



Rose Youth Foundation

JEWISH YOUTH MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Report to the Community 11

A Grantmaking Initiative of Rose Community Foundation

The 2010-11 Rose Youth
Foundation Members



Grantmaking Creates Meaningful Change

By Jono Bentley – freshman at Stanford University

Few teenagers contribute money to charity. Far fewer have the opportunity to grant \$60,000 to nonprofits in their community. Rose Youth Foundation enables 23 Jewish teens to do just that – every year.

On my application to participate in Rose Youth Foundation (RYF), I wrote that I wanted to serve on the board because I sought to affect meaningful, tangible change in my community. The grants we made this year helped me understand the many forms meaningful, tangible change can take.

We decided to fund organizations addressing homelessness. Our grant to support homeless teens in their efforts to earn their GEDs and

find stable jobs is meaningful change. We decided to fund innovative programming for Jewish teens. Our grant to connect Jewish teens to one another and foster Jewish learning through organized bike rides is meaningful change. We decided to fund programs and services to help refugees living in Greater Denver and Boulder become self-sufficient. Our grant to provide refugees with computer literacy and English classes is meaningful change. We decided to fund

For the 10th year, Rose Youth Foundation, a grantmaking initiative of Rose Community Foundation, provided Jewish teens from the Greater Denver area the opportunity to learn about grantmaking and philanthropy. In 2010-2011, 23 Rose Youth Foundation members from 14 schools gave away \$61,500. This report is about who they are, what they did and how they did it.

Finding My Voice

By Elizabeth Dansky – senior at Kent Denver

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As a teenager, I am often told, “Be the change you wish to see in the world.” These powerful words from Mahatma Gandhi are easier said than done. The difficulty in this task lies not in knowing what to change, but rather how to bring that change about. This year, Rose Youth Foundation served as a springboard for 23 Jewish teenagers to make tangible differences in our community. I am grateful to have been part of this group and to have the opportunity to find my voice and have it heard.



Blake Oberfeld writes a Request for Proposals at the RYF retreat.

I never knew how powerful my opinions and those of my peers could be until one site visit meeting with a potential grantee this year. Towards the end of our meeting, the potential grantee profusely thanked us for choosing to make Jewish teen programming a priority, and for the criteria we established in our Request for Proposals. She asked us why we thought this criteria was essential. To my surprise, she grabbed a pen and took notes as we answered her question, explaining that we felt that by engaging Jewish youth through meaningful programming, our community would be supporting the future of the Jewish people.

Her action was puzzling to me because as a teenage student, I am accustomed to taking notes from those older and more experienced than I. It was a complete role-reversal that made me realize how much power RYF placed in the hands of youth and how my words, actions and decisions could directly benefit numerous other teenagers. RYF brought together a diverse group of young adults, who were collectively all experts on being Jewish teenagers in the Denver and Boulder area. In essence, we had taken much of the guesswork out of the process for adult programmers because we had given them a clear statement of what we, as Jewish teenagers, wanted to see in our programs. We knew how to judge the effectiveness of a program because we represented the population that these programs were addressing. This realization allowed me to clearly see the value of RYF and to understand how we, as teenagers, can “be the change.”

In the last 10 years, 157 Jewish youth have granted more than \$460,000 to make our community a better place.

In celebration of Rose Youth Foundation's 10th anniversary, Rose Community Foundation has embarked on a campaign to endow this program. An endowment will ensure that RYF will continue to serve our community's youth and nonprofits forever. A \$500,000 leadership gift from Rose Community Foundation will cover RYF's

ongoing operating costs, guaranteeing that all contributions will support the annual grants made by the teens. We invite you to join us in supporting the future of Jewish youth philanthropy in our community. For more information, contact Margie Gart, director of philanthropic services, at 303.398.7442 or mgart@rcfdenver.org.

An Impressive Commitment to Refugees

By Max Frey – junior at Cherry Creek High School

In reviewing grant proposals for one of our grant priorities – to support programs and services that help refugees become self-sufficient and adapt to life in Greater Denver and Boulder – I visited the Colorado African Organization (CAO) and left feeling inspired by this center and the support it offers to all foreign refugees. On that site visit, I was not expecting to see the determination and commitment that was displayed by all of the volunteers and managing staff. They were staying late to accommodate more refugees, and when even more would come, they wouldn't turn them away either. CAO staff would invite them in and begin to change their lives, slowly but surely. Furthermore, their innovative approach to intertwining a refugee's life with their new community was astounding to me; CAO ultimately becomes a second family to the refugee and his or her family.

