

To: The Matanel Foundation

End of the year report: **The Aleka Matanel Foundation Fellows Program**

We are happy to report that the Aleka Program has come to an end for the year. Below is a summary of this year's happenings.

As we mentioned in our previous letter, this year we opened the second cycle (1st year) of the program. This year there were 15 participants: teachers (11 female teachers, and 4 male teachers) with master's degrees and the potential to reach leadership positions. They currently serve in a variety of roles: home room teachers, counselors, kindergarten teachers, and professional teachers. This year we focused on group integration and the participants' personal structuring.

This year we held 10 meetings over the course of the year. The meetings were held in Heichal Shlomo in Jerusalem. The meeting structures were lecture-based. In addition, each teacher was required to present their personal biographies to the rest of the fellows, and then received feedback from their peers. In between the meetings, the program coordinator served as an address for consultations regarding the participants' professional and personal development.

In March we took a tour of the Beita Israel village run by the Hineni Foundation in Kiryat Gat. In addition, this July Herzog Academic College ran a leadership seminar in which many teachers from across the spectrum of Israeli society participated, including alumni of both cycles of the Elka program. They participated in seminars on the subject of educational leadership. Part of the seminar was dedicated to a hackathon on the subject of educational entrepreneurship. Of course, the Elka alumni participated in the hackathon, and the winning initiative, which was chosen from among the initiatives of dozens of teachers, was from Ziva Demoza, on the subject of English education. This was an initiative that she had begun working on during her first year as an Elka Fellow and continued to work on together with her mentor last year. This year during the hackathon she brought it up yet another level. It should be noted that currently Ziva is a Regional English Counselor for the Central District. She received this position after participating in the Elka Program.

Ziva is an example of a teacher who knows how to take advantage of the opportunities and resources she received at Elka in order to advance professionally and personally.

Elka alumni from both cycles met up for a short time during the seminar. The meeting was empowering, exciting and very meaningful for both groups. As a result, we have had the idea to create a network of former Matanel Fellows in order to create joint meetings from time to time, along with lectures and workshops that will help them successfully deal with the challenges they encounter in the field.

The next steps that are planned for the coming academic year (2024) which is the second year of the second cycle, is for some of the participants to write down their biographies and turn them into lesson plans on Ethiopian Jewish culture and the Ethiopian Jewish heritage. Other participants will establish educational initiatives that they would like to implement. To this end we will provide them with personal mentors suited to the field they are interested in. The mentors and participants will hold joint meetings and we will accompany them through all these processes.

On our behalf, and on behalf of the teachers we want to thank the Matanel Foundation, Joelle, Gad, Ami, and Devorah for support and for making the dream of the Elka Program become a reality. Please consider supporting the second year of the cycle that begins during the next academic year -2024.

We would love to meet with you so that we can elaborate and tell you about the program and our additional initiatives.

All the best,

David Meherat, Director, The North American Conference on Ethiopian Jewry

CC:

Eden Elias- NACOEJ Program Director

Tikvah Alayu- Elka Program Coordinator