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**BAY AREA PHILANTHROPIST FANS THE SPARKS OF TEEN CHANGEMAKERS
WITH GRANTS APPROACHING \$2 MILLION**

From Campaigning for Lifesaving Cancer Research to Empowering Underprivileged Youth, 15 Teen Leaders From Across the Nation Are Changing Our World

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, June 30, 2014 — The Helen Diller Family Foundation, a supporting foundation of the Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties, gives the next generation of philanthropic visionaries from California and across the country the support and resources they need to bring to life their visions of a better world. Today, the Foundation announced 15 recipients of the 2014 Diller Teen *Tikkun Olam* Awards. Now in its eighth year, the program is adding an additional five national awards, expanding its reach to honor 15 young Jewish leaders, each of whom will receive a \$36,000 award. With \$540,000 granted this year, the 2014 Diller Teen *Tikkun Olam* Awards mark the second consecutive year of growth and the largest funding bestowed to teen changemakers in a single year during the Foundation's history.

What began as a simple idea for Bay Area philanthropist Helen Diller – to support California Jewish teens who exemplify the spirit of *tikkun olam*, a central Jewish precept meaning to *repair the world* – has since grown to encompass and mobilize a national network of socially engaged Jewish youth. Since 2007, the Diller Teen *Tikkun Olam* Awards have honored 55 Jewish teens with grants totaling **almost \$2 million to further their philanthropic visions and education.**

This year, the program is doubling the number of recipients recognized from communities across the nation to 10, while continuing to honor five teens from California. From Los Angeles to New York, each of these 2014 recipients has made an indelible impact in their own communities, nationally, or globally.

Acknowledged for their exceptional leadership and commitment to social good, the teens have provided unique solutions to pressing social issues by developing projects that support public health, equality, education, environmental sustainability, and engagement opportunities for their peers.

Meet the 15 recipients of the 2014 Diller Teen *Tikkun Olam* Awards:

- **Paige Alenick, 18, Woodcliff Lake, NJ: Donate A Toothbrush** – an organization that collects toothbrushes for distribution worldwide to improve oral health in impoverished nations.
- **Tyler Barbee, 16, Mill Valley, CA: Challenger Baseball & Basketball** – launches baseball and basketball-focused teams for children with special needs, helping them develop social skills, team skills, and greater independence.
- **Zach Certner, 18, Morristown, NJ: SNAP (Special Needs Athletic Programs)** – a nonprofit that creates inclusion opportunities for children with special needs through sports and extracurricular programming.

- **Jonny Cohen, 19, Highland Park, IL: GreenShields** – a project that designs and produces aerodynamic add-ons to enhance the fuel efficiency of school buses.
- **Morgan Davidson, 16, Woodland Hills, CA: Ambassadors for Hope Club** – high school clubs that raise awareness about blood cancers through community blood drives, fundraisers for critical research, and bone marrow/stem cell donor recruitment.
- **Jacob Gardenzwartz, 18, San Diego, CA: Theater Of Peace (TOP)** – a teen theatre troupe that enlivens anti-bullying programs at schools with interactive performances, promoting acceptance and diversity.
- **Katie Hamelburg, 19, Potomac, MD: Operation 18,000** – an initiative that connects teens to meaningful volunteer opportunities and helps them measure, track and publicize their collective efforts.
- **Amanda Harris, 20, Atlanta, GA: Wear then Share** – a project that empowers underprivileged children through dance and provides them with the dancewear they need to take center stage.
- **Maxine Harvey, 18, Methuen, MA: Debbie's Treasure Chest** – an organization that collects goods and raises funds to purchase and stock a warehouse full of toys, clothes and toiletries for families in need.
- **Yoni Kalin, 20, Washington, DC: Color My World (CMW)** – a project that unites environmentally savvy teens to collect lightly used crayons and donate them to shelters, schools and refugee camps around the world.
- **Lillian Pravda, 14, New York, NY: Vision for and from Children (VFAFC)** – an organization dedicated to giving children the gift of sight by supporting access to eye care, eye surgeries and vision-related services worldwide.
- **Adena Rochelson, 15, Fayetteville, NY: Operation Soap Dish** – a project that collects and distributes everyday essentials such as toiletries and household cleaning products to financially challenged families.
- **Yaniv Sadka, 18, Beverly Hills, CA: Teens Curing Cancer (TCC)** – a teen-driven organization that engages students in fundraising for pediatric cancer research labs while educating the community on childhood cancers.
- **Joshua Toch, 17, Morgan Hill, CA: Mind Before Mouth (MBM)** – a club that builds collective strength among students facing personal challenges and bullying through the power of public speaking.
- **Samantha Vinik, 17, Millburn, NJ: iTold4** – a project that trains teens to educate younger students and their peers on hearing loss risk factors and ways to prevent noise-induced hearing loss.

