



Rose Youth Foundation members at their opening retreat

The dynamism of philanthropy: lessons from the grantmaking process

By Avi Kaye, rising senior at Denver Jewish Day School

The pinnacle of my Rose Youth Foundation (RYF) experience was the opportunity to observe the dedication and altruism demonstrated by professional staff of nonprofit organizations. This was especially true during a site visit to Florence Crittenton, a high school serving teen mothers and their children by ensuring their future through supportive education. The aesthetics and aura of the building were similar to that of regular high school, but the external façade did not express the profound impact the facility and its staff have made on the lives of numerous young women. By integrating a standard education with supplemental social support, Florence Crittenton offers new mothers a chance for a successful future while maintaining and cultivating their role as parents. This potent experience manifested for me how individuals can devote time and energy to pursuing a better world for themselves, for their children and for the community.

This year, I served as co-chair of RYF. Facilitating the final grant decision-making meeting — which resulted in our group deciding to make grants to Florence Crittenton and five other impressive nonprofits — was a fulfilling culmination of my two-year experience in this program. The process of RYF empowers teens through cooperative leadership and philanthropic resources to investigate the fundamental question: “How would you use \$60,000 and your Jewish values to make your community a better place?” This approach to philanthropy brings an eclectic group of Jewish teens together from all around the Denver metro area with a common mindset and goal to improve the state of our community through the lens of Judaic principles. In the 2015-2016 cycle, the RYF board mainly focused on the values of *v’chekezta bo*, you shall strengthen, and *lo ta’amod al dam rei’echa*, do not stand idly by. These teachings, coupled with research on the most pressing and enduring challenges facing

For the 15th year, Rose Youth Foundation, a collaborative philanthropy group at Rose Community Foundation, provided Jewish teens from the Greater Denver community the opportunity to learn about grantmaking and philanthropy. In 2015-2016, 23 Rose Youth Foundation members from 11 schools granted \$60,000. This report is about who they are, what they did and how they did it.

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My experience in Rose Youth Foundation

By Sam Goldstein, rising senior at Cherry Creek High School

Two years ago, my mom shared with me an email about Rose Youth Foundation (RYF), explaining the program and what it does. I did not know anything about RYF and after reading the description, and giving in to some convincing from my mom, I decided to apply. Now, almost two years of great experiences later, I understand how amazing this opportunity is. Through my time with RYF I have picked up many great life skills and interests which I would not have acquired otherwise.

I did not know what to expect when I joined RYF. I knew the idea of the program but I did not know the process we would follow to get to the final grant decision-making. As we started gathering information on different issues around the Greater Denver community, I started realizing how many different issues I wanted to help address. Sadly, we could only select one or two areas to focus on, but by having a specific focus I became very knowledgeable on the issues.

The most impactful experience I had in RYF was when I visited New Legacy Charter School. New Legacy recently opened to serve parenting teens. When I visited the site and met a few of the students currently attending the school, I was surprised to see the school really made it possible for the parents to also be teens. Being a teenager myself, I could not imagine having a baby to take care of all the time and the school, which had an onsite early childhood education center, helped these teens graduate with promising futures.

After visiting and learning about teen pregnancy I have a newfound understanding of this serious issue. Throughout all my time with RYF I have learned a lot about many issues facing our community and I have become more aware and motivated to help my community.

Now that I have finished two years of RYF, I feel a need to continue this type of work. There are many issues in my community I want to help with and now I have a good background on philanthropic work. I have learned so much about giving in a knowledgeable, Jewish way, which I will most definitely continue to use in the future. I may even end up going into nonprofit work when I grow older. RYF has had a huge impact on my life and I will always continue to give back to my community.



Rose Youth Foundation brings Jewish teens together

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the Greater Denver community, galvanized our group to focus on a challenge facing our peers: preventing teen pregnancy and providing education for teen parents.

During our final meeting, the year of building group dynamics and establishing grantmaking criteria culminated in the allocation of \$60,000. As co-chair, I had the privilege of facilitating and witnessing the RYF members discuss, compromise and foster a mutual vision for the impact they wanted to have through consensus and discussion of Jewish principles. The entire

RYF team worked together and decided with one voice to make grants that would help address the issue of teen pregnancy in our community. This enlightening scene demonstrated the abounding possibilities that can occur from empowerment and a common goal. With minimal guidance and limited initial criteria, the group was able to decide collaboratively to engage in a single mission to assist our peers. It was an honor and a humbling experience to be in the midst of a truly collaborative, philanthropic effort that enabled me to inspire change and mobilize efforts for communal good.

Help ensure our youngest leaders continue to shape our community

In 2011, Rose Community Foundation began a campaign to endow Rose Youth Foundation. Thanks to many generous donors, we are more than halfway to our ultimate goal of \$2 million. An endowment for Rose Youth Foundation will ensure that future generations of Jewish teens will experience this program and that our community will continue to benefit from the leadership and perspective of youth grantmakers. If you would like to make a gift to support the Rose Youth Foundation endowment, contact Sarah Indyk, director of special projects, at 303.398.7416 or sindyk@rcfdenver.org.

Get Involved

How would you use **\$60,000** and your **Jewish values** to make our community better? Rose Community Foundation seeks a diverse group of Jewish and interfaith-Jewish students who will be in their sophomore – senior years in 2016-2017 and want to make a difference by learning about philanthropy and becoming teen grantmakers. The online application and more information is available at rcfdenver.org/RYF.

