination and internet expansion are part of our advocacy efforts.

B'nai B'rith appreciates a "Dear Colleague" letter from U.S. Sen. Bob Menendez on behalf of the HUD senior housing community advocating for \$600 million for new construction. As the letter states, "As HUD's most recent Worst Case Housing Needs Report finds, 2.24 million very low-income elderly households are paying more than 50 percent of their income in rent, an increase of 68% since 2009." B'nai B'rith welcomes the request from senators for additional resources to build more senior housing properties around the country, as such homes are desperately needed.

Thanks to Menendez and the 38 other members of the Senate who signed this statement, in particular Sens. Chris Van Hollen, Chis Murphy, Ben Cardin, Elizabeth Warren, Chris Coons, Tammy Baldwin, Alex Padilla, Bob Casey, Richard Blumenthal, Cory Booker, Edward Markey, Dianne Feinstein, Mark Kelly, Tammy Duckworth and Dick Durbin. All of them represent housing properties in the B'nai B'rith senior housing network. B'nai B'rith appreciates their support!

Additionally, over the past few months, we met with staff members from the following offices:

### SENATE

Alex Padilla (D-Calif.)  
Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.)  
Chris Coons (D-Del.)  
Chris Murphy (D-Conn.)  
Ben Cardin (D-Md.)  
Richard Durbin (D-Ill.)  
Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.)  
Kyrsten Sinema (D-Ariz.)

Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.)  
Cory Booker (D - N.J.)  
Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.)  
Tom Cotton (R-Ark.)  
Josh Hawley (R-Mo.)  
John Boozman (R-Ark.)  
Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.)  
Richard Shelby (R-Ala.)

Roy Blunt (R-Mo.)  
Marco Rubio (R-Fla.)  
Bob Menendez (D-N.J.)  
Bob Casey (D-Pa.)  
Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.)  
Tommy Tuberville (R-Ala.)  
Tom Carper (D-Del.)  
Senate Appropriations Committee

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## On The Hill

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### HOUSE

|                           |                               |                                |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Chrissy Houlahan (D-Pa.)  | Adriano Espaillat (D-N.Y.)    | Andy Kim (D-N.J.)              |
| Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.)    | John Rutherford (R-Fla.)      | Ted Deutch (D-Fla.)            |
| Scott Perry (R-Pa.)       | Steve Womack (R-Ark.)         | Susan Wild (D-Pa.)             |
| Bruce Westerman (R-Ark.)  | Mike Garcia (R-Calif.)        | Ann Wagner (R-Mo.)             |
| Barry Moore (R-Ala.)      | Pete Aguilar (D-Calif.)       | Al Green (D-Texas)             |
| Paul Tonko (D-N.Y.)       | Kay Granger (R-Texas)         | Sylvia Garcia (D-Texas)        |
| Glenn Grothman (R-Wis.)   | Grace Meng (D-N.Y.)           | Donald Norcross (D-N.J.)       |
| Cheri Bustos (D-Ill.)     | Ann Kirkpatrick (D-Ariz.)     | Tony Cárdenas (D-Calif.)       |
| Katherine Clark (D-Mass.) | Matt Cartwright (D-Pa.)       | Jamie Raskin (D-Md.)           |
| David Trone (D-N.Y.)      | Lisa Blunt Rochester (D-Del.) | House Appropriations Committee |

## B'nai B'rith Welcomes Passage of Legislation by Congress: Pleased with Health Care Provisions Benefitting Older Americans

B'nai B'rith International welcomes Congress passing legislation that will ease the price of health care for older Americans.

This legislation makes important improvements to Medicare that will result in health care being more affordable for seniors. For example, Medicare is allowed to negotiate with pharmaceutical companies on the prices of certain drugs and Medicare recipients will now have their out-of-pocket prescription drug spending capped at \$2,000 per year. These two changes should bring down the price seniors pay for prescriptions drugs.

Furthermore, Medicare recipients will now benefit from a \$35 a month cap on insulin and no charge for all covered vaccines. In addition, this legislation extends subsidies that make health care coverage through the Affordable Care Act more accessible for older Americans.

