DISTANCE LEARNING

TORAH FUND

“INVESTING IN THE FUTURE”

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 30, 2019

8:30 PM (EASTERN TIME)

SCRIPT

PRESENTERS: RANDY SCHWARTZ, INTERNATIONAL TORAH FUND CHAIR

RABBI LILLY KAUFMAN, TORAH FUND EXCUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Introduction**

Welcome to the WLCJ Torah Fund Distance Learning session. I am Randy Schwartz,

International Torah Fund Chair and joining me today is Rabbi Lilly Kaufman, the Executive

Director of Torah Fund. We are delighted you were able to join us this evening and we will do

our best to provide you information about the Torah Fund Campaign to make your time with us

worthwhile.

We would ask that you please mute your phones by pressing \*6. Also, if you have a question

during the presentation, please e-mail one of us at either [rschwartz@wlcj.org](mailto:rschwartz@wlcj.org) or

[likaufman@jtsa.edu](mailto:likaufman@jtsa.edu) and we will make every attempt to answer it at the end of our session, or by

email after this session.

So here we go. What is Torah Fund? Torah Fund is the dedicated philanthropy of Women’s

League for Conservative Judaism. Our donors belong to sisterhoods at Conservative synagogues

in the United States and Canada or are individual members of Women’s League. Everyone is

welcome to contribute. The monies raised by the Torah Fund Campaign supports scholarships

and programming at five degree-granting seminaries of higher-learning worldwide. Two are in

North America: the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York and the Ziegler School of

Rabbinic Studies in Los Angeles. The Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies is in Jerusalem, the

Seminario Rabinico Latinoamericano is in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and the Zacharias Frankel

College is in Potsdam, Germany.

The mission of Torah Fund is to provide every woman an opportunity to participate in

preserving, promoting, and perpetuating Conservative/Masorti Judaism through active giving to

the Torah Fund Campaign of Women’s League for Conservative Judaism.

It is not, nor has it ever been, a fund to purchase or refurbish Torahs.

In the next hour, our goal is to provide you with information to invest in the future of your

sisterhood’s Torah Fund Campaigns.

First and foremost, you must educate yourself with the information we just covered. What is

Torah Fund? What is the Mission of Torah Fund? And you should be able to recite the five

seminaries we support in your sleep – you must commit them to memory so that their names are

readily available when you speak to anyone about the Torah Fund Campaign.

You should also have at your fingertips the various parts of the 5 seminaries. For example:

The Jewish Theological Seminary (also referred to by its initials as ‘JTS’) comprises the

Rabbinical School, the H.L. Miller Cantorial School, the William Davidson School of Education,

Gershon Kekst Graduate School, and the Albert A. List College. Its Center for Pastoral

Education is rapidly becoming a leader in its field, for clergy of all faiths. Its library houses one

of the largest collection of Jewish books and rare manuscripts in the world.

The Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies is the rabbinical school of the American Jewish

University in Los Angeles.

The Schechter Institutes in Jerusalem include a leading Israeli graduate school called the

Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies; the Schechter Rabbinical Seminary; the TALI Educational

System which prepares teachers of Jewish studies in Israeli public schools; Neve Schechter

which houses the center for Jewish heritage in the arts at Neve Tzedek in Tel Aviv, Midreshet

Schechter, which offers adult education through synagogues and community centers throughout

Israel, and Midreshet Yerushalayim which offers Jewish learning to Jews in the Ukraine.

The Seminario Rabinico Latinoamericano houses the Abraham J. Heschel Rabbinical Training

Institute, the Cantorial and Hebrew Music Teachers Education Beta Asaf Institute, and programs

in continuing education. Its campus library in Buenos Aires houses the largest collection of

Jewish books in Latin America.

The Zacharias Frankel College is the newest seminary in the Masorti world. Located in a suburb

of Berlin, at the University of Potsdam, it trains Masorti/Conservative rabbis in Europe. Its first

graduate – Nitza Stein Kokin -- was ordained on June 18, 2017.

All of our five seminaries are centers of excellence. Our graduates are employed throughout the

world – many in congregational pulpits, but not all. They are active in social justice, Jewish

education, Israel advocacy, chaplaincy, university Hillels, and non-profit organizational

management, and as Jewish lay leaders who are leaders in business, law, medicine and

comparable professions.

