

**Oral History of:** Paula Glazier  
**Interviewed by:** Stanley Meretsky  
**Date of Interview:** June 18, 2018  
**Location of Interview:** Max M. Fisher Federation Building  
**Subject Matter:** Women's Philanthropy Dept. of the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit

Stan: 00:01 Hi, my name is Stan [Muretski 00:00:03] and today is June 18th. I'm interviewing Paula Glazier at the Max M. Fisher Building in Bloomfield Hills. This interview is being recorded as part of the Women's Leadership Oral History Project. Paula, do you give your permission to the Leonard N. Simon's Jewish Community Archives to publish, duplicate, and otherwise use this recording for educational purposes and for use as deemed appropriate by the archives?

Paula Glazier: 00:31 Yes.

Stan: 00:33 Thank you. The Women's Philanthropy Department of Jewish Federation has had several names throughout its history including The Women's Division, Women's Campaign and Education Department and for the purpose of this interview, the questions will refer to it by its current name, Women's Philanthropy, but you can use whatever name in the discussion you're comfortable with. Anyhow, let's start out with your youngest childhood memories. Where were you born and raised?

Paula Glazier: 01:03 I was actually born in Portland, Maine and came here when I was five. My mother's family was here. I went to school in Detroit, graduated high school in Detroit.

Stan: 01:19 What school?

Paula Glazier: 01:20 Henry Ford. Oh, Vernor Elementary School, let's say that, know for having Vernors three times a year, and then went to University of Michigan for school, for ...

Stan: 01:37 What did you major in there?

Paula Glazier: 01:39 Majored in social work, and then went to law school at University of Detroit and spent about six months being actually working as an attorney. That was it, but it was a great background for all my volunteer work after that.

Stan: 02:03 Were you involved in organizations back in high school and college, learning to get started in volunteer work?

Paula Glazier: 02:11 In high school I was. There were always a lot of clubs. I was President of the National Honor Society. Not so much in college, but philanthropy, being involved in organizations, was always important in my family. It was something that I aspired to do.

Stan: 02:38 What about religion in your family?

Paula Glazier: 02:42 We were members of Congregation Shaarey Zedek, part of the conservative movement. My earliest memories in Detroit were of going to the Shaarey Zedek on Chicago Boulevard, that big building. I remember when the Shaarey Zedek on Bell Road was built. I watched its progress the entire time. It's impressive that it still looks so good now so many years later. Also, in Maine one of the things that I ... Family lore, what I've been told, my grandfather helped start, and my father helped start, a conservative shul there. Being active in the community has always been part of my life.

Stan: 03:41 Tell me about your folks and their activities.

Paula Glazier: 03:44 My parents worked really hard. They weren't that involved. My mother worked most of the time, but when they could, they did. I remember my mom being part of a Hadassah study group for years. They also, when Detroit started a chapter of Friends of ALYN Hospital in Jerusalem, my parents became very involved because ALYN Hospital in Jerusalem, an orthopedic hospital, was actually founded by my dad's uncle in the 1930's, but again, I grew up with stories of him, my grandmother's favorite brother, who first went to Palestine in 1918, 100 years ago now, with the American Zionist Medical Unit for Palestine, one of the first Hadassah missions to Israel. I have letters that he wrote, talking about the colonies of the Galilee and day trips from Tiberias. It's just a fascinating story.

Stan: 05:15 Very interesting. Philanthropy has been part of your family history very strongly then.

Paula Glazier: 05:22 Yes, yes. When I had little kids and I was no longer practicing law, I decided I would get involved with organizations locally

that I could do it on my own time and be able to take care of my little kids. I joined ORT. I joined Hadassah. I joined NCJW. I just joined everything. I got very involved with ORT. In 1990 I became the President of Women's American ORT in our Detroit chapter. That was a great experience. When the ALYN Hospital chapter was started I was the third or fourth President of that. It was great working with my parents on that. I also, at the same time, was involved in Federation because I really felt that Federation was important, is important. Federation, it's the umbrella, it's the safety net for the community, for world Jewry. I felt that as important as it is to be involved in specific organizations that target specific individuals, the wonder of Federation is that it deals with everybody. It can touch everybody's life through all of its agencies, both locally and the organizations that it gives money to on a national and international basis.

- Stan: 07:37 When did you first start with Federation?
- Paula Glazier: 07:40 I was trying to think of that as I thought about coming here today. I think it was in the ... Well, I know it had to have been in the early 80's. I must've been somewhat involved doing something, I don't remember what, but I was asked to be involved in a group that, and I don't remember the name of the group, but we learned about the various agencies of Federation. We learned about Federation and its mission and we learned about all the constituent agencies. Some of them we visited. Some of them we had a speaker come in for, but that was my real introduction to the Federation world.
- Stan: 08:38 Was there somebody in that group that mentored you to keep you going once you started learning about all these things?
- Paula Glazier: 08:45 Not then, but going to Federation events and getting involved in some of the activities on some of the committees, I was just so impressed with all the women who were involved. At the different meetings when the past Presidents were asked to stand up, these were women who were so involved in everything in the community, Jane Sherman and Doreen Hermelin and Marlene Borman and Tilly [Brandywine 00:09:26] and Edith [Jacquere 00:09:28] and Dulcie Rosenfeld. I'm sure I'm missing at least half a dozen even from those early years, but it was so impressive that not only were they involved with the entire community, but they were still involved in the Women's Department at Federation because that was important to them.
- Stan: 09:57 What were some of the early committees that you volunteered at?

Paula Glazier: 10:01 One of the earliest that I remember was called Tzedakah Experience. That was for fifth graders. One Sunday of the year when we brought fifth graders in from all the Sunday schools, or at least all the ones that would participate with us, and they learned about the Federation agencies and some of the non-Federation agencies like [inaudible 00:10:33], also that were part of our community. The fifth graders, they went from table to table. There were people from each of the agencies at the tables to interact with them, to do an activity with them. Through these activities they learned about the community. That lasted a number of years. When I first came onto it, Sheri Schiff was very involved with Tzedakah Experience.

Tzedakah Experience has evolved through the years. Now I think there are other activities that ... I'm not sure it's fifth graders or sixth graders, but there's a lot of different activities for the pre Bar and Bat Mitzvah kids now so that they can learn about the community. Some do their community service within our agencies. That's actually one of the things that has been so important, I feel, about Women's Philanthropy through the years. A lot of the programs that we started, that we evolved with us through the years, we were piloting it for the whole community. Some of our programs have gone on to be part of the entire Federation and have become just much bigger and more important as it's evolved through the years.

Stan: 12:40 Which was [crosstalk 00:12:41]?

Paula Glazier: 12:42 Well, we did Shalom Baby, which is now jBaby, and is a very important program that brings in a lot of young people to, I was going to say Young Adult Division, but it's Next Gen. All the names have changed through the years. A program like that really got its roots in what we were doing in Women's Department at the time. We're proud of it.

Stan: 13:24 What about other members of your family, your daughter, your husband, your daughters? Did you get them started into philanthropy also?

Paula Glazier: 13:34 My husband is wonderful. He's not a committee person. He was on the Board for a number of years at Hillel Day School. When it came time for him to be President he backed off because he's just not a committee person, which is fine, but he's very, very philanthropically-minded. We have two daughters, [Alana 00:14:06] who lives in the city and has been involved on the Tamarack Board and very involved on the JCC Board, as well as Hillel Day School. My daughter Mindy, who lives in Philadelphia with her family, teaches at the Jewish day school there, the

Hillel equivalent, and is involved also in her synagogue and at the school. Yes, I think that my involvement was good for the family. Back in the days when I was ORT Treasurer before I was President, my girls learned some of their math skills and how to use an adding machine by helping me out doing some of the work on the books. It's definitely been a family experience.

Stan: 15:18

Have you worked with helping to bring in new leaders for Women's Philanthropy or any of the other organizations, mentoring or trying to help mentor?

Paula Glazier: 15:30

Sure. One of the focal points during my presidency and probably every presidency is how to get new women involved, whether the ones who are retiring from jobs and have more volunteer time, or the younger ones who might have time in between taking care of the kids. We had a vice president dedicated to the Young Women's Steering Committee, because it was very important that we get involved, in Women's Department, those women who were getting too old to be part of Young Adult Division, but they weren't sure that they wanted to come join us because that's where their mothers and grandmothers were involved. We had many programs to involve them. I worked one-on-one with a number of them to let them know that they did matter and that it was important to us that they become involved.

Stan: 16:58

Who are some of the leaders now who ... ?