While we wish the legislation provided additional resources for the HUD senior housing program, we are excited the health care provisions will make a positive impact in the lives of older Americans.

## Senate Banking Hearing on Senior Housing

In the spring, we welcomed the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs holding a hearing on "Affordability and Accessibility: Addressing the Housing Needs of America's Seniors." B'nai B'rith commended the committee for shining a spotlight on the senior housing affordability crisis and the critical role service coordinators play in assisting seniors to age in place.

In addition, we were pleased Sen. Bob Menendez (D-N.J.) and Sen. Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.) called attention to the HUD Section 202 senior housing program as they questioned witnesses. HUD recently reported that "The Section 202 program helps to reduce the number of vulnerable seniors experiencing worst-case housing needs or homelessness. With the assistance of service coordinators, many of these residents can access community-based services that are designed to help them stay longer in their housing, age in the community, and avoid more expensive institutional settings."

Clearly more HUD service-enriched affordable housing units are needed. We call on Congress to act to meet the needs of an ever-growing list of seniors who need affordable housing.

## Interview with Dr. Jennifer Molinsky, Ph.D. on current state of affordable Senior Housing

B'nai B'rith was excited to host Dr. Jennifer Molinsky, Ph. D., project director of the Housing an Aging Society Program at the Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies, for an interview with our CEO Dan Mariaschin. Dr. Molinsky and Mariaschin discussed the current state of affordable senior housing, how housing is connected to health care, nutrition, service coordination and accessibility, and government solutions to combat the affordability crisis.

We thank Dr. Molinsky for a great discussion and for sharing her opinions. [Housing Access & Accessibility for America's Seniors](#).

## Russian Invasion of Ukraine Leaves Horrific Toll on Seniors

By Evan Carmen (Originally Published on April 25, 2022)

“These explosions are all so terrible,” said Anna Churilyana, a blind 90-year old woman in Odessa, Ukraine. In the Washington Post story, “To evacuate or not? In Odessa, some older residents cannot flee war,” Churilyana talked about Russia’s bombing campaign, saying, “I can’t see them, but I can feel them with my whole body.” Evacuating her home isn’t feasible; Churilyana is forced to cover her windows to protect against explosions. Volunteers provide nonperishable food, allowing her to eat. Sadly, her story, since Russia invaded Ukraine, is all too common.

According to the European Disability Forum, there are over 7 million people aged 60+ in Ukraine. Russian’s invasion has brought unfathomable consequences to all Ukrainians, including seniors. Older people have suffered from social isolation, and a lack of clean water and medical supplies. Recently, HelpAge International, a nonprofit global network of organizations dedicated to older people, conducted a survey of the conditions facing seniors in Donetsk and Luhansk, Ukraine.

### According to the results:

1. **99%** of respondents don’t want to be evacuated.
2. **91%** have mobility issues, live alone and need assistance with getting food.
3. **79%** lack access to clean drinking water because of shelling and airstrikes.
4. **34%** require immediate medication to treat chronic diseases like diabetes, blood pressure and pain relief.
5. **75%** need hygiene supplies like toothpaste, soap, adult briefs and toilet paper.
6. **91%** are without electricity, which is problematic given the freezing cold weather and therefore require thermal blankets.

Seniors have been forced to sleep in subway stations and metro cars, deep underground to avoid the bombing. Agence France-Presse reported on Valentyna Katkova, a 77-year-old woman from Kyiv, who, as of March 19, slept in a metro station for a month. “And I, like an old one, am here. That’s because I’ve had a stroke, a heart attack — so here I am, sleeping in the carriage,” Katkova said. The mayor of Kyiv indicated that upwards of 15,000 people are using the subway stations for shelter. According to Bloomberg News, because Kyiv’s subway stations were built during the Cold War they can double as bomb shelters. For example, the Arsenalna station goes 346 feet underground, making it the deepest station in the world. Fortunately, civil defense preparedness continued after Ukrainian independence in 1991, providing for sufficient drinking water fountains and bathrooms throughout the metro system.