When you and I give to Torah Fund, we are making an investment in the Jewish

future. Who or what are we investing in?

We donors to Torah Fund are investing in students like **David Yedid**, who, as a second-

year rabbinical student at JTS, was named a Wexner Scholar and a Davidson Fellow. Dave

was deeply shaped by his work as a field guide with New Vision Wilderness, helping young

adults and teens to heal from the trauma of suicidal ideation, addiction, abuse, and mental

illness.

Driven to expand direct-care opportunities for youth in distress, he is a founding staff

member and rabbinic intern at BaMidbar Wilderness Therapy, a therapy and addiction

treatment program for young Jewish adults. An avid Ramah-nik, Dave spent five summers

at Camp Ramah in varied roles as a camper and staff member, and he takes this experience

with him in this new therapeutic venture.

We donors to Torah Fund are investing in **Anna Silverman**, who is poised to graduate the

H. L. Miller Cantorial School of JTS this May. Growing up in Warsaw, Poland, Anna did not

know she was Jewish until 1990, when she was 26 years old, and studying opera at the

Academy of Music in Warsaw. Anna began to explore her Jewish roots when she met her

first openly-Jewish woman in 2004. Let’s pause over that phrase “openly-Jewish woman”: It

speaks volumes about the Anti-Semitism that exists where Anna grew up. As a JTS student,

Anna has visited many of our sisterhoods to enrich their Torah Fund events with her

beautiful singing and her account of her remarkable life’s journey.

Ordained by the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies, **Rabbi Neal Loevinger** works as Director

of Spiritual Care/ Chaplaincy at Vassar Brothers Medical Center in Poughkeepsie, NY. He is

responsible for leadership of the chaplain team, for the Clinical Pastoral Education program,

for strengthening relationships with community religious groups, and integrating spiritual care

into hospital operations.

**Rabbi Gabriel Botnick** is rabbi of Mishkon-Tephilo in Venice, California. A 2014 graduate of

the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies, he now serves on the school’s faculty, teaching

Halakhah (Jewish law), as well as teaching in the Miller Introduction to Judaism program of

AJU. He is also a Mohel (performs brit milah) and is the only non-Orthodox rabbi in the world

certified by the Israeli rabbinate as a Shochet.

**Rabbi Sandra Kochman** – Born in Paraguay, she received her Rabbinic Ordination from the

Seminario Rabinico Latinoamericano Marshall T. Meyer in 2000. Since November 2005 she has

lived in Jerusalem where she works at the Masorti Community in the Bet HaKerem

Neighborhood and at the Masorti Movement as the Coordinator of weddings and conversions at

the Kotel’s egalitarian “Ezrat Israel” plaza.

**Tamara Eppelbaum**, not a rabbi or a cantor, who graduated JTS’ Albert A. List College in

2011, joined the Israeli army when she made aliyah. Now she serves as a spokeswoman for

the Israel Defense Forces, responsible for the development and execution of the IDF’s

media strategy for international audiences, including dozens of news outlets around the

world. She relates, “I recently brought a group of international journalists to the Syrian

border to meet Israeli medical personnel who treat Syrian men, women and children

injured in the war. The Syrians came to the IDF believing we were the enemy, but gratefully

received medical aid. It was one of the most impactful things I have ever seen.”

**Rabbi David Steinhardt**, senior rabbi of B’nai Torah Congregation in Boca Raton,

Florida, is celebrating his 25th year with this synagogue of over 1,400 families. He is most

proud of his congregation’s commitment to social justice. Through a program called TLC:

Tzedakah, Limud and Chesed, the synagogue sponsors charitable and social justice

initiatives which include sheltering the homeless, volunteering with refugee children,

visiting Jewish homes for the aged, attending to local hunger, running literacy programs,

and responding to national and international crises. The program has over 250 participants

and three-quarters are young adults with children. Though they are not traditional

synagogue-goers, this group connects to the Jewish community through activism.