Paula Glazier: 17:03

I was looking over some lists before this, and on my Executive Committee and people were on my Board are Leah Trosch and Roz Blank and Betsy [Hewer 00:17:22] and ... Oh I know I'm forgetting names, but women who have been Presidents recently in the past number of years. Jennifer Silverman was our liaison from Young Adult Division. She's been involved in Women's Philanthropy for years and is still involved, which is wonderful to see.

Stan: 18:03

Programs educating women, were you involved in those also, beyond just being active in the organization, actually participating in some of the committees and the training programs?

Paula Glazier: 18:17

Sure. As President, we ran some of those programs during my presidency. I was involved in recruiting women for it and speaking to them, helping set up the programs for it. I was also involved at some point in one of the women's [inaudible 00:18:47] programs, where we put together ... I was a participant at one point before my presidency, and then ... I

think it was still before my presidency. I don't remember exactly what year, I was one of the Co-Chairs. Marti Rosenthal was the Chair of another women's [inaudible 00:19:12] group which got together, a group of women, and took them to Israel to teach them more about Federation, the Federation activities in Israel, to make a group that they could bond with and come back and be involved here. That was terrific.

Some of the best experiences were Israel trips as part of Federation. In 2001, which was during my presidency, there was an intifada in Israel. There was a four-day solidarity mission to Israel that I was asked to go on. Jane Sherman was very involved in that and was on my bus. We were actually in Israel on 9-11-2001. That was an experience.

- Stan: 20:25 You want to talk a little bit more about that, the feelings and how people reacted?
- Paula Glazier: 20:31 Yeah. We were on our way to our Partnership 2000 area in the central Galilee and had stopped at a mall for a drink break and actually saw on television at that point, because it was 9:30 in the morning here, what was happening in New York. Then we continued on to our Partnership 2000 area where we thought we would be bringing them comfort that we were visiting in spite of the intifada. Instead, they were offering us comfort and help for those people who had relatives in New York at the time, helping them get through on the phone to New York to find their loved ones. It was a reversal in roles and a very impactful trip.
- Stan: 21:46 I bet.
- Paula Glazier: 21:48 For both sides, for our Partnership 2000 area and us. Speaking of Partnership 2000, that was also an important part of my presidency. At that time we were doing women's Seders here to just get our women together to work on something that was meaningful, teach something new about possibly a new slant on how to present a Seder to your family. Some women from our Partnership area came in to attend the Seder. They stayed at women's homes and they were here over Shabbat. A lot of them went to Shabbat services with our women. It was the first time for many of the Israeli women that they had been to services that weren't Orthodox. They saw how other people celebrated being Jewish, that there was another way besides the Orthodox services that they were used to. That was one thing.

The other thing that I feel they learned was they saw how many volunteers were involved in putting together the Seder, in working on our different committees within Women's Department. They took that back with them as a model for the Partnership region and developed women's groups amongst the three municipalities that made up our region and really had a novel model of volunteering. They really hadn't seen that before. I think that was really important.

- Stan: 24:07 Very much so. How many trips did you make to Israel then?
- Paula Glazier: 24:15 Around the time of my presidency ... There were also the Detroit Miracle Missions. There were four of those. I was on three of them. I'm not sure. I haven't counted how many times. Each time to Israel is very special and a learning experience.
- Stan: 24:42 What other positions did you hold along the way before you became President?
- Paula Glazier: 24:48 Well immediately before President I was Campaign Vice President. Leading up to that I had been Recording Secretary for the Board and prior to that I shared a number of the different campaign committees. It was felt then that we had many different giving levels so that women could feel comfortable coming in at whatever level they wanted. We had events for each of those giving levels, which was a lot of events. Now it's been consolidated to, I think, just two events, but we had a lot. It seemed to work. For those years, it did work. I feel that I worked my way up the giving levels and sharing the different committees and getting the opportunity to meet and interact with all the women who were part of Women's Philanthropy, Women's Department.
- Stan: 26:18 As you work your way up, you have all these different duties to perform as Chairs, as Vice President, all these other things. What do you feel were the most important parts of all these activities that you did, especially in your duties as President? What did you feel was the most important part of that job?
- Paula Glazier: 26:40 Giving everybody, all the women, a voice, letting all the women on all of our committees feel that they were spending their time in a worthwhile manner and educating them as to where all the money was going, why we were doing this, why it was important to be part of the community.
- Being frank, there have been times during the years when people have felt that Federation was an elitist organization and

that they were only interested in you if you gave money. I feel that through Women's Department we were able to reach out to so many women and get them involved that we were able to break down those old barriers and stereotypes in many situations. If you bring in the women, if you make what they're doing important, which it is, they go back and educate the whole family. As they sit there at the dinner table and talk about what they did during the day, that's where the kids learn about philanthropy and being part of the community. I think it's essential to get as many women involved as we possibly can. That was my goal. I think that's been the goal of every President of Women's.

