



Community Legacy Fund Application Cover Sheet
(to be completed on this page and attached to the front of each application)

Applicant Organization: Community Kollel of Kansas City

Program Title: The First One's on Us --Build your own Jewish Library

Program Start Date: May 2009

Program End Date: May 2010

Grant Amount Requested: \$10,179 Total Program Budget \$10,179

Grant summary, including description of program, need addressed and expected outcomes/benefits (please limit to space below):

The First One's on Us --Build your own Jewish Library is an initiative to help the Jewish Community begin bringing Jewish literature into their homes. Upon beginning a new *chevrusah*, study partnerships, the Kollel scholars will present the student with the book being studied, to serve as the founding stone of the student's library. By doing this, the Kollel will help educate those currently unaware of the tremendous value placed on study and reading, and that the Jewish Library is essential to every Jewish Home. This will serve as the student's introduction to the merit of owning and using the mainstays of every Jewish library.

Having tools available is an essential first step to study. Although merely possessing a book may not necessarily draw its owner to read it, having it available to read, *when the owner so chooses* is vital. The task of the Kollel rabbi will be to excite the owner to want to study – and *The First One's on Us; Build your Jewish Library* will provide the tools necessary to actually spend time learning.

An empowered community begins with education. The Jewish people, dedicated to education and literacy, must always remain committed to enriching our own knowledge databanks. If we are not studying, we lose our appreciation of who we are and what we stand for.

Finally, it would be an inspiration to live in a community of homes who broadcast the importance of Jewish learning, by prominently displaying their personal libraries and tributes to Jewish texts.

If program is successful will organization assume future costs? Yes No One Time Program

Community Legacy Fund Grant Application

Two copies of each grant application attached to the grant application cover sheet are due to the Jewish Community Foundation by the following deadline:

December 31, 2008

Grant applications and cover sheets should be e-mailed to Brooke Klonsky at brookek@jewishkc.org.

If you are applying to the Jewish Community Foundation for the first time, a copy of your IRS tax determination letter stating that you are a 501(c)(3) organization is required.

The following information is required. Letter/Number your responses to correspond with the letters/numbers below:

A. Name and address of applying organization

The Community Kollel of Kansas City
Jewish Federation of Greater Kansas City
5801 W. 115th Street
Suite 201
Overland Park, KS 66211

B. Application contact person, title and phone number

Rabbi Binyomin Gonsher
Executive Director
(913) 579-2440

C. Title of proposed program

The First One's on Us --Build your own Jewish Library

D. Description of program

1. Describe specifically the activities of the program being proposed and its goals and objectives.

The First One's on Us --Build your own Jewish Library is an initiative to help the Jewish Community begin bringing Jewish literature into their homes. Upon beginning a new *chevrusah*, study partnerships, the Kollel scholars will present the student with the book being studied, to serve as the founding stone of the student's library. By doing this, the Kollel will help educate those currently unaware of the tremendous value placed on study and reading, and that the Jewish Library is essential to every Jewish Home. This will serve as the student's introduction to the merit of owning and using the mainstays of every Jewish library.

2. What population will be served? How many will be served?

Only those with no formal Jewish Library (as determined by the ownership of 12 or more Jewish books) will be considered applicants. However, any Jewish member of our local community, who agrees to study the text with the kollel scholar for a period of four sessions will be entitled to keep the material presented. An anticipated 25 families will be affected by *the First One's on Us – build your own Jewish Library*.

3. What is the time period for the program?

This program will run indefinitely, provided sponsors continue to step forward.

4. What is the location of the program?

The First One's on Us --Build your own Jewish Library will be offered in the greater Kansas City area, to anyone with the space available to begin constructing his own Jewish library.

5. How will this program be marketed to its target population?

Enrollees in this program will be recruited through current Kollel programs. (During the last calendar year, over 700 program hours were provided by the kollel, with total attendees in the 1000's.) Those who commit to the minimum four-session study period of in depth text analysis will be chosen to enroll.

6. Who will be responsible for administering the program, both volunteer and professional? What are their qualifications?

The Kollel scholars, with over 20 years of combined collegiate level teaching as well as master's levels accreditation in Jewish Studies, will administer the program. All Kollel rabbis own extensive, personal Jewish Libraries; with mastery knowledge over books published for novice and advanced students. Rabbi Binyomin Gonsher, the Executive Director, will administer the session, coordinating speakers, dates and other logistics. He has served as the Executive Director of the Community Kollel of Kansas City for 18 months, was the Founder and CEO of *Guys with Brooms* and served as the Main Librarian during his studies at The Talmudic University of Florida.

