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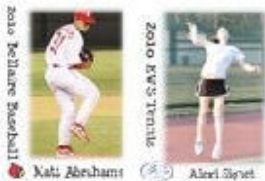
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Sun, 25 Jul, 2010

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- Israel
- World
- Nation

Columns



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By Joseph W. Samuels



A & E

By Aaron Howard



Food

By Ted Powers

Global Conference draws Jewish innovators to Israel

Published • Thu, Jul 08, 2010

JERUSALEM (JTA) – Some 120 young Jewish innovators have gathered in Israel for a global summit.

The ROI Global Summit for Young Jewish Innovators, which began Sunday, July 4, and runs four days, has brought together Jewish business and social entrepreneurs, innovators, thinkers and artists from all over the world to discuss how to strengthen Jewish education and identity, Jewish arts and culture, environmental responsibility, and tikkun olam, repair of the world.

"I invite all those who fear for the next generation of Jewish leadership to come see the Jewish future and hear its many voices at ROI," said Lynn Schusterman, who created ROI as a partnership between the Center for Leadership Initiatives and Taglit-Birthright Israel.

Since ROI's inception in 2006, Schusterman has invested \$600,000 in more than 60 projects.

"I am deeply inspired by these 20- and 30-somethings, whose Judaism moves them to build networks of purpose – and to repair the world," she said.

To mark its fifth anniversary, ROI awarded \$500,000 in grants to 35 initiatives led by members in 11 countries, with a special emphasis on collaborative projects. Some of these projects include Jewcology, a Web portal for Jewish environmentalists created through an international collaboration by 17 ROI members; Jewish Salons, an international network addressing Jewish identity through culture and arts; Jew It Yourself, whose 21st century Jewish catalogue will enable visitors to explore how to live Jewishly in a pluralistic context; and Bat Kol, an organization for Orthodox lesbians in Israel, which promotes acceptance of lesbians and gays, especially in the observant community.

ROI provides professional development and financial support to a network of 500 innovators and activists, who have launched hundreds of projects in more than 100 communities over the past five years. — JTA



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