



Levite Jewish Community Center 2021 Annual Report

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From the president

My two-year presidency turned out much different than expected. Grand plans about rolling out membership changes and planning for the JCCA Biennial quickly changed to managing mandatory shutdowns and figuring out PPP loans.

Early in the pandemic, the executive committee meeting with then-Executive Director Samantha Dubrinsky determined that organizations that devoted the majority of their focus to returning to normal quickly would have a hard time dealing with the pandemic's curveballs. On the other hand, we realized, organizations that leaned into the challenge and figured out how to adapt operations and services to pandemic-related needs stood the best chance — not only of making it through the pandemic, but of thriving in the new environment.

The amount of pure human effort required to meet these challenges has been impossible to quantify, which is why I am honored to be associated with the LJCC staff, officers and directors, members, and volunteers who took the call to action seriously and helped push The J through the pandemic.

Our efforts have paid off.

Having reduced its net debt position by as much as 75 percent from 2019 levels, The J enters 2022 in its strongest financial position since I joined the board more than a decade ago. The pandemic forced us to reexamine our mission, and while this report shows that serving the community has been a major focus over the past two years (see pages 5–7), I am most proud of how we've been able to refine and redefine our core services.

For example, the Cohn ECLC is not only at 100 percent capacity again, but has distinguished itself as one of the city's premier early childhood programs. Camp LJCC is better than ever, and group fitness is full of life. Our campus is alive with people of all ages and backgrounds.

My goal when taking this job was for The J's organization to be sustainable in the long term. I believe we have set ourselves up for success and I look forward to continuing the journey with you.

Thank you,

Jesse Unkenholz
President, LJCC Board of Directors





Mission

The mission of the Levite Jewish Community Center is to enhance Jewish identity by providing programs and activities that promote cultural enrichment, cultivate educational development and provide for the well-being of its members.

At our core

Through the lens of Jewish identity and values, the Levite Jewish Community Center provides a welcoming, family-oriented gathering place for a diverse membership to engage in meaningful experiences of the mind, body, and soul.

The LJCC prides itself on being a welcoming facility to people of all faiths, ages, genders, sexual identities, and socioeconomic backgrounds. We are a family-oriented recreational and educational facility that is open to the entire community. As a recipient of Birmingham Jewish Federation and United Way dollars, we impact thousands of Birmingham residents annually.





Historical highlights

- **1906:** Original Young Men's Hebrew Association opened to help Jewish men and Jewish immigrants.
- **1930s:** Started to accept female members and welcome German refugee families with free memberships.
- **1955:** Moved to current site and opened to the public in 1958.
- **1960s:** Challenged Birmingham's segregation laws by opening to all races.
- **2017:** Amidst aggressive antisemitism and bomb threats, the LJCC helps unite Birmingham by hosting the Maccabi Games.
- **2020:** The LJCC keeps members and employees safe during the first year of the pandemic while implementing virtual offerings. In 2021 we gradually and successfully reopen with various protective protocols in place, and in the process become a model for Jewish Community Centers nationally.





Accomplishments

The Levite Jewish Community Center: 2021

- Red Cross blood drives drew more than 100 gallons
- Partnered with Community Food Bank of Central Alabama to distribute food to some 300 families as part of our monthly Farmers-to-Families Program that ran from September to December.
- December "Vax Party" put vaccines in 42 arms, including half a dozen children
- Membership grew more than 11 percent from the end of 2020 to the end of 2021
- Served as a temporary space for the archives of the Birmingham Holocaust Education Center
- In partnership with the Birmingham Jewish Foundation, our Yom Ha'atzmaut celebration included an at-home paint night with Sari Menaker, a virtual comedy night with Benji Lovitt, and a virtual tour of Israel with Julian Resnik
- Camp LJCC included Israel Day plus celebrating Shabbat, which featured more than 80 campers baking challah

