



DILLER TEEN FELLOWS CURRICULUM OUTLINE

THE HELEN DILLER FAMILY FOUNDATION
A SUPPORTING FOUNDATION OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY ENDOWMENT FUND of the JEWISH
COMMUNITY FEDERATION OF SAN FRANCISCO, THE PENINSULA, MARIN & SONOMA COUNTIES

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PROGRAM GOAL

The Diller Teen Fellows (DTF) program's goal is to develop future generations of Jewish leaders who will be committed to the Jewish community, Israel, and community service. At the program's end each participant will feel inspired and empowered to take action.

THE PARTICIPANTS

Twenty exceptional teens (juniors in high school) are selected in a competitive process to become a part of the Diller team. The group meets for Sunday workshops, weekend retreats, and goes on a three-week Summer Seminar in Israel.

- ✧ The team is made up of a very diverse group of bright and articulate Jewish teens from different religious affiliations, ethnic heritage, geography, and gender.
- ✧ The group is intentionally diverse in the hope that the Fellows will not only become close friends, but will also recognize how much they can learn from one another. The model of Jewish communal leadership is enhanced by what the Fellows will teach one another.

METHOD

In order to create well-rounded future Jewish leaders, the program integrates four major themes that together make up the tapestry of the Diller Teen Fellows. These four themes are:

- ★ Judaism: Ethics and Identity-Building, Texts and Traditions
- ★ Community Service
- ★ Leadership
- ★ Israel

JUDAISM

Outcomes: Diller Teen Fellows will:

- ✧ Understand the Jewish value of *Tikkun Olam*
- ✧ Know how to read and analyze Jewish texts
- ✧ Gain a better understanding of Jewish texts and their significance
- ✧ Feel a sense of belonging to the Jewish community
- ✧ Want to contribute to the Jewish community
- ✧ Have a positive association with the Jewish community
- ✧ Understand the concept of global Jewish peoplehood

Method:

- ✧ Shabbat services organized and led by the Fellows
- ✧ Text study
- ✧ Group discussions about Jewish identity, observance, texts, traditions, and values

- ✧ Design and execute personal social action projects
- ✧ Monthly workshops with community leaders and educators
- ✧ *Mifgash* (meeting) with Israeli teens
- ✧ Summer Seminar in Israel
- ✧ Immersion in a positive Jewish identity-building experience

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Outcomes: Diller Teen Fellows will:

- ✧ Feel empowered to work for change
- ✧ Feel an obligation to serve the community
- ✧ Understand that social action and *tikkun olam* are Jewish values
- ✧ Gain the skills to utilize their resources to initiate change
- ✧ Gain more knowledge about community service opportunities both within and outside of the Jewish community, both locally and globally

Method:

- ✧ Group discussions on the challenges and opportunities of community service
- ✧ Design and execute projects in the local community and in Israel
- ✧ Presentations by professionals from the local Jewish community with the possibility of mentoring relationships
- ✧ “Pay it Forward” project (a.k.a. “Doing Good Well”) at the end of the program

ISRAEL

Outcomes: Diller Teen Fellows will:

- ✧ Have a personal relationship with Israel and Israelis
- ✧ Understand why Israel is so important to the global Jewish community
- ✧ Understand issues facing contemporary Israeli society
- ✧ Be engaged with issues concerning Israel in the future

Method:

- ✧ Connection with Israeli teens: this includes e-mail communication and *Mifgashim* (meetings) in the U.S. and in Israel
- ✧ Learning from visiting Israeli scholars and visiting local community Israel experts
- ✧ Summer Seminar in Israel
- ✧ Workshops on current issues in Israel during the retreats and some of the Sunday sessions
- ✧ Group discussions about Israeli politics and current events, the Fellows’ relationship to Israel, and how Jewish life in Israel compares to Jewish life in the Diaspora

LEADERSHIP

Outcomes: Diller Teen Fellows will:

- ✧ Gain tools to be more effective in planning and executing community service projects
- ✧ Will develop self awareness about their strengths and weaknesses as a leader
- ✧ Learn how to work effectively as part of a team
- ✧ Feel empowered to initiate projects on their own
- ✧ Learn how to network using their resources

Method:

- ✧ Work in small groups to design and implement projects
- ✧ Group discussions about what it means to be a good leader
- ✧ Opportunities to interact with community leadership
- ✧ Help each other to use their resources and accentuate their individual strengths
- ✧ Initiate a personal project at the end of the program as part of the “Pay It Forward” (a.k.a. “Doing Good Well”) project
- ✧ Initiate, lead, and teach different parts of the meetings, services, and workshops providing each Fellow a chance to share an area of expertise

COMPONENTS

The four themes are woven through all the various program components throughout the course of the year. The following components have been developed to maximize the impact of the program, while recognizing the time constraints in a high school junior’s schedule.

