

The Jewish Women's Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago Grants Awarded December 2009

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 job placement and ongoing support to help them move up the economic ladder. Women are also encouraged to form mutual support networks with other program participants and develop creative solutions to challenges such as child care and transportation. **Renewal Grant Amount: \$10,000**

Economic Empowerment for Women (EEW): Business Weekends for Micro Entrepreneurs: The goal of EEW's Business Weekend is to help low income and poor women in Israel improve their economic situation by empowering them with the knowledge, skills and tools necessary to develop and grow their own microenterprises. The Business Weekends provide two days of intensive business seminars, networking, and personal empowerment workshops, and will reach women with both "high profile" and "low profile" businesses. This project works to promote long-term economic security by giving women entrepreneurs the necessary tools to take their businesses to the next level. **Renewal Grant Amount: \$10,000**

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 represents women in precedent setting court cases in the areas of employment, welfare, and housing rights. Itach lawyers also advocate for women's rights in the Knesset by submitting petitions on issues such as equal representation for women on government committees. Activities undertaken through this project help uphold the fundamental rights of disenfranchised women through policy advocacy and reform. **Renewal Grant Amount: \$9,000**

Jewish Child and Family Services (JCFS): Help for Jewish Women Affected by the Economic Crisis: Serving clients at JCFS' Chicagoland North Suburban and Northwest Suburban Offices, this program provides education, linkage, and support to Jewish women who are experiencing financial problems due to the economic crisis. Under this program, women meet with a Financial Assistance Case Manager for one-on-one financial counseling, education, and support. The Case Manager helps women set a household budget and assess their assets and income, and provides appropriate linkages to other community or government services. This program assists local Jewish women address their immediate financial needs and plan for long-term economic stability. **Grant Amount: \$15,000**

Jewish Vocational Service (JVS): Jewish Women's Small Business Boot Camp: Under this project JVS will offer specially tailored CORE FOUR® Business Planning training programs to Jewish women in the Chicago area with the goal of helping them develop their own microenterprises. These Women's Small Business Boot Camps help women enhance their knowledge of key business education components including: success planning, market planning, cash flow planning, and operations planning, and promote networking among the participants. This program provides opportunities for women to increase their earning potential and achieve long-term economic self-sufficiency. **Grant Amount: \$10,000**

Project Keshet: Building a Jewish Legacy: Supporting a Process for Addressing the Needs of Women in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Kazakhstan: The goal of Project Keshet's work is to create overarching strategies for improving conditions for Jewish women and girls in the Former Soviet Union (FSU) through community-based education and advocacy. In 2010, Project Keshet will continue to develop a growing group of female leaders in the Jewish community and expand their impact and activism. This grant supports

travel for these female leaders from throughout the FSU to attend leadership development meetings and national and international conferences on topics such as women's health, domestic violence, and human trafficking. This project ensures that women advocates are at decision-making tables and therefore able to take an active role in promoting policy reform. **Renewal Grant Amount: \$7,500**

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 3-year pilot project, SHALVA hired an attorney (Legal Liaison) to assist clients who are engaged in frustrating legal battles with the men who abused them. The Legal Liaison helps SHALVA's clients better understand the complicated legal process and facilitates communication with their attorneys. The Legal Liaison also works to identify and recruit attorneys who will provide pro bono legal representation for SHALVA's clients. By providing crucial post-separation assistance, this project promotes the long-term safety of women impacted by domestic abuse. **Renewal Grant Amount: \$20,000**

Women's Business Development Center (WBDC): Advocacy: The advocacy conducted by the WBDC is focused on promoting economic opportunities for women business owners in Illinois. This project is committed to: leveraging funding for women's businesses; ensuring that the City of Chicago, Cook County and State of Illinois award contracts to women business owners, and helping government departments implement best practices in diversity. This project works to increase economic opportunities for women by advocating for policy changes inside government institutions. **Renewal Grant Amount: \$9,700**

Yad L'Isha: The Yad L'Isha Legal Aid Center and Hotline: The Yad L'Isha Legal Aid Center advocates assist destitute Israeli *agunot* (women whose husbands refuse to grant them a divorce) 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 due to 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 works in the political, legislative and religious spheres to bring about lasting social change. **Renewal Grant Amount: \$10,000**

Education/Leadership Development for Women & Girls

American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC): Girls' Space: This pilot program promotes leadership skills among teenage girls and creates safe spaces for girls within junior high and high schools throughout Israel. As part of this project, older girls (10th – 12th graders) serve as mentors to younger at-risk girls (7th – 9th graders). The older girls plan and implement educational programs on topics such as body image and nutrition and coordinate social service days with the younger girls. Israel's Ministry of Education is an active partner in this pilot, and the program is overseen by a trained teacher within each school. This program seeks to empower teenage girls through leadership training, while simultaneously reducing common risk factors of girls in need. **Grant Amount: \$20,000**

National Council of Jewish Women, Chicago North Shore Section (NCJW): Young Women's Leadership and Advocacy Project: This program engages young Chicagoland Jewish women (ages 18-35) in advocating for systemic change to societal problems at the local, state, and federal levels. An Outreach Coordinator works to recruit women to attend at least one of four educational and skills-based training sessions. The young women then work together to set their own advocacy agenda and identify ways to address pressing topics such as domestic violence, health care, economic justice, and human trafficking. The women will engage in advocacy actions throughout the year including: on-line engagement, visits to elected officials, letter writing and petition campaigns, and joining advocacy coalitions. This program works to create a cadre of engaged young women who are future leaders within the Chicago Jewish community. **Grant Amount: \$5,200**

Health & Well-Being for Women & Girls

The Association of Rape Crisis Centers in Israel (ARCCI): *Legal Counseling and Representation of Victims of Sex Crimes*: ARCCI is a supervisory organization representing the nine Rape Crisis Centers (RCCs) located throughout Israel. The goal of this program is to train lawyers and law students to provide legal advice and/or representation to victims of sex crimes and offer on-going legal consultation to the RCCs. After completion of the training, the lawyers and law students will volunteer their time to work with victims to ensure that they are informed about their legal rights and options. This program responds to the need for sensitive and free legal assistance for victims of sexual violence, and helps ensure that victims obtain the justice they deserve. **Grant Amount: \$6,000**

B'shvilaych Women's Health Organization: *The Israel Breast Health Awareness Program: Your Health is in Your Hands*: This program increases knowledge about breast cancer, and provides an opportunity for Orthodox women from several underprivileged, religious communities throughout Israel to receive a clinical breast exam (CBE). Under this project, B'shvilaych staff provides culturally sensitive proficiency training for female doctors on CBEs in each of the selected community areas. Educational workshops, which educate women on breast cancer, genetic testing, and how to complete a self breast exam, are also provided in each community. After the completion of these workshops, women are given the opportunity to receive a CBE by one of the trained female doctors. This program works to increase access to breast examinations among religious women, and promotes on-going preventative care. **Grant Amount: \$17,600**

Jewish Community Abuse Resources, Education and Solutions (JCARES): *JCARES*: JCARES is a coalition consisting of 56 Jewish and secular organizations in the Chicagoland area working to increase effective Jewish community-wide responses to domestic abuse. JCARES represents a broad cross section of Jewish and secular agencies including SHALVA, the Response Center, Jewish Child and Family Services, CJE Senior Life, and the Mayor's Office on Domestic Violence. In 2010, JCARES will continue to focus on education, advocacy and outreach efforts, and promote initiatives that prevent, address and respond to abuse in Chicagoland Jewish homes. **Renewal Grant Amount: \$10,000**

Shalom Bait, Asociacion Civil de Prevencion de la Violencia Familiar: *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 are provided with legal assistance as they engage in legal battles against their abusers. Shalom Bait staff also works to increase community awareness, train professionals in the community on how to intervene in cases involving domestic violence, and engages in advocacy efforts to enforce and strengthen the domestic violence laws in Argentina. This project works to break the silence surrounding domestic violence and promotes and protects the rights of victims. **Renewal Grant Amount: \$20,000**

Total Grants Awarded: \$180,000