Rabbi Steinhardt comments: “When I teach Torah, I ask my students not only what it

means, but what it obligates us to do…. Responsibility for others is how we receive

holiness.”

We are proud of these students and alumni, and of the impact they are having on our

communities and on our world.

**The Cost of Educating Clergy in the US**

We want you to understand the cost of providing a rigorous, authentic, caring, and

practical education at our seminaries.

In the United States, to educate a rabbi or a cantor costs approximately $55,000 per year

for 5 or 6 years. That’s $275,000-$330,000 to educate clergy. Tuition does not cover this

cost. JTS, as one example, relies on private donations, including Torah Fund, for 70% of its

annual budget, and distributes over $6,000,000 in financial assistance annually to students

in its five schools: undergraduate, graduate, education, rabbinic, and cantorial.

Each of the seminaries that Torah Fund supports – JTS, Ziegler, the Seminario, Schechter,

and Frankel, dedicates a different percentage of its annual budget to student scholarships.

Torah Fund donations support student scholarships and educational programming at all

five seminaries in 4 different countries. We leave it to the schools to decide the portion of

their budget which goes to scholarships each year, and we support their efforts.

**Visiting Seminaries/Classes online & in-person/Websites**

While all five seminaries that Torah Fund supports are part of the Conservative/Masorti

movement, each one is unique. The best way to get to know them is to visit them. A Torah

Fund Discovery Trip is leaving for Buenos Aires in February, and travelers will spend time

at the Seminario Rabinico Latinoamericano, which we support.

Right now, it is not possible for tour groups to visit JTS, as the campus is still under major

renovation. Construction is on schedule and the plan is to re-open to visitors after the

formal dedication ceremony in the fall of 2019. To plan the 2019-2020 visit of your

sisterhood to JTS, please be in touch with me.

Ziegler welcomes visitors year-round: be in touch with Rabbi Artson or Rabbi Peretz to

visit their stunningly beautiful campus. If you are able to snag a ticket to the JTS or the

Ziegler Ordination ceremonies in May, those are well worth attending. They are joyous

affairs.

if you happen to be in Jerusalem, Germany, or Buenos Aires you can arrange a visit to

Schechter, Frankel, or Buenos Aires with a phone call or email to those schools, in advance.

To know these places in more depth it helps to study there. Those who live in the greater

New York area can now attend **daytime classes at JTS** with leading scholars, on

Wednesdays, through the Dept of Community Engagement, at a reduced fee for WLCJ

members. Each winter, Ziegler hosts and coordinates a wonderful **Day of Study** with

the Pacific South West Region of Women’s League. Every year Schechter hosts the **National**

**Masorti Women’s Study Day** in Jerusalem, attended by hundreds of Israeli women, with

courses offered in Hebrew, English, Spanish and Russian. Share this information with your

sisterhood members and donors, so they can plan their travel to include an inspiring visit

to one of our seminaries!

The next best way to get to know our seminaries is to **visit their websites and participate**

**in their on-line offerings**. These include weekly Torah commentary in English, which is

sent via email to subscribers by JTS, by Ziegler, and by Schechter. JTS offers on-line classes

on a regular basis. It is worth the small effort to subscribe to each school’s email list, so

that you are informed of news and events, including concerts, days of study, and public

lectures. Or, make yourself a note to visit each website once every few months, or before

major Jewish holidays, to see what great ideas each one can offer you or your community to

deepen your Jewish practice and Jewish knowledge.

Torah Fund has an essential role in supporting these fine seminaries. How do we do it?

GUIDE TO A SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN

Soliciting Gifts

Soliciting for gifts to Torah Fund involves a personal approach. Speak with your sisterhood

members about Torah Fund at your monthly Sisterhood meetings, take the opportunity to speak

with congregants at Kiddush or synagogue programs, wearing your Torah Fund pin all the time

as it alone is a conversation starter. Don’t take for granted that donors from previous years will

offer support again. Nurture them, let them know how important their *continued* support is to the

Campaign, and ask them to think of raising their donations to a higher level.

