

The Jewish Women's Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago  
Grants Awarded December 2008

**Economic Security/Legal Reform for Women & Girls**

**Alternativa Laboral: Employment and Empowerment for Unemployed Immigrant Single Mothers:** This innovative project helps new Latin American immigrant single mothers in Israel find suitable employment and achieve economic self-sufficiency. Program participants receive job training and education on their rights in the workplace as well as ongoing support to help them move up the economic ladder. Women are encouraged to form mutual support networks with other program participants and develop creative solutions to challenges such as child care and transportation. **Grant Amount: \$7,500**

**Economic Empowerment for Women (EEW): Marathon Business Weekend for Micro Entrepreneurs:** EEW's programs help low-income and poor women in Israel improve their economic situation by empowering them with the knowledge, skills, and tools needed to begin and operate their own microenterprises. Under this project, women business owners will participate in EEW's *Access to Market* program, which offers advanced marketing and business training. These workshops will assist women who have existing microenterprises grow their businesses to the next level and generate more income through outreach to new consumers and markets. **Renewal Grant Amount: \$10,000**

**Hotline for Migrant Workers (HMW): Trafficking of Israeli Women:** This project works to stop the trafficking of Israeli women as workers in the sex industry in Israel and abroad. The HMW provides advocacy and support to victims, follows-up with the police to ensure that identified traffickers are prosecuted, and trains police on how to identify victims of trafficking and enforce anti-trafficking laws. Efforts undertaken through this project will help free women from sexual slavery and link them to appropriate legal and supportive services. **Renewal Grant Amount: \$7,000**

**Itach-Women Lawyers for Social Justice: Turn up the Volume:** Itach works to promote social justice for low-income Israeli women through case-law and advocacy. Under this project, Itach will represent women in court cases addressing issues such as employment benefits, childcare protection, and proper housing. Itach lawyers will also advocate for women's rights in the Knesset by submitting petitions on issues such as due process for housing and welfare. Activities undertaken through this project will help uphold the fundamental rights of disenfranchised women through policy advocacy and reform. **Renewal Grant Amount: \$10,000**

**Mavoi Satum: The Alternative Beit Din Campaign:** This project works to address the plight of *agunot* and *mesuravot get* (Israeli women whose husbands refuse to give them a divorce - "get"), by targeting the male dominated ultra-Orthodox beit din (religious court). The goal of this project is to establish a forum of lay leaders, legislators, rabbis and public personalities to lay the foundations for the creation of a beit din that is an alternative to the State backed court. These efforts will simultaneously place pressure on the current beit din to change its ways. This project works to promote broad legal reform and improve the status of married women in Israel. **Renewal Grant Amount: \$16,000**

**WePower: Training Courses for Women Candidates:** WePower works to empower Israeli women to take active leadership roles at the local and national levels. Under this project, WePower will provide training courses for women throughout Israel with the goal of empowering them to reach their political potential and acquire the tools necessary for success in the political arena. This project will bring about social change by increasing the number of women in leadership and decision making roles. **Grant Amount: \$10,000**

**Women's Business Development Center (WBDC): WBDC Advocacy:** The advocacy done by the WBDC is focused on promoting economic opportunities for women business owners in Illinois. This project is committed to: increasing access to business training and support; leveraging funding for women's business assistance programs; conducting disparity studies to identify women's business program goals in the City of Chicago and State of Illinois; and helping units of government implement best practices in diversity. This work will help increase economic opportunities and options for women and promote positive policy changes inside government institutions. **Renewal Grant Amount: \$8,000**

**Yad L'Isha: The Yad L'Isha Legal Aid Center and Hotline:** The Yad L'Isha Legal Aid Center advocates assist destitute Israeli agunot secure a get (divorce) by providing them with expert legal representation in the rabbinic courts. The women served are secular, orthodox and traditional, and more than 50% are seeking a divorce as a result of violence or sexual abuse. The advocates also work to raise awareness on the plight of the aguna, promote legislative reform, and set legal precedents in the civil courts. This project will work in the political, legislative and religious spheres to bring about long-lasting social change. **Renewal Grant Amount: \$10,000**

**YEDID- The Association for Community Empowerment: Bread and Roses: Protecting Women from Workplace Abuse:** Yedid works to protect Israeli women from workplace abuse through legislative reform, community organizing, and education. Under this project, Yedid will: provide women with individual assistance when their rights have been violated, organize employees to stand up to unfair employment practices, and advance national policy initiatives to ensure safe and humane working environments. This work will help improve the economic status of Israeli women and promote policy reform. **Grant Amount: \$8,500**

