



**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: seniors@bnaibrith.org

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**B'NAI B'RITH
INTERNATIONAL**
CENTER FOR SENIOR SERVICES

1120 20th Street, NW, Suite 300 North,
Washington, DC 20036

WWW.BNAIBRITH.ORG

EDITORS: Sara Hyams,
Janel Doughten and
Evan Carmen



Joint programming between CSS and B'nai B'rith Connect

The B'nai B'rith Center for Senior Services continues to team up with the young leaders of B'nai B'rith Connect to host events at the buildings in the CSS Housing portfolio.

B'nai B'rith Connect is the next generation of leaders for B'nai B'rith International. As budding philanthropists, Connect Leaders also roll up their sleeves and volunteer at the community level, delivering care and support as part of B'nai B'rith's community action and humanitarian aid efforts. Although Connect is not currently located in all the areas where CSS buildings are located, this is a step in helping develop more Connect membership by holding volunteer events that attract young leaders and benefit the residents as well.

In January, CSS and Connect co-hosted a Sip and Paint program along with the staff and Board of Directors of the B'nai B'rith Apartments of Deerfield Beach, Florida I/

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Joint programming between CSS and B'nai B'rith Connect

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Liz Krebs, Associate Director of Programs, B'nai B'rith Connect; Angie Arroyo, staff member, B'nai B'rith Apartments of Deerfield Beach; and Janel Doughten, Associate Director of CSS.

II/III. More than 30 residents and young leaders painted their interpretation of a tree, under the guidance of staff member Angie Arroyo. The program started with a pizza party for residents and Connect members to get acquainted. In between waiting for the paint layers to dry, residents and Connect members mingled while sipping wine and eating hors d'oeuvres provided by the building.

The Sip and Paint event was such a success that in April the two groups co-hosted a combination Passover Seder and Unto Every Person a Name dinner program for the residents.

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Joint programming between CSS and B'nai B'rith Connect

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In May, Connect will host a food donation event at the Adelstein Family-Project H.O.P.E. B'nai B'rith House in the Bronx, New York. Donations will be accepted in advance and will be packed and distributed to residents at the building. This is a follow-up to the Mitzvah Makers event held in December 2024, when Connect volunteers and members of the building's Resident Association packed emergency

preparedness kits, personally delivered them to each unit and shared meaningful moments over pizza and a lively game of BINGO.

Many thanks to B'nai B'rith Connect leadership, building staff and Boards of Directors of the CSS Housing Network for their hard work putting all of these events together!

UPCOMING CENTER FOR SENIOR SERVICES EVENTS FOR 2026

Annual Managers and Service Coordinators Meeting May 13-15, 2026

The annual Managers and Service Coordinators Meeting will take place in Las Vegas for three days of learning and networking. Beginning on Wednesday, May 13, we will kick off the day with a volunteer service project at Three Square, the largest anti-hunger organization in Southern Nevada. The group will be sorting and packing donated food items as well as packing meals for the Kids Café. After the service project, we will tour the facility with Three Square staff, followed by a Q&A about their anti-hunger programs and services provided to clients, including the senior focused programs.

Thursday and Friday will include sessions on communicating with staff and residents, troubleshooting building problems and case studies, cultural competence and updates from the Office of Community Outreach at the Social Security Administration. Additionally, there will be updates on other Federal agencies, Congress and the senior housing industry.

Annual Conference on Senior Housing October 17-19, 2026

Join your colleagues in Denver, CO for the Annual Conference on Senior Housing in October. The group will be visiting Kavod Senior Living, a Section 202 senior housing building in Denver that has become an innovator in the field of housing and services, allowing residents to remain living independently and age in place.

More details to come.



A Note from the Chair

Dennis Rice, Chair, B'nai B'rith Center for Senior Services

As I look back over my first full year serving as chair of the B'nai B'rith Center for Senior Services (CSS), and as the representative of CSS on the B'nai B'rith International Board of Directors, I am reminded of what I am a part of and where CSS fits in with B'nai B'rith. I see CSS as fitting right in with the B'nai B'rith mission, where it has long been a leader in addressing aging issues through the Center for Senior Services, which I am proud to chair.

Founded in 1843, B'nai B'rith is the world's oldest Jewish service organization, dedicated to strengthening Jewish life and promoting dignity, security and human rights for all people. The initial mission of B'nai B'rith was to support widows and orphans, and over time has grown to include combating anti-Semitism, standing with the State of Israel, representing the Jewish community at the United Nations and other global institutions and helping communities in need. Through education, advocacy and community engagement, B'nai B'rith's efforts continue to make a lasting impact around the world.

Since establishing our first partnership with HUD in 1971, we've grown to include 35 senior housing communities in 27 cities, making us the largest national Jewish sponsor of subsidized senior housing in the United States.

