

Dear Friends,

We are blessed to write to you once again at the start of a New Year. I feel renewed when I can stop the clock for a few moments and take the opportunity to review what has transpired these 12 months since our last newsletter. This special *heshbon*—period of counting and accounting—offers strength, even courage, to meet ongoing and new challenges. As Ta-Nehesi Coates so wisely put it in his recent book *Between the World and Me*: “To struggle not because it assures you victory but because it ensures you an honorable and sane life.”

The Fund’s grantees—your grantees—bring together passion and compassion, knowledge and work to their social justice projects across the world. The work you fund enables these grantees to explore their potential and deepen their commitment to the betterment of our world.

Consider **Rose**, who spent three months teaching children in Kalwa, Mumbai. There she learned how much the poor rely on family and community, on patterns and traditions, and on themselves to continue: “The energy and trust that the kids offered me in the classroom was a window into the strength of individuals and the potential of compassion in the slum.”

Or take **Aviva**, whose work on conflict resolution and on-the-ground relationship-building in Israel and in the Palestinian territories moved conversations between the two communities from fear and anger to openness and “resilient listening.”

Then there’s **Sydney** and her work with youth representatives from the **Bhutanese refugee community in Pittsburgh, PA**, and their joining the Pittsburgh Student Activist Coalition.

These are but a few highlights of the 47 grantees whose lives you have changed through your contributions—and the lives they have changed as a direct consequence of your giving.

And we also want to let you know about changes to the Fund as well.

Our revamped website can now accept electronic applications as well as secure electronic contributions at www.AmyAdinaSchulmanFund.org. Also watch the website for information on our 28th Annual Lecture coming in Spring 2016 at The Jewish Center in Princeton, New Jersey.

We appreciate your feedback, questions, comments at AmyAdinaSchulmanFund@verizon.net.

Thank you for your ongoing generosity in promoting social justice and human dignity through your contribution by check or electronically through the PayPal link on our website. Each dollar you donate continues to be tax deductible and 100% of every dollar goes to supporting our grantees.

Health, strength, a sweet and fulfilling New Year from the Schulman Family to your family,

Ruth (and Mel z”l)

Dan, Jennie and Molly (college senior) and Jake (college sophomore)
Joel, Nancy and Logan (high school freshman)

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The Amy Adina Schulman Memorial Fund Supports social justice worldwide with a strong commitment to a just and equitable Israel.

Sho, a graduate of Tufts U., had previously worked with the Washington DC Alliance for Peacebuilding, and with the Bosnia-Herzegovina Mosar Summer Youth Program. As Sho reports: “Receiving a grant from the Amy Adina Fund was indispensable to my participation in the program *Achvat Amim*, a human rights organization, which enabled me to volunteer at *Search for Common Ground (SFCG)* and the Hand in Hand Center for Jewish-Arab Education. There I learned to balance a sensitivity for my place as an outsider and still undertake meaningful action.” In Israel he helped set SFCG’s social media strategy for the Universal Code of Conduct on the Holy Sites initiative, where it took time to understand “how religious, political, and leaders of other different groups rally around the protection of each other’s holy sites. If we can protect the world’s holy sites, then we can prevent conflicts from escalating by mitigating the confusion, pain, and anger that attacks on holy sites trigger.” At Achvat Amim, he also coordinated a series of film screenings for SFCG’s film, *Fire Lines*, the story of the Palestinian firefighters who helped fight Israel’s worst natural disaster, a lesson for him in “how much thought goes into crafting a short film on a difficult topic and the delicate balance between showing the difficult truth and not making the viewer feel attacked.”