Keep in mind that they don’t have to increase in huge increments – donors at the $18 level can

be asked to increase their level of giving to $25 or $36 – they don’t have to jump to the pin level

of $180 in one step (unless they are interested in receiving the gift of a pin at the Benefactors

level). Try to help them determine what they can comfortably give. Create a payment plan

where donations can be paid over months through the year. They can provide post-dated checks

or automatic withdrawals, depending on the capabilities of your sisterhood and/or your

congregation policies.

And when your communication with a donor is successful in receiving a donation or if the donor

raises their level of giving, always follow-up with a written thank you note.

EXAMPLES OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF EVENTS (FOR ALL LEVELS OF GIVING)

We would like to share with you some ideas of what sisterhoods are doing for their Torah Fund

events. Sisterhoods find that honoring a sisterhood member, a valuable volunteer within the

sisterhood, the congregation, and in the community brings in many people and helps to make

their Torah Fund events successful.

.

1. If your Rabbi and/or Cantor have attended any of the seminaries we support, invite them

to speak at your Torah Fund event and share their personal experiences, including the

advantages of the Torah Fund Campaign to their education/training.

1. At every monthly Sisterhood board meeting, a tzedakah box is passed around for which

each attendee will honor some personal occasion. The money from this collection is used

to cover most of the expenses for their Torah Fund Brunch. They keep the brunch simple

and try to find interesting speakers who preferably do not charge. Men and women are

invited to attend and usually there are attendees from nearby synagogues.

1. At each monthly Sisterhood meetings, a sisterhood provides a fake cake which they call a

Mitzvah cake. They light a candle for each mitzvah that a member remembers and for

each candle that is lit, the member pays $1. They raise between $45 and $65 at each

monthly meeting for Torah Fund.

1. One Sisterhood has a Torah Fund Brunch every year. They charge $18 per attendee.

Each sisterhood member brings a dairy or pareve dish\*. They always have a speaker,

some gratis and some do charge. They find that it costs them very little to put on this

event and it provides them with a vehicle to raise money for Torah Fund.

\*Of course, you would have to honor your congregation’s kashrut policies and work

within these boundaries.

1. A sisterhood selects an honoree each year which allows them to recognize someone for

their volunteering efforts and/or involvement. They hold this event as a brunch at a local

hotel to elevate the importance of the event. They charge $40 for brunch and a minimum

$18 donation to Torah Fund. The honoree invites friends and family outside of their

congregation so it becomes a community event.

1. One sisterhood changed this up a little this past year. They had a brunch and honored a “couple” who exemplified the Conservative/Masorti Movement. They charged $36 ($18 for brunch and $18 as a Torah Fund donation). Because the couple was so popular in the community, many people donated well over the $18, and some people who could not attend, donated in honor of this couple.
2. One sisterhood has a “Tealess Tea” each year. They send an invitation to all families in

their congregation. The invitation is extended in the form of a poem asking them to sit

down at home and have a cup of tea with them (a teabag is enclosed with the invitation).

They ask for a minimum of $18 which should be remitted in an enclosed addressed

envelope. The sisterhood women get together to stuff the over 900 invitations over

coffee and tea. This has proven to be successful and this sisterhood achieves their goal

each year.

1. One smaller sisterhood offers a Yoga class as their entertainment for their Torah Fund

event. They extend an invitation to the men’s club as well as the entire congregation.

They request a $10 donation to Torah Fund but more is welcomed. Torah Funds cards

are available and if they raise $180 or more, they raffle a Benefactor pin.

It has been suggested that at Torah Fund events, sisterhoods should consider raising the

minimum entry donation for their Torah Fund event from $18. We would suggest that this be a

conversation at your sisterhood meetings as you will know best what your community’s capacity

is. Many sisterhoods do not have a minimum donation but leave it to the discretion of the

individuals attending the event. This works out well in their communities.

**Your Region Torah Fund Vice President is available to travel** and would like to visit each of

your sisterhoods at least once during their 3 year term. Please consider extending an invitation

for your Region Torah Fund VP to join you at your Torah Fund event. They would be happy to

give a short presentation on Torah Fund.

**Student speakers**

Among the most effective speakers about Torah Fund are current students. I will now run

through the basics of requesting a student speaker. This information is also available on the

Torah Fund web page, which is located on the JTS website, at [www.jtsa.edu/torahfund](http://www.jtsa.edu/torahfund).

