



COMBATING THE BDS MOVEMENT ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

The persistent presence of the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement on college campuses requires a deliberate and strategic response. BDS tries to delegitimize Israel through rhetoric and actions that often cross the line into anti-Semitism. How can we educate and empower our college students to fight back against these challenges on their campuses?

WHAT'S OUR RESPONSE?

In addition to our extensive support for 17,000 students at 15 college Hillels, we're also funding innovative strategies that give student and faculty leaders the tools to combat the BDS movement.

- **Israel on Campus Coalition (ICC)** Providing effective tools helps students on the frontlines to engage with Israel's complex issues and stand up to BDS activity on campus. Israel on Campus Coalition also uses the latest research techniques to monitor campus developments so it can mobilize students when BDS events emerge. When CUNY schools recently experienced a BDS campaign, ICC, in partnership with the local colleges and with UJA support, coordinated a strategic, rapid response plan to address events as they unfolded.
- **Engaging faculty** Professors play an influential role in academic life and have a longer-term presence on campus than most students. This year our support helped the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York bring together progressive-leaning professors from New York campuses to discuss the complexity of Israel and travel to the country on a study tour. Professors learned about the diversity of Israeli society and returned to campus with a more nuanced perspective, willing to speak out in Israel's defense. Also through our funding, the Israel Action Network collaborates with faculty on campus to shape healthy discourse about Israel in college classrooms and academic associations and create greater understanding about Israel's legitimacy.
- **Student leadership trips to Israel** Engaging student leaders of all backgrounds who will speak out against BDS is crucial. That's why we're funding a trip to Israel for student activists from select New York area colleges.
- **Interfaith Entrepreneur Fellowship** When Jewish student groups develop positive relationships with a wide range of other student groups on campus, they form a foundation for support that can help when tensions flare over BDS activity. We're funding the Interfaith Entrepreneur Fellowship so Jewish student leaders from 10 New York area colleges will receive training in coalition-building and financial support for programming. The colleges include Baruch College, Brooklyn College, Hofstra University, Hunter College, John Jay College, and Queens College. These fellows will engage with other student leaders to explore what it means to be an ally and work for the greater good of the campus community.

ONE EXAMPLE ...

Anne Rice, an assistant professor at Lehman College, participated in Scholars as Bridge Builders, a seven-day study tour to Israel.

The group visited Sderot, Tel Aviv, and Jerusalem, and met with Israeli professors from Tel Aviv University, Hebrew University, Technion, and Western Galilee College. They also visited Palestinian professors in Ramallah and Rawabi.

"As a scholar, I thought the best thing I could do was go and see what people have to say. In terms of BDS, you don't want to burn bridges with the institutions that are collaborating and coming up with solutions." – Anne