



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Stroum Jewish Community Center Launches New Teen Philanthropy Program

April 4, 2018—The Stroum Jewish Community Center (SJCC), together with the Samis Foundation and the Bianco family, is proud to launch a new teen philanthropy program called the Giving Initiative for Teens (GIFT) this fall for the 2018-19 school year.

SJCC serves more than 15,000 people annually in the Greater Seattle area, and has made youth and teen leadership and engagement a key focus in the coming year. The Jewish population in Seattle is growing, yet the availability of teen leadership program has dwindled, making it an exciting time for SJCC is to add GIFT to the teen service programs already in place.

“Philanthropy has always been central to Jewish life, making GIFT a fantastic way for us to deliver on our agency’s mission of celebrating Jewish life and culture,” said SJCC CEO Amy Lavin.

Applications are now open for interested students in and around the Puget Sound who will be in 9th-11th grade in fall 2018. Mentors and teachers can also nominate students. Teens will meet monthly to research and explore organizations and causes they wish to support; raise and allocate funds to address real community issues; learn about the process of grantmaking; hear from local philanthropists; all while exploring their own Jewish values.

A key piece of the program is the advisory council, comprised of local leaders in the fields of business, technology, and philanthropy. Advisors will help the teens network in the community, offer professional guidance, and learn fundraising strategies.

Kim Fisher, a longtime SJCC member whose teenage daughter started the SixThirTeens philanthropy group that partners with the J for service projects, is excited to have another opportunity to engage teens in our community. “Offering them a variety of ways to stay connected and practice generosity as they navigate their increasingly busy lives is a huge priority for us all,” she said.

The GIFT program is part of the fourth cohort of the Jewish Teen Funders Network Foundation Board Incubator. A project of the Jewish Teen Funders Network (JTFN) and funded by Laura Lauder and the Maimonides Fund, the Foundation Board Incubator brings the success and impact of Jewish teen philanthropy programs across North America into cities around the world. Seattle is one of the newest incubator communities, joining San Diego, Detroit, Boston, Philadelphia, Toronto, Melbourne, and Israel.

The J is now accepting student applications and nominations from teachers and mentors. The application deadline is Sunday, May 20. Forms can be found at www.SJCC.org.

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Stroum Jewish Community Center

The Stroum Jewish Community Center inspires connections to build community and ensure Jewish continuity. Together we create outstanding programs, partnerships and spaces that welcome everyone to learn, grow and celebrate Jewish life and culture. Learn more at www.sjcc.org.

Samis Foundation

The Samis Foundation was created in 1994 to reinvest the profits of Samuel Israel's real estate business to support Jewish education locally, and other program areas in Israel. The foundation imagines a Jewish community in which all Jewish children have access to intensive and immersive Jewish education and experiences. Learn more at www.samisfoundation.org.

Jewish Teen Funders Network

The Jewish Teen Funders Network (JTfN) serves as a central resource for the quickly growing field of Jewish teen philanthropy. We work to grow and strengthen the field of Jewish teen philanthropy in North America. JTfN was created in 2006 as a program of the Jewish Funders Network, an international organization dedicated to maximizing the quality and impact of Jewish philanthropy. Learn more at www.jtfn.org.