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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tikkun Olam Women's Foundation Gives \$130,000 to Organizations in DC and Israel; Grants to Provide Education, Advocacy Training and Economic Empowerment for Women and Girls

TOWF Bucks Stagnant Trend of Grant Allocations, Adds New Members

Rockville, MD – The Tikkun Olam Women’s Foundation of Greater Washington (TOWF) awarded a record \$130,000 in grants to 11 organizations in the DC area and in Israel. In seven years, TOWF has granted more than half a million dollars to organizations making a positive difference in the lives of women and girls. This year, TOWF also successfully launched a new member recruitment campaign, which has been critical to the strength of our grantmaking.

“Despite the fact that giving by Foundations nationally has remained unchanged or even decreased again in 2012, we are proud to continue to increase our giving year after year,” said Sara Gorfinkel, Director of the Foundation. “Our 15 new members have added resources and energy to this already dynamic and diverse group of Jewish women, bringing fresh perspective and new ideas to the table.”

TOWF’s grant recipients address prevalent issues affecting women and girls locally and in Israel. Programs include leadership and professional development training, positive body image work, economic empowerment through small business entrepreneurship training, advocacy for women’s rights during a Jewish divorce, abusive relationship prevention through teen education, and domestic worker abuse advocacy and education. “These programs advocate for women’s empowerment, on a personal level and at a grassroots and community organizing level,” explains Carol Feder, The Foundation’s Chair.

One \$60,000 grant (over two years) made to the Jewish Coalition Against Domestic Abuse (JCADA), provides a teen dating awareness and violence prevention educational program at schools, camps, synagogues and youth groups. “Without Tikkun Olam Women’s Foundation’s continued support, our prevention program would not be what it is today,” says Elissa Schwartz, Executive Director of JCADA. “This year, their grant enabled us to expand the reach of our program, teaching many more teens what it means to be in a healthy relationship.”

The Tikkun Olam Women’s Foundation is the only Jewish giving vehicle in the Greater Washington area that offers women a voice and a vote in supporting causes that impact the lives of women and girls. They achieve this by pooling their charitable donations and then, together, deciding how to allocate funds.

Detailed grant allocation information is listed below. For more information about joining or supporting the Tikkun Olam Women's Foundation of Greater Washington, please visit www.towf.org or contact Sara Gorfinkel, Director, at (301) 348-7376, or sara@towf.org.

2011-2012 TOTAL GRANT ALLOCATIONS: \$130,000

LOCAL PROGRAMS -JEWISH WOMEN & GIRLS

[Adas Israel Community Mikvah](#) (\$5,000)

Into the Depths: Introducing Mikvah as a Tool for Positive Body Image – This program enables girls and their mothers to explore an ancient practice of the mikvah through a 21st century lens. Participants engage in a Jewish framework of healthy decision making regarding their bodies and gain knowledge and skills to practice ritual immersion as a tool for positive body image.

[AVODAH](#) (\$10,000)

Jewish Women's Professional and Leadership Development Institute – This new program addition aims to train current AVODAH corps members to understand the root causes of gender inequity, increase their connection to social justice within and beyond the Jewish community, and provide access to female professional role models through mentoring relationships between these young women and established female leaders.

[Jewish Coalition Against Domestic Abuse \(JCADA\)](#) (\$30,000)

"It's Not Love" – The second year of a two-year grant will continue to fund a full-time program director to expand JCADA's teen dating awareness and violence prevention educational program. The program provides teens with the tools necessary to make healthy decisions about dating and other relationships, and parents and educators with steps to identify a teen in need of support.

[Organization for the Resolution of Agunot](#) (\$12,000)

Agunah Prevention Program – This educational programming for high school and college students in the DC area focuses on the protection of women in Jewish divorces in accordance with Jewish law and advocates preventative measures through signing a pre-nuptial agreement that specifies the peaceful giving of a get in the event of a divorce. The program empowers participants to protect themselves through the marriage process and serve as advocates within their communities.

LOCAL PROGRAMS—LOW-INCOME IMMIGRANT WOMEN

[A Wider Circle](#) (\$10,000)

Well Mother, Well Baby – Comprehensive educational program preparing low-income pregnant and parenting adolescents for a healthy pregnancy, healthy birth and long-term responsibility of caring for themselves and their children. This program aims to 'break the cycle' of poverty within low-income teenage families.

[CASA de Maryland](#) (\$6,000)

Domestic Worker Outreach and Education Project – This project continues outreach and education for domestic workers employed by diplomats, as embassy employees, media, and other stakeholders to reduce domestic worker abuse.

Empowered Women International (\$12,000)

Entrepreneur Training for Success – Program mentors immigrant, refugee, and low-income women in the DC metro area by providing business and marketing training and product development assistance to launch and sustain businesses in the arts and cultural industries.

ISRAEL PROGRAMS

Economic Empowerment for Women (EEW) (\$10,000)

Building Assets Through Small Business and Savings – This program increases the financial stability of existing micro enterprises. The grant provides business training and long term support; fosters and promotes savings among low-income women in order to prepare for the future and ensure economic stability; and fosters financial empowerment among women entrepreneurs.

Mahut Center (\$10,000)

Women, Age and Employment – This project advocates for enforcement of the Equal Opportunity Laws in Israel and fights against ageism for the inclusion of socio-economically marginalized women over 40 in the employment market. Working in coalition with employers, unions and government, Mahut Center advocates for allocation of state funds for the development of programs designed to expand employment opportunities of older women. Finally, this project raises awareness and opens public discourse on gender and age-based discrimination in employment and on the importance of a multi-aged work-force.

Mavoi Satum: The Association for Rights of Agunot and Mesoravot Get (women denied a religious divorce) (\$10,000)

Sign and Wed Prenuptial Center and Campaign – This project ensures the operation of private rabbinical courts so that women will be able to marry and divorce while protecting their rights. In addition, it provides couples with the option to sign a legally binding prenuptial agreement enabling the couple to reach a fair and just divorce settlement. Mavoi Satum campaigns to raise awareness and promote the widespread signing of prenuptial agreements and the option of egalitarian orthodox divorces through private rabbinic courts.

WePower (\$15,000)

Young Women for Future Leadership – This grant will fund a program aimed at building Israel's next generation of women leaders by training young motivated women activists in the municipal/public arena and encouraging them to enhance gender social justice to the benefit of women and girls in their communities.

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The Tikkun Olam Women's Foundation of Greater Washington provides a vehicle through which Jewish women can support causes that result in lasting impact on the lives of women and girls. It gives women a vehicle for expressing their Jewish identity and for developing a more informed Jewish philanthropic response to women's issues. The Tikkun Olam Women's Foundation is an independent project of the United Jewish Endowment Fund and The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington.