



# Rose Youth Foundation

JEWISH YOUTH MAKING A DIFFERENCE

# Report to the Community 2012

A Grantmaking Initiative of Rose Community Foundation

The 2011-12  
Rose Youth  
Foundation  
Members



## Once in a Lifetime

By Simon Kaufman – freshman at University of Michigan

**January 8, 2012. Tebow drops back in the pocket, finds a receiver downfield, he throws. It's caught. Thomas at the twenty, the ten...Broncos touchdown! The Broncos win! The Broncos beat the Steelers!**

For the 11th 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 2011-2012, 23 Rose Youth Foundation members from 11 schools gave away \$60,000. This report is about who they are, what they did and how they did it.

I could have been there; I could have been among the fans that witnessed the Broncos' miracle playoff win this year. It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that I missed because on that Sunday night I had a Rose Youth Foundation meeting.

I was not among the screaming fans when Tebow's throw was caught. Instead I sat at a board room table with 22 other high school students. We only found out about the result of the game when someone updated us via their iPhone. The celebration lasted only a minute.

Instead of being amongst 60,000 fans I was amongst 23 teens. Instead of getting excited each time Denver moved the ball down the field, we passionately discussed how we would narrow our funding priorities. I didn't sit around a television watching every play while cheering with friends. I sat around a table with a small group analyzing the different problems our grantmaking could address and which organization provided the best solution to these problems. I didn't hear fans scream on each successful play, instead

I heard a small round of applause after our group reached consensus on the grant priorities we would set.

I wasn't at the game, I was in the Rose Community Foundation board room and I didn't need to see an 80-yard overtime touchdown pass to make me believe in miracles. I simply had to look around. There sat a group of teens, all Jewish – yet all from very different backgrounds – who all shared a common goal: an interest in making their community better. Rose Youth Foundation is a miracle; it's a Hail Mary pass that has created winners throughout the community for the last eleven years. Rose Youth Foundation fields a team that is capable of tackling any problem. We research areas of concern in our community, find possible solutions and fund the very best ones – all while keeping in mind the goals of Jewish giving.

That night I wasn't with 60,000 fans. I was with 22 other teens making \$60,000 worth of differences. And I wouldn't trade that once-in-a-lifetime experience for anything.

## Get Involved

Rose Youth Foundation is accepting applications from Jewish teens who will be in grades 10-12 in 2012-2013. We seek 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 can be found at [rcfdenver.org/RYP](http://rcfdenver.org/RYP), or contact Sarah Indyk at 303.398.7416 or [sindyk@rcfdenver.org](mailto:sindyk@rcfdenver.org).

# The Value of Community

By Lior Schinagel – senior at Denver Jewish Day School

This year in Rose Youth Foundation was life changing. I learned innumerable lessons, one of which was how to make decisions as a group. The first big decision our group had to make was which areas of need we would prioritize when the time came to make our grants. There was one issue about which I felt strongly – Jewish teen engagement. Coming from a Jewish school, I see the true value of being connected to the Jewish community as a teenager; however, very few teenagers

in the Denver area are engaged in Jewish life. Other Rose Youth Foundation members clearly felt the same way as I did, the priority was proposed – and unanimously accepted – before I could even chime in.

At our grantmaking retreat, we found ourselves with more than \$200,000 in requests on the table and only \$60,000 to grant. Our group decided to make one of our largest grants to one of our Jewish teen engagement grantees.

## 2011-2012 Grant Priority: Inspiring Jewish Teenagers to be Involved in Jewish Life

**Jewish Student Union** (Port Chester, NY): \$10,000 to support Jewish Student Union clubs in Denver-area high schools.

**Robert E. Loup Jewish Community Center** (Denver): \$7,000 to create a community-wide art initiative organized for and by Jewish teens.

# A Step Up the Ladder

By Olivia Solow-Neiderman – junior at Cherry Creek High School

While most teenagers celebrate their 16th birthdays with friends and family, I enjoyed mine at the Rose Youth Foundation opening retreat. I had always hoped that my 16th birthday would be a monumental day, but I had never imagined the impact that one day could make on my life. At the retreat, I learned about many topics, but the idea that inspired me the most was the realization that we, a group of 23 teenagers, could create positive, influential changes in our communities. I learned that as grantmakers, we could have the greatest impact with our philanthropy by first choosing specific areas or issues we would fund.

As a group, we established four grant priorities, but I developed a passion for one issue in particular: helping those with special needs. We decided to focus our grantmaking within this priority on aiding adults with special needs in becoming more self-sufficient, in part because we learned from Maimonides that the highest degree of *tzedakah*, charity inspired by the pursuit of justice, is to help someone acquire the means to be able to help themselves. We identified an organization that embodied our goals for this priority: SHALOM Denver, a division of Jewish Family Services of Colorado.