## **Education/Leadership Development for Women & Girls**

**Ida Crown Jewish Academy (ICJA): Girl Speak Up:** Girl Speak Up is an after school program targeting 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade girls from the day schools in Chicago's Orthodox community. The mission of this project is to build resiliency in Jewish girls through establishment and reinforcement of positive attitudes and beliefs. During facilitator-led sessions, girls will discuss pressing issues such as peer relationships and stress management. This project will help foster positive and productive communication skills while creating a safe place for girls to speak honestly and openly about their thoughts, feelings, and the world around them. **Renewal Grant Amount: \$20,000**

**Nishmah: The St. Louis Jewish Women's Project: Banot Buddies:** Nishmah is an organization that promotes and enriches the lives of women and girls in the St. Louis Jewish community. The Banot Buddies project will pair pre-middle school girls with older teenage girls for community service projects that exemplify Jewish values. Under this project, the older girls serve as mentors and role models to the younger girls, and foster their leadership skills by implementing service projects. Girls who participate in this project will benefit by having positive experiences that promote leadership, self-esteem and a life-long interest in Jewish ideals. **Grant Amount: \$2,500**

**PANIM: The Institute for Jewish Leadership and Values: Panim el Panim Seminar for Girls:** Panim's flagship 4-day youth leadership program teaches teen girls about public policy and social activism through a Jewish lens. The goal is to create a personalized program for girls that incorporates Jewish values and equips participants with the tools and techniques needed to become effective players in advocating for social change throughout their lifetimes. Under this project, Chicago-area girls will participate in a weekend of learning in Washington, D.C. Girls will hear from policy experts and will gain experience lobbying for a cause related to

women's issues. Through this program girls will take a hands-on approach to integrating public policy, social responsibility and Judaism. **Grant Amount: \$12,000**

## **Health & Well-Being for Women & Girls**

**Asociacion Civil de Prevencion de la Violencia Familiar, Shalom Bait: *Pursuing Justice, the Law as a Tool of Change***: Shalom Bait is the only Jewish organization working directly to meet the needs of Jewish victims of domestic violence in Argentina. Under this project, victims of domestic violence within the Buenos Aires Jewish community will be provided with legal assistance as they engage in legal battles against their abusers. Shalom Bait staff will also work to increase community awareness, train professionals in the community on how to intervene in cases involving domestic violence, and engage in advocacy efforts to change the outdated domestic violence law in Argentina. This project will work to break the silence surrounding domestic violence and promote and protect the rights of victims. **Grant Amount: \$17,000**

**Jewish Community Abuse Resources, Education and Solutions (JCARES): *JCARES***: JCARES is a coalition of more than 49 Jewish and secular organizations in the Chicagoland area working to increase effective Jewish community-wide responses to domestic violence. This coalition collaboratively creates, supports and influences initiatives and policies to prevent, address and respond to abuse in the Jewish community. JCARES represents a broad cross section of Jewish and secular social service agencies including SHALVA, the Response Center, Jewish Child and Family Services, CJE Senior Life, and the Mayor's Office on Domestic Violence. JCARES is a vital collaboration that creates initiatives and policies to prevent, address and respond to abuse in Chicagoland Jewish homes. **Renewal Grant Amount: \$10,000**

**Jewish Child and Family Services (JCFS): *Responding to Eating Disorders in the Jewish Community***: This project assists individuals in Chicago affected by eating disorders through counseling, support, and linkage to services. Under this project, clinical and non-clinical staff from JCFS (Chicagoland's largest Jewish social service agency) will receive training on how to recognize, diagnose and treat eating disorders. A Parent Support Group will also be developed to help parents learn strategies they can use to assist their children in their struggle. This project will help increase JCFS' proficiency in identifying and treating eating disorders, and will work to promote positive and healthy choices for women and girls. **Renewal Grant Amount: \$12,750**

**SHALVA: *Legal Liaison Program***: SHALVA is the oldest, independent Jewish domestic violence agency in the United States, and works to address domestic abuse in Chicago Jewish homes and families through counseling and education. As part of this innovative project, SHALVA will hire an attorney (legal liaison) to assist clients who are engaged in lengthy and frustrating legal battles with the men who abused them. The legal liaison will help SHALVA's clients better understand the complicated legal process and facilitate communication with their attorneys. The legal liaison will also work to identify and recruit attorneys who are willing to provide pro bono or affordable legal representation for SHALVA's clients. This project will help promote the long-term safety of women impacted by domestic abuse. **Grant Amount: \$19,000**

**Total Grants Awarded: \$180,250**