But our work goes far beyond building housing, the Center provides ongoing training and programs for residents, site staff and building boards across our Housing Network. These include both in-person and virtual programs that foster community, education and best practices in senior living and support.

CSS is also involved with advocacy for issues impacting older adults in the United States and around the world.

Working together with members and supporters nationwide, our senior advocacy program champions policies that support and empower older adults. We engage decision makers at all levels to ensure essential programs—such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and other aging-related initiatives—remain strong and effective.

The mission of the B'nai B'rith Senior Housing Network is to provide seniors with quality, affordable housing in a secure, supportive community environment, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial Status or disability, in order to maximize their independent and dignified lifestyle. Our advocacy extends beyond our network to promote affordable, accessible and well-managed senior housing nationwide.

B'nai B'rith supports the principle that healthy aging begins early and depends on lifelong access to affordable, quality health care. We continue to advocate for a sustainable Medicare program that preserves benefits and meets the evolving needs of older adults and people with disabilities, as well as Medicaid.

We support maintaining and strengthening Social Security as a vital social insurance program. It remains a cornerstone of retirement security, protecting the dignity and financial stability of older Americans.

These initiatives represent only a portion of what CSS delivers every day in support of older adults across the country and our own Senior Housing Network.

I am honored to serve as chair of CSS, continuing our proud tradition of service, advocacy and community support.

Troubleshooting with Resident Associations in the CSS Housing Network

By Janel Doughten, Associate Director, Center for Senior Services



In the past six months, I have been troubleshooting issues with Residents Associations (RAs) within the B'nai B'rith Senior Housing Network. The number one issue is the confusion among residents about the purpose of the RA, and why they should even bother to attend RA meetings or activities.

The goal is to bring consensus among residents as to what the RA should be and what the current residents can support. It may just be a social club, or the RA can additionally be an effective advocate for all residents of the community, and that can evolve over time as the resident population changes. One of the most useful tools for the officers to figure out what residents will support is to distribute annual surveys and interpret the results for the members.

Additionally, as an organization with by-laws and an active treasury, the RA must conduct meetings which include taking votes and authorizing spending of funds. Although not everyone wants to attend meetings to discuss finances, it is the only way to ensure that money is spent with

the approval of the membership, and to discuss any building issues the RA can advocate for solutions with management.

When troubleshooting with RAs, I always start with the definition of an RA developed by CSS staff from resources from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). A Resident Association is a group of concerned citizens who elect officers to represent the housing community in which the residents live and are recognized by management as representing all residents. The RA is the voice in the community. It strives to make the housing community a better place to live by actively seeking to influence decisions that directly affect the residents it serves.

To do this effectively, the RA acts as a liaison between management and residents, and residents and the community. A very important part of every RA's effort should be devoted to programming or activities. The RA develops and carries out programs which bring together a diverse group of people, striving to make all feel welcome and included regardless of income, mobility, language and other potential barriers to participation.

In my presentations about RAs, I touch on the responsibilities of the officers to the members, as well as the responsibilities of the residents, including being respectful of other's opinions and time.

I also make sure staff members know how they can be supportive of the RA without overstepping boundaries. Unless a situation arises to a lease violation, management's role is to meet with the RA officers to solve community problems and listen to their concerns. HUD considers it the role of the service coordinator to act as an advisor to the officers as requested.

Boards of Directors have a role too, listening to the leadership of the RA about the residents' needs for the community and even making donations to make that happen, such as supporting a food bank in the building or a medical needs fund.

Many times, it is simply having a neutral party explain what the RA can be, and how important it is for the residents to have a voice in the community. HUD has long advocated for RAs to be in the buildings, and we intend to make sure that is the case in the CSS housing portfolio.

For more information, please contact Janel Doughten jdoughten@bnairbith.org



A Note from the Co-Chair

By Bruce Menditch co-Chair, Senior Housing Committee

This past year, I have truly enjoyed my participation as an active member of the B'nai B'rith International Board of Directors, B'nai B'rith Housing Incorporated (BBHI) Co-Chair of the Senior Housing Committee and as a member of the B'nai B'rith Homecrest House Board of Directors. Through these roles, I have gained a deeper appreciation of the vital mission that B'nai B'rith has undertaken in support of senior housing.

The purpose of B'nai B'rith Senior Housing is to provide seniors with quality, affordable housing in a secure, supportive community environment, without regard to religion, race or national origin, in order to maximize their independence and dignified lifestyle. In light of the challenges we face, including rising anti-Semitism, it is fair to ask whether we can continue to fully achieve this mission. I believe the answer is yes—because of the strength and dedication of our leadership.