Not surprisingly, problems also extend to Ukrainian seniors who are refugees. The United Nations Refugee Agency reports that, as of April 6, over 4.3 million refugees have left Ukraine. Between

March 4 and 6 HelpAge International interviewed 105 older people (50+) who are refugees to learn more about their plight. People reported their needs extend to medical assistance, hygiene supplies and clothing, just to name a few. While working with refugees in Moldova, HelpAge assisted a family making up four generations. This family included a great grandmother who is 93 years old, a grandmother who is 75 years old, a granddaughter and a baby two weeks old. HelpAge indicated the great-grandmother evacuated quickly and consequently left her medication at home.

Working at B’nai B’rith International, I have been able to witness firsthand the enormous impact nonprofit organizations have on people who need assistance the most. As a humanitarian organization, B’nai B’rith’s aid for Ukrainians began immediately after the fighting started. We have sent warm clothes, food, hygiene items, baby formula, medicines and comforting aids such as stuffed teddy bears for children. In addition, we have sent funds to Moldova to assist with temporary housing and other essentials for refugees crossing to safety in Moldova. Also, B’nai B’rith is trying to safeguard a small measure of Jewish continuity, with a shipment of Passover specialty foods delivered to the B’nai B’rith Leopolis Lodge in Lviv, including Matzoh, gefilte fish and cookies.

A volunteer team from B’nai B’rith International recently returned from Poland, where they provided on-the-ground humanitarian aid to Ukrainian refugees. Andrea Cure, B’nai B’rith director of development; Edyta Szemiel, chief financial officer of B’nai B’rith; and Alina Bricman, B’nai B’rith director of EU Affairs, traveled to multiple cities across Poland and worked with other organizations to provide vital aid to the millions of Ukrainian refugees flowing over the border.

“I am grateful to have had the opportunity to help in even the smallest ways,” Cure said. “To hand a weary mom a cup of tea in a train station, to give a B’nai B’rith bear to a little boy who had to leave all his toys behind—these little interactions and exchanges were meaningful beyond words.”

Szemiel spoke with refugees whose thoughts remained with their elderly parents in Ukraine, because seniors too often are unable to evacuate because of mobility and other medical reasons. As the war continues, B’nai B’rith will continue to work with aid teams in Ukraine and at various border crossings to assess and meet immediate and longer-term needs.

There are no words to describe the horror taking place in Ukraine. An unprovoked attack by Russia that leaves Ukraine in ruins has zero justification. People being displaced from their homes, sleeping in metro stations and living every day in horror is heartbreaking. While humanitarian organizations like B’nai B’rith have made tremendous strides providing assistance to people, the only way to truly end the suffering is to find the means to end hostilities.



## On the Road Again

By Mark D. Olshan, Associate Executive Vice President, B'nai B'rith International



While attending graduate school in California and working summers at a camp in New Hampshire for children with developmental issues, I drove my 1966 Volkswagen “bug” cross-country on a somewhat regular basis and made stops at the Grand Canyon, Yellowstone National Park, the Badlands and Mt. Rushmore, as well as countless vineyards and

tasting rooms in the Napa Valley. There wasn't a geographic region in the United States I didn't drive through on one of my cross-country jaunts. That said, besides the unbelievable scenery and experiences that I can't talk about in a family publication, I could also tell you the cost of parts and labor rates for car mechanics in virtually every state in the continental United States.

And my almost 40 years working at B'nai B'rith has only afforded me further opportunities to travel throughout the country. With only 10 B'nai B'rith sponsored properties up and running when I started, we now are the largest national Jewish sponsor of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) subsidized buildings for low-income seniors in the United States, with 28 locations in 16 states.

Whether taking a small “prop” flight to snowy Peoria, Illinois, or traveling the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast in my personal vehicle (the VW was long since retired), there has been no shortage of trips.

Throughout the 1980s, the 1990s and early 2000s, my travel increased as I visited countless B'nai B'rith lodges, synagogues and local groups wanting to start a B'nai B'rith housing property in their community. We scouted suitable properties, worked with architects and consultants from coast to coast, broke ground and cut ribbons, evolving and expanding the B'nai B'rith affordable housing program.