With CAO's determination, it was clear that the community was becoming more aware of, and more welcoming to, refugees who had overcome tremendous challenges to find their way to a new life in Denver. The basic programs CAO provides, such as English as a second language classes or American citizenship preparation, are critical for the refugees' success. The fact that CAO enhances refugees' lives and helps them to successfully



Samantha Hea presents a grant check to Colorado African Organization's Adrien Mangituka.

integrate into their new communities was also miraculous and very impressive to me. CAO is a model of efficiency and success because they ensure every basic and complex need of a refugee is met. The refugees they serve have a 100 percent success rate of gaining citizenship. This year, we wanted our grantmaking to support refugees because as Jewish people, our history helps us identify with the struggles of people who are displaced or forced to flee from persecution and genocide. With the help of CAO, refugees in Denver find a supportive community to welcome them to their new home.

Change Continued from Page 1

organizations reaching out to welcome and engage interfaith families and couples in Jewish life. Our grant to support monthly Shabbat dinners and a Shabbat retreat for interfaith families is meaningful change.

Through our grantmaking, we achieved my goal of affecting meaningful change; but I also learned that the RYF experience is so much larger than that. As a group, we followed a few key rules with our grantmaking, one of which was that we had to grant our funds in a "primarily Jewish"

way. At my first RYF meeting, I knew nothing about philanthropy, let alone Jewish giving. But I soon learned that the "change" I wrote about on my application didn't capture what I truly wanted to achieve. What I should have written was that I wanted to participate in *tikkun olam*, the Jewish ideal of repairing the world. That is what we worked towards at our RYF meetings on Sunday evenings in the Rose Community Foundation board room. And that is what our grantees are working towards as they serve our community every day.

Get Involved

Rose Youth Foundation is accepting applications from Jewish teens who will be in grades 10-12 in 2011-2012. Rose Youth Foundation seeks members from diverse backgrounds. Members work together for eight months to award grants in a primarily Jewish way to help address issues they identify in the community. The online application and more information about Rose Youth Foundation can be found at rcfdenver.org/RYF, or contact Sarah Indyk at 303.398.7416 or sindyk@rcfdenver.org.

Issue 1

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2010–2011 Rose Youth Foundation Grants

Innovative Jewish Programs to Engage Post B'nai Mitzvah-aged Youth

Hazon: \$6,500 to create Denver and Boulder teen biking programs, offering a series of one-day rides combining biking with Jewish environmental education.
hazon.org

Jewish Student Union: \$2,550 to create JSU Club Summer, a summer-long series of weekly social and educational gatherings for Jewish teens.
jsu.org

Keshet: \$6,000 to support LGBT-inclusion training for staff and teachers working with Jewish teens, and LGBT-inclusion workshops for Jewish teens themselves.
keshetonline.org

Mizel Arts & Culture Center (MACC): \$3,750 to support the Teen Film Board in developing activities for Jewish high school students at the 2012 Denver Jewish Film Festival. This is a matching grant.
maccjcc.org

Helping Refugees to Become Self-Sufficient and Adapt to Life in Greater Denver and Boulder

Colorado African Organization: \$7,000 to support English as a second language, computer literacy, United States social systems awareness, parent engagement and citizenship preparation classes for refugees.
caoden.org

Growing Colorado Kids: \$3,000 to support agricultural and nutritional education to train refugee youth to grow food for their families and the community. Colorado Nonprofit Development Center serves as fiscal sponsor.
growingcolorado.org

Jewish Family Service of Colorado: \$6,000 to support the International Kid Success program, providing counseling, school interventions, parent support and education for refugee students attending Denver and Aurora Public Schools.
jewishfamilyservice.org

Lutheran Family Services of Colorado: \$3,000 to support a program to build community among refugee women and facilitate their transition to life in Denver.
lfsco.org

Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning: \$5,000 to support pre-employment and volunteer training and placement to help refugee youth build their resumes and become more involved in their communities.
spring-institute.org

Welcoming and Engaging Interfaith Families and Couples in Jewish Life

Stepping Stones: \$6,700 to support *Shabbat, No Experience Necessary*, monthly Shabbat gatherings and a weekend Shabbat retreat for interfaith families.
steppingstonesfamily.com

Services for Homeless Youth and an End to Homelessness

Denver's Road Home: \$5,000 to support an end to chronic homelessness in Denver. Mile High United Way serves as fiscal sponsor.
denversroadhome.org

Urban Peak: \$7,000 to support services for homeless youth and youth at risk of becoming homeless.
urbanpeak.org