- Stan: 28:35 Are you still helping to get other people involved now?
- Paula Glazier: 28:40 In every way I can. One of the strengths of the Women's Department, Women's Philanthropy, is that the past Presidents don't go away. That's what impressed me so much. One quick story, I went to an event. I was a lowly Chair of one of the campaign committees. There was a meeting at Dulcie Rosenfeld's house. I walked in and she knew my name. I was shocked. She was a past President. She's involved in the whole community. I was very, very surprised. I have tried throughout my career in leadership, in philanthropy, with Women's, with other organizations, to acknowledge everybody. I don't think I'm as good on remembering names as Dulcie is, but I know faces. I smile. I say hello. I introduce myself. I ask for names. I think that's really important, because that does make the one-on-one connection.
- Stan: 30:06 You mentioned other organizations. Are you involved with other, besides Federation and Women's Philanthropy?
- Paula Glazier: 30:18 After my presidency I was involved with one of the Federation planning and allocations committees. I chaired that for a number of years. I chaired Shalom Street at the JCC for a number of years. I'm now on the Board of Frankel Jewish Academy. I was involved on the Board for years at my synagogue. It's just important to stay involved and be part of the community. That's the strength of our community. Going to all the conferences, conventions through the years, Detroit is a leader in so many ways, in our programming, in our people who have become leaders of national organizations, Connie Giles, David Hermelin, Penny Blumenstein, Joel Tauber, so many of our people have gone on to national and international acclaim. Again, without notes you should never mention some names because you're not going to get them all. I apologize to anybody and everybody who I'm omitting, but everybody is important.

Stan: 32:02 Right. Is an executive in all these organizations a challenge? What were your greatest challenges? What were the biggest problems that you had to solve, especially as President of the Women's Philanthropy?

Paula Glazier: 32:22 It really goes back to getting more people involved and raising more money, because there are many wonderful organizations and causes. People have many different ways of spending their money. Again, it just goes back to educating people as best we can so that they understand how Federation and its agencies are the safety net for everybody in the community and is always striving to do better, both in outreach to people and in how they use the communal money. The staff who I worked with as President, people are great. The staff does a lot of the work. Difficulties, there are challenges but with a lot of good heads put together we're really able to overcome them. There weren't major difficulties. I feel that every year we build upon what's been done in the past and go forward to new heights of success.

Stan: 34:17 What is your most favorite accomplishment, your proudest achievement? You personally, when you come home at the end of the day, what do you think you were the happiest about?

Paula Glazier: 34:31 When I was President, seeing people who were happy to be involved, who understood why they were involved and were eager to do more, bringing along the younger people. David Hermelin of blessed memory told us that one of the duties of a leader is to look behind us and pull people along. It's not good for an organization when somebody stays in one position for years. You have to train people. You have to make them want to be President or Chairman or whatever position it is. You always need to be looking to build future leadership. In Women's Philanthropy, we have so many wonderful, qualified women that sometimes it's difficult to choose, but we've done a wonderful job. We've had many, many wonderful Presidents and Campaign Chairs. I feel that we've gone from success to success.

Stan: 36:14 What staff members do you remember working with, Federation staff people? How did they interact with you? I don't want to ask you who your favorites were because that is ...

Paula Glazier: 36:26 Well, when I ... Helen Katz came in as the Director of Women's Department at the beginning of my presidency. She hadn't worked in Women's Department prior to that. There were certain things that we had our own way of doing things. She and I spent a lot of time together as she learned the culture of Women's Department and the hands-on approach of the

women who were involved, because that was very different from general Federation, from general campaign. The people in our committees expected to be involved and expected to have their ideas listened to. For support staff, Toni Hayes-Howard started around the same time. She is still working in Women's Philanthropy and has been spectacular, our communal memory of things going on, but one of the important things that happened, whether during my years as Campaign Chair, going into the presidency, Women's Philanthropy used to be down here on the first floor of the Federation building. We were isolated. Our staff people did not interact that much with other people in the building who were all on the second or third floor. When they decided to make more conference suites on the first floor, Women's got moved up to the second floor. That was a wonderful move because all of a sudden our professional staff was seeing and interacting with the professional staff of general campaign and the planning and allocations committees more and more all the time. That helped integrate Women's more into the whole Federation.