JTS and Ziegler are the two seminaries located on the US mainland. Please contact Rabbi

Artson to schedule a student speaker from Ziegler and contact me to schedule one from JTS.

Since your sisterhood must cover the student’s travel costs, you are advised to choose the

seminary that is nearest your location, to minimize those costs. Sometimes a donor will

contribute money or airline miles to help out. We have not historically provided student

speakers from Schechter in Jerusalem, the Seminario in Buenos Aires or Frankel College in

Germany, but if you have a personal connection, you can take the initiative to do so. My

office does not work on those arrangements.

Each sisterhood is responsible for paying a nominal fee to the student of $100. The

expectation is that a rabbinical or undergraduate or education student would speak for 15

minutes and take a few questions, for this kind of fee. If you expect someone to teach a class

you would need to pay them more. If you request a cantorial student, and expect them to

sing a type of music which is best sung with instrumental accompaniment, you need to hire

the accompanist and budget accordingly, including rehearsal time; or find a volunteer who

is a skilled musician; and make sure there is a working, tuned piano, etc. Cantorial students

can reasonably be expected to sing 2 or 3 songs, and speak for a few minutes about their

journey to the cantorate, their school, and what they hope for their future. They should not

be expected to perform a full concert. I work with each sisterhood chair to clarify the

nature of the program when you contact me.

Be prepared to fully reimburse the student on the day of the event. You may need to have a

volunteer pick up the student from a train station since many do not have cars in the city.

You will work out the travel logistics with the student directly, after I introduce you via

email. Please do involve me if there are any problems in the planning of the event, and let

me know how it went!

These students are our very best ambassadors, and they can inspire your donors as

few other people can.

I am occasionally asked whether we can supply **alumni** who live in the sisterhood’s Region

to come to a Torah Fund event as a speaker. This is not something that my office handles. I

have tried on occasion, without success. It is best accomplished through personal

relationships with the alum and a member of your sisterhood; or your synagogue rabbi

may be able to help with that, through his or her personal connections. If you find an

alumna/us who is available and willing to speak to your sisterhood, be prepared to make a

donation to Torah Fund in his/her honor, or to the organization he/she represents.

Please contact me to find a student speaker at least 3 months before your event date, and

please be sure the event date is firm on your synagogue calendar. This seems like a lot

of lead time, but remember, you need to advertise the event through your synagogue bulletin at

least one month prior, and the bulletin editor needs time. Seminaries have summer and winter

breaks, and I often cannot reach most students during those times. I am more than happy to help

you think through the big picture of your event, so please do not hesitate to call me.

This is a good segue to sharing general information about the campaign timeline.

Some of the deadlines we are about to share differ for Canadian sisterhoods and for PSW region,

since they have an office through which gifts must pass before they arrive in the New York

Torah Fund office.

**Campaign Timelines**

The Torah Fund Campaign runs from **July 1 to June 30th** of each year. All monies must be

received at the Torah Fund office by June 15th (earlier for PSW and Canada) together with a

completed Transmittal Form to be counted toward the sisterhood goal for the year ending June

30th.

The transmittal forms should be copied to your Region Torah Fund Vice President. Ensure you

know your Region Torah Fund VPs name and her contact information. She offers a wealth of

information for you throughout your term as Sisterhood Torah Fund Chair. The Region Torah

Fund VP receives a monthly report of monies received by the Torah Fund office from each

sisterhood in her Region and she is, therefore, able to check monies received against your

particular transmittal form to ensure the money has been received and is accounted for. A very

good double-check.

Many sisterhoods have their Torah Fund events at the same time every year. It is an annual

event that everyone looks forward to attending. We have noticed that some sisterhoods schedule

these events at the end of May or into June and leave themselves very little time to ensure the

checks are listed on the transmittal form and sent to the Torah Fund office before the June 15th

deadline. If you are experiencing this type of “time crunch” every year, you might want to

consider rescheduling your Torah Fund event earlier in the year. Of course, this is always

dependent upon the availability of your synagogue so make sure you check on this, book the

room, etc.