**Complete descriptions below*

“The Foundation believes that supporting Jewish teens today creates future generations of strong Jewish leaders. These teens are not only our future, they are also passionate and creative, and will bring innovation and inspiration to the global Jewish community,” said Helen Diller, President of the Helen Diller Family Foundation. “We’re so proud of these 15 young visionaries whose projects are making a lasting impact on their communities and their peers. These teens truly bring the spirit of *tikkun olam* to life in meaningful ways.”

Beyond bolstering national recognition of the teens and their social action projects, the Diller Teen *Tikkun Olam* Awards foster a growing community of recipients collaborating on youth leadership, innovation, and socially minded volunteer service across the nation. Past recipients are now inspiring their peers to follow in their *tikkun olam* footsteps. These Awards alumni have gone on to be recognized by some of the world’s most prestigious institutions and leaders, including the United Nations Foundation, The White House and former president Bill Clinton.

The Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA), through their network of 153 Jewish Federations throughout the country, continues to collaborate with the Helen Diller Family Foundation to inspire and encourage Jewish teen volunteer service nationwide.

“The Diller Teen *Tikkun Olam* Awards not only foster an inspiring passion for social change among our nation’s Jewish youth, but also empower them to become tomorrow’s leaders,” said Jerry Silverman, President and CEO of JFNA. “We applaud the 2014 recipients for their efforts to repair the world and are proud to continue supporting the Helen Diller Family Foundation in its mission to spotlight young people who are making a difference today.”

The 2014 recipients were selected by committees of educators and community leaders from across the United States. Candidates completed a detailed application describing their projects, goals, inspirations and challenges, fundraising tactics and ultimate accomplishments. Eligible applicants were United States residents, between 13 and 19 years old at the time of nomination, who self-identify as Jewish. A celebratory luncheon honoring the teens will be held in San Francisco on Monday, August 25, 2014.

2014 DILLER TEEN *TIKKUN OLAM* AWARD RECIPIENTS AND THEIR PROJECTS:

Paige Alenick (Woodcliff Lake, NJ): A Reason to Smile – Teen Supports Oral Health One Toothbrush at a Time

One night while brushing her teeth, Paige Alenick thought about the toothbrush in her hand, and how fortunate she was to have this small necessity. The moment inspired Paige to reach out to World Dental Relief (WDR), a nonprofit that distributes dental supplies to healthcare missions around the world. Paige was stunned to learn that millions of people around the world suffer from health issues such as tooth decay, oral cancer and even a decline in psychological wellbeing – all because they lack access to basic dental care. To address this issue, she created ***Donate A Toothbrush***, an organization that collects toothbrushes for distribution in the US and developing nations around the world. Today, the organization stands as the largest provider of toothbrushes for WDR, distributing her collections to more than 106,000 people in over 60 countries. Paige continues to expand her reach by building partnerships with dental corporations to foster large-scale toothbrush donations.

Tyler Barbee (Mill Valley, CA): Helps Teens with Special Needs Step Up to the Plate Through Team Sports

Inspired by watching his older brother manage the challenges of autism, Tyler Barbee was moved to help teens with special needs enjoy their own abilities. Tyler recognized that his brother’s participation in school programs and engagement with peers greatly improved his social skills. This led Tyler to form a local chapter of ***Challenger Baseball***, an established division of the National Little League that facilitates the participation of teens with special needs in community-based sports programs, and to create ***Challenger Basketball*** on the same premise. Tyler has forged connections between mainstream competitive teams and special needs teams, creating opportunities for all participants to experience teamwork, independence and self-confidence. The skills players acquire through the program extend beyond the field, empowering them socially and academically. Tyler has already helped launch ***Challenger*** in three communities, and plans to expand the program further through a partnership with a professional baseball team.

