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For Immediate Release

Jewish Federation Brings Together Barbash Family, Jewish Foundation to Support Jewish Family Service's Fight Against Poverty

Food Pantry Transformation is Cincinnati 2020's First Project

CINCINNATI, OH:--- When the Jewish Federation of Cincinnati brought Pam Barbash to the current Jewish Family Service Food Pantry, she saw that the steep stairs and modest space would limit how well members of our community in need could be helped. Soon afterward, she and her husband, Bernie, decided to commit to the largest gift of their lives to help transform the JFS Food Pantry into a pioneering new facility—the Barbash Family Vital Support Center—to be located on the Cincinnati campus of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion.

The Barbashes' gift, which will exceed \$1 million, propelled forward an unprecedented collaborative investment that will include the Jewish Federation of Cincinnati, private donors and The Jewish Foundation of Cincinnati. Funded by this partnership, the Barbash Center will be the first project to go live under the sponsorship of Cincinnati 2020, the community-wide collaboration to make Cincinnati a model community and a Jewish destination.

"Pam openly shared with me that she grew up knowing how it feels not to have enough," said Jewish Federation Development Director Danielle Minson. "So when she saw how the current site of the Food Pantry limited its reach, it was only natural for them to invest in our community's efforts to help those with the least."

The 2008 Community Study—which surveyed about 100,000 individuals in the greater Cincinnati area to capture the characteristics of the local Jewish community and provide insight into its needs, attitudes and behaviors—found that 1,100 Jewish households (9%) fall below 200% of Federal poverty guidelines (i.e., \$27,000 for a two-person household).

"Until now, we have only been able to help a small percent of our poorest community members," explained Beth Schwartz, Executive Director of Jewish Family Service. "The new Barbash Family Vital Support Center will change everything. The size, location and design on the HUC-JIR campus will enable us to more than double our current number of clients served by 2020. And we will be able to provide them with more comprehensive services, including addressing the long-term challenges created by poverty and mental illness. Being at HUC and having their rabbinic students provide pastoral services will truly make this Center unique."

Of the \$2.1 million total private donations required to open the Barbash Center by early 2013, \$800,000 must still be raised. To meet this goal, the Jewish Federation of Cincinnati will partner with JFS to launch a Sustainability Campaign, co-chaired by Pam Barbash, Bret Caller and Beth Guttman.

Jewish Federation Past President Bret Caller explained, "This is what Cincinnati 2020 is all about—bringing together people and organizations in order to achieve community priorities that no one organization could achieve by itself."

The transformative investment by The Jewish Foundation of Cincinnati, which will total \$3.2 million over a 10-year period, will be used for initial expenses of developing the Barbash Center and the increased costs of the expanded services. However, the bulk of the Center's ongoing operating budget will continue to rely on donations given through both the Jewish Federation of Cincinnati's Community Campaign and Jewish Family Service's Friends Campaign.

"Jewish values teach us that the measure of a community is how it treats the most vulnerable," said Dr. Jonathan Cohen, Dean of HUC-JIR's Cincinnati campus. "Not only will the Barbash Family Vital Support Center provide rabbinical counseling, but it will also be a place where parents can bring their children to volunteer out of a spirit of tikkun olam [repairing the world]."

"Bringing together generous donors with the right organizations and ideas to make projects like this a success is what the Jewish Federation does best. During the early stages of development, we've shared the news of this innovative initiative with a few community members, and many have already told us they want to help us reach our overall goal." said Danielle Minson.

"We are proud to be one of very few communities where private donors, the local Federation and Foundation, the lead social service agency and an international Jewish seminary can work seamlessly to significantly enhance our ability to help those most in need," says Michael R. Oestreicher, President of The Jewish Foundation of Cincinnati.

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The Jewish Foundation of Cincinnati invests in high impact, transformational initiatives in the areas of Unmet Basic Needs, Jewish Educational Opportunities, Leadership Development, Continuous Jewish Involvement and Israel Connection. Since its founding in 1995, the Foundation has significantly enhanced the cohesiveness and culture of the Cincinnati Jewish community and has invested nearly \$70 million in a vision to make Cincinnati one of America's great cities for Jewish life.

Founded in 1875 in Cincinnati, *Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion* is the nation's oldest institution of higher Jewish education and the academic, spiritual, and professional leadership development center of Reform Judaism. HUC-JIR educates men and women for service to American and world Jewry as rabbis, cantors, educators, and nonprofit management professionals, and offers graduate programs to scholars and clergy of all faiths. With centers of learning in Cincinnati, Jerusalem, Los Angeles, and New York, HUC-JIR's scholarly resources comprise the renowned Klau library, the American Jewish Archives, research institutes and centers, and academic publications. In partnership with the **Union for Reform Judaism** and the **Central Conference of Rabbis**, HUC-JIR sustains the Reform Movement's congregations and professional and lay leaders. HUC-JIR's campuses invite the community to cultural and educational programs illuminating Jewish history, identity, art, and archaeology, and fostering interfaith and multiethnic understanding.

The Jewish Federation of Cincinnati develops and connects leaders, contributors, organizations and ideas to build an inclusive Jewish community that helps people in need, supports Israel and assures a vibrant Jewish future. Visit jewishcincinnati.org.

Jewish Family Service of Cincinnati strengthens lives and our community by providing professional social services to families and individuals in times of need. Visit www.jfscinti.org