

Covenant Foundation Announces New Grants

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From a technology-based curriculum to teach students about Jewish moral and social issues, to a mentorship program for young girls to encourage Jewish community engagement, 13 innovative and trailblazing initiatives are recipients of new Covenant Foundation grants.

As part of approximately \$2 million to be distributed this year, the Foundation announced today \$798,100 in new grants as part of its mission to support, advance and recognize excellence and impact in Jewish educational settings.

The 2009 round of grants highlights a commitment to initiatives across the landscape of Jewish educational experiences, settings and audiences. Grants include organizations and projects dedicated to Jewish learning through technology, empowerment of students and teachers in environmental and other pressing social justice issues, new media, and youth engagement.

"The Covenant Foundation is injecting vitality into Jewish educational realms, promoting and encouraging new ways of thinking, supporting unique ways of interacting within and beyond the community, and growing Jewish community into the new century," said Eli N. Evans, chairman of the foundation's board of directors. "The potential of this new set of grant recipients is future-oriented and significant in all respects."

Foundation grants are divided into two categories: Signature grants, which provide funding for up to \$250,000 for up to five years, and Ignition grants, of up to \$20,000 for one year to support new and untested approaches.

"We are particularly interested in acknowledging creativity in Jewish education and traversing unknown territory where risk and innovation are married," said Harlene Winnick Appelman, Executive Director of the Foundation. "Our new crop of grantees are generators of ideas and approaches of great promise for success, effect and transformative replication elsewhere."

Signature grantees include:

- IKAR, Los Angeles: \$140,000 over three years to develop the Minyan Tzedek project, which will enable congregation members to pursue a range of social justice projects rooted in Jewish learning. These will include providing food to the poor, interfaith environmental cooperation, advocating for food justice, seeking reduction in environmental footprints, and supporting high-risk students in area schools.
- Jewish Theological Seminary, New York: \$250,000 over three years to develop, implement and evaluate a new third-grade curriculum for Conservative congregational schools. The aim is to give students a voice in designing their own learning, and to incorporate new technologies in classrooms.
- Keshet, Jamaica Plain, MA: \$20,000 for one year to support an intern who will help provide resources, training and technical assistance to emerging gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender groups to create safe and inclusive Jewish educational institutions.

- Nishmah: The St. Louis Jewish Women's Project, St. Louis: \$7,000 for one year to expand Banot Buddies, which joins elementary- and high school-age girls for mentorship, enrichment and community service projects underscoring Jewish social values.
- RAVSAK: The Jewish Community Day School Network, New York, and The Interactive Communications and Simulations Group at the University of Michigan: \$165,100 over three years to enhance and make more widely available Jewish Court of All Time (JCAT), a web-based educational project for Jewish middle school students. The project uses interactive media, supported by a curriculum, to teach students about significant moral, social and cultural issues.
- Solomon Schechter Day School Association, New York: \$30,000 over one year to plan a middle school curriculum examining Judaism and the environment.
- Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies, Chicago: \$66,000 over two years to support the Master of Arts in Jewish Professional Studies program to enrich Jewish knowledge and professional skills of Jewish educators and professionals in the Chicago area.

The new round of Ignition grantees include:

- Contemporary Jewish Museum, San Francisco: \$20,000 for one year for LINK: A Jewish Art and Technology Initiative, which will merge art, Jewish education and technology in a program including a year-long public discussion and lecture series, an interactive website and sound installation, and a curriculum-building fellowship for Bay Area Jewish educators.
- The Curriculum Initiative, New York: \$20,000 for one year to expand its emerging leaders program for Jewish students seeking involvement in Jewish life and issues at non-Jewish independent high schools.
- Gann Academy, The New Jewish High School of Greater Boston, Waltham, MA: \$20,000 for one year to train teachers and advisors in a values-focused curriculum, which integrates Judaism and character development for teens navigating adolescence while building a strong Jewish identity.
- Jewish Student Press Service, New York: \$20,000 for one year to support The Jewish Journalism 2.0 Web Initiative for College Students, engaging college students to expand and enhance the Service's online magazine and develop it as a venue for the exchange of ideas and opinions on Jewish issues and community.
- National Ramah Commission, New York: \$20,000 for one year to plan The Ramah Fellows program, a community service initiative that will place post-college alumni of the Ramah camp network in Jewish communities throughout North America to engage in community-building projects and experiences.
- Uri L'Tzedek, New York: \$20,000 for one year to develop the Uri L'Tzedek University Fellowship, which will support, educate and empower student activists to assume roles in Orthodox communal leadership and create communities of change dedicated to social action in educational settings.

Since 1991, the Foundation has provided nearly \$19 million to develop and support Jewish education and community-building projects and programs in North America.

Past grantees with creative and trailblazing approaches to Jewish education across denominations and settings are highlighted on the Foundation's website.

The Covenant Foundation is currently inviting 2010 Signature and Ignition grant applications ^[2]. The deadline for submitting an initial letter of inquiry is March 2nd.

The Covenant Foundation is a program of the Crown Family Foundation and the Jewish Education Service of North America (JESNA).