

# The Charlotte JEWISH news

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## Jewish Federation: The STRENGTH of a People. The POWER of Community.

*Together our impact stretches from Charlotte to Israel to 70 countries around the world*

By Sue Littauer, Development Director, Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte

I've had the privilege of getting to know hundreds of volunteers and donors during my years as the Development Director for Federation. I've listened to their stories, laughed with them, cried with them, and have always been interested to learn how they connect to our community, to the Jewish Federation, to Judaism.

Reading about the crisis in the Ukraine, seeing the images on the internet, in the newspaper and on television has made a huge impact on me because I've had the opportunity to travel to the Ukraine a few times during the past several years to visit at-risk populations and to witness the rebirth of Jewish life, all made possible through the Jewish Federation and its overseas partners.

The Federation system responded immediately to the crisis in the Ukraine by doing what it does best – providing emergency relief and assistance to those in need. In a part of the world where many of us have roots, the most vulnerable members of our Jewish family – children and the frail elderly – became innocent victims in a rapidly deteriorating situation. Our fellow Jews, caught in the



Sue Littauer

cross-fire, needed our help and our Federation system responded by committing core funding and by opening the Ukraine Assistance Fund to raise the additional dollars needed. Through the work of our overseas partners, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), the Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI) and World ORT, our Federation was able to provide on the ground assistance.

I've seen the Federation respond to crisis after crisis, in Israel and around the world. Just this fall, the Jewish Federation of North America committed the funds to "complete the journey" – to bring the remaining Ethiopian Jews to Israel. Our own Federation made a commitment to join in

the worldwide effort to resettle this vulnerable population by raising additional funds.

In July 12, 2006, Sue Worrel and I landed in Israel on the very day the Second Lebanon War started. We saw firsthand how the Federation system responded. Children were immediately brought to safety, crisis counseling was put into place, food and supplies were distributed to bomb shelters. Financial assistance was provided immediately without

hesitation to those in need, before Emergency Funds were set up throughout the Federation system.

I know, that through the my Annual Campaign pledge, I am able to support all of the wonderful programs offered by our amazing local beneficiary agencies which provide a Jewish education for our children and grandchildren, build a strong Jew-

ish life here in Charlotte, and connect our teens and the members of our community with Israel.

I am thankful that through my financial support of the Jewish Federation, I am able to provide for Jews in Israel and around the world – for Jewish camps, secure and safe environments, for social experiences for thousands of seniors who are alone and need financial assistance.

And I know that because of my own pledge to the Annual Campaign, the organization that means so much to me – the Jewish Federation – will respond immediately to crises around the world.

*One gift really makes a difference.*

If you have not had your opportunity to make your pledge to the 2014 Annual Campaign, please join me by pledging online at [www.jewishcharlotte.org](http://www.jewishcharlotte.org) or by contacting me at [sue.littauer@jewishcharlotte.org](mailto:sue.littauer@jewishcharlotte.org) ☆



### 2014 Campaign at a Glance

Campaign Total to Date	\$2,375,000
Number of Contributions Received	1177
Percentage of Campaign Complete	69%

as of March 18

## April 6 Seminar Helps Teens Find Their Passion and Turn it Into a Business

Who is Vanessa Van Petten?  
 \* Author of one of Amazon's "Top 5 Hottest Books"  
 \* Youthologist  
 \* Teen whisperer  
 \* International speaker  
 \* Guest of Dr. Drew and The Real Housewives of Orange County  
 \* CEO  
 \* Website developer  
 \* Behavioral investigator  
 \* *Huffington Post*, *Forbes*, and CNN columnist  
 \* Mom's Choice Award winner  
 \* Emory University Magna Cum Laude graduate  
 \* Certified in Subtle Expression Training Tool (SETT), Subtle Expression Recognition Training (SubX) and Statement Analysis  
 \* All of the above

If you answered, "All of the above" then you would be right. As a young entrepreneur, Vanessa will be the keynote speaker at Jewish Family Services Family Reunion on April 6. The keynote address for parents of teens, pre-teens, and young adults, titled "Decode Your Teen," will focus on bridging the differences between young people and parents so each understands what the other is thinking. This free event will teach ways to communicate and build trust, as well as deal with lying, drama, and sulk-



Vanessa Van Petten

ing. Tapping into her experience as a "behavioral investigator," Vanessa will share stories, advice, and research with parents and their children wanting to build better relationships.

Following the 10 AM program, teens are invited to join Vanessa for an informal discussion on finding their passion projects and achieving success. "Many students are constantly told that they are too young to know what they want to do or start their careers," says Vanessa. In this talk, she will share her journey of starting her business at 16-years-old and then continuing to grow it from the cramped desk of her college dorm room. She will address ways to facilitate and inspire young people to find their passions and act on them. She gives practical, humorous, and inspiring advice on how

to deal with naysayers, where to find funding and how to get over mental blocks when you feel like you are stuck.

Vanessa tells true stories that give insight into the minds and attitudes of both parents and teens on issues ranging from friendships and bullying to school, sex, alcohol, and drugs. Her advice is realistic; some of it is challenging. But, she gets her insight from being able to break through the barriers that exist between teens and parents. Many parents will be shocked to find out that for the most part, their teens not only need them, but truly want them involved in their lives.

"When I was 16," says Vanessa, "I thought it was my Dad's goal in life to make me miserable. I was convinced that he had a running list of all the ways he could embarrass me in front of my friends, trick me into doing more chores, or make my curfew earlier. I realized my dad was reading books that were all written by adults, and I wondered why nothing was written by teenagers."

This inspired her to write "You're Grounded!" from a teen point of view at age 17. It was a critical success and launched her

(Continued on page 14)

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