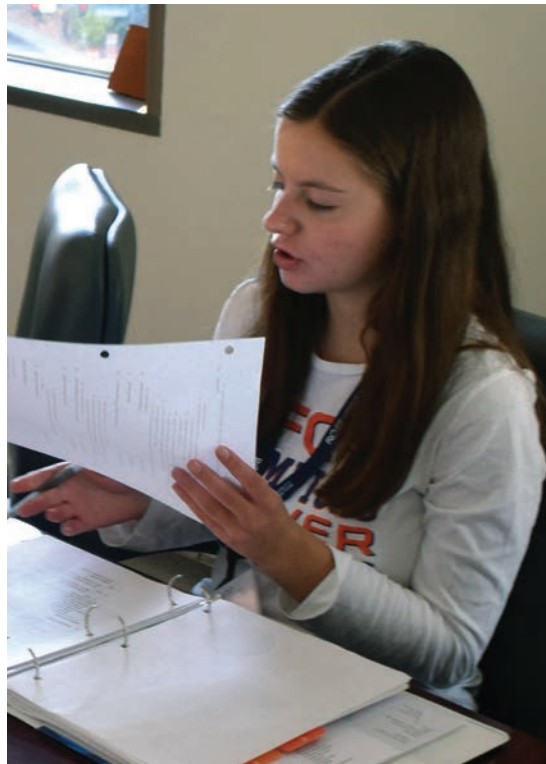
Teens helping teens

By Kate Wexler, graduating senior at Denver South High School, attending University of Colorado in the fall

This year Rose Youth Foundation granted \$60,000 to help address issues related to teen pregnancy. Within this overarching priority we identified two areas of focus: preventing teen pregnancy and supporting pregnant and parenting teens in completing their high school educations. For our primary focus, preventing teen pregnancy, we invited nonprofit organizations serving the Greater Denver community to apply for grants through a request for proposals. For our secondary focus, supporting pregnant and parenting teens in completing their high school education, we proactively identified two specific schools serving pregnant and parenting teens.

As Jewish teens, we wanted our grantmaking to reflect the Jewish value of *lo ta'amod al dam rei'echa*, do not stand idly by. Reports, including a 2014 report in *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, show that since 2009, Colorado has led the nation in providing LARCs (long-acting reversible contraceptives) through the Colorado Family Planning Initiative and experienced a 40 percent decline in teen birth rates. This funding has, however, been under threat, and we believe it imperative to continue supporting organizations in our community that work to prevent teen pregnancy. In addition, we sought to practice the Jewish value of *v'hechezekta bo*, you shall strengthen. According to a 2012 report by The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, only 51 percent of teen mothers nationally receive their high school diploma by age 22, compared to 89 percent of females who did not give birth in their teens. For these reasons and more, we decided to fund institutions dedicated to the success and well-being of teen parents and their children.

Our primary focus was preventing teen pregnancy. As teens ourselves, we felt it was important to pick a priority that impacts our peers and could potentially impact ourselves. Both teen parents and their children are often at a disadvantage in education, health and financial stability. We agreed to fund evidence-based, promising and brand new programs that are dedicated to providing teens ages 11 to 19 with a variety of



Rose Youth Foundation participant evaluates grantee information

services. When evaluating grant proposals, we looked for programs that provided long-acting reversible contraceptives, comprehensive sexual education, and outreach and awareness programs. Ultimately, we decided to fund four organizations dedicated to preventing teenage pregnancy in our community: Boulder County Public Health's Genesister program, Women's Health of Boulder, Girls Incorporated of Metro Denver and Planned Parenthood of the Rocky Mountains. We are excited to witness the positive effects our grants will have on the programs at these incredible organizations.

Our secondary focus was supporting pregnant and parenting teens in completing their high school educations. We identified schools in our community that prioritize teen parents and their children and invited these schools to apply for grants. When evaluating these proposals, we looked for comprehensive services that offer teens various academic and postgraduate resources, in addition to high-quality childcare. The organizations we chose to fund, Florence Crittenton Services and New Legacy Charter School, embody our dedication to providing teen parents with the opportunity to finish high school.

2015-2016 Rose Youth Foundation Members

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2016 Rose Youth Foundation Grants - \$60,000

Preventing teen pregnancy through comprehensive sex education and access to contraception

Boulder County Public Health (Boulder) \$10,000 to support Genesister, a pregnancy prevention program for the sisters of pregnant and parenting teens combining sex education, service learning and empowerment to complete high school.

Girls Inc. (Denver) \$6,000 to support the Healthy Girl program, an after-school program teaching adolescent and teenage girls comprehensive sex education including decision-making, assertiveness, avoiding risky situations, contraception and abstinence.

Planned Parenthood of the Rocky Mountains (Denver) \$14,000 to support the Responsible Sex Education Institute, empowering students with information and skills to foster healthy relationships and safer sex.

Women's Health (Boulder) \$15,000 to support the SHAPE program, a youth-led program providing peer education about HIV, sexually transmitted infections and contraception, and a safe conversation space for challenging topics.

Supporting pregnant and parenting teens in completing high school

Florence Crittenton Services (Denver) \$5,000 to support the Student & Family Support Program, providing comprehensive services to empower teen moms to be loving, nurturing, supportive parents and self-sufficient, successful students and community members.

New Legacy Charter School (Denver) \$10,000 to support the on-site Early Learning Center, which provides high-quality early childhood education and care that promotes healthy child development while allowing teen moms and dads to complete their high school educations and develop the skills they need to succeed in college, careers and as parents.



Rose Youth Foundation members, pictured with New Legacy Charter School students and staff, made a site visit to the school