



The 2012-13 Rose Youth Foundation members.

For the 12th year, Rose Youth Foundation, a collaborative philanthropy group at Rose Community Foundation, provided Jewish teens from the Greater Denver area the opportunity to learn about grantmaking and philanthropy. In 2012-13, 23 Rose Youth Foundation members from 12 schools granted \$60,000. This report is about who they are, what they did and how they did it.

Not as Simple as Black and White: Making Decisions as a Teen Grantmaker

By Margo Brown - freshman at University of Southern California

As a senior in high school this past year, I was faced with the daunting task of applying to college. I went into the process totally intimidated. I imagined each application ending up on an old man's desk. The old man, after quickly skimming my application, would then mark it with a large red "denied" stamp.

I became a member of Rose Youth Foundation (RYF) in 2011 because I wanted the opportunity to make a difference in my community. I imagined the choices I would make would be simple, like my image of the college admissions officer making a clear and obvious decision about my application. I imagined a smiling group of Jewish teens happily choosing

a wonderful and deserving organization that easily stood out from the rest.

Anyone who has ever spent time at RYF meetings knows that we never come to decisions easily. We are a diverse group of people, each holding our own opinions. Over the course of our grant proposal review process, we each became passionate about one or more of the organizations we site visited. RYF works in consensus, which makes decisions even more elusive. Everyone must agree with each decision made. We put so much work into everything we do because we understand that we can make a large impact; not just with our grants but also because the messages we

Get Involved

Rose Youth Foundation is accepting applications from Jewish and interfaith-Jewish teens who will be in grades 10 – 12 in 2012-13. Members work together for eight months to identify issues facing our communities, set grant priorities, evaluate prospective grantees and make grants that reflect what it means to give in a primarily Jewish way. The online application and more information is available at RCFdenver.org/RYPF, or contact Sarah Indyk at 303.398.7416 or sindyk@RCFdenver.org.

2012-13 Rose Youth Foundation Members

Noa Baumgarten
Madeline Booth
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Elliot Eisen
Paris Franklin
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Yoni Rabinovitch
Samuel Reiff
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Rachel Rockford
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Josh Rubin
Lior Schinagel
Lauren Schusterman
Sarah Senkfor
Blake Sidon
Olivia Solow-Niederman
Dash Sperling
Jamie Spitz
Cale Wagner

Staff

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

Welcoming and Supporting Refugees

By Dash Sperling - senior at Denver Jewish Day School

To support an individual in changing his or her life is satisfying, but to positively impact a whole family – or even a community – is truly a life-changing experience.

This year, I found myself fascinated – as did many of my fellow RYPF members – with aiding refugees. This arose from our deep connection to the Jewish people's history. For centuries, Jews could not find refuge in any sphere or population. Refugees today have faced a similar situation. These individuals flee their homes due to political persecution, war, humanitarian violations or natural disasters and attempt to make a home in a new, foreign culture. We also felt compelled to establish this priority due to our adherence to Maimonides' ladder of *tzedakah*, teachings about how to best give charitable resources in an honorable, Jewish manner.



Members of Rose Youth Foundation brainstorm together.



Rose Youth Foundation members excitedly share their ideas.

Maimonides' teaching that there is no form of *tzedakah* above that which helps the recipient to become self-sufficient resonated with us.

Our aim was to support nonprofit organizations that provide refugees with the skills they need to thrive in the Denver community. We learned that English as a Second Language classes, job training and cultural education could help to smooth the course of refugees working to adapt to life in a new place. Our grants will help organizations serving refugees in Denver welcome them with supportive arms.

Supporting Refugees in Adapting to Life in Greater Denver and Boulder and Becoming Self-Sufficient

African Community Center (Denver): \$6,300 to support a summer college readiness, leadership development and community service program for refugee youth.

Colorado African Organization (Denver): \$6,000 to support onsite babysitting during adult English as a Second Language and citizenship education classes.

Ecumenical Refugee and Immigrant Services (Denver): \$6,000 to support a job placement and computer literacy program for refugees.

Jewish Family Service of Colorado (Denver): \$5,000 to support English as a Second Language classes, a citizenship training program and case management for refugees.

Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains (Denver): \$5,770 to support job training and placement for refugees.

Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning (Denver): \$5,400 to train refugee youth as health educators and health navigators for refugee elders.

Engaging Youth in Jewish Life: A Priority I Could Relate to

By Paris Morwood Franklin - junior at Pomona High School

Most of my life I didn't have a strong connection to Judaism. As I entered high school, I was looking for new things to explore. I wasn't actively looking for a Jewish extracurricular activity, but when I heard about RYF, it allowed me to be swept away on the journey of a lifetime.

