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15 TEENS WIN NATIONAL AWARD FOR EXCEPTIONAL LEADERSHIP TO REPAIR THE WORLD

The Helen Diller Family Foundation's 15th Annual Awards recognize teens for their leadership in initiatives to make the world a better place.

SAN FRANCISCO — The Helen Diller Family Foundation, a supporting foundation of the San Francisco-based Jewish Community Federation and Endowment Fund, announced the 15 recipients of the 15th annual Diller Teen *Tikkun Olam* Awards.

This year's award recipients are working across the globe to address **urgent issues, ranging from mental health to education inequity to voter education**. Each awardee will receive \$36,000 to support their work or further their education. Full descriptions of all 15 Award recipients and their projects can be found at: www.dillerteenawards.org.

While some awardees found innovative ways to adapt their existing projects when the pandemic hit, others developed projects in response to the pandemic, addressing pressing newly relevant concerns including mental health, education access, or senior support services. All awardees supported community needs throughout this difficult period, creating networks that mobilized their peers to take collective, meaningful action.

"These teens are being recognized for their extraordinary efforts that embody the values of *tikkun olam* (to repair the world)," said Phyllis Cook, Chief Philanthropic Consultant to the Helen Diller Family Foundation. "In the face of the unusual challenges of this past year, the Diller Teen *Tikkun Olam* Award recipients exhibit courage, commitment, and compassion, bringing hope for the future. These young leaders inspire all of us to do our part to repair the world."

Now in its 15th year, the national awards recognize young Jewish leaders who are committed to ideas and impact that address the world's most pressing challenges in the communities around them. This year's cohort will join a network of awardees who have led marches on Washington, enacted new legislation, raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for cancer research, and fought for health and education equity and environmental justice. **Past Awardees have gone on to receive recognition from prestigious institutions and leaders, including the United Nations Foundation, the Jefferson Awards Foundation, America's Promise Alliance, and former President Barack Obama.** Additionally, the recipients will have the opportunity to network and share their collective and individual achievements. This will be done through virtual settings to ensure everyone is kept safe during these uncertain times.

The 2021 Diller Teen *Tikkun Olam* Awards recipients were selected by committees of community leaders and educators located in cities across around the country. Candidates

completed detailed applications describing their project's issue area, goals, inspirations, and challenges, fundraising tactics, and measurable impacts. Eligible applicants were United States residents, between 13 and 19 years of age at the time of the application deadline, who self-identified as Jewish.

For more information on this year's awardees, please read their bios below and visit www.dillerteenawards.org or follow Diller Teen Awards on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

Kelly Danielpour

Los Angeles, CA, 18

Long before the pandemic, Kelly read about a teenager with anti-vaccine parents who wanted to self-consent to vaccinations to protect his immunocompromised sister. When she tried to help him, she found hundreds of peers with similar concerns and a lack of accessible resources. She founded VaxTeen to provide centralized information on vaccines and vaccine access in all 50 states and advocate for legislation allowing older minors to self-consent to vaccines. VaxTeen's goal is to increase immunization rates and reduce preventable disease; they have successfully lobbied D.C. councilmembers to pass a minor self-consent bill, educated medical professionals on supporting and reaching young people, and published an op-ed in the *LA Times* advocating for teen vaccine access. To date, VaxTeen has mobilized 30 teenaged ambassadors nationwide to conduct outreach in their own communities to encourage vaccination, in addition to working with the University of Michigan Adolescent Health Initiative, Planned Parenthood, and the CA Department of Public Health. Kelly hopes to broaden VaxTeen's reach to youth nationwide while continuing to advocate for legislative change.

Sarah Frank

Tampa, FL, 17

As a published author and public speaker, Sarah had experience inspiring her peers to tap into their academic potential. When Sarah's student government board rejected her proposal to build a free online student resource site to help students struggling during the pandemic, she built the website herself and featured her own AP study guides to share with her peers. Friends, and other people in the community, were eager to contribute their own resources, and soon the site grew into Simple Studies Inc, an organization that offers free study resources, tutoring, and support for and by students to combat education inequality. The organization has a blog with advice articles, standardized testing resources, AP concept-breakdown videos, and study buddy matching. They also offer college application tips, free tutoring for every common class, a Discord community, and Study Sunday video calls to encourage productivity. During the pandemic, they mobilized over 800 volunteers from 40 states and 40 countries to serve 140,000 website users and 20,000 Discord members with more than 200 study guides and 30 blog articles. Sarah plans to expand Simple Studies Inc by adding international content, with a goal of reaching 1 million site users.

