



The American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 22, 2008

Contact: Mitchell Bard

Tel: 301-565-3918

Email: mgbard@aol.com

Web: <http://www.JewishVirtualLibrary.org>

AICE Announces Winners of Schusterman Israel Scholar Awards

CHEVY CHASE, MARYLAND — The American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise (AICE) announced today the recipients of the Schusterman Israel Scholar Awards. These prestigious awards are meant to encourage students to pursue academic careers in Israel-related fields by supporting their graduate studies.

This year's winners, who will each receive \$15,000 to support their studies, are Naomi Baldinger (UCLA), Randall Geller (Brandeis University), Hillel Gruenberg (New York University), Sara Hirschorn (University of Chicago), and Hannah Pressman (New York University). In addition, previous award winners - Rachel Berry (New York University), Rachel Fish (Brandeis University), Eric Fleisch (Brandeis University), Joshua Gleis (Tufts University), Jonathan Gribetz (Columbia University), Liora Halperin (UCLA), Joseph Ringel (Brandeis University), and Ofer Sharone (Berkeley) - who have advanced toward their degrees had their awards renewed for 2008.

“Universities throughout the country need more scholars to teach courses about Israel so students can gain an accurate view of Israel’s history and culture,” said AICE President Howard Rosenbloom. “Many students are discouraged from pursuing degrees in Israel studies because few opportunities exist for young scholars to teach

the subject. We believe each of these students has great potential for making important contributions to the field of Israel studies, and we're grateful to the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation for helping us create a cadre of future scholars."

"We are proud to support this important project to help inspire a new generation of leaders to engage in writing, research and teaching about Israel," said Lynn Schusterman, President of the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation. The Foundation has been at the forefront of efforts to foster understanding and support for Israel on college campuses.

AICE's Executive Director, Mitchell Bard, added, "We are concerned that most courses about Israel focus on the conflict with the Arabs, but a full understanding of Israel requires discussion about the many other facets of Israeli society, culture and politics. By supporting aspiring scholars from a range of disciplines, and a variety of perspectives, we hope to encourage a new generation of educators who can expose students to all aspects of Israel."

Naomi Baldinger is a third-year graduate student and departmental fellow in the Comparative Literature Ph.D. program at UCLA. In 2005, Baldinger completed a B.A. at the University of Texas at Austin and was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa in 2003. In February 2008, Naomi co-organized a conference at UCLA entitled "The Idea of the Arab Jew." Her doctoral studies at UCLA have included the roles of "self" and "other" in Israeli literature.

Randall Geller is a third-year Ph.D. candidate in Israel Studies/Middle Eastern History in Brandeis University's Department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies. He received an M.A. in Middle East/Judaic Studies from Brandeis University in 1995 and a B.A. in History and Classical Civilizations from Dickinson College in 1992. He previously worked as a journalist in Israel. Randall's dissertation, "Non-Jewish Soldiers in the Israel Defense Forces, 1948-1957," will address the subject of minorities in the Israeli military.

Hillel Gruenberg is a Ph.D. candidate in the joint Ph.D. Program in Hebrew & Judaic Studies and History at New York University, specializing in Israeli Political History. Hillel received a B.A. from the State University of New York in Binghamton, majoring in History and Philosophy, Politics and Law (PPL) with a concentration in Middle East and North African Studies. He plans on studying the history and factionalism of Israel's political parties as well as the adaptation of Zionist ideology to the Israeli political sphere.

Sara Hirschhorn graduated with honors from Yale University in 2003, completing a double major in Political Science/Comparative Politics and History with a concentration on area studies of the Middle East. In 2005, she received her M.A. in Middle East Studies from the University of Chicago. In 2006, Sara was accepted into the doctoral program in the History Department at the University of Chicago as a Century fellow, where she studies the history of Zionism and the Arab-Israeli conflict. Her dissertation will focus on American-born immigrants in Israel and their political involvement within the Israeli radical right and settler movement since 1967. Apart from her studies, she has served as a research assistant for Chief U.S. negotiator Ambassador Dennis Ross and several faculty members at Yale and the University of Chicago and continues to be active in academic teaching and public education related to Israel and the Middle East.

Hannah Pressman, is a Ph.D. candidate in Modern Hebrew literature at New York University, where she will also receive an advanced certificate in Poetics and Theory. She has focused her studies on issues of "Confessional Texts and Contexts: Studies in Israeli Literary Autobiography," explores the role of confession and religious-secular dynamics in Hebrew self-writing during the second half of the twentieth century. While underscoring pressing contemporary questions about the sources and definitions of Jewish identity, her research also considers the boundaries between individual stories and history in Israeli society. A former Wexner Graduate Fellow and MacCracken Fellow at NYU, Pressman is currently serving as the 2007-2008 Hazel D. Cole Fellow in Jewish Studies at the University of Washington.

The Israel Scholar Development Fund is a project of the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise (AICE), a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization created in 1993.

###