Zach Certner (Morristown, NJ): Athlete Creates Sports Clinics to Help Children with Autism Get in the Game

Zach Certner, an avid sports player, was disheartened to see family friend Mikey repeatedly excluded from typical peer-building social activities, such as organized sports, just because he was viewed as “different” as a teen with autism. Driven to create opportunities for kids like Mikey to be part of the fun, Zach and his brother co-founded ***SNAP (Special Needs Athletic Programs)***, a project that provides opportunities for children with special needs to participate in athletic and social programming. Captured in the organization's motto, "Kids Helping Kids," ***SNAP*** activates a network of teen mentors to run athletic clinics that give children with special needs the chance to interact with their peers. Through the program, Zach also advocates for autism awareness by leading sensitivity trainings at schools across seven states. To date, ***SNAP*** has educated 3,500 students, trained 450 mentors and raised more than \$150,000 for the cause. To grow his initiative, Zach is currently developing a webinar that will be used to train teen mentors across the country, transforming ***SNAP*** into a sustainable model for the future.

Jonny Cohen (Highland Park, IL): Invents “Green” Shield to Reduce Environmental Footprint of School Buses

During a walk home from school in seventh grade, an inventive Jonny Cohen began contemplating the environmental footprint of the school buses that passed by him — and how a change might minimize emissions and cut down on fuel costs for buses nationwide. Johnny launched **GreenShields** to design and bring to production aerodynamic add-ons for the hoods of school buses. After months of trials and tests, Jonny arrived at a prototype proven to increase fuel efficiency by 10 percent and significantly reduce environmental emissions. **GreenShields** is now fully operational with a bus company in Florida and continues to grow with the help of skilled volunteers and mentors. Jonny continues his research at Columbia University, where he is studying mechanical engineering and creating his own internship program in the engineering department to involve environmentally savvy peers in his work. By collaborating with his professors and network of supporters, Jonny has brought his project one step closer to fulfilling his goal of providing every school in the U.S. with his **GreenShields** add-on at cost or for free.

Morgan Davidson (Woodland Hills, CA): Bringing Communities Together in the Battle Against Cancer

As a child, Morgan Davidson was a firsthand witness to her grandmother’s battle with, and ultimate decline from, aggressive lymphoma. Before her grandmother died, Morgan made a commitment to fight to give hope to others suffering from the disease. Her one-day event, Cuts for a Cure, successfully raised \$29,000, recruited 25 people to sign up for the National Bone Marrow and Stem Cell Registry, and set Morgan on a lifelong *tikkun olam* journey. Inspired by her initial success, Morgan launched the **Ambassadors for Hope Club**, moving other teens to help her on her journey to save lives. She set out to pursue the education she needed to become one of the youngest trained volunteer recruiters for Be the Match National Stem Cell and Bone Marrow Registry, as well as a City of Hope volunteer recruiter for blood, plasma and platelet donors. After four years of fundraising and hosting donor drives, Morgan has now successfully founded two high school chapters of the **Ambassadors for Hope Club**, recruited more than 250 donors for Be the Match, and is personally responsible for matching four individuals in need with donors and has raised more than \$45,000 for City of Hope, a leading cancer research center.

Jacob Gardenswartz (San Diego, CA): Teen Theatre Troupe Brings Bullying into the Spotlight

Sitting through a fairly typical school lecture about the ills of bullying, Jacob Gardenswartz was inspired to find a more captivating way to get teens to empathize with their peers. Drawing from his passion for theatre, Jacob collaborated to create **Theater Of Peace (TOP)**, a teen theatre troupe that blends anti-bullying and pro-peace messaging with the dynamic energy of live performances, bringing a new twist to anti-bullying programming at schools across San Diego. The troupe develops short skits and interactive lessons that teach children how to become “upstanders,” not “bystanders.” By encouraging the audience to share their solutions on how to best combat bullying and providing schools with post-performance curricula, **TOP** turns listeners into participants and ensures that the conversations continue long after the curtain call. This unique approach has successfully rallied 4,000 students around Jacob's cause and raised nearly \$10,000. Jacob is currently working with several businesses to implement his program as part of their sexual harassment and workplace violence training.

Katie Hamelburg (Potomac, MD): Creates Pathways to Meaningful Volunteer Opportunities

Knowing that not all teens have the financial means to donate to philanthropic causes, Katie Hamelburg wanted to create a lasting project that empowered teens to instead contribute their time through volunteer projects that resonate most with them. With this in mind, she launched **Operation 18,000** to activate members of the United Synagogue Youth (USY) to volunteer a total of 18,000 hours throughout 2013. She developed an online platform that utilized a matching algorithm for connecting teens across North America to available volunteer opportunities in their local communities, while measuring, tracking and publicizing their collective efforts. Teens engaged in and led a variety of humanitarian projects, whether serving at assisted living centers or providing aid for natural disasters. During its first year, **Operation 18,000** far exceeded its goal with more than 600 teens volunteering a total of 32,686 hours, nearly doubling its anticipated impact. Katie is actively mentoring her successor who is shaping Operation 54,000 for next year, which aims to triple the original goal.