Hannah Frazer

Highland Park, IL, 19

As a student in a diverse community, Hannah noticed that people tended to keep to themselves rather than interact with different people. She developed Question Connection, a card game distributed through the Question Connection Game nonprofit, to facilitate interpersonal connection and cultivate empathy at a time when social media and technology threaten in-

person communication. Hannah conducts workshops teaching participants to use the cards openly and effectively in order to foster deeper connections between users. Question Connection is available in English, Spanish, Mandarin, Korean, and Hebrew; over 1,200 copies have been distributed in eight countries, and the game has been implemented in youth groups, community centers, and schools.

Sam Friedman

West Palm Beach, FL, 17

Sam's passion for technology and his experience helping family members with their technical needs made him realize how many seniors are left behind by their technical illiteracy. He founded South Florida Tech for Seniors, a nonprofit that matches student volunteers with senior citizens to provide personalized, free, one-on-one technology support. The organization aims to teach seniors the skills they need to be self-sufficient when using technology. South Florida Tech for Seniors volunteers have had nearly 300 interactions with seniors and produced and distributed 13 technical videos with over 1,200 views. Sam plans to expand his project's reach to serve more seniors in South Florida and beyond.

Daniel Goldberg

Santa Barbara, CA, 17

Inspired by his father, an emergency physician, Daniel wanted to find a way to make a meaningful impact during the pandemic. During the initial weeks of the shutdown, he was contacted by people who had run out of food but, due to their age or health, were unwilling to leave home to brave the grocery store. Daniel, as a healthy teen, felt that he and his peers were uniquely situated to provide help. Daniel started ZoomersToBoomers to provide safe, free grocery delivery to the elderly and immunocompromised. He soon realized that the same population would benefit from the social connection his volunteers could provide. ZoomersToBoomers grew from a city-wide support system to an international organization. With over 35 associated sites in the US and one overseas, the organization has made more than 5,000 grocery deliveries through a 1,000+ member volunteer force. After the pandemic, ZoomersToBoomers will leverage its network to provide technological and social support to seniors.

Jordan Grabelle

Voorhees, NJ, 16

As a child and avid reader volunteering at literacy events in underserved communities, Jordan was shocked to see middle school students gravitate towards books for much younger readers. She combined her passions for reading and arts and crafts to create Love Letters for Literacy (LLL), which focuses on teaching the alphabet to preschoolers and ESL students with colorful play-based literacy packets created by LLL volunteers. Fifty percent of at-risk children begin first grade with early literacy skills up to two years behind their more advantaged peers; LLL seeks to equalize the educational playing field by helping close the achievement gap with fun, educational games families can play together. Since 2014, LLL has mobilized over 19,600 volunteers worldwide, developed relationships with over 50 nonprofits and Head Start programs, and helped over 43,000 underserved children learn to read in all 50 states and 30 other countries. Jordan will continue to lead the organization in college and aspires to expand to 50 countries by 2022.

Sari Kaufman

Parkland, FL, 18

After experiencing a school shooting as a student at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, FL, Sari became passionate about gun violence prevention and civic education. She found that voters were uninformed about local candidates' positions, and consequently, politicians took little responsibility for their campaign promises. This compelled Sari to co-found MyVote Project, a student-led education organization and website that provides accessible nonpartisan voting information, including every candidate's background, policy stances, news articles, and social media. MyVote also hosts candidate forums, policy events, and Get Out The Vote (GOTV) activities to educate the public and hold politicians accountable. MyVote has mobilized 200 student volunteers to research 5,000 candidates; over 3,000 users in more than 20 states accessed the website; their GOTV phone banking has reached 15,000 people and MyVote social media content has reached 25,000 users. MyVote will scale to reach voters in every state with state leadership teams that will distribute the volunteer effort across the country.

Maurice Korish

Randolph, NJ, 17

When COVID-19 put immunocompromised and elderly individuals at risk, increased demand for grocery delivery programs made securing these services challenging and expensive. Maurice co-founded Deliver Together to help vulnerable individuals struggling to get groceries by matching them with local teen volunteers. Deliveries are managed through Deliver Together's website, which uses personalized software and a unique location algorithm to match volunteers with clients based on geographic proximity. To date, 80 volunteers across three states have successfully completed over 1,000 deliveries for at-risk, homebound, or immobilized individuals. Deliver Together partners with other nonprofits, and is currently in the process of incorporating as a 501(c)(3), which will facilitate further partnerships. The organization plans to improve their website platform, develop a smartphone application, and expand to more states in order to broaden their impact.

Jerry Orans

Mamaroneck, NY, 16

When Jerry learned about the PPE shortages in medical facilities at the start of the pandemic, he combined his interests in robotics and helping others to co-found Hack The Pandemic, a website that enabled people with home tools, such as 3D printers, to manufacture PPE for first responders, and matched these suppliers to hospitals in need. The organization soon evolved into a logistics and distribution platform, helping distribute products from small-batch manufacturers to medical facilities. Hack The Pandemic has mobilized over 300 volunteers to deliver more than 20,000 face shields, mask strain relievers, and intubation boxes. They are currently branching out into Research and Development with the osPAPR, an innovative open-source Powered Air Respirator. After the pandemic, they plan to broaden their impact to become a disaster/crisis response group that can produce, test, and distribute products.

