



Announcing CLAL's Rabbis Without Borders Student Fellowship

Rabbis Without Borders is a new initiative of CLAL -The National Center for Learning and Leadership. A leader in religious pluralism, CLAL uses wisdom to deepen people's civic and spiritual participation in American life. The mission of *Rabbis Without Borders* (RWB) is to nurture and develop a network of rabbis and rabbinical students who have a common vision to make Jewish wisdom an accessible resource to help people across religious and cultural borders enrich their lives. Given the current openness in American life, the time is ripe for rabbis to take a more active role in developing and disseminating Jewish wisdom to anyone who wants to enhance his or her life.

To help prepare future rabbis to lead the way in bringing Jewish ideas to the widest possible audiences, RWB is inviting applications for its first Rabbinical Student Fellowship Program. Rabbinical students from the east coast rabbinical schools will be invited to study with CLAL's innovative faculty. (*See below for faculty list and bios.) Students will gather once a month at the CLAL offices in NY for dinner and a two to three hour interactive learning session during the 2009-2010 academic year. One weekend retreat will be held in the spring.

The program offers an opportunity to join with students from across the denominational spectrum and to build skills in a variety of areas that will foster more effective spiritual leadership, including:

- The sociology of the American religious and spiritual landscape (ie. what Americans really believe about God, trends and practices in American spiritual life, knowledge of other religious traditions);
- The theory and practice of pluralism (ie. why hearing different viewpoints strengthens our society, what kind of religious voices do Americans consider authentic and why);
- Innovative methods and pedagogies for translating Jewish wisdom and practice into useful contemporary idioms (ie. how we need to change our vocabulary to be understood by contemporary Americans Jews and non-Jews and ways that they can apply Jewish wisdom to their lives);
- Using technology and media to communicate your message to a broad audience (ie. how to use tools such as blogs, the internet, media and other technology more effectively in your work.)

The RWB Rabbinical Student Fellowship will cover all costs for participating in the program. There will be no cost for participants.

If you are interested in participating in the program please send an application including: your name, address, email address, school you attend, resume, and a one page double spaced response to why you would like to participate in this program by May 8, 2009 to Rabbi Rebecca W. Sirbu at rsirbu@clal.org. Space is limited.

CLAL Faculty

Rabbi Tsvi Blanchard, Director of Organizational Development at CLAL-The National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership, is an ordained Orthodox rabbi. He holds Ph.D.'s in Psychology and Philosophy, and has taught at numerous Universities, and is a practicing clinical and organizational psychologist in New York. A popular speaker and consultant, Blanchard has appeared often in the media on such programs as "The Oprah Winfrey Show" and "Eye on Religion." In 2006, he was featured along with Elie Wiesel in the documentary, *Turn to Me*, by Academy Award nominee Murray Nossell on the gift of volunteering, released by the Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services. Blanchard's stories and parables have been widely anthologized. Publications include "How Stories Heal," "Joining Heaven and Earth," and "After Eden: The Search for the Holy in a Consumer Society."

Rabbi Steve Greenberg, Senior Teaching Fellow at CLAL was featured in the acclaimed 2001 film *Trembling Before God*, about Orthodox gay Jews, and has appeared in over 500 post-screening community dialogues throughout the world. As educational coordinator for the film's outreach project, he arranged for screenings in Israel's religious school system, reaching over 2,000 principals, educators and school counselors. Steve helped organize the first Orthodox Mental Health Conference on homosexuality, and has worked with numerous families in reconciliation. Winner of the coveted Koret Book Award for Philosophy and Thought, Steve is the author of the groundbreaking book *Wrestling with God & Men: Homosexuality in the Jewish Tradition* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2004). A renowned speaker across the U.S., and a guest on numerous talk shows including NPR's "Fresh Air," Steve is a frequent commentator for the media and has published several articles on Jewish law and church and state issues.

Rabbi Brad Hirshfield, Co-President of CLAL Ranked two years in a row in *Newsweek* as one of America's "50 Most Influential Rabbis," and recognized as one of our nation's top "Preachers & Teachers," by Beliefnet.com, Brad Hirshfield is the author of *You Don't Have To Be Wrong For Me To Be Right: Finding Faith Without Fanaticism* (Harmony, Jan. 2008). He also conceived and hosts two landmark series for Bridges TV— American Muslim TV Network, *Building Bridges: Abrahamic Perspectives on the World Today* and *American Pilgrimage*, and is a regular commentator for Tru-TV. Co-host of the weekly radio show, *Hirschfield and Kula* (KXL, Portland, OR), and featured on PBS's "Frontline: Faith and Doubt at Ground Zero," and the acclaimed film, *Freaks Like Me*, he writes a column for the WashingtonPost/Newsweek.com's "On Faith," *For God's Sake*, and his blog, *Windows & Doors*, appears on Beliefnet.com. Rabbi Hirshfield is the Co-President of CLAL—The National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership. An Orthodox rabbi, he received his M.A. and M. Phil from the Jewish Theological Seminary, and his B.A. from the University of Chicago.

Rabbi Irwin Kula, Co-President of CLAL, is a respected religious leader, teacher, lecturer, and commentator, he is the author of *Yearnings: Embracing the Sacred Messiness of Life*, winner of a "Books for a Better Life Award," and selected as one of the "10 Best Spiritual Books of 2006," which was featured in the public TV special, "The Hidden Wisdom of Our Yearnings." Listed two years in a row as one of the nation's 50 most influential rabbis in *Newsweek*, Rabbi Kula was named one of the new leaders to watch on the American spiritual landscape by *Fast Company* magazine and "Religion and Ethics Newsweekly" (PBS). A regular on *The Today Show*, he hosted his own public TV series, *Simple Wisdom*, and was featured in the acclaimed film, *Time for a New God*. A nationally recognized speaker who appears frequently in the media, he has worked with such luminaries as Queen Noor and the Dalai Lama on compassionate leadership, and was featured in PBS-TV's "Frontline: Faith and Doubt at Ground Zero." He is a blogger for the *Washