

## A Strategic Plan for CJDS

CJDS has its marching orders. We now have a six-year strategic plan that will guide us as we continue to grow the school. The main purpose of this strategic plan is to delineate the financial, organizational and enrollment management elements needed to provide the strongest possible platform in support of Charlotte Jewish Day School's mission-focused purposes and outcomes.

Charlotte Jewish Day School chose ISM to be the facilitating group to guide us through our strategic planning process. ISM (Independent School Management) is an organization that supports independent schools across the country. The approach that ISM takes is a bit different than one might find in a typical strategic planning process of a non-profit. It focuses primarily on viability related issues. With all of the experience that ISM has with over 2000 independent schools, they have gathered a plethora of data on what constitutes a school of excellence. They used this data to convey a list of eighteen stability markers that a school can and should attempt to achieve.

The strategic plan is then fashioned from information gathered from surveys of all stakeholders in the school, ratings from the stability marker assessment, and hopes and dreams of the board of directors and community supporters. A

six-year plan is then laid out together with a financial strategic plan that matches the expected next steps. Too often strategic plans are created without enough thought given to the financial feasibility of the plan.

The themes addressed in the plan are Student and Faculty Culture, Faculty and Staff Support, Community Relations with the organizations at Shalom Park, Internal and External Marketing, and Board Structure and Function.

The responses to the surveys assured us that the quality of education, the atmosphere, and the dynamics of the school were healthier and more robust than found at a typical independent school. Our faculty and student culture was healthier than is found in most independent schools. It was clear that our enrollment is challenged by the economics of our times, along with the changes taking place in the Jewish world. Our marketing techniques require a different approach and the progress we have made partnering with organizations on the Park needs to continue.

We completed the three day marathon with our facilitator and guide exhausted, but exhilarated that we don't have far to go to reach the Level Three (the highest level) in meeting the stability markers set out by ISM as an indicator of excellence. ☆



## Community News

### CRRA Continues a Compelling Calling

By Karen Brodsky

Since Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency has had the pleasure of appearing monthly in *The Charlotte Jewish News*, there are still many who wonder about the CRRA's *raison d'être* and what makes it Jewish.

Recently Gideon Aronoff, who served more than six years as president and CEO of HIAS, with which CRRA is affiliated, resigned his position to spend more time with his family. His remarks to HIAS and affiliate staff upon leaving included, "I sincerely believe that HIAS' 130 years of service to the Jewish community and to Jewish and non-Jewish migrants in need is one of the truly compelling callings in the Jewish community. It has been a great honor and pleasure for me to work in partnership with you to assist so many of the world's most vulnerable refugees and immigrants. I am in awe of the work that all of you do in your communities - day in and day out - providing newcomers with new homes and new hopes for the future. We have provided rescue and resettlement and have made our country and the world much more just and humane places."

CRRA exists to carry out that mission and helps Charlotte to be a more just and humane city. Its work is based upon the Jewish

tenet in the Torah to welcome the stranger. The Torah says, "Do not mistreat strangers living in your land, but treat them just as you treat your own citizens. Love strangers as you love yourselves, because you were strangers once in the land of Egypt." (Leviticus 19:33-34)

The Jewish Telegraphic Agency's managing editor Uriel Heilman interviewed Aronoff for a story released on May 17.

Writes Heilman, "Aronoff's tenure at HIAS was not without controversy. As president and CEO, he was an unapologetic proponent of HIAS' advocacy and support for non-Jewish immigration to America - something some Jewish critics saw as outside the scope of HIAS' *raison d'être*."

"Aronoff never saw it that way. He said, 'I helped the agency look into its past and understand and discover both from a values standpoint and a history standpoint how you can be unapologetically focused on Jewish ... concerns and unapologetically focused on universal values at the same time. HIAS always had a focus on Jews in danger, which still exists - both the danger and the focus - but also historically and traditionally has used our skills and capacities to help people of other backgrounds when they turn to us in need."

"What I did was help the



Gideon Aronoff

agency see its history more clearly and be more forthright that both sets of activities are core to what HIAS is. People often try to portray some kind of a fundamental shift, but I don't think the fundamental shift occurred in what we do so much as the way that the integrated program of HIAS is understood and described and discussed in the community."

Heilman interjects, "There's also a pragmatic reason for pursuing a more universalist mission. Aronoff said: 'If HIAS simply were to be dormant except in times of great Jewish need, it wouldn't have the capacity or ability to respond when the Jewish world suddenly needs it.'

"It would be both irresponsible and unethical to not help others where we can and to not pre-

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