Sarah Shapiro

Northridge, CA, 17

As the daughter of an educator, Sarah grew up immersed in the educational sphere, and understood firsthand the impact education can make and, especially, how educational

inequalities were exacerbated during the pandemic. Inspired to develop a community-oriented solution for struggling families, she co-founded The Covid NineTEEN Project, which provides free one-on-one tutoring and activities to over 3,000 elementary school students in 14 different countries. Over 250 teen mentor volunteers host more than 50 activities a week, with programs offered in 33 different languages and covering academics as well as arts and athletics. The Covid NineTEEN Project has been recognized on national media for its impact on students worldwide. After the pandemic, the organization will organize a lecture series that trains others to create their own versions of the project on a smaller scale.

Hope Shinderman

Pacific Palisades, CA, 17

As a neurodivergent student, Hope knew that effective education, especially during the pandemic, often entails enrichment beyond the classroom. She founded Bored of Boredom to provide online academic and extracurricular support for students suffering learning losses during the pandemic. Many participants are neurodiverse, from under-resourced communities, or ESL students. Bored of Boredom has mobilized over 900 volunteers to serve 2,000 students in preschool through 12th grade around the world with virtual group classes on traditional and unique topics, an ESL program, social justice courses, and individual tutoring. They have community partnerships in the United States as well as in China and Central America, and have raised money to support increased technology access to help close the digital divide. The organization is training a new leadership team to ensure Bored of Boredom's continued success.

Emanuelle Sippy

Lexington, KY, 17

As a co-leader of the Student Voice Team, a Kentucky education justice group, Emanuelle had experience as a community organizer. When the pandemic began, she organized the Coping with COVID-19 Student-to-Student Study (CWC) to help identify and ultimately address issues of education inequity. With nearly 10,000 survey responses from 119 of 120 Kentucky counties detailing students' social-emotional health and home lives, Coping with COVID-19 also created a community of support, mobilized students to reach broad audiences, and generated policy recommendations. The Kentucky Student Voice Team has reached tens of thousands through op-eds, policy reports, school climate audits, roundtables, presentations, rallies, teach-ins, media appearances, conferences, a published book, and testimony before the state legislature.

Daniel Solomon

Miami, FL, 17

Legally blind since birth, Daniel found his passion in orchestral music. Faced with the underfunding of school music programs, he founded Pinecrest City Music Project, Inc. (PCMP), a community-wide symphony that fosters young musicians through a peer-to-peer educational platform in Miami public schools. PCMP tackles socioeconomic, disability, and gender inequities by offering full scholarships to all PCMP families, working with Miami public school ESE Departments to develop sensory-based arts exhibits, and establishing a female STEM-Music Coding Program in partnership with GeorgiaTech. The only youth-run vendor to the Miami-Dade School Board, PCMP is fully facilitated by high school arts students. Since its founding in 2018, the organization has grown to serve 502 students and offers eight weekly programs at six

campuses. A strong mentorship system ensures that the program will continue to be successful as new high school facilitators take the reins.

Lauren Tapper

Chicago, IL, 15

When schools closed due to the pandemic, Lauren felt isolated and demoralized, despite being surrounded by caring family. Recognizing the connection between emotional wellness and overall health, she co-founded Covid-TV, an online platform where teenagers from around the world could provide their peers with emotional and mental health support during the pandemic and form a community combating isolation and anxiety. Lauren then expanded Covid-TV to launch social justice projects addressing mask shortages, hunger, unemployment, and political advocacy. The organization now supports more than 60 global teen ambassadors leading community fundraising and action campaigns to address pandemic-related crises and other social justice issues. The online platform connects teens from ten countries and has reached over 15,000 global readers. Post-pandemic, Covid-TV will expand into Empowerteen, a platform for several social justice and mental health channels, and Entrepreneurship-TV, a mentorship program connecting under-resourced teens to experienced student entrepreneurs.

Alana Weisberg

Los Angeles, CA, 15

During the stay-at-home orders, while Alana, an avid reader, was constantly reading, buying, and trading books, she realized that school closures had left students in underserved communities without access to libraries and books. Moreover, approximately 640,000 tons of books end up in landfills annually because most recyclers cannot process glue and bindings. Alana developed Bookworm Global to address literacy, poverty, and the environment. Bookworm Global organizes gently-used-book giveaways and library installations in low-income communities, targeting students who are at risk for academic slide and illiteracy. Literacy can help people rise out of poverty, advocate for themselves, and fight for social justice. Since the pandemic began, Bookworm Global has donated over 24,000 books and served 20,000 people. The organization is training new leadership and expanding nationwide through service organizations like The National Charity League and Girl Scouts.