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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Springfield JCC to Relaunch PJ Library in Western Massachusetts

Award-Winning Jewish Family Engagement Program Kicks Off with “Havdalah in the Hay” Event

SPRINGFIELD, MA (October 15, 2021) – PJ Library Western Massachusetts will become a program of the Springfield Jewish Community Center, effective November 1, 2021. The award-winning Jewish engagement initiative will serve as a cornerstone of the J’s efforts to innovate how families with Jewish children can connect with Jewish culture and values.

Founded as a flagship program of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, PJ Library offers free, high-quality Jewish books and music each month to children ranging in age from 6 months to 13 years. Previously, local PJ Library subscriptions have been administered by the Jewish Federation of Western Massachusetts (JFWM), which has served 1,750 families and more than 2,900 children across the region.

Elise Barber, currently the PJ Library Coordinator at JFWM, will join the Springfield JCC staff and continue to design and implement PJ Library programming as part of an expanded role focused on Jewish community engagement and education throughout the Pioneer Valley.

“PJ Library provides creative and varied access points for connecting with Jewish families,” said Springfield JCC Chief Executive Officer Samantha Dubrinsky. “As an organization striving to strengthen families’ relationship to their local Jewish community, we are honored to be relaunching this program in Western Massachusetts and thrilled to be a part of the global PJ Library community.”

To celebrate the program’s relaunch, the Springfield JCC will host “Havdalah in the Hay” on Sunday, November 21, from 10 AM to 12 PM, on the J’s 20-acre campus. The free outdoor festival will feature a petting zoo, bounce houses, and a multi-sensory Havdalah to mark the end of Shabbat, the Jewish Sabbath.

“The beauty of PJ Library is that it impacts families beyond the books they get in the mail at home,” said Richard Goldstein, Springfield JCC Board President. “Our talented team looks forward to offering a range of fun experiences to engage families raising Jewish children.”

For more information, or to register your child for PJ Library, contact pj@springfieldjcc.org.

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The Springfield Jewish Community Center (Springfield JCC; the J) enriches community and nurtures wellness through physical, intellectual, social and spiritual programs and services. The J is guided by Jewish values, welcoming and respecting people of all abilities, ages, backgrounds, identities and faiths.