Amanda Harris (Atlanta, GA): Helps Underprivileged Children Dance Their Way to a Brighter Future

A dancer at heart, Amanda Harris wanted to share her passion for the art and make a difference in the lives of low-income children. That's why she created ***Wear then Share***, a project that enables kids to dance and learn the motivation and persistence that come along with the discipline. Encompassing both a dancewear initiative and dance outreach program, ***Wear then Share*** collects and distributes new and gently used dance clothing to nine community organizations that benefit underprivileged children in the Atlanta area. Amanda also launched dance programs at a local homeless shelter and the Boys and Girls Club, where she taught weekly classes to 25 students and coordinated recitals to build their confidence. Since 2006, Amanda has distributed more than 9,000 dancewear items, valued at more than \$80,000, to thousands of children in her community and taught hundreds of students how to dance. Amanda is currently training other teen leaders to follow in her dance steps and scale her project nationally, with branches created in two additional states.

Maxine Harvey (Methuen, MA): Teen Transforms Toys Into Treasures for Children in Her Community

Maxine Harvey experienced first-hand the transformative power of one person's generosity when she was adopted from China by a single mother in Massachusetts. Grateful for her new family's support, Maxine wanted to help other children who were given a similar chance for a new beginning. Every year, she looked forward to her family's annual Chanukah party, which collected toys in a garage for foster children in the community, and Maxine couldn't wait until she could create a project of her own. As a teen, Maxine co-founded ***Debbie's Treasure Chest***, a project that collects and raises funds to purchase clothes, toys, books and toiletries for local families in need. Maxine has successfully grown ***Debbie's Treasure Chest*** by closely collaborating with her local social services office to impact even more children and their families. The nonprofit now operates year-round in a 3,000 square ft. warehouse, which has provided 1,500 families with more than 75,000 necessities. Maxine plans to expand to a larger warehouse this summer, and her younger sister and co-founder Talia Harvey, age 14, is excited to be taking on a larger role when Maxine leaves for college in the fall.

Yoni Kalin (District of Columbia): Teen Colors Outside the Lines, Finding Purpose for Recycled Crayons

After observing a restaurant waitress throw away barely used crayons at a local family restaurant, Yoni Kalin identified an opportunity to turn trash into treasure. An avid recycler, Yoni launched ***Color My World (CMW)*** in 2010, a project that promotes environmental awareness by finding use for recycled crayons – creating a sustainable model for recycling and donating crayons to shelters, schools and refugee camps around the world. To foster community engagement, Yoni encourages teens to host crayon donation drives and involve restaurants in supporting the cause, while educating children on the importance of recycling. Through his detailed online tool kit, Yoni has successfully recruited 75 teens and more than 130 restaurants to launch their own ***CMW*** projects. To date, ***CMW*** has donated more than 300,000 crayons across 17 states and seven countries. Yoni's next focus will be a partnership with art teachers in disadvantaged communities in Israel.

Lillian Pravda (New York, NY): Teen Leads Peer "Diplomats" to Give Sight to Children Across the Globe

Born with a cataract, Lillian Pravda underwent two eye surgeries before she was five years old and vividly recalls how nervous she was waiting in the hospital before surgery. Wanting to help future patients, Lillian began volunteering in a pediatric surgical unit and learned that 19 million children worldwide are visually impaired, yet many of them are unable to access the care they need. Lillian, then just eight years old, decided to take action and created ***Vision for and from Children (VFAFC)***, a U.S.-based global philanthropic foundation dedicated to providing eye surgeries and vision-related services for children in need across the globe. By organizing in-kind donations from world-renowned physicians and recruiting teen "Diplomats" throughout North America to raise funds, ***VFAFC*** sponsors teams of ophthalmologists to deliver ocular care in third-world regions as well as brings children to the U.S. for sight-saving and sight-restorative surgeries. ***VFAFC*** has partnered with individuals, Fortune 500 corporations and local, national and international businesses in order to fulfill its mission in the U.S. and abroad. Through Lillian's leadership as Founder & CEO (Chief Eyesight Optimist), ***VFAFC*** has helped 24,210 children receive the gift of sight. Lillian recently launched her "One Million \$1 Bills" campaign to fund the building of ophthalmology centers in developing countries.

