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**Jim Joseph Foundation Announces \$33 Million in Grants
to HUC, YU and JTS to Advance Jewish Education**

*Historic investment will increase number and quality of Jewish educators
in both traditional and experiential education*

San Francisco, CA – As part of a continued concentrated effort to increase the number of credentialed future Jewish educators and to improve the quality of professional preparation and Jewish education they receive, the Jim Joseph Foundation (JJF) today announced that \$33 million in grants have been awarded to the three leading training institutions for Jewish educators. With these grants, JJF has now gifted a total of nearly a quarter of a billion dollars to Jewish education and Jewish youth causes since it was established in 2006 as a private foundation.

The \$33 million in grants JJF awarded will support The Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS), Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC), and Yeshiva University (YU). JJF gave the three institutions an initial \$12 million of this funding in September 2009, at a time when the institutions had been hard hit by the economic recession. These initial grants marked the beginning of what the Foundation envisioned would be multi-year investments and a partnership between the Foundation and the three institutions. The funding provides financial aid for students pursuing education degrees or certification in programs that prepare them to work with Jewish youth and young adults. The grants will also assist each institution in planning, staffing and implementing new and enhanced programs designed to attract more educators to the field.

“The investment in these training institutions directly addresses the future of Jewish education and is a partnership that will greatly advance this cause,” says foundation President Al Levitt. “We care deeply about the future of Jewish life in this country. This partnership should have a significant impact on the number of future Jewish educators and the skills they will bring to their professions. With the help of these grants, we know the institutions can reach their full potential and produce teachers who continue to positively shape the lives of Jewish youth.”

Rabbi David Ellenson, President of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, states, “We are enormously grateful to the Jim Joseph Foundation for this historic, potentially transformative gift to advance the training of Jewish educators at HUC, which will enable us to recruit larger numbers of talented and motivated individuals, provide them with the necessary depth of knowledge, and nurture their creativity and aspirations so that they may serve the growing educational needs of the Jewish community. We are honored that our institution has been chosen to strengthen the crucial role of Jewish

educators in ensuring the vitality of Jewish identity, practice, and values through *shalsholet haKabbalah* -- the chain of Jewish teaching and learning.”

It is projected that more than 1,000 new educators will graduate from the institutions during the grant period in a variety of doctoral, master’s, and certificate programs. Many of the educators will graduate from programs designed to prepare them to work with teens and young adults. Particular emphasis at the institutions is being placed on early childhood education and informal or “experiential” education, which focuses on such areas as camping, Israel trips and immersive learning.

“We are humbled by both the challenge and the profound sense of purpose that this historic investment represents,” adds Richard Joel, President of Yeshiva University. “The Jim Joseph Foundation’s continued investment and partnership ensures that the community’s focus remains laser-like on the centrality of Jewish education.”

The grants also present a unique opportunity for collaboration and partnership among the three institutions. Two areas of shared interest the institutions have identified are the advancement of new technologies for distance learning and the marketing of Jewish education as a desirable professional career. The three institutions will work to foster best practices, and they have committed to collaborate on projects when possible to ensure creative new directions to the education of future Jewish educators.

“The unprecedented degree of partnership among JTS, HUC, and YU that the Jim Joseph Foundation has fostered is a historic development of major importance,” says Dr. Arnold Eisen, Chancellor of The Jewish Theological Seminary. “The future of American Jewry in large part depends on the quality and quantity of visionary Jewish educators. Finding and training a dramatically increased number of such educators is a challenge we all face. As a result of the Jim Joseph Foundation, JTS, HUC, and YU are working together as never before with a shared goal and a clear understanding of what we can, should, and must do together, and where we must proceed on parallel and separate tracks. It is truly a moment of unique promise for each of our institutions and for the entire Jewish community.”

Of note for JTS is the launch of an ambitious program that will allow all students in its William Davidson Graduate School of Education to spend a full academic semester in Israel. Currently at JTS, only rabbinical and cantorial students have had the opportunity to spend extensive time in Israel.

The Shimon Ben Joseph Foundation, commonly known as the Jim Joseph Foundation, is committed to the legacy of its founder, Jim Joseph, z”l, devoted exclusively to supporting education of Jewish youth in the United States. Jim Joseph was a dedicated Jewish philanthropist who cared passionately about the education of Jewish children, youth, and young adults. He believed that focusing on young people was the best way to preserve a strong Jewish faith and proud heritage, thereby ensuring success of the Jewish people for the future.

After completing his master's degree at the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, Jim Joseph began a highly successful career acquiring and developing commercial and residential property for his company, Interland Corporation. As he built his business, Joseph donated generously to a wide variety of Jewish institutions and organizations and formed the Jim Joseph Foundation in 1987. Mr. Joseph passed away December 19, 2003 and was buried by his family in the Jewish tradition in Israel.

The Foundation's Board of Directors and its foundation professionals are building on the philanthropic mission that Jim Joseph pursued – to foster compelling, effective learning experiences for young Jews in the United States. In accordance with Mr. Joseph's view, the Foundation recognizes that Jewish learning takes place in a multitude of settings, including but not limited to day schools, camps, youth groups, congregations, college campuses, service learning experiences, community centers, and the like.

The quarter of a billion dollars gifted since 2006 has gone to an array of institutions and organizations that cover a multitude of settings, including Jewish day school and religious schools, camps, youth groups, and Israel programs - including Birthright Israel and its follow-up program Birthright NEXT. The Foundation has also generously funded teacher training, education and recruitment, service learning, and incubator programs such as the Foundation for Jewish Camp's Specialty Camps Incubator, which was designed to provide expertise and support to a cohort of entrepreneurs as they plan and implement their vision for new models of non-profit, Jewish specialty camps in non-traditional settings.

Among the largest and highest profile gifts the Jim Joseph Foundation has awarded over the past four years was to B'nai Brith Youth Organization for their professional development institute; Birthright Israel Foundation to establish Birthright NEXT; to Hillel for its Campus Entrepreneur/Senior Educator initiative; and to the Israel Education Resource Center to develop their pre-college education center. The Foundation has also supported considerable research in the field.

And just last week, Stanford University received \$12 million to renew and expand its doctoral concentration in Education and Jewish Studies and to establish the Jim Joseph Professorship in Education and Jewish Studies. Stanford University is now the second research institution in the country, along with NYU to offer this type of doctoral degree. NYU's program also receives funding from JJF.

“At a time when the economic downturn is reducing funds available for Jewish education, the new funding being made available by the Jim Joseph foundation is particularly important,” Jonathan Sarna, Joseph H. & Belle R. Braun Professor of American Jewish history at Brandeis University observes. “The \$250 million that the foundation has poured into Jewish education and Jewish youth since 2006 should help to make the generation of Jews now coming of age in the United States better educated, Jewishly speaking, than any native-born generation of Jews since America's founding.”

Adds Executive Director Chip Edelsberg: “The Jim Joseph Foundation is confident that partnering with these institutions is an effective way to impact the next generation of Jews. The foundation’s first four years of grant making represent significant investments in both established institutions and newer organizations - indicative of JJF’s commitment to support Jewish youth and young adults in myriad educational settings. JJF Directors deeply value preparing, credentialing and developing professional educators. The Board also generously supports organizations that enable individuals to have immersive Jewish learning experiences. The Foundation believes this approach to its philanthropy will help to create multiple pathways to a vibrant Jewish future.”

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