- Our Community Scholarship Program spent some \$80,000 assisting families with demonstrated need, including ECLC children, Camp LJCC participants, youth athletes, and members
- A \$10,000 donation to Children's of Alabama (below) brought the 12-year total for money raised on behalf of Sam Lapidus to more than \$100,000





Accomplishments



Cohn Early Childhood Learning Center: 2021

- Fully reopened in August 2021 with 202 students
- Enforced full vaccination for all teaching staff
- Received Childhood Workforce Stabilization Grant, which will help the ECLC keep its high standards by enabling the payment of two years of quarterly bonuses, with up to \$1,500 per quarter paid to full-time staff members
- Participated in the Subsidy Program for Essential Workers
- Restarted extracurricular activities
- Added swings and a mobile infant play space to the toddler playground



Reopening Wellness

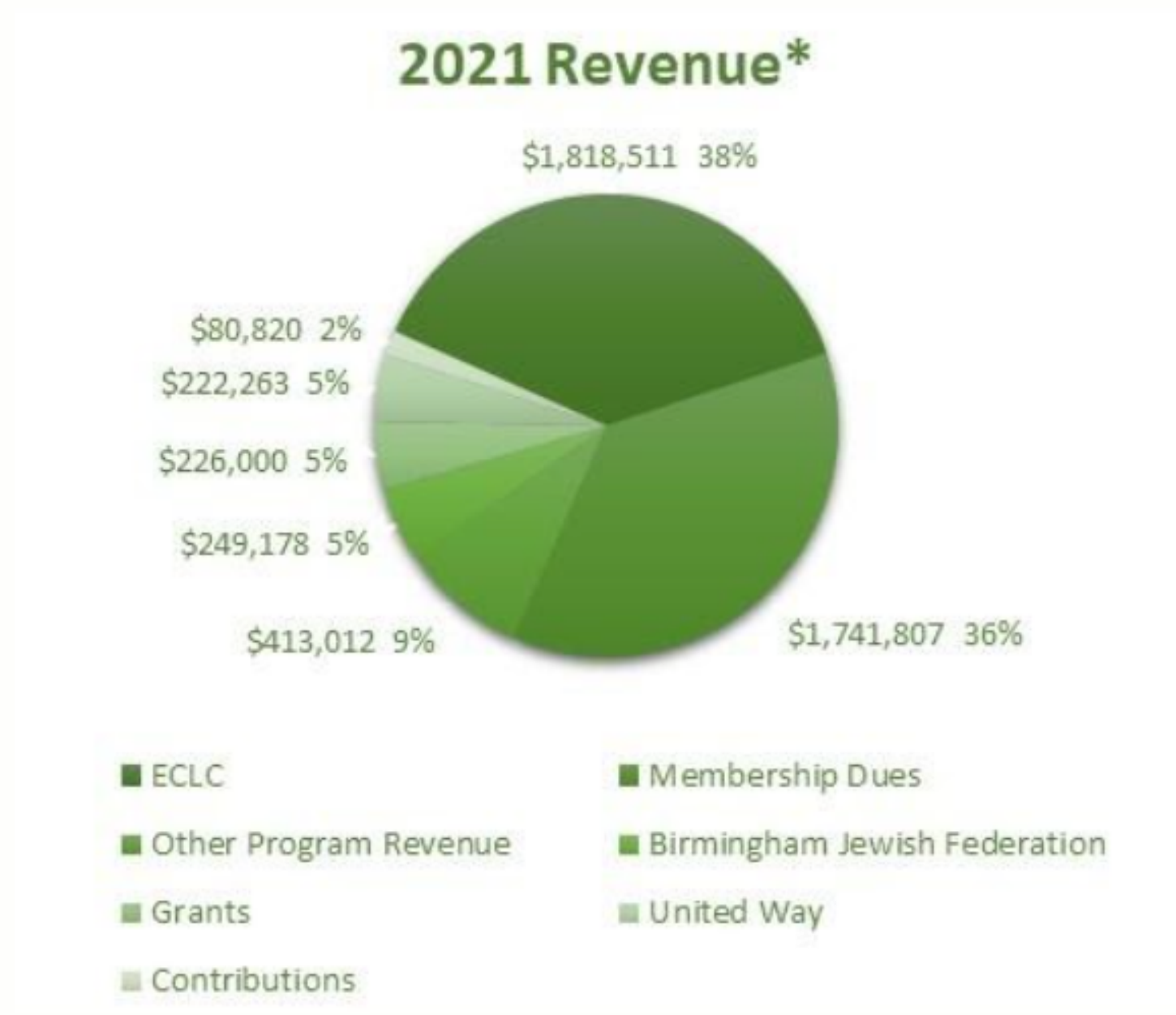
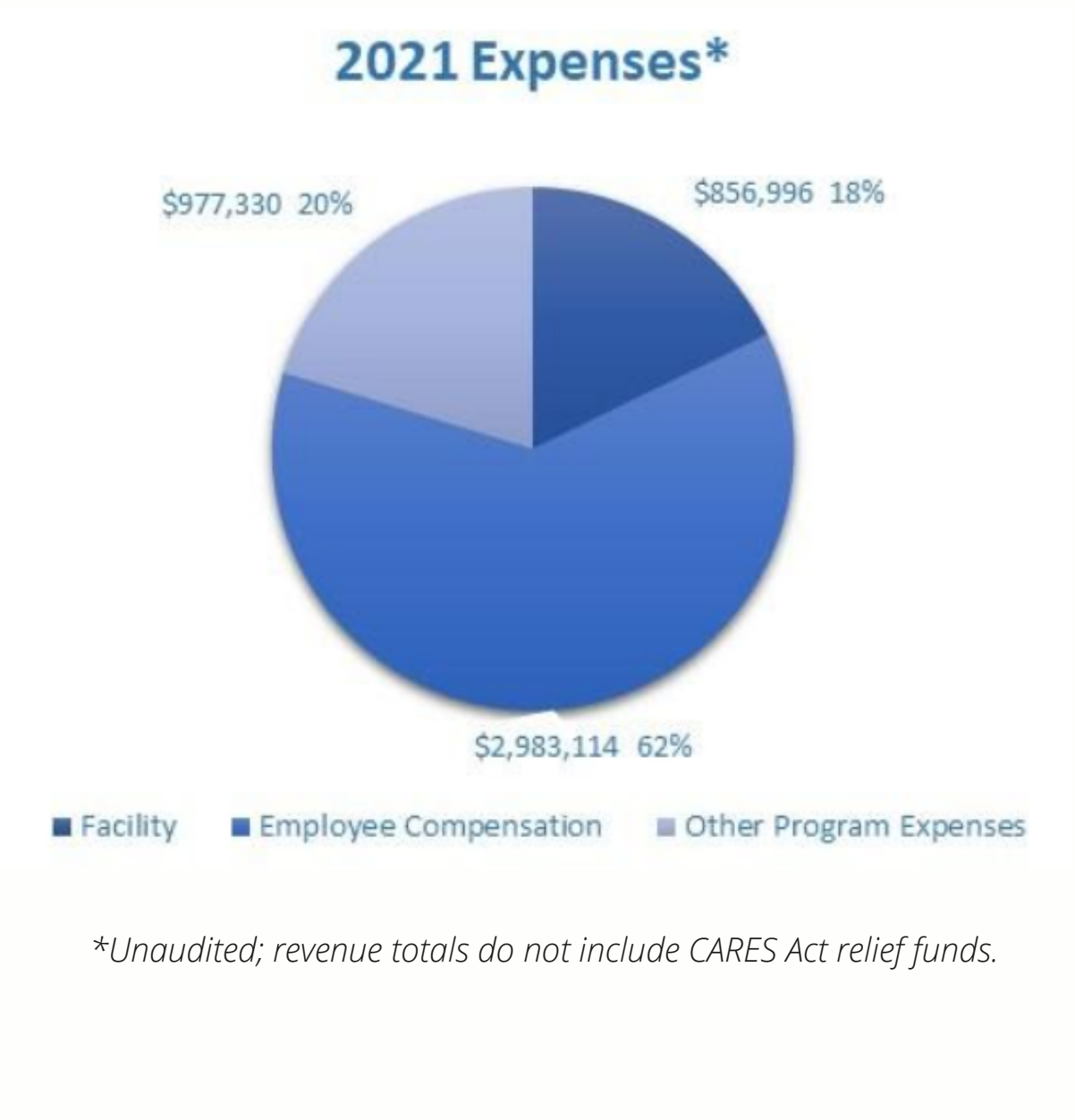