Adena Rochelson (Fayetteville, NY): Soaping Up – Teen Helps Provide Families with Everyday Essentials

When Adena Rochelson first volunteered at a food pantry in fourth grade, an empty shelf intended for toiletries and household products struck a chord with her. She learned that many families often had to go without these items, since government assistance programs do not cover their costs. To address this gap, Adena launched **Operation Soap Dish** to provide low-income people with the everyday essentials they need to feel good about themselves, affording them dignity and respect. Since 2009, Adena has cultivated a network of collecting items from across 15 states in the U.S., Israel and Canada, distributing over 20,000 toiletries and household products, valued at more than \$60,000, to families in her community and beyond. A passionate advocate, Adena diligently campaigns to raise awareness of how these everyday items can improve the quality of life of people living at or below the poverty line. Most recently, she instilled a passion for volunteering among local second graders through an educational program that culminated in a “soap box derby” to benefit her cause. More than 1,600 people benefit from **Operation Soap Dish** each month, and Adena plans to expand to more communities in the U.S. and developing nations.

Yaniv Sadka (Beverly Hills, CA): Youth Helping Youth – Teen Mobilizes Students to Fight Pediatric Cancer

Teens Curing Cancer (TCC) began with one boy, Benny, and his battle with lymphoma. Yaniv Sadka met Benny on his first day coaching for West LA Lacrosse’s summer camp and was struck by the young boy’s passion for life. As the summer progressed, Yaniv supported Benny as his health steadily declined. Experiencing Benny’s battle with lymphoma inspired Yaniv to dedicate himself to making a difference in the pediatric cancer community. Disappointed by the lack of meaningful volunteer opportunities for youth in this realm, Yaniv founded his own charitable organization, **TCC**, to provide a non-traditional volunteer opportunity for teens. In spearheading **TCC**, Yaniv has led a 2,000-member student body in two schools to create and host fundraising events that raised more than \$11,000 for pediatric cancer research labs. While the struggle to defeat a terrible disease is far from complete, Yaniv has already mobilized a powerful cohort of teens who are now equipped to make a positive difference in the lives of others.

Joshua Toch (Morgan Hill, CA): Gives Peers a Platform to Take a Stand Against Bullying

Joshua Toch experienced significant bullying in his youth as a result of his disability. One day, Joshua decided to talk about his experience living with cerebral palsy, and was surprised and excited by how receptive others were to his message and the conversation. This led Joshua to participate in a local speech competition, speaking on how bullying impacted his life — and he knew he’d been successful when a self-identified bully told him after the speech that he’d been inspired to change his ways. This experience empowered Joshua to launch **Mind Before Mouth**, a student-run initiative through which young people speak candidly and powerfully about the challenges they face from bullying and our collective responsibility to speak up and speak out against it. Speakers share diverse perspectives on what it means to be a teen, transforming perceived weaknesses into strengths and building bridges to help teens better understand one another. Through **Mind Before Mouth**, Joshua has sparked conversations and helped generate empathy among more than 30,000 teens in seven schools.

Samantha Vinik (Millburn, NJ): Tell a Friend – Teens Educate Students on Noise-Induced Hearing Loss

Samantha Vinik, who was born with severe hearing loss, always wanted to help others prevent the loss she couldn’t. She started by working with a few friends to design a lesson that teachers could use on how to prevent noise-induced hearing loss. After offering the lesson to 100 school districts — and getting 100 “no’s” — Samantha started **iTold4**. Taught entirely by student volunteers, **iTold4** uses the power of word-of-mouth and an interactive curriculum, including special tapes that simulate living with severe hearing loss, to raise awareness. Nearly three years later, **iTold4** has received a resounding “yes” from the community and shared information on how to protect one’s hearing with more than 2,300 local fourth-grade students through a team of 40 student volunteers. Samantha plans to continue growing the program by conducting research on environmental factors that contribute to hearing loss as part of her studies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

The Diller Teen *Tikkun Olam* Awards is one of a number of projects funded by the Helen Diller Family Foundation to develop leadership in teens and enhance Jewish education. Bay Area philanthropist Helen Diller believes that charitable giving is a fundamental part of living a full and accountable life. Now in its 14th year of giving, the Foundation has granted more than \$220 million to support education, the arts, medical research and development, leadership training programs for teens and many other charitable endeavors.

For more information, or to nominate a teen for next year's Diller Teen Tikkun Olam Awards, visit www.dillerteenawards.org or contact Esha Pai at (212) 561-7469 esha.pai@kingcompr.com.

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