During our site visit to SHALOM Denver, I found myself marveling at

the passion of the people involved in the organization and the immense impact that the services they provide have on adults with disabilities. From developing everyday skills to earning a salary, the people served by SHALOM Denver continually increase their self-sufficiency.

## 2011-2012 Grant Priority: Supporting Individuals with Special Needs in Becoming Self-Sufficient

**SHALOM Denver** (Denver): \$6,000 to develop employment sites for groups of individuals with special needs. SHALOM Denver is a division of Jewish Family Service of Colorado.

# Welcoming the Stranger

By Jamie Spitz – senior at Cherry Creek High School

I joined Rose Youth Foundation this year with a desire to make a real difference – to tend to community problems such as homelessness, education and hunger. Never did it occur to me to help refugees. After all, this is Denver, Colorado. Little did I know that more than 2,500 refugees resettled in Colorado last year alone. They come here from all over the world – some seeking political asylum, many with very little to their names and often speaking no English. Most are in search of a better life. However, refugees typically face significant challenges in adapting to life in a new community in a new country. In order to be successful, they need to learn English and basic job skills.

As Jews, we could relate to the experiences of these displaced people living in a new city. Throughout history there are many examples of Jewish people being mistreated and exiled from their homelands. Furthermore, the Torah teaches us that foreigners residing among us



Elizabeth Dansky chats with recent refugees at Colorado African Organization.

must be treated as our native-born. As a result, we decided to make grants to support refugees in adapting to life in Greater Denver and in becoming self-sufficient. I had the chance to visit many of the organizations we funded under this priority and was overwhelmed by the truly amazing work they do.

## 2011–2012 Grant Priority: Supporting Refugees in Adapting to Life in Greater Denver and Boulder and Becoming Self-Sufficient

**African Community Center** (Denver): \$4,000 to establish a computer lab for refugee students.

**Colorado African Organization** (Denver): \$7,500 to provide onsite child care during adult ESL, computer literacy and social integration classes.

**Goodwill Industries of Denver** (Denver): \$4,500 to train and certify refugee women as doulas.

**Jewish Family Service of Colorado** (Denver): \$10,000 to support citizenship classes for refugees.

**Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains** (Denver): \$5,000 to support job training and placement for young adult refugees.

## 2011–2012 Rose Youth Foundation Members

Elizabeth Dansky, Co-Chair  
Jordan Kastrinsky, Co-Chair  
Jared Alswang,  
Communications Director  
Brianne Andersen,  
Jewish Learning Director  
Blake Oberfeld,  
Grants Manager  
Noa Baumgarten  
Margo Brown  
Peri Cirbo  
Max Frey  
Sara Goldstein  
Eitan Grinstein  
Daniel Halpern  
Simon Kaufman  
Sam Payne  
Yoni Rabinovitch  
Somer Reznick  
Rachel Rockford  
Josh Rubin  
Lior Schinagel  
Lauren Schusterman  
Olivia Solow-Niederman  
Jamie Spitz  
Cale Wagner

## Staff

Scott Esserman, Educator  
Sarah Indyk, Jewish Life  
Initiatives Manager  
Lisa Farber Miller, Senior  
Program Officer

**\$60,000**  
in grants to **9** organizations

## Issue 1

Rose Youth Foundation's  
*Report to the Community* is  
published annually by:

Rose Community Foundation  
600 South Cherry Street, Suite 1200  
Denver, CO 80246-1712  
303.398.7400



600 South Cherry Street, Suite 1200  
Denver, CO 80246-1712

Address Service Requested

NONPROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
DENVER, CO  
PERMIT NO. 159

## Open Your Hand

By Margo Brown – senior at Colorado Academy

As members of Rose Youth Foundation, we identified homelessness as one of the biggest and most pressing problems facing Greater Denver and Boulder. In studying Jewish texts and laws of *tzedakah*, charity inspired by the pursuit of justice, we learned that we are taught to “open your hand wide to your brother, to your poor, and to your needy, in your land.” (Deuteronomy 15:11).

We further decided that we would give to an organization that provided long-term support to homeless people because the highest level of giving in Judaism is to help someone become self-sufficient.

Given the scale of the issue, we narrowed our focus to funding support for homeless families with young children. That was when we learned about Warren Village. We decided to fund them because we saw, firsthand, what a difference they make in the lives of the families they serve.

### 2011-2012 Grant Priority: Supporting People Who are Homeless in Becoming Self-Sufficient

**Warren Village (Denver):** \$6,000 to support homeless families with secure housing, early childhood education, case management and adult education.

## Ensure our youngest leaders will continue to shape our community.

In 2011, Rose Community Foundation embarked on a campaign to endow Rose Youth Foundation. To date we have raised more than \$800,000 toward our goal of \$2 million. 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](mailto:mgart@rcfdenver.org).