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New Cohort of Schusterman Rabbinical Fellows Announced

New York, NY, June 3, 2010—Eight outstanding rabbinical students have been named as Schusterman Rabbinical Fellows, a program that brings future leaders of the Conservative and Reform movements together for two years of formal study.

This third cohort of the program—which was inaugurated in August 2008—will be composed of four students each from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR) and The Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS). The program is designed to create a cadre of Reform and Conservative rabbis who share a broad and dynamic vision of communal leadership for American Jewry.

The Schusterman Rabbinical Fellowship Program is funded by the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation (CLSFF). The Center for Leadership Initiatives, Inc. (CLI), a private operating foundation dedicated to developing Jewish leaders and promoting managerial excellence throughout the Jewish community, has helped shape the program.

Beginning this fall, SR Fellows will study leadership, collaboration techniques, and key issues in American Jewry, learning from faculty at HUC-JIR, JTS, and outside experts. Through semi-annual gatherings, monthly conference calls or webinars, and informal exchanges, the SR Fellows will examine management methods, define personal visions for their rabbinate, and cultivate strategies for drawing Jews who often feel marginal—including those in interfaith relationships and those not affiliated with any Jewish congregation—closer to the heart of the Jewish community. The SR Fellowship provides funds for tuition and a living stipend during the third and fourth years of the Fellows' rabbinical studies, in order to give the participants more opportunity to focus on becoming rabbinical leaders of contemporary American Jewry.

"We are pleased to be able to provide this distinguished group of rabbinical students from different denominations the opportunity to study together and, we hope, emerge from their seminaries with open minds and collaborative spirits," said Sandy Cardin, President of CLSFF. "As future leaders of our community, it is important that we help them recognize, celebrate and embrace the universal ideas and values that bind us all as Jews."

Rabbi David Ellenson, President of HUC-JIR, said, "We are grateful to the Schusterman Foundation for its vision in sustaining this fellowship. This program models the kind of

cooperation that can and ought to mark American Jewish life. Ours is a partnership that respects denominational differences, while also recognizing that the American Jewish community faces a common set of challenges and requires transformational rabbinical leaders who will revitalize contemporary Jewish life.”

“The Schusterman Rabbinical Fellowship Program enables rabbinical students to engage in interdenominational dialogue and collaboration, and this makes an enormous contribution to the future of American Judaism,” said JTS Chancellor Arnold Eisen. “On behalf of JTS, I once again thank the Schusterman Foundation for its remarkable leadership and its ongoing support of our rabbinical students.”

SR Fellows include*:

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion:

Sydney Henning, Albuquerque, NM
Adena Kemper, Lawrenceville, NJ
David Spinrad, San Francisco, CA
Joshua Stanton, Bethesda, MD

The Jewish Theological Seminary:

Dahlia Bernstein, Plainview, NY
Joshua Dorsch, Wynnewood, PA
Ravid Tilles, Silver Spring, MD
Eric Woodward, Tarzana, CA

* Full biographical statements can be found below.

Further information about the fellowship is available by contacting Rabbi Ellen Flax, Director, Schusterman Rabbinical Fellowship (www.srfellowship.org), at (212) 665-7262 or eflax@srfellowship.org.

Founded in 1875, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (www.huc.edu) is the nation's oldest institution of higher Jewish education and the academic, spiritual, and professional leadership development center of Reform Judaism. HUC-JIR educates men and women for service to American and world Jewry as rabbis, cantors, educators, and communal service professionals, and offers graduate and post-graduate programs to scholars of all faiths. With centers of learning in Cincinnati, Jerusalem, Los Angeles, and New York, HUC-JIR's scholarly resources comprise renowned library and museum collections, the American Jewish Archives, biblical archaeology excavations, research institutes and centers, and academic publications. HUC-JIR invites the community to an array of cultural and educational programs which illuminate Jewish history, identity, and contemporary creativity and which foster interfaith and multiethnic understanding.

