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Koret Foundation Funds Awards \$100,000 Matching Grant to Caravan for Democracy High School Edition *Funding Will Allow for Expansion of Israel Advocacy Program*

January 18, 2006—San Francisco, CA-- On the heels of a successful pilot year, Koret Foundation Funds of San Francisco has renewed its support of Caravan for Democracy High School Edition by awarding the program with a \$100,000 matching grant.

"After funding the inaugural year of this program, we are happy to once again participate in the Caravan for Democracy High School program in Northern California," said Jeff Farber, Executive Director of Koret. "Surely our support recognizes Caravan's work in high schools to better acquaint students with the positive aspects of Israel, and ways in which to advocate for Israel once they reach college."



Caravan for Democracy High School Edition (HSE), a program of Jewish National Fund, Media Watch International, and American Friends of Likud, empowers high school juniors and seniors to advocate for Israel and respond to anti-Israel sentiments when they go off to college. The program has filled a void in Jewish education that previously left many students unprepared to support Israel when faced with opposing viewpoints or hostility.

Through advocacy training, public speaking seminars, and lectures featuring media specialists, Israeli politicians, and professionals in interactive learning, Caravan for Democracy HSE prepares students for the challenges they will face when they are away from home and removed from familiar surroundings. It teaches them about the current situation in Israel and guides them to stand up for Israel in concrete and meaningful ways.

"In *The UnCivil University*, a book we just released, we found systemic anti-Israelism on campuses throughout the United States, and will be releasing a volume this year on anti-Semitism and anti-Israelism in America's high schools and middle schools," said Dr. Gary Tobin, president of the Institute for Jewish & Community Research. "We found there are many negative images in textbooks and supplemental materials and many negative sentiments expressed by guest speakers. It is important that programs like Caravan for Democracy High School Edition be successful in dealing with this serious issue."

Koret, founded in 1979, is dedicated to promoting educational excellence and opportunity, shaping a diverse cultural landscape, and bolstering agencies that are innovative in their approach to meeting community needs in the San Francisco Bay Area. Koret's generous funding of Caravan for Democracy HSE will allow for expansion of the program, which reached 700 students and more than 50 community professionals and teachers in the Bay Area last year, to include those who are not affiliated with Jewish

schools, clubs, or centers of Jewish learning. This year Caravan will hold 10 main programs with multiple events, reaching 3,000 students in the San Francisco region.

Additionally, the matching grant will allow Caravan for Democracy HSE to give each participating student a paperback copy of the internationally acclaimed book *The Israelis: Ordinary People in an Extraordinary Land* by award-winning journalist Donna Rosenthal. The book is a balanced portrait of the many faces of contemporary Israelis--from students to soldiers to high-techies, Mizrahi and Ashkenazi Jews to Israeli Druze, Christian and Muslim Arabs to Ethiopian and Russian immigrants. *The Israelis* provides students with a deeper understanding of Israeli culture and society than mainstream media coverage of the Arab-Israeli conflict does.

"I'm delighted that my book will become part of this exciting, innovative project to smash stereotypes and provide students insights into the rich tapestry of modern Israeli society little known by Jews and non-Jews alike," said Ms. Rosenthal, a former Israel TV producer, Israel Radio reporter and journalism instructor who has written for *The Los Angeles Times*, *The New York Times* and *Newsweek*.

Ms. Rosenthal will discuss her book and Israeli diversity with Caravan for Democracy HSE schools and facilitate breakout sessions with students and teachers. A member of the JNF Speaker's Bureau, she was rated one of the top ten most popular Jewish speakers by *Publisher's Weekly* magazine.

"JNF is proud to work together with Koret and other local organizations to bring Israel advocacy and education to Northern California," said Dr. Sol Lizerbram, JNF Vice President of College Activism. "By preparing and empowering high school students for Israel activism, we are helping to promote pro-Israel education and activity on campus and in our communities."

To find out how you can join the effort to support Caravan for Democracy HSE in San Francisco, contact Sherri Morr, JNF Western States Zone Director at 415-677-9600 or smorr@jnf.org. To learn more about Caravan for Democracy HSE or support a program in another community, contact Mara Suskauer, Executive Director, Israel Advocacy and Education at 212-879-9305 ext. 245 or msuskauer@jnf.org.

Caption: Ephraim Sneh, member of the Israeli Knesset and Hillel Kipnis, a student at the Midrasha school in Berkeley, California, at a Caravan for Democracy HSE event. (photo available as a high-res jpeg upon request)

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Jewish National Fund is a non-profit organization founded in 1901 to serve as caretaker of the land of Israel, on behalf of its owners—Jewish people everywhere. Over the past century, JNF has planted over 240 million trees, built over 180 reservoirs and dams, developed over 250,000 acres of land, created more than 450 parks, provided the infrastructure for 1,000 communities and educated students around the world about Israel and the environment. Today, JNF is putting its century of experience to work with the Blueprint Negev initiative, supporting Israel's newest generation of pioneers in developing the Negev Desert, Israel's last frontier. For more information on JNF or to plant trees in Israel, call 1-800-542-TREE (8733) or visit <http://www.jnf.org/>. To contact your local office, please call 888-JNF-0099 or visit <http://www.jnf.org/>.

Media Watch International (MWI) is an independent, non-profit organization dedicated to advancing Israel's image by promoting accurate, timely, and impartial media coverage of Israel and the Middle East. MWI's proactive strategy is predicated upon building positive relationships and fostering a constructive dialogue with the news media, while refining and harnessing the constructive media relations potential of Israeli spokespeople and the community. MWI's newest website is <http://www.mediawatchcaravan.org/>. The site provides instant access of first-rate information to counter imbalanced media coverage of Israel and the Middle East.

American Friends of Likud is part of a global federation of center-right Zionist movements known as Likud Olami - the World Union of Liberal and National Zionists. While American Friends maintains close links to Israel's Likud party, we remain an independent democratic movement that takes an active role in the World Zionist Organization, the Jewish Agency for Israel, and other world movements. We are an organization devoted to promoting public education on the situation in the Middle East, particularly in Israel, as well as advancing general awareness of Zionism. American Friends of Likud provides a solid partnership of public support for the State of Israel, its citizens and its democratically elected governments. For more information, please visit our website: <http://www.thelikud.org/>.

About Koret -- An entrepreneurial spirit guides the Koret Foundation and its sister philanthropy, the Koret Fund, in addressing societal challenges and strengthening Bay Area cultural and community life. By investing in pioneering, strategic solutions, Koret helps develop models that inspire replication in communities across the nation and around the world. In the San Francisco Bay Area, Koret focuses its support on strengthening organizations that improve the quality of life in our region. By promoting educational excellence and opportunity, shaping a diverse cultural landscape, and bolstering agencies that are innovative in their approach to meeting community needs, Koret adds to the region's vitality and opportunity. Internationally, Koret Israel Economic Development Funds (KIEDF) provide loan guarantees to small businesses, and Koret Fellows pursue policy reform to help move Israel toward a free-market economy. The Koret Foundation and the Koret Fund are private philanthropic organizations run by independent boards of directors. Since 1979, these boards have directed more than \$315 million towards projects that reflect a new philanthropic vision for our region.

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