Unfortunately, over the last 10 years, funding for affordable housing has been severely limited and we have had to come up with alternative business models. Since it is more difficult to build new buildings, we wanted to preserve the housing stock that we currently have. But where do we get the money? We looked to the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) to raise funds. The LIHTC raises private equity to provide public good, like rehabbing older affordable housing. So, we stopped trying to create new properties and found ourselves looking to rehab and preserve our existing buildings.

### How times have changed

Earlier this year, I visited B'nai B'rith House in Reading, Pennsylvania. During the trip I pondered how times have changed. In the 1980s and 1990s, B'nai B'rith's mission was to build affordable senior housing. But now, this trip was about preserving those very units for the next generation.

The meeting provided a great opportunity to reconnect with old B'nai B'rith friends and work with the current board to secure the building's legacy. Our relationship with the property dates to its construction in 1978.

The building was the site of the B'nai B'rith Annual Conference on Senior Housing in the fall of 1998. We received significant media coverage in the Reading Eagle Times and even the news broadcasted live from the Inn of Reading, where we held many of the meetings. The main issue being discussed in the meeting was the aging in place of the residents and how to provide the array of service support to keep them living independently for as long as possible.

### Updating for today and tomorrow

Fast forward to now. During our meeting in Reading last winter, I presented plans for a substantial rehabilitation that would position the property for the future.

The goals for B'nai B'rith House in Reading apply to our entire housing network—that is, repositioning our sponsored properties for long-term success.

In the summer of 2019, I attended a re-dedication ceremony at Adelstein Family Project H.O.P.E. B'nai B'rith House in the Bronx, New York, for a renovated building. Residents were excited to be in apartments with new bathrooms, kitchen cabinets, counters and appliances, and all-new lighting and paint. Additionally, safety systems had been updated, including security cameras. Last was the installation of brand-new air conditioner units in each apartment's bedroom and living room.

Additionally, funds have been set aside for a variety of services not previously available. Through partnerships with local providers, for the first time, residents have access to referrals to community resources and supportive casework services, as well as a host of new classes, workshops, events and activities.

Fortunately, our efforts to update these buildings have resonated in Congress. In 2018, Congress passed a law making it easier for HUD senior housing properties to preserve their buildings. Consequently, we are working with B'nai B'rith sponsored properties in New Haven, Connecticut, and Chesilhurst and Marlton, New Jersey, to cement their long-term success. It's not just the modernization of the property. It's also about additional services for residents. Working with our

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## IN MEMORIAM Morton Peltzman

Long-time B'nai B'rith member and founding board member of Pasadena Interfaith Manor (PIM), Morton Peltzman, passed away Nov. 28, 2019. On Tuesday, April 26, 2022, PIM held a ceremony to dedicate a Memorial for Mort in the building, a picture in the lobby with a caption that includes the years he served on the PIM board starting with when the building was just an idea:

Mort Peltzman 1971-2019 Founder – Innovator



Pictured are PIM board members; Milo Wharry, Raymond Wilkerson, Eugene Rhoden, Brian Davis, Michael Peltzman (Mort's son and the Board President), Amy Merkin, Mike Merkin, Lavinia Brown, Sarah Brown, Bob Woods and Andrew Farkas.

A long-time supporter of the B'nai B'rith Senior Housing Network, Mort will be missed by all those who knew him. May his memory serve as a blessing.

### On the Road Again

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developer and management partners, a plan is in place that includes a further assessment, resident/stakeholder input and leveraging the resources available through partnerships, grant opportunities and staff training. Future programming might include adult education on such topics as food and nutrition, health and wellness, personal finances, local transportation and veterans' benefits.

At B'nai B'rith, we pride ourselves on being more than bricks and mortar. Each property provides a strong, supportive and inclusive environment where residents can "age in place" with dignity.

In today's economic climate, the ability to preserve and renovate safe, supportive housing for low-income seniors is paramount in being able to provide for the next generation of older adults.

Yesterday, I was opening new buildings, today and tomorrow, it's about preserving those very buildings well into the future. And I'll be hitting the road again to make it happen.

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