Sitting around the boardroom table and being able to grant \$60,000 in order to help others was the most rewarding experience I have ever had. As a group, we decided on three issues we felt affected those in the Greater Denver and Boulder community. I was far from an expert

on anything related to teens being involved in Judaism, and that's why our Jewish youth engagement priority stood out to me. We wanted to help keep teenagers involved in Judaism – something most of us had struggled with in our own lives.

While RYF was my only Jewish activity, after reading grant proposals and attending site visits for a few organizations, my eyes were opened. Not only did I get the chance to learn about other opportunities for Jewish teens, but RYF itself gave me a place to feel welcomed into the Jewish community. More importantly, RYF



Paris Franklin presents a grant check to Jewish Student Connection.

gave me the opportunity to help others I could relate to in more ways than I could have possibly imagined.

Inspiring Jewish Youth to Become Involved and Stay Involved in Jewish Life

Ekar Farm (Denver): \$3,230 to create a youth-planned and led day of Jewish learning and environmental activism in celebration of Earth Day 2014.

Jewish Student Connection (Denver): \$4,000 to support expansion of Jewish Student Connection clubs to two high schools in Boulder.

Jewish Youth Professionals Council (Denver): \$5,300 to support a community-wide teen Shabbaton and teen council. Jewish Student Connection serves as fiscal sponsor.

Temple Sinai (Denver): \$7,000 to create a cross-communal leadership development and community service teen program for 11th and 12th graders, in partnership with The Denver Synagogue at BMH-BJ, Hebrew Educational Alliance and Temple Emanuel.

Making a Difference: Supporting Teen Mental Health

By Yoni Rabinovitch - senior at Denver Academy of Torah High School

This year, Rose Youth Foundation made a difference in the area of mental health by supporting people suffering from mental illness. We chose to focus on teenagers since – as teens ourselves – we could most relate to what they were going through.

We spent time learning about *tzedakah*, charity inspired by the pursuit of justice, and how it is more nuanced than simply giving money to the financially poor. We interpreted *tzedakah* to mean giving that

not only supports a person financially but that also supports physical, emotional and mental well-being. Based on these new insights, we determined that improving the mental health of our peers was a wonderful way to fulfill this Jewish teaching by offering support in numerous ways besides basic financial assistance.

My peers and I are confident that our grants will not only help the well-being of teens in need, but may also serve to help save teens' lives.

Supporting Teen Mental Health

Jewish Family Service (Denver): \$3,000 to fund the KidSuccess program to provide mental health counseling in public high schools.

Second Wind Fund (Denver): \$3,000 to support operations in the seven-county Metro Denver area for this organization in their work to provide suicide prevention counseling to teenagers.



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Ensure our youngest leaders will continue to shape our community.

In 2011, Rose Community Foundation began a campaign to endow Rose Youth Foundation. Thanks to many generous donors, more than \$900,000 has been raised toward our goal of \$2 million. An endowment for Rose Youth Foundation will mean that future generations of young Jewish people will have the chance to 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 Margie Gart, director of philanthropic services, at 303.398.7442 or mgart@RCFdenver.org.

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send with our grant priorities demonstrate what is important to teens today.

Every time I go to an RYF meeting, I get to experience something amazing. I become a part of a group of Jewish teens who, like me, have a passion for making a difference in our community. What I learned from Rose is that not every decision is an easy one. There is not always an organization that is more deserving than another, just like in college admissions where there may be two equally qualified applicants.

Good Jewish philanthropy takes time, a lot of planning and forethought. As a group, we looked to Jewish texts for guidance and used our knowledge and experience to identify pressing problems in the community. We then dug deeper into the problems to determine where our money could best be allocated to in order to make the largest impact possible.

Especially when working in a group like RYF, you must be willing to fight for organizations that you are passionate about, but also willing to listen to others who have different opinions and ideas that they believe will bring about the biggest change.

Because of my experience with RYF, I no longer imagine an old man alone at a desk reading and denying my application. Instead, I hope that the schools I applied to operate in a similar way to RYF. I hope that their admissions officers are united with a goal and are as passionate as the 23 Jewish teens who sit around the board room table at Rose Community Foundation on Sunday nights. I imagine them each fighting for different applicants; making compromises only after they have discussed every option fully and weighed each decision in order to make the biggest difference in their communities — just like us.



ROSE YOUTH
FOUNDATION

Jewish Youth Making a Difference
Report to the Community
2013