Some donors will want to make their gift before December 31st, for tax purposes. For all

gifts processed in the New York office (earlier Canadian or PSW gifts), we typically set a

deadline of mid-December for receipt in New York of these end-of-calendar-year gifts, so

that we have time to process them. Please do not delay sending those donations to the

Torah Fund office. The delay may not seem like much to you, but it could make the

difference between a donor receiving a receipt that is useable for her taxes that year, or

not.

**REMEMBER, ALL CHECKS ARE TO BE MADE PAYABLE TO “TORAH FUND”**

**AND FORWARDED TO THE TORAH FUND OFFICE. NO CHECKS ARE TO BE**

**MADE OUT TO WLCJ AND NO CHECKS ARE TO BE SENT TO THE WOMEN’S**

**LEAGUE OFFICE. ALL TORAH FUND BUSINESS IS HANDLED THROUGH THE**

**TORAH FUND OFFICE HOUSED AT THE JEWISH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.**

Our Canadian sisterhoods are asked to send their remittances to the Canadian Camp Ramah

Office. That office is:

The Jewish Theological Society

3845 Bathurst St., Suite 310

Toronto, Ontario, M3H 3N2

This information appears on the Canadian transmittal form, on Canadian pledge cards, and the

Torah Fund website.

If you are new to your position or are having difficulty with the electronic transmittal form,

please register for one of the **Transmittal Webinars** offered by Karen Tenesaca, our Torah

Fund Administrative Assistant in New York. The webinar takes 20 minutes and Karen can talk

you through connecting with the session as well as the step-by-step completion of the form.

They are free and very helpful. Please take advantage of them. Karen also provides follow-up to

these sessions should you need additional assistance.

You have many Torah Fund resources available to you. Your first line of communication is with

your **Region Torah Fund Vice President**. Make sure you know her name and have her contact

information (phone and cell number and e-mail address). She is an elected Region official and

can answer any and all question that may arise for you. She also is in touch with all the other

sisterhood Torah Fund chairs in your Region so she can share events and other situations she has

helped them with. The Region Torah Fund VPs have a meeting each month with Rabbi and

myself so they are in touch with the other 12 Torah Fund VPs and share ideas from

sisterhoods throughout our organization.

We know that everyone’s lives are extremely busy, but we urge you to return all e-mails and

phone messages from your Region Torah Fund VPs. They will be in touch with you throughout

the year and will have valuable information to share with you. So, please, make the effort to take

those few minutes to touch base with them. It will be time well spent, I guarantee you.

Please remember to visit the Torah Fund website as well as the 5 seminary websites. They will

provide you with current information.

**Problem-solving**

Sometimes when we try to accomplish a great project we run into problems. That’s life.

Please remember that **you do not have to go it alone**. Chances are, someone on your

board has experienced exactly the same problem and can help you.

If the issue has to do with Torah Fund policies, your first point of contact is your Region

Torah Fund Vice President. The Region TF VP is your go-to person for policies and advice

about the current campaign, and for news from the seminaries.

If there is a serious problem, be sure to let your sisterhood President know, and your

Region TF VP. The Region VP will know when to contact Randy or me, or both of us.

How do we define is a serious problem? Our guidelines are simple, and have to do with

people or money, or both. Here are some examples:

If you have a very dissatisfied donor (whether rightly or wrongly), you may gain insight

and practical advice from your Region VP, or Randy or me. Try to work within your region,

but there are times when one of us may be the best person to speak directly with the donor.

Donors’ feelings are important, and often there is a simple misunderstanding, which can be

easily cleared up.

A second type of common problem is a lost check or batch of checks. It is really important

to send your Region VP a copy of every transmittal form that you send to the TF office. That

way she can check the monthly report she gets from our office to make sure we received

your transmittal. Without a copy of your transmittal, she does not know what to look for.

A third type of common problem is difficulty meeting your sisterhood goal. It is not

unusual to feel concern when an event doesn’t bring in the kind of revenue you expected,

or when fewer donors respond to a mailing, or the economy in your area has slowed down

unexpectedly, or there is some other factor you can’t quite define. Again, please don’t go it

alone. Reach out to your Region VP, or to your Exec Board. If there is a big discrepancy

between a goal and reality, or a personnel issue, or a big policy question, the Region VP can

consult Randy or me or both of us. We really are here to help!

