

Full name of the agency: Alpert Jewish Family & Children's Service

Full name and title of honoree: Ellie Hart

Title of award received by honoree from your agency: Engaged Leadership Award

Date honoree received award from your agency: Nominated to receive award at annual meeting, May 2016

Please attach a biography of honoree approximately 300 words in length describing the honoree's service to the agency and reasons for receiving an award from your agency:

Simple words can't capture everything Ellie has done in the past 4 years for our community in Palm Beach County, but the long and short is this: Ellie is an AJFCS *AmeriCorps* member and is on the Board of AJFCS. She is also in a unique position, working with staff at the Alpert Jewish Family & Children's Service (AJFCS) to make sure older adults and those with needs, particularly our Veterans (almost 70% of all people over age 65 are Jewish in Palm Beach County) are paired with AmeriCorps "peer-helpers" - nominally paid "volunteers" who assist AJFCS clients in everyday life.

She spends countless hours seeking veterans who need help with everything from camaraderie to assistance with medical and social challenges, and she then attempts to find them services. So she goes where they go. If I see something in the paper that looks interesting, she shows up. Her outreach efforts are without comparison. For those of us at the AJFCS, Ellie has become our go-to girl, the person we can call upon to jump into a meeting to develop orientation for volunteers, call an aging World War II soldier who needs services or place a phone call to a possible supporter of the agency. She is a great brain-storming partner.

More than anything, Ellie loves working with veterans. "Working with veterans has opened up a whole new chapter in my life," she says. "I think they are truly one of our nation's under-served populations." "She's interested. She's concerned. She's very dedicated," says 91-year-old WWII veteran George Fischer. "We don't find someone like her every day." Ellie wrangled her way onto an *Honor Flight* so that she could accompany a Veteran to Washington DC, an experience she calls one of the most special in her life.

Ellie's enthusiasm and interest in helping others made her a perfect candidate to be a "stakeholder" to offer advice for the national *Patient Outcome-Centered Research Institute* (PCORI) research study, administered by the University of Wisconsin. AJFCS is one of only three sites in the country that was chosen to participate in this preeminent "aging in place" research, and Ellie is a perfect fit for this project.