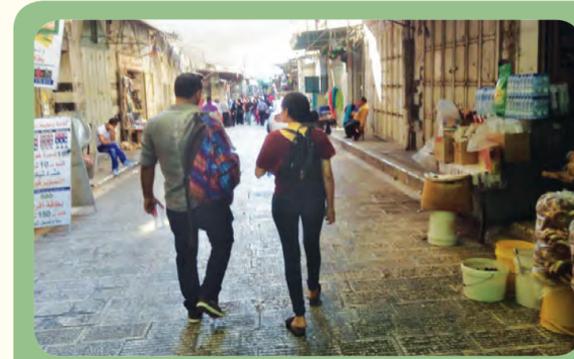
As Sho notes, “being an activist or doing work for social change is extremely difficult. Thus, one can only be resilient and feel fulfilled with friends, partners, and allies as a support system. It felt exhilarating to become part of the networking for social change in Israel and Palestine. Such a small space and such a diversity of incredible work already being done, I felt energized and hopeful that perhaps, just perhaps, there is potential for future peace.”

Rachel spent nine months with **Yahel Social Change Program**, “primarily focused on the Ethiopian Israeli community in Ramat Eliyahu which experiences a wide range of social disparities.” She helped transition children from a learning center classroom environment to a Home-

work at Home model and better connect parents to the educational system, helping all children in the family with more engaged student behavior.



Bat El and Rachel cooking injera



Yael and a fellow intern walking in Nablus

Yael is fluent in Hebrew, with two semester of Arabic language at Wesleyan. She has worked in the area of conflict resolution since her years at the Abraham Joshua Heschel High School, where she “gained experience in discussing the most sensitive aspects of the Israeli presence in the Palestinian territories with those who vehemently disagreed with me.”

Yael interned with **Windows: Channels for Communication**, an NGO that builds connections between Palestinian and Israeli youth. As Yael points out, “while many coexistence-oriented groups exist that create short-term space for Palestinian and Israeli children to get to know each other, Windows is special in that its youth programming is long-term—about two years per youth group. The organization embarks on a process together that involves Single Identity Group meetings, letter exchanges, seminars and workshops. The goal is to create, as a group, an alternative media source, a blog, that explores a facet of the conflict in an honest and thought-out way.” The bulk of Yael’s work was “was behind the scenes.” As she frames it, “When I applied for my internship, I had initially wanted to create my own project, to create a mini-curriculum of modified Windows workshops for American youth. I had assumed I could follow my own trajectory with their resources. But that is not how a small, volunteer-based non-profit works. You need to work as a team at all times. So instead of creating my own educational framework from scratch, I explored the many years of work that past interns had created and coordinate with my supervisors to improve on that content.” She adds: “Small-scale and long-term peace-building is a time-consuming, tiring, and expensive endeavor. That Windows continues to push against barriers is both inspiring and motivating.” Yael now feels compelled to further engage in conflict resolution and in justice work in Israel-Palestine—a compulsion deepened by the support of the Amy Adina Schulman Fund.

All the world is a narrow bridge... but the main thing is not to fear.

WELCOME

Amy Adina Schulman Memorial Fund

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER September/October 2015 Tishrei 5776



Amy Adina Schulman
...leaving her dreams of *tikkun olam*,
social justice, for others to fulfill.



Ruth’s Message –
“Walking home from Rosh HaShanah Services with Mel and Amy Adina in October 1986, the three of us were singing a melody the rabbi had woven throughout the Service. Prancing and pirouetting around us, as her curls bobbed up and down, Adina taught us the Hebrew words to the melody:

Kol ha-Olam Kulo
All the world is
Geshet Tsar Me’od (2x)
A narrow bridge
V’ha-Ekar (2x)
But the main thing
Lo Le’fa-ched Klal
Is not to fear.

A perfect moment—that next to last time we would ever be together, these words her parting gift to us.”

Highlights from 2014-2015 Grantees

Improving the world with your help!



Allyza leaving Rahat Center for Young Adults in Negev

The Amy Adina Schulman Memorial Fund supports social justice through environmental sustainability and empowerment.

Allyza L. interned at the Center for Transboundary Water Management located at the *Arava Institute for Environmental Studies (AIES)* on Kibbutz Ketura, Israel. She writes us: "AIES is a small non-profit organization that seeks to promote peace through transboundary environmental initiatives in Israel, the West Bank, Jordan, and the Middle East/Mediterranean region. My most important accomplishment while there was the development of a proposal for USAID's Middle East Regional Cooperation grant. This 100-page document took months of research, preparation and writing and required that I orchestrate a close collaboration among many partners in Israel and the West Bank."



