

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

## **Arev Fund Announces Inaugural Round of Grants**

*New York, United States - September 14, 2016* - With great enthusiasm, The Arev Fund announces its grantees for the 2016 cycle. The grants support projects in the areas of spiritual leadership, communal life, social justice and education.

The Arev Fund launched on January 15, 2016 as a giving circle of observant Jewish women with the mission of promoting impactful female Jewish philanthropy to spur change in the areas of spiritual leadership, communal life, social justice, and education in the United States and Israel, with a particular focus on the advancement of women. With this initial round of grants, Arev purposefully moves its mission forward.

This year, the area of **Spiritual Leadership** received the largest allocation of Arev funding, as our members currently choose to advance this issue, both in the United States and in Israel. We are proud to endorse the promising developments in this burgeoning area, and are excited by the range and depth of the serious efforts to address women's leadership in the Modern Orthodox community. Arev members chose to divide this grant among five different projects, each with a different approach to this issue. The projects are:

### **Beit Hillel: Meshivat Nefesh - Women's Spiritual Leadership Initiative**

Beit Hillel is an Orthodox leadership forum in Israel that includes rabbis, community scholars and leaders. Arev is partnering with Beit Hillel on the Meshivat Nefesh project, which works to arm women scholars with professional tools to expand the number of women serving as halakhic decision-makers and to support women's authorship of high-level Torah scholarship.

### **Matan Morot Halakha**

Matan is a center for women's Torah scholarship in several locations in Israel. Arev funding will help support the Morot Halakha program, which seeks to create a pool of female leaders and teachers who are deeply learned and versed in broad areas of halakha. These women plan to serve in communities in both the geographic center and periphery of Israel to positively impact women's lives, well-being, and commitment to Torah and halakha.

### **Ohr Torah Stone Susi Bradfield Women's Institute of Halakhic Leadership**

Ohr Torah Stone is a multi-faceted organization dedicated to highlighting the relevance of Torah Judaism in the modern world. Arev's grant will help support the Susi Bradfield Women's Institute of Halakhic Leadership, which aims to close the educational and professional gap in women's spiritual leadership in the Orthodox community. This program features a five-year

Full-time Talmud and halakha curriculum, practical and communal training, and partnerships with external organizations to create and fund professional opportunities for its graduates.

### **Yeshivat Maharat Pastoral Torah curriculum**

Yeshivat Maharat provides a path for women in the United States to gain the skills, training, and certification to become spiritual leaders within the Modern Orthodox community. Arev funding will help support the Pastoral Torah Curriculum, a uniquely integrated pastoral, spiritual, and leadership-training program that employs Torah texts along with those of contemporary social sciences to grapple with key issues of human life and development.

### **Nishmat's Miriam Glaubach Yoetzet Halakha Program**

Nishmat is a Jerusalem-based center for women's scholarship, leadership, and social responsibility. The Miriam Glaubach Yoetzet Halacha Program is the American platform for the training of Yoatzot Halacha—female halakhic advisors—a role created by Nishmat. Arev will help fund the leadership training component of this curriculum, which will include mentoring programs and workshops to develop and expand professional development.

In the area of **Communal Life**, Arev will be partnering with **Eden Association**, an organization that provides educational, social and therapeutic services to underprivileged women and girls living in the Negev. Arev funding will support Eden's Bet Bogrot, a project that addresses the gap in state-mandated services for young women living on the geographic periphery of Israel who are aging out of foster care. This project provides safe haven, counseling, and tools to help these young women transition successfully to adult life. We are inspired by Eden's grounded and solution-oriented approach to supporting a vulnerable population at an important developmental moment.

In the area of **Social Justice**, Arev is funding initiatives of **ORA (The Organization for the Resolution of Agunot)** and of **Mavoi Satum**. Based in the United States, The Organization for the Resolution of Agunot (ORA) seeks to eliminate abuse from the Jewish divorce process through agunah case advocacy, early intervention programs, and initiatives for education and agunah prevention. Mavoi Satum provides legal and emotional support to women in Israel who have been refused a Jewish divorce, and works to find a solution to the problem of get refusal in Israel. These two organizations are independently developing aggressive social media campaigns around the issue of *get*-refusal. We believe that the bold and savvy approaches of both ORA and Mavoi Satum will create a synergy to rid the global Orthodox world of this painful scourge.

In the area of **Education**, Arev is funding a special project of **Machshava Tova**, an organization that provides underprivileged populations with technological training in a supportive and empowering environment. Arev is partnering with Machshava Tova on the App2U project, an innovative program conceived in consultation with Google, which trains disadvantaged women in app-building and related skills and provides these women with access to careers in the high-tech sector. This thoughtful, focused, and practical education and career-planning project will

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enable a cadre of well-trained professionals to live productive and constructive lives in Israel. We believe that the students' final project of building apps for non-profits serves as a powerful model for how education can fuel social change.

The Arev Fund is committed to partnering with these organizations to advance the areas of spiritual leadership, communal life, social justice and education. In the coming grant cycle, Arev may decide to focus on fewer areas, and may fund some of its current grantees for a second grant cycle. Arev received a very large number of applications, and is invigorated by the depth and breadth of innovative entrepreneurial activity taking place in these sectors. For further information about the Arev Fund and its grantees, please visit Arev's website at [www.arevfund.org](http://www.arevfund.org).

Arev Fund

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