

PRESS RELEASE

GRAY ACADEMY OF JEWISH EDUCATION AWARDED AVI CHAI BOOKSHELF GRANT

November 7, 2007 - Gray Academy of Jewish Education is pleased to announce that it has been awarded an AVI CHAI Bookshelf Grant for over \$5,000.

The AVI CHAI Foundation, a New York-based private foundation dedicated to supporting and encouraging the growing Jewish day school movement, developed the Bookshelf Program nine years ago in an effort to upgrade day school libraries and library collections.

Day Schools are eligible for the three year grant if their libraries are open for at least 25 hours per week and are staffed for 15 of those hours. In addition, untrained school librarians must attend two professional development seminars during the course of the year – this year the seminars are available via video conferencing.

Schools must also commit to participating with AVI CHAI in the support of their libraries. In the first year of the program, schools receive 100% of their allocated fund from AVI CHAI. In the second and third years, AVI CHAI will contribute 50% and 25% of the funds respectively and schools must contribute the remaining amount towards Bookshelf purchases from their own budgets. After the three year grant cycle, schools are responsible to maintain their libraries on their own.

Lauren Merkin, a member of AVI CHAI's Board of Trustees, says, "One feature of any first-rate high school is a comprehensive library. Experience has taught us that school buy-in is critical to ensuring the long-term success and sustainability of any short term philanthropic intervention in a school. It is gratifying to see how many schools have committed themselves and their resources - both financial and human - to the growth of their libraries and the success of the Bookshelf venture."

In addition to financial support, the Bookshelf grant provides schools and their librarians with enhanced professional development opportunities in the area of library science.

"We are delighted to have been selected for the AVI CHAI Bookshelf grant. Through this grant, the Kaufman Silverberg Library and our library staff will be better equipped to effectively serve both our teachers and students, helping to enrich the classroom curriculum and develop the research skills our students will need for University," said Rory Paul, Head of School and CEO. "As partners with the AVI CHAI Foundation in enhancing and maintaining our library, we express our commitment to offering all-around excellence in Judaic and General Studies, to our students and staff."

Gray Academy of Jewish Education will receive funding from AVI CHAI over three years toward the purchase of materials (books, audiovisual items, computer hardware and

software) for their media centres. According to the guidelines of the grant, at least half of the money must be used toward Judaic materials.

Gray Academy of Jewish Education is one of 95 high schools participating in the 2007/2008 program.

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