The Jewish Theological Seminary of America (www.jtsa.edu) is a preeminent institution of Jewish higher education that integrates rigorous academic scholarship and teaching with a commitment to strengthening Jewish tradition, Jewish lives, and Jewish communities. JTS articulates a vision of Judaism that is learned and passionate, pluralist and authentic, traditional and egalitarian; one that is thoroughly grounded in Jewish texts, history, and practices, and fully engaged with the societies and cultures of the present. Our vision joins faith with inquiry; the covenant of our ancestors with the creative insights of today; intense involvement in the society and State of Israel with devotion to the flowering of Judaism throughout the world; service to the Jewish community, as well as to all of the communities of which Jews are a part: our society, our country, and our world. JTS serves North American Jewry by educating intellectual and spiritual leaders

for Conservative Judaism and the vital religious center, training rabbis, cantors, scholars, educators, communal professionals, and lay activists who are inspired by our vision of Torah and dedicated to assisting in its realization.

The Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation (www.schusterman.org) is dedicated to helping the Jewish people flourish by supporting programs throughout the world that spread the joy of Jewish living, giving and learning. The Foundation also provides assistance to non-sectarian charitable organizations dedicated to enhancing the quality of life in Oklahoma, especially in the areas of education, child advocacy and community service.

The Center for Leadership Initiatives, Inc. (CLI) catalyzes the power and potential of individuals to lead organizations and communities to higher vision, meaning, and effectiveness. Based out of offices in Vancouver, BC, Canada and Jerusalem, Israel, CLI (www.leadingup.org) works to help Jewish leaders create communities in their own image, with programs that will resonate with their generation. Braiding professional development training, innovative facilitation, networking opportunities and Jewish textual content, CLI seeks to contribute to greater effectiveness and dynamism in new and existing Jewish organizations.

Schusterman Rabbinical Fellows, 2010—2012:



Dahlia Bernstein, 24, is a third-year rabbinical student at the Jewish Theological Seminary. Hailing from New York, Dahlia is a graduate of the Joint Program of the Albert A. List College of Jewish Studies at JTS and Columbia University, where she earned two bachelor's degrees: one from Columbia in Anthropology and the second in Talmud and Rabbinics from JTS. During her four years at Columbia, Dahlia trained and served as a peer counselor for a crisis hotline. Between college and rabbinical school, Dahlia worked for the Jewish Community Relations Council of NY in their Intergroup Relations Department. For the past 7 summers, Dahlia worked at Camp Ramah in Nyack, NY. As a delegate for Camp Ramah, Dahlia traveled to Berlin and Ukraine on cross cultural exchanges and in 2009 participated in the AJWS Rabbinical School delegation to Muchucuxcah, Mexico.



Joshua Dorsch, 24, is a third-year rabbinical student at the Jewish Theological Seminary. He is also earning his masters in Jewish Education from JTS' Davidson School. He is a graduate of the Joint Program of the Albert A. List College of Jewish Studies at JTS and Columbia University, where he earned two bachelor's degrees: one from Columbia in Political Science, and the second in Talmud and Rabbinics from JTS. While an undergraduate, Josh served as the List College student body president, as the Vice President of Initiatives of the Columbia/Barnard Hillel, and was an active brother in the Alpha Epsilon Pi fraternity. In addition to his work over many summers at Camp Ramah in the Poconos, Josh has served as an interim principal of a supplemental school, as the student rabbi of Emanuel Synagogue in West Hartford, CT and as a teacher at Tehillah Hebrew School in Riverdale, NY. Josh is originally from Wynnewood, PA, where he was a member of Temple Beth Hillel/Beth El. He is a former competitive table tennis player and enjoys rooting for his favorite Philadelphia sports teams, the Phillies and Eagles.



Sydney Henning, 29, is a third-year student at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Los Angeles. She was born and raised in Albuquerque, New Mexico, where she was a member of Congregation Albert. Sydney graduated from the University of New Mexico with a degree in Political Science and Journalism in 2003. Prior to rabbinical school, she worked as a state director for the 2004 Kerry Presidential Campaign, as a nationwide community organizer for AFSCME, one of the largest labor unions in America, and as the Director of National Initiatives for Birthright Israel's Alumni Association, now known as Birthright Israel NEXT. In her free time, Sydney enjoys fiction writing, reading and yoga.



Adena Kemper, 26, is a third-year student at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York City. Adena is a magna cum laude graduate of Brandeis University, where she majored in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies and minored in Religious Studies. Before starting rabbinical school, she worked as a full-time Jewish educator for two years at Temple Isaiah in Lexington, MA. She also studied Hebrew and Jewish Studies at Hebrew College to keep up her learning. Since starting rabbinical school, Adena has taught religious school at Congregation Beth Elohim in Brooklyn and Temple B'nai Jeshurun in Short Hills, NJ. She also volunteers at HUC-JIR's weekly soup kitchen and participates in a Social Action Exchange Program through the Bronfman Center for Jewish Student Life at NYU. Adena hails from Lawrenceville, NJ, where she was a member of nearby Har Sinai Temple. In her spare spare time, Adena enjoys singing and dancing.



David Spinrad, 39, is a third-year student at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, Ohio. Prior to rabbinical school, for twelve years David was the independent operator of a personal training business in San Francisco that served competitive athletes, people with significant weight-loss goals, cancer survivors and clientele living with HIV. In addition to his rabbinical studies, David serves Congregation Beth Isaac in Trenton, MI and teaches 2nd grade in the religious school at The Valley Temple in Cincinnati. He was also the 2nd Year Representative on the Rabbinical Student Assembly at HUC and will serve as the Schusterman Rabbinical Summer Resident at Wise Temple in Cincinnati. David is originally from San Francisco, CA, where he was a member of Congregation Emanu-El. In his spare time, David likes to work out and indulge in his love of fantasy baseball.



Joshua Stanton, 24, is a third-year rabbinical student at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York City and co-Editor of the Journal of Inter-Religious Dialogue. He is also a founding co-Director of Lessons of a Lifetime™, a nursing home-based project designed to improve intergenerational relations. An alumnus of Amherst College, Josh graduated in 2008 with degrees in history, economics, and Spanish. At Amherst, he co-founded the Amherst College Multi-Faith Council and served in several leadership positions within Amherst College Hillel. Josh has been the recipient of numerous leadership awards, including the Bridge-Builders Leadership Award from the Interfaith Youth Core, Associates of Jewish Homes and Services for the Aging's Annette W. and Herbert H. Lichterman Outstanding Programming Award, and the Volunteer Hero Award from the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington. He is also a blogger for the Tikkun Daily and Huffington Post and is completing a book about Moses Maimonides as an inter-religious leader. In his free time, Josh enjoys swimming and baking cookies for his wife.



Ravid Tilles, 25, is a third-year student at the Jewish Theological Seminary. Ravid graduated with honors from the University of Pittsburgh, where he majored in Social Work and received a certificate in Jewish Studies. While at Pitt, Ravid was the Vice President of Religious Life at Hillel for three years, where he led High Holiday services and helped raise active participation at Hillel from 50 to 200 students. He also is a founding member of the Jewish acapella choir at Pitt. Since starting rabbinical school, Ravid has served as the Youth

Director of Temple Beth Sholom in Roslyn, Long Island. He has spent two out of the last three summers as a group leader for USY on Wheels. Ravid is from Maryland, and still has strong ties to his home congregation, Shaare Tefila in Silver Spring.



Eric Woodward, 29, is a third-year rabbinical student at the Jewish Theological Seminary. Originally from Tarzana, CA, Eric is a cum laude graduate of Williams College, where he majored in religion and received honors for his thesis on Joseph Soleveitchik. He earned a master's degree in Jewish philosophy from JTS, where he wrote his thesis about Walter Benjamin. Before starting rabbinical school, Eric worked for two years as the program director at Judea Reform Congregation in Durham, NC. Eric is the founder of Eitzat Yitro, a group at JTS for rabbinical students

whose identities involve some interfaith component (such as parental intermarriage, conversion of a close relative or partner, or a student's own conversion). He is the vice president of the Rabbinical School Students Organization and a member of Keshet. Eric is also a teacher at the Rebecca and Ivory Prozdor High School and the Ansche Chesed Hebrew School, and has been a fellow at Yeshivat Hadar. This summer, he will complete a 400-hour unit of Clinical Pastoral Education at Bellevue Hospital in Manhattan.

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