Allyza AIES grey water management project

A graduate of Barnard who majored in environmental policy, Allyza previously served as a senior research staff member at Columbia University's International Research Institute for Climate and Society. There she worked with

over 30 author groups to produce a series of case studies on the use of climate information for decision making and developed a proposal for support of an international network on drought information.

"Shifting from a NYC-based academic institution was much more of a cultural transition than I anticipated. To my hyper-organized, time-sensitive NYC mind, the blend of Israeli culture, kibbutz culture, desert culture, and small non-profit culture meant things always seemed hectic, and yet always worked out. One of my goals was to get out of the top-down world of large international institutions and learn more about environmental work happening on the ground. It is critically important to understand the ways in which people around the world operate at different paces, and react differently to schedules and deadlines."

"The tight-knit community was incredible...Every week I participated in the AIES Peacebuilding and Environmental Leadership Seminar with students from Israel, Palestine, Jordan, the US, Europe. In many instances this forced me to think beyond my comfort zone. I started to learn more about what it really means to be a good listener in difficult discussions, and many times I was amazed by people's willingness to share and receive and connect. Too often the media we receive dehumanizes 'the other.' We spent a lot of time breaking down these barriers of mistrust and building relationships across cultures, religions, and political ideologies."

"I cannot thank the Amy Adina Schulman Fund enough for its generosity in helping me to live out this experience. Through the ups and the downs, the challenges and rewards, I had a wonderful seven months in Israel. When I think back on it all, I've only touched on a handful of the ways this time has impacted me and changed my world view... thank you so much for helping me make this adventure a reality."



Vidya's Impacta-Peru quilt

Matt is a graduate of Berea College in Kentucky and a recent AmeriCorps participant. Matt worked at the *Hava ve'Adam Eco-Educational Farm* in Modi'in, Israel, for five months: "I have spent much of my adult life studying, working, and volunteering in sustainable agriculture capacities, and my experience in Israel exceeded my expectations. We attended classes daily that pushed us both personally and professionally, while my weekly workday on the construction crew gave me an opportunity to apply what I learned in the classroom. I felt privileged to see how a biogas system worked on the farm and had the chance to build a mud oven. Hava ve'Adam opened a door for me, one that beckons me to return to Israel and one that challenges me to find that same peace elsewhere. I am grateful to those that helped me to arrive here. Thank you so much for your support."



Thursday night potluck at Kibbutz Lotan

Dylan and Alyssa K., two other grantees, both at *Kibbutz Lotan*, learned about environmental sustainability. Alyssa K.'s Cornell engineering advising department asked, based on her experiences, that she give a presentation to freshman chemical engineers "to show my peers how what they are learning in the classroom is applicable and useful in sustainable living."

Dylan is a new Cornell graduate who before his departure had organized a semester-long program at Ithaca High School to explore environmental advocacy and change. He describes his first months in the *Kibbutz Lotan Green Apprenticeship Program* as "fascinating and inspiring, full of challenges, with practical work on mud building, sustainability, permaculture design, passive energy, and organic techniques, as well as visiting organic farms in Israel to volunteer and observe their sustainable design practices." For Dylan, the "program offered prompted my interest and a ton of leads that I now am investigating to further my goals of permaculture skill development and ecosystem design proficiency. It also connected me to some of the smartest, most thoughtful, and well-intentioned people on the planet."

The Amy Adina Schulman Memorial Fund supports social justice through expanding solutions in sanitation and health advocacy.

Vidya, a PILA Fellow and graduate of Fordham U., was a study coordinator at *Impacta-Peru*, investigating the relationship between interpersonal violence, drug use, and HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases among incarcerated women in prison in central Lima. "I am so grateful to have had the privilege of doing this research. I learned that nothing ever works out as planned, and that you have to be prepared for every possible issue. We had hoped each participant could complete the questionnaire alone, without help from an outside facilitator, so as to avoid bias from an external agent. However several participants were illiterate, so I had to step in to assist them. It was difficult for me because I had to try not to influence their answers through my own personal bias, as well as having to interpret the participants' answers to the best of my ability. I learned to think quickly on my feet, and gained investigative skills that allow me to conduct research with human subjects without, or with limited, bias."

Another aspect of Vidya's work was with Impacta-Peru's community outreach program. "I've been involved with over 15 different community programs, helping to bring consciousness to the realities of HIV and the services we offer. I distribute materials and inform about our investigations and projects, and enroll patients in our clinical trial - a global study that seeks to find a vaccine against HIV through healthy, HIV-negative study participants. We are at the vanguard of international HIV/AIDS investigations, much of the work sponsored by the National Health Institute of the U.S."

"The things I learned are priceless, and I know they will serve me in my future career in Public Health and Epidemiology. I start my Masters in Public Health this Fall at the U. of Illinois - Chicago."

"Thank you folks at the Amy Adina Fund for supporting me through this incredible journey. I would never have been able to... participate in this service without your kindness and generosity."



Vidya attending an HIV/AIDS awareness event

Ruthie completed her volunteer project with *Sanergy* and "...a week after returning from Kenya, I went from the sunny, bustling streets of Nairobi to the pebbly paths of Camp Ramah Darom, my favorite annual gig at Winter Break Family Camp in the mountains of Georgia. While there I explained to eager listeners how I turn human waste into fertilizer in Kenya." The decision to volunteer for Sanergy was based on her longstanding interest in public health: "I was raised among adults who didn't think one ought live, work, or raise a family without considering all the other humans on the face of the planet." Her passionate interest in improved sanitation in the developing world originates in the simple fact that open human fecal waste in forests and rivers—indeed, any open space—promotes the spread of fecal pathogens that jeopardize the health of children and adults, impeding their ability to learn or work. Her volunteering with Sanergy in Kenya was an opportunity to see implemented a market solution for the transformation of human waste into ready-to-use fertilizer. As she notes, "support from the Amy Adina Fund allowed me to come to Kenya and do the work I knew deep down I needed to do and hopefully let me build a career path in public health services." Ruthie has been hired to work with Sanergy on a two-year contract.



Nahal Gishron - Dylan's path in the desert

On the cover:

Top Row - Yahelnikim: staff, partners, and community members
Row Two - Allyza on a walk; Aviva in Jerusalem
Row Three - Natalie with young friend; Rachel with her host family
Bottom Row - Arava Institute Peacebuilding Leadership Seminar



Natalie running the Hypertension Workshop

Natalie, who holds a B.A. in Public Health from the University of Rochester, had worked as a research intern one summer for Migrant Health Israel, a non-profit dedicated to providing healthcare for Israel's immigrant population and afterwards as a student intern at the Health Empowerment Program at St. Joseph's Neighborhood Center in Rochester, NY, which served individuals with little to no health insurance.

The grant from Amy Adina Schulman Fund enabled Natalie to work with *Eritrean refugees* at the *Terem Refugee Health Clinic* located in the Central Bus Station in South Tel Aviv. According to Natalie, the clinic "offers an array of subsidized medical services to asylum seekers who are not covered by the national health insurance law." Interning at the clinic allowed Natalie to interact with asylum seekers and the many Eritrean staff members. She worked in reception, completed patient histories, and conducted research in order to develop a chronic disease workshop for the clinic: "Whether I was trying to communicate with a mother about her sick baby or asking a patient about his symptoms to produce a medical record, I was seeing always the humanity and humility of the individuals there seeking out what was best for themselves and their families" For Natalie, the experience gave her a new understanding—and sympathy—for the impoverished, oft-neglected south Tel Aviv neighborhoods. "It was truly a memorable and life-changing experience and I'm very grateful for the support I received from the Fund!"



Natalie with colleague