



PRESS RELEASE

AWARD-WINNING SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR TO SPEND COMING YEAR WORKING WITH JEWISH TEENS

USY Service-Learning Initiative Selects ‘Changemaker’ to Inspire Teens to Make a Commitment to Social Action

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Matthew Fieldman, an advertising agency CEO who’s won several awards and honors for his work as a social entrepreneur has been named the 2015 “USY Danny Siegel Changemaker-in-Residence” by United Synagogue Youth. Over the course of the year Fieldman will serve as a teacher, mentor, and role model for Jewish teens, inspiring them to make a commitment to social action and social justice.

The Changemaker program gives teens a chance to meet and work with experienced professionals on the forefront of social entrepreneurship and *tikun olam* (repairing the world). Now in its second year, the program taps in to the desire of young people to have a direct, positive impact on their world, while helping them connect this passion to their Jewish identities.

“Teens represent the energy, passion, and idealism that is inherent in *tikun olam*,” said Fieldman, a former USYer and USY advisor from Cleveland, Ohio. “They are natural risk takers [and] that willingness to take risks is the perfect foundation for social entrepreneurship.”

Fieldman said he plans to engage teens in hands-on volunteering, as well as encourage their ideas for social action, so that most importantly, they begin to see themselves as agents for change, both in the Jewish community and the world at large.

Fieldman, 35, has worked with non-profits, both Jewish and secular, for years, and mentored several aspiring social entrepreneurs through Cleveland’s Social Entrepreneur Accelerator and Purpose Capital initiatives. He is currently the CEO of his own ad agency, Rockit Results.

Fieldman said he “caught the social entrepreneurship fever,” in 2010 when he helped expand MedWish, a non-profit that repurposes discarded medical supplies and equipment to provide humanitarian aid in developing countries.

That same year he and a partner launched EDWINS Leadership and Restaurant Institute, a non-profit restaurant in Cleveland that trains formerly-incarcerated men and women for careers in fine dining. In raising the capital for this project he was named “2014 Fundraiser of the Year” by *Fundraising Success* magazine.

Fieldman has won several awards and honors for his fundraising and philanthropy, including the 2011 Manhattan Institute Social Entrepreneurship Award, 2012 Toshiba “Help the Helpers” Award, 2012 Mutual of America Community Partnership Award, and the 2011 Ariane de Rothschild Fellowship, as a result of which he spent three weeks studying social enterprise at Cambridge University in England and ESSEC Business School in Paris.

He was also named Engage!Cleveland’s first ever “Rising Star,” and one of Cleveland’s “25 Under 35” by the Cleveland 20/30 Club.

Fieldman is currently working on launching his next venture, Cleveland Codes, which will bring careers in software development to inner-city youth.

“Tikun olam has long been a pillar of USY, so we are thrilled to have someone with Matthew’s experience and passion in this role,” said Rabbi David Levy, Director of Teen Learning for United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. “We can’t wait to see the new ways in which he will inspire our teens to action.”

Last year’s “Changemaker,” journalist and social entrepreneur Jessica Abo, drew a passionate response from USYers through teaching them about social action, sharing her own experiences, and working alongside the teens on different field projects.

The USY Danny Siegel Changemaker-in-Residence program is funded by a generous gift from Dianne and Martin Newman of Providence, Rhode Island in memory of their parents, Sylvia and Leonard Zimet and Lillian and Morris Newman.

The Newmans chose to name the program for Danny Siegel because of his tremendous impact inspiring Jewish teens to work to improve the world. A past USY International President, poet, author and lecturer, Siegel has shared his passion for “doing good” with generations of USYers, and his name has become synonymous with tikun olam in USY and around the world.