We now want to spend a few minutes talking about caring for the money.

**Caring for the money**

The money that we raise on behalf of Torah Fund does not belong to us as individuals, nor

to our sisterhood, nor to the synagogue, nor to Women’s League. It belongs to Torah Fund,

on whose behalf it is raised, which in turn, owes it to the seminaries which benefit from the

Torah Fund campaign. These donations are entrusted to us for safekeeping, and the donor’s

trust is placed in your hands at the very moment she hands you a check meant for Torah

Fund.

The easiest and quickest way to lose a donor’s trust is to sit on her check and fail to send it

in promptly. The best way to definitively lose a donor’s respect is to sit on her check which

was written in time for her to receive a tax receipt for the current tax year, such that she

misses the deadline because of your handling of the check. Don’t let this happen to you!

It is really easy to prevent these two problems. When you receive checks, credit card

information, and/or cash, your goal should be to carefully record what you have received

and move it forward to the next step as quickly and as accurately as possible.

On our website, and also available in print form, are training documents titled ‘Transmittals

Basics’ and ‘Transmittal Policies’, the latter written in the form of Frequently Asked Questions

and Answers. If you cannot download these from our website easily, please call Karen in the

office, and she will send you a print version.

I will now read the 7 policy questions and answers.

**Transmittals How-To: 7 Policy Questions**

1. Why must I process donations so soon after receiving them?

1) Checks do expire after a time. It is best to send them in to be deposited promptly.

That is how you would want your donation to be treated by a philanthropy that you support.

2) If you find an error in a check, it is much easier to follow up with a donor within

a day or two than it is if you let time go by.

2. Can I fix an error on a check?

No. This is illegal! You must return the check to the donor, for the donor to fix it.

The donor may authorize you to make a change, but you should get this authorization

in writing (email is fine).

3. My donors make out checks to our sisterhood and we deposit them in our sisterhood checking

account, and then make out one big check to Torah Fund. IS THIS OK?

Yes! In this case, the sisterhood is responsible for giving the donor a receipt. The Torah Fund

office does not provide receipts to sisterhoods.

4. Why does the Torah Fund office need to have current addresses for all donors?

The Torah Fund office sends out receipts to every donor who gives to Torah Fund, no matter

the size of the gift. This is not required by law for gifts below $250, but we do it as a service to our donors.

(We do not send out receipts to sisterhoods.)

5. Why do we encourage higher level donors to give directly to the Torah Fund office?

The Torah Fund staff sends out pins directly to higher-level donors, and we keep a close

watch on the amounts of higher level gifts, since they have a large impact on the success of the

campaign.

6. Why does the Region Vice President need a copy of each transmittal?

1. The Region VP is responsible for the performance of her region. Sending her copies of your transmittals is the simplest way to keep her informed. She can also assist you in clearing up any discrepancies between your records and the Torah Fund office’s records if she has a copy of your transmittals. You can do this via snail mail or electronically.
2. To prepare a transmittal using EXCEL, please go to the Torah Fund website at [www.jtsa.edu/torahfund](http://www.jtsa.edu/torahfund) and click on Torah Fund Resources. The first document that will pop up will be the Transmittal Form, and you can access the digital version there. Or call Karen in the office at (212) 678-8027.

7. Can’t I send my sisterhood’s donations to the Women’s League office in New York?

No. The Torah Fund office and the Women’sLeague office are located in different buildings.

Sending donations to the wrong location will delay the deposit of your donations.

Let’s take a step back, as we wrap up this distance learning program, and remember why we

invest in Torah Fund. Here is one more student bio.

**Samuel Gelman** began his journey to the rabbinate at the age of five, when he stood up and

announced to his kindergarten class, “I want to be a rabbi when I grow up.” Samuel has advanced

since then, with a bachelor’s degree in Near Eastern Studies from Princeton University, and is

currently in his second year of studies in rabbinical school at the Jewish Theological Seminary.

On behalf of Sam, David, Anna, Gabriel, Neal, Sandra, Tamara, and David, and so many more …

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF TORAH FUND!