E. Describe the extent of the need for this program and how it came to your organization's attention.

Sitting in Starbucks one afternoon with a student, one of the kollel rabbis sensed unease from across the table. Although they had been discussing Torah concepts for the past twenty minutes, when the time arose to peer inside the *chumash* (bible), the student felt uncomfortable. He then told the rabbi that he hadn't seen one of "those books" since he was a child in his grandmother's home. What we had assumed to be a staple in every Jewish Home, is apparently not commonplace at all.

We tested this theory in different settings – as we teach from private homes, many evenings a week, we have begun to ask the host families, "to please supply a *chumash* for the discussion." More than we would like to admit, have uncomfortably declined.

With the growth of the internet and the decline of tangible book sales, the Jewish Home Library is disappearing. And whereas the argument can be made that much of the information available between two covers can be found inexpensively online, the presence of a proper Jewish library in a home provides a message of dedication to study and academia that has been a part of our heritage for thousands of years.

F. How will the Jewish community ultimately benefit from the implementation of this program?

Having tools available is an essential first step to study. Although merely possessing a book may not necessarily draw its owner to read it, having it available to read, *when the owner so chooses* is vital. The task of the kollel rabbi will be to excite the owner to want to study – and *The First One's on Us; Build your Jewish Library* will provide the tools necessary to actually spend time learning.

An empowered community begins with education. The Jewish people, dedicated to education and literacy, must always remain committed to enriching our own knowledge databanks. If we are not studying, we lose our appreciation of who we are and what we stand for.

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G. Has this program been implemented before by your organization, by another organization in Kansas City or elsewhere? What were the results?

Inspired by the *PJ Library*, we are not aware of any other community that offers this service for the adult population. After seeing the excitement a new book brings to the home, we believe similar opportunities should be available for older readers as well.

H. How does this program relate to the ongoing goals and activities of your organization?

As part of our mission to provide meaningful, vibrant and long lasting educational programs for our community, the Kolllel is always looking for ways to create new ambassadors for Jewish Study. Beginning a library in one's home turns the environment into one that broadcasts a passion and enthusiasm for Jewish learning.

Additionally, *The First One's on Us; Build your Jewish Library* will help establish repeat attendance to classes and Kolllel offerings. Conditional on the gift is the commitment to study it with one of the scholars.

I. Financial Information

1. What is the dollar amount requested for this program? What is the total percentage of this amount to the total cost of the program?

The total cost for *The First One's on Us – Build your own Jewish Library* is \$10,179, and we are requesting the assistance of the Jewish Community Foundation for 100% of this program.

2. What is the line item budget for this program? Include a complete revenue projection and complete detail by expense categories. See attached.

3. How will partial funding of this grant application impact the program's implementation?

In the event partial funding is secured, the number of families involved will be reduced. The program aims to engage 25 families at full funding; a significant decrease in resources available yields a significant decrease in lives affected.

4. Is this an on-going program? If yes, how does your organization plan to assume the costs in future years?

This is an ongoing program. Graduates of the program will be encouraged not only to recommend new enrollees, but to sponsor their enrollment.

J. Evaluation

1. What are the expected short-term and long-term outcomes of this program?

We expect to give out 10 books in the first four weeks, 15 in the following eight. The short term outcome will be the beginning of an educational process that places emphasis on ownership of classic Jewish Sources, as well as commitment from the students to study those sources on an ongoing, four-time minimum basis.

Long term, we anticipate the development of 25 new private Jewish Libraries in the Greater Kansas City area.

2. How will these outcomes be evaluated?

As with all Kolllel events, online surveys will be conducted. In this case, enrollees will be offered the opportunity to evaluate the program after the first session, the final session and six months after the initial gift.

K. Why should the Community Legacy Fund fund this program?

Reading enhances the quality of life, as does Jewish study. A great impact on the Jewish community can be achieved by placing the tools that encourage those two above goals into local homes, *and by facilitating the use of those tools.*

For questions regarding your organization's grant application please contact Brooke Klonsky at 913-327-8245 or brookek@jewishkc.org.