- ✧ 8 Sunday workshops
- ✧ 3 weekend-long retreats (one at the beginning of the program, one with the Israeli teens, and one in the fall after the Summer Seminar)
- ✧ 3 Evening programs (two with the Israeli teens and one in preparation for the Summer Seminar)
- ✧ *Mifgash* (meeting) with Israeli teens
- ✧ Home hospitality weekend with the Israeli teens in the U.S.
- ✧ Group and individual community service projects
- ✧ 3 Week Summer Seminar in Israel
- ✧ Final celebration

THE GROUP PROJECTS

The program takes a Project Based Learning approach. The Fellows learn by doing, not by talking about doing.

In the first half of the program the team breaks into four project groups. Each group takes responsibility for a project that will happen in the U.S. or Israel.

In addition to offering a service to the community, these projects allow the Fellows to become better leaders by learning from the planning and implementation of this experience.

Throughout the program DTFs will be asked to “go meta” - to take a big picture look at how they work on their project and how they can learn from this experience to become more effective in creating future projects.

MIFGASH

Another important component of the program is the *Mifgash* with the Israeli teens. The Israeli teens come to the U.S. for a 12 day visit. The budget for this component should come from each community’s local Living Bridge program or similar local funding.

In addition to the Summer Seminar in Israel together, the two groups build relationships through:

- ✧ A weekend long shared retreat (the second retreat for the DTFs)
- ✧ Home Hospitality Weekend: Starting on Friday the Israeli teens spend time at the homes of the DTFs
- ✧ E-Mails: The *Mifgash* component is one of the highlights of the Diller Teen Fellows program and online correspondence helps the teens make the most out of their time together in person

SUNDAY WORKSHOPS

These workshops give the Fellows a chance to delve into all of the four pillars and explore a variety of issues relevant to teens. Some workshops will be lead by the students and some by the coordinator or other community educators. In addition, DTF participants will meet with local and Israeli activists and volunteer at Jewish community events.

WEEKEND RETREATS

The weekend retreats are an opportunity for the Fellows to bond as a group and build relationships while learning about all four pillars. The first retreat is at the beginning of the program so its emphasis is on group dynamics and laying the groundwork for the rest of the year so everyone has a common language when learning about these issues. The second retreat is during the *mifgash* with the Israeli teens so the concentration is on Israel and Jewish life in the Diaspora compared with Jewish life in Israel. The final retreat is near the end of the program so its focus is on summarizing all they have learned and exploring what opportunities they will have to utilize their new knowledge and skills in the future.

SUMMER SEMINAR IN ISRAEL

This important component of the programs allows the Fellows to come together as a group and go to a new depth of exploration of all the threads that make up the Diller program.

- ✧ Judaism: The DTFs take part in exploration of Jewish identity throughout the summer, including experiencing different streams of Judaism and actively participating in various forms of observance, text studies, discussions and direct actions that relate to text.
- ✧ Community Service: The Fellows spend part of the Summer Seminar working on community service projects in Israel.
- ✧ Leadership: Each Fellow will be responsible for leading the group for two days during the Summer Seminar. In addition, DTFs will have many other opportunities to grow as leaders including activities such as a survival hike in the Negev desert that includes group games and processing group dynamics. The Fellows will also get to meet with Israeli leaders throughout the trip.
- ✧ Israel: The Summer experience gives the Fellows a chance to spend several unforgettable days with their Israeli counterparts and their families. The diverse itinerary includes components such as an Arab-Israeli Peace Seminar, visiting a Bedouin village, attending an Israeli rock concert, and participating in workshops with various Israeli artists, among other activities.

“PAYING IT FORWARD” / “DOING GOOD WELL” INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS

A special Jewish curriculum has been designed for the Diller Teen Fellows program called “Doing Good Well.” Each teen will be given a small amount of money with which they will launch a personal project in their senior year of high school. This project encourages the Fellows to use the tools and resources they have gained throughout the program.