Prior to that we were really a separate entity. I'm not sure that we were looked upon with the respect that we should've been, but that really did start to change when people got to know us better by being up on the second floor. Location is very important sometimes.

- Stan: 39:48 Well as they say in real estate, location, location, location.
- Paula Glazier: 39:51 Right, right. It was true for us.
- Stan: 39:55 How big of a staff does Women's Philanthropy have, professional staff in Federation?
- Paula Glazier: 40:04 We used to have, at my time probably, I'm trying to remember, the Director and maybe two Associate Directors. Now we don't have that. We have people who work in other Federation departments who have other portfolios who work on something within Women's Department. If it's the campaign event then some of the women who work in the campaign department work with our Women's Philanthropy people to put it together. We're very integrated into what goes on in the whole building.
- Stan: 41:03 This is a strange question, but do you feel women solicit differently than the men solicit?
- Paula Glazier: 41:11 Probably. I think that men, from what I've seen, might go to their friends, their business associates and say, "I need X

amount. Open your checkbook. Give me this amount. It's for such and such." For the women, there has to be more of a connection. The women who are giving need to understand why they're giving, what their money is going to do. Not that women are less trusting than men, but the men will just seem to trust the person who's asking them, for the most part. If it's somebody who they believe in, they'll give the money. The women want to know why.

Stan: 42:16 That's an interesting answer. I appreciate that one. How does Women's Philanthropy interact with the general campaign? Do you or is it just totally separate?

Paula Glazier: 42:28 No, now I think we're very much part of the general campaign. We have our own events, but a lot of the staff, I think a lot of the training, is all done together, differently than it used to be done when we had so many different divisions. It was so people-intensive to get everybody together and train them in soliciting. We used to have days when we brought all the divisions together so that they could learn how to solicit. Now I think that's all part ... We're just one part of the whole picture now, which is the way it should be.

Stan: 43:35 What are your hopes for the Women's Philanthropy in the future? Where do you see it going?

Paula Glazier: 43:42 I see it training, being involved with more and more women. We are a wonderful training ground. My presidency, Beverly Liss preceded me. Nancy Grosfeld was after me. Beverly is the current President of our Detroit Federation. Nancy was President a couple years ago of the whole Federation. A lot of the skills that one needs for that can be learned in Women's Philanthropy. Not to say that you have to be a member of Women's Philanthropy to learn these skills in order to move on to big jobs in Federation as a whole, but it doesn't hurt. I see us as an important part because again, it's important to get as many people involved as possible. By having our Vice Presidents, by having all of the committees that we do have, many women can get involved. Many women can learn about the Federation mission and move on to more positions if they desire. Some like what they're doing on one project. They might stay with that project forever in some capacity. That's okay too, because that project does so much good and educates so many people and reaches out to the community.

I just feel that it's important for Women's Philanthropy to continue as it's been doing, educating women, piloting many projects. When you involve a committee of laypeople and you

open it up for discussion, you get all the pros and cons from a lot of different viewpoints that you may not get when it's the professionals looking at things by themselves from their point of view. It's important that we have our committees, that we have people involved and really continue being role models for the women who are coming up after us.

- Stan: 46:59 That's a very important term, role model. One last question, is there anything that I haven't asked you about that you'd like to add in, something that you've suddenly remembered after talking all this time?
- Paula Glazier: 47:16 I'll remember something at two o'clock this morning, but no. I think we've been thorough. I feel so privileged and so honored to follow in the footsteps of the women who came before me in Women's Philanthropy. The women who have come after me have been a stellar group of women. It's a privilege to be part of that crowd. I hope that all the things that I did, half of which I can't remember right now, I hope they were important to other people at the time and continue to be important and that some of the things are the reason some people are involved today, have been involved, will get other people involved. I'm just very happy that I have been part of the Detroit Federation and the group of wonderful people who I've worked with at Women's Philanthropy.
- Stan: 48:48 I'm very happy to have interviewed you today. I think it's been a wonderful experience. I appreciate all the history that you've given us. I know that future watchers of this video will enjoy it also. Thank you.
- Paula Glazier: 49:04 Thank you. Thank you.