



## \$250,000 Challenge Grant to PJC Advances Youth Programs & Outreach

Josh Fraimow

**T**he Partnership for a Jewish Center has been awarded a \$250,000 challenge grant by the Shepard Broad Foundation of Miami, Florida, to establish a Youth Activities Center and a new Teen Mitzvot program as part of the new facility on Cornwallis Road.

This major contribution will support the building's capital campaign and provide funds for collaborative youth programs across synagogues and outreach to unaffiliated Jewish youth.

"We're thrilled by this show of support," says Partnership co-chair Larry Rocamora. "It lets us reach out and serve a critical part of our community. Particularly in the teen years, kids can feel less connected to the Jewish part of their lives. We'll have a chance to strengthen those connections and draw them in through service, recreation and cultural activities."

The challenge grant is intended to rally support for these efforts within the local community. "Every dollar pledged to the Capital Campaign for the Center

will be matched dollar for dollar, up to \$250,000," Rocamora explains. "We hope that parents across the community, in particular, will see the amazing benefits that the Youth Activities Center and a Teen Mitzvot program can provide, and that they will offer their enthusiastic support."

Adam Goldstein, Capital Campaign Co-Chair, envisions the Center and new program as a springboard for inspiring journeys in Jewish discovery for local teens. "The Shepard Broad Foundation Challenge Grant will help create gathering places for Jewish youth, affiliated and unaffiliated, across synagogues and congregations. It will also allow youth of all ages to engage with the broader Jewish community."

A defining feature of the Center will be a new Youth Mitzvah Corp. Exemplifying the Center's commitment to *tikkun olam* and community service, the Mitzvah Corp will encourage Jewish teens to perform mitzvot collaboratively across the region, and will serve as a model for similar programs across the country. Projects will be selected based on both community needs and the interests of the teens themselves.

"We have already received the first

\$25,000 toward this generous match," says Goldstein. "We encourage everyone to consider making a donation to maximize the impact of this incredibly generous dollar-for-dollar match offered by the Shepard Broad Foundation."

In the short term, Rocamora sees the challenge grant stimulating local philanthropy. And down the road? "We will see the emergence of a new generation of Jewish leaders."

Those interested in the Teen Mitzvot program can contact Federation Associate Executive Director Ziva Raney at [ziva@shalomdch.org](mailto:ziva@shalomdch.org) or (919) 483-5335 ext. 18.

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– Larry Rocamora

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