The following actions helped us safely reopen our wellness and fitness programs:

- Adopted masking guidelines in order to improve member safety
- Enforced full vaccination for all LJCC employees
- Implemented special protocols to keep youth sports and the aquatics programs safe
- Launched online Group Fitness classes
- Proceeded with round-the-clock sanitation of all areas
- Rearranged equipment on the Fitness Floor in order to ensure physical distancing
- Added 16 Group Fitness options, for a total of 24 classes
- Reopened the indoor pool
- Provided hand sanitizer stations throughout the facility



Financial highlights



Year-end net debt over the past three years:

- 2019: (\$1,526,226)
- 2020: (\$1,178,975)
- 2021: (\$577,624)



Thank you

The past two years have been especially difficult for institutions geared toward helping their communities. We can be proud, though, of our slowly emerging from the pandemic in as good a shape as we have, and for having served as a model for Jewish Community Centers around the country regarding our approach to the pandemic.

One of the best signs of our rebound is being able to augment our wonderful staff with new hires. Collectively we are raising our profile while devoting time to getting the funds that are so crucial for any nonprofit, and we're all adding capabilities to our operation while working to enhance our programming. But with all the recent progress, we're still not where we need to be. Here's how you can help:

- Promote The J to your friends and family, and let them know the benefits of membership.
- And speaking of membership, make sure you're getting the most out of yours.
- Volunteer (contact Community Engagement Director Katie Hausman Grace to learn more).
- Consider a donation that will help improve our facility and strengthen programming.
- Help us find corporate sponsors (contact Director of Marketing and Fund Development Brooke Bowles with your ideas).

We're looking forward to a much improved 2022 with you.

Shalom,

Aimee Johnson
Executive Director





WE ARE THE J!

Board of Directors: Officers

- Jesse Unkenholz*, President
- Allison Weil, Immediate Past President
- Steven Corenblum*, Vice President
- Terry Bernstein*, Vice President
- Marissa Grayson*, Vice President
- Hilton Berger*, Treasurer
- Isa Dorsky*, Secretary

Incoming officers for 2022-23:

- Hilton Berger, President and Interim Treasurer
- Steven Corenblum, Vice President
- Terry Bernstein, Vice President
- Cathy Fingerman, Vice President
- Marissa Grayson, Vice President
- Isa Dorsky, Secretary

**Will continue on board for 2022-23.*

***Will join board for 2022-23.*

Board of Directors

- Alyssa Blair
- Jennifer Cordover*
- Hilton Diamond
- Cathy Fingerman*
- Abby Fox
- Arlene Goldstein*
- Layne Held
- Jon Kimerling*
- Katherine Kimerling*
- Jacob Kossoff
- Eric Morrison
- Jessica Nissenbaum
- Honora Pinnick
- David Sher*
- Frank Siegal*
- Adam Sigman
- Jeffrey Sokol*
- Abe Kunin**
- Rebecca Rothman**
- Martin Sher**

Leadership team

- Aimee Johnson, Executive Director
- Brooke Bowles, Director of Marketing and Fund Development
- Barbara Traweek, Director of the Cohn Early Childhood Learning Center
- Doug Hocutt, Director of Facilities
- Maureen Scardino, Director of Finance
- Della Higgins, Director of Wellness



Thank you, funding partners



The Birmingham
JEWISH FEDERATION

