

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Melissa Jarvis-Prieto
323-761-8888 x8774
909-489-7948 (cell)
mjarvis@jvsla.org

**JVS SCHOLARSHIP FUND HELPS JEWISH STUDENTS FROM
DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS WITH HIGHER EDUCATION**
As Economy Continues to Struggle, Many Turn to College as Option

(LOS ANGELES) As the economy struggles to recover, many people are turning to higher education as a way to expand their options in a difficult job market. With the hope of increasing their skills, transitioning to a new industry or learning a new trade, people of all ages and backgrounds are applying to undergraduate, graduate and vocational schools with the hope of making a new start. The **JVS Scholarship Fund**, which to date has awarded over \$4.5 million to more than 3,200 Jewish students in financial need, has responded in kind, awarding \$327,000 to 157 students for the 2010-2011 academic year. Students and their families will be on hand at a special ceremony July 7 at Sinai Temple to receive their scholarships.

The JVS Scholarship Fund was founded in 1972 with the belief that education is the first step to career and financial independence. “Unlike many other faith-based scholarships, we place no limits on age, on our students' fields of study, or even where they can attend school. Our only requirements are that they be Jewish, reside in Los Angeles, and demonstrate financial need,” said JVS CEO Vivian Seigel.

Evgueny K. has been on his own since 19. Born in Russia, he moved to Israel to join the Israel Defense Fund, where he served in a special elite fighting force and participated in operations in Lebanon and the Gaza Strip. After an honorable discharge he worked for the Israeli Ministry of Defense. But Evgueny's ultimate goal has always been to further his education. He came to the United States and with help from JVS' Scholarship Fund, was able to enroll in the American Jewish University, where he is an undergraduate studying Business Administration.

Also starting over is Parvaneh R. A single mother, Parvaneh immigrated to the United States from Iran, wanting a brighter future and religious freedom for herself and her children.

With the goal of becoming a dental hygienist, she will be starting undergraduate work at West Coast University. Despite limited English skills, she also managed to complete an AA degree in Science, and passed the Registered Dental Assistant Board Exams, all the while balancing work, school and motherhood. As if that weren't enough, she plans to give back to the Jewish community by volunteering at free clinics and senior housing facilities.

Heather L. has had a difficult time completing her education, struggling with both financial and addiction issues. After going through the Beit T'Shuvah residential drug treatment program, she returned to school at Santa Monica Community College, and eventually transferred to American Jewish University, where she aspires to attend the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies. Thanks to a strong network and circle of counselors, professors, advisors and mentors, she has remained committed to recovery and been able to move forward with her life. Heather is determined to prove herself worthy of the investment JVS' Scholarship Fund is making in her future.

Said JVS Scholarship Fund Manager Cathy Kersh-Millstein, "This has been a very difficult year for many of our students and their families, who have been unable to support themselves financially. Nearly every student this year had a story of recent job loss in their application. Receiving these scholarships lets people know that there are resources out there, and that we believe more strongly than ever in giving students the best possible start, or the chance at a completely new beginning in their lives."

JVS Los Angeles offers hope and opportunity to the our diverse community through job training, education and expert career guidance, transforming lives and empowering individuals to achieve dignity and independence. With more than 18 programs throughout Southern California targeting a wide array of clients, including people with disabilities, at risk, foster and probation youth, refugees and immigrants, and career professionals in transition, JVS is empowering people to become economically self-sufficient, enhancing the quality of life for individuals and families in our community. For more information, visit www.jvsla.org.

###