

## B'nai Tzedek Young Philanthropy Grant Program

### **PROJECT TITLE: Jewish Student Union**

#### **I. Proposal Summary (Executive Summary) for use on ballot.**

*The Proposal Summary should be about one paragraph of 1-3 sentences and should include the most general description of the use that will be made of the funds. Be concise and compelling, your readers are age 13-32.*

The Jewish Student Union program would use these much needed funds to continue its efforts to empower Jewish students in local public schools of all backgrounds and affiliations to be proud of their Judaism. We would use funds to continue funding our growing clubs in Stanton College Preparatory School and Atlantic Coast High School and open more clubs. The funds would be used to host events and co-sponsor collaborative events together with local youth programs the students are involved in.

#### **II. Project Description (Program Narrative)**

##### **What is the problem or need you are trying to address and how will you do it?**

##### **Do your best to keep this document to 1 page.**

This section *should provide the reader with an* explanation of the problem or need the program will address as well as who and how many people will be impacted by this funding. Remember funding is over 3 years in the amount of \$5,000 per year, totaling \$15,000.

The Pew Research Center's study "A Portrait of American Jews" paints a very scary picture of where American Jewry and its identity is heading. The younger generations are becoming more and more distant from Jewish identity of any kind. Anti-Semitism and Anti-Zionism is spreading and becoming more rampant in the public school system. A student told me that she attended the Bolles Middle School and was faced with Anti-Semitic bullying but didn't know how to stand up for her Judaism so never reported it.

Jewish Student Union was started with a simple mission – to connect, inspire and empower Jewish teens and public and community day schools to develop a positive Jewish identity. Over time we have noticed that our programs have helped Jewish students connect with their Judaism, with the Jewish people and with each other. However, our programs accomplished other things as well. Our programs have introduced the non-Jewish students in the schools to Judaism and Israel in a positive light. It has created an atmosphere in these schools where being Jewish isn't something you hide from your non-Jewish friends. It has made being Jewish something to be proud of.

Our students have gotten more involved not only in JSU but in their local youth programs taking leadership roles. They tend to get more involved in Israel advocacy with programs such as AIPAC and StandWithUs. The pride and confidence they develop within our programs empowers them to go on to become leaders in their respective communities.

We have hundreds of students in the greater Jacksonville area that need a Jewish Student Union club in their school. We will use this grant to help us to run amazing programs while developing the next Jewish leaders. We will continue bringing kosher pizza to public schools and run hands on activities. We will run city-wide events outside of school such as our Latte & Learning program and Shabbat dinners. We will continue to run social events and weekend retreats. We will encourage kids to join summer programs in Israel to develop their Jewish identity further when school is out. We will collaborate and co-sponsor events that our teens run such as an upcoming StandWithUs event one of our club presidents is helping run.

At the start of this year over 130 students at Stanton Preparatory school signed up for our program and we've had over 30 kids at our meetings each week. Teens from Atlantic Coast High School reached out to have us open a club in their school and we're now working with teens in other local high schools to hopefully open clubs in their schools as well. With your help we can open a club in any school where a Jewish teen attends and we can empower the next generation of Jewish leaders.