Over the past years I have had the privilege of working alongside and learning from remarkable individuals, including Mark Olshan, Janel Doughten, Evan Carmen, my co-chair Abbie Stone and Dennis Rice, chair of CSS. I have seen firsthand the passion, commitment and care they bring to advancing our mission.

Mark's many years of leadership have guided CSS through significant challenges and success, his presence will be greatly missed upon his retirement at the end of June. Janel's tireless efforts organizing meetings, seminars and facilitating educational sessions have strengthened awareness and engagement. Evan's dedication to navigating the legislative process ensures continued government support. Abbie's enthusiasm and devotion as both a volunteer and advocate are truly inspiring. I especially want to thank Dennis for his steady dedication and positive outlook for all who work alongside him.

These individuals have been mentors to me and their leadership continues to inspire my own commitment to this important work. I hope that all who are involved in this mission find similar inspirations and remain dedicated to advancing our shared goals.

Thank you for your continued efforts and support.

CSS Virtual Meetings Share Best Practices Across the Network

On Monday, March 16, the Center for Senior Services (CSS) held its annual Virtual Conference on Senior Housing. The B'nai B'rith Conference on Senior Housing is held twice a year: a virtual conference in the Spring and an in-person meeting in the fall. Every year, this meeting brings together staff and members of the boards of directors of the B'nai B'rith Senior Housing Network to learn from CSS staff. Topics include how to enhance the lives of their residents, focusing on best practices for resident health, wellness and social interaction.

Along with Federal and Congressional updates, presentations included: Improving Food Security for Seniors Through On-Site Food Distribution with staff from Amos Towers, Scranton, PA; Case Management Support for Residents with staff from St. Mary's Court, Washington, DC; Fraud/Scam Awareness and Prevention with staff from B'nai B'rith Apartments in Deerfield

Beach, FL; Animal Therapy with staff from B'nai B'rith Apartments in Allenton, PA ; Partnering with B'nai B'rith Connect and Hosting Intergenerational Programs with Janel Doughten, associate director, CSS; and Resident Associations Troubleshooting with Janel Doughten and Abbie Stone, co-chair, Senior Housing Committee. Thank you to all the presenters for sharing your best practices!

The B'nai B'rith Senior Housing Committee met virtually on Wednesday, March 18. Open to all board members in the Senior Housing Network, the Committee discussed the mission statement and purpose of the Network, as well as what you need to know as a member of individual boards of directors. The meeting concluded with a networking and best practices session. The B'nai B'rith Senior Housing Committee meets twice a year, once in the spring in a virtual format, and an in-person meeting in the fall as part of the Annual Conference on Senior Housing.



ON THE HILL



*by Evan Carmen
Legislative Director for
Aging Policy*

CSS Relieved Congress Passed Legislation to Fully Fund HUD Senior Housing FY26 Budget

In February, Congress passed legislation that fully funds the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) senior housing program for the rest of the 2026 fiscal year. We are relieved Congress appropriated funding for Section 202 rental assistance and service coordinators. In addition, this legislation extends provisions of Medicare telehealth until Dec. 31, 2027, enabling seniors to continue to access healthcare providers, at times, from home.

CSS Advocacy for HUD Senior Housing and FY2027

With HUD senior housing funded for FY2026, we have moved our advocacy efforts to FY2027. The White House released its proposed budget for FY2027. Based on the proposed budget, the HUD senior housing program could face cuts. The CSS team is busy meeting with congressional offices to advocate for HUD senior housing and the funds required to make the program successful. As always, our visits are done with our colleagues from the American Association of Service Coordinators (AASC). Service Coordinators are a vital piece of the HUD senior housing program and AASC representatives are a natural fit to our advocacy efforts.

From December 2025 to April 2026, we met with staff members from the following offices:

SENATE

Ashley Moody (R-Fla.)
Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.)
Katie Britt (R-Ala.)
John Boozman (R-Ark.)
Chris Coons (D-Del.)
Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.)
Tammy Baldwin (D-Wisc)
Dick Durbin (D-Ill)
Senate Appropriations Committee

HOUSE

Barry Moore (R-Ala.)
Bruce Westerman (R-Ark.)
John Rutherford (R-Fla.)
Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-N.J.)
Steve Womack (R-Ark.)
Juan Ciscomani (R-Ariz.)
Peter Aguilar (D-Calif.)
Mike Quigley (D-Ill)
Adriano Espaillat (D-N.Y.)
Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn)
Grace Meng (D-N.Y.)
House Appropriations Committee

Resident Advocacy

Throughout the years, B'nai B'rith has reached out to our housing network asking residents to advocate on behalf of the Section 202 program. We are pleased to report that our work has contributed to the renewal of existing building contracts and funding for service coordinators.

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This year is no exception. In February we asked residents to call and write their senators and representatives regarding rental subsidies for their buildings and funding for the service coordinator program. Generally, March is when Congress starts working on the budget and appropriations process for the next fiscal year.

The purpose of these efforts is for residents to advocate on their own behalf regarding the importance of affordable housing for low-income seniors. Letters with personal stories are the best way to illustrate the importance of affordable senior housing. Our request always attaches a sample outline for a letter or phone call to the building's senator or representative's office.

Congressional Staff Member Visits Homecrest House

B'nai B'rith welcomed Ricky Powell-Graves, Regional Coordinator for Central Maryland, from Sen. Angela Also Brooks's (D-Md.) office to Homecrest House in Silver Spring, Maryland. Powell-Graves toured this Housing and Urban Development (HUD)-backed property and visited the gym, residents' apartment units, the library, computer room and dining facility.

Before the tour, Powell-Graves spent time speaking with residents about their experiences at Homecrest House. Residents raved about the activities, staff and affordable rent.

Congressional visits like this are a valuable way to show elected representatives' offices the importance of HUD senior housing. By touring the properties and speaking with residents, Members of Congress and their staffs get a firsthand look at the vital role affordable housing plays in a neighborhood.

In attendance from the B'nai B'rith Housing community were B'nai B'rith International Associate Director for the Center for Senior Services Janel Doughten; B'nai B'rith Legislative Director for Aging Policy Evan Carmen; Homecrest House Executive Director Carol Cohen Wolfe; and Homecrest House Property Manager Shenell Gordon. Also in attendance was American Association of Service Coordinators (AASC) Policy Consultant Alayna Waldrum.

"We appreciate Ricky taking the time to visit Homecrest House—a shining example of the role HUD senior housing plays in the community, and we are thankful for Senator Alsobrook's office showing support," Carmen said.

Passwords: A Few Simple Practices for Greater Security*By Evan Carmen*

I imagine many people act as tech support for someone in their life. For years, I used to help my grandfathers with their computers. When my grandfather moved from Boston to New York, I backed up his files in the cloud, just in case something happened during the move. I was happy to help, plus it's good practice to backup files.

My other grandfather lived in Florida and was originally from New York. He used the computer to keep up to date with current events and follow the New York sports teams, particularly the Giants. When Giant games were not on national television, he would sit at the computer and follow along through Gamecast. He was an enormous Giants fan

and the ability to follow along was a big deal. Not to mention all the additional Giants articles he was able to read online.

One time, I remember showing him something on the computer, when I noticed a list of passwords underneath the keyboard. This list included passwords for his email, banking and investment accounts. You could access their life savings with these passwords. Clearly not something you would want in the wrong hands. So, I asked him, "How long has it been since they passwords were updated." While my grandfather couldn't remember, the phrase "years" was used in the sentence. At that point, I knew what the next hour

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Passwords: A Few Simple Practices for Greater Security

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would hold for me. It was time to update the passwords.

While it took time, I updated all my grandfather's passwords. I explained that while my sister and I were flattered he used our names for passwords, they were easily guessed and he should go with something not predictable. At the end, all the passwords were changed, and the password list was stored more securely.

Something tells me my experience with my grandfather is similar to other people's. Older adults are using the internet in greater numbers for a variety of activities through smart phones and computers. Seniors bank, email, monitor and coordinate financial investments, and do other business online. Moving one's activities online is a good thing, however it requires a level of attention to password security.

Ensuring passwords are unique and kept secure is important. When creating passwords for the internet it's good to keep a few things in mind:

1. Never use the same password for multiple accounts. If a hacker gets your password, you don't want that person to have easier access to several of your accounts.
2. Approve multi-factor authentication, which provides an extra level of protection for your accounts. I can't tell you how many times I sign into an account and get emailed or texted a code I subsequently need to enter. While it's an extra step, making your account more secure, is well worth the small hassle.
3. Passwords should be 12 characters or more. You don't want a short password because that will make it easier to steal. Also, it's a smart practice that your password includes a mixture of uppercase and lower-case letters, numbers and symbols.
4. Ensure passwords are not easily recognizable. Using "password123abc" is not a good idea. Neither is naming your passwords after your family members. These are the type of passwords which can get easily stolen. Going with something more unique that only you would know, ensures a greater level of security.
5. Use an online password manager to keep track of your passwords for your various accounts. If that's not feasible, and you must write it down, put your passwords somewhere secure in your home where someone is not likely to find the document.
6. Generally, it's a good idea to change your password once a year.

The internet has made life easier, which can't be denied. However, with new flexibility comes a greater level of security. Unfortunately, bad actors are only getting smarter, and everyone must up their internet security game, including password safety. Doing a few simple practices can put people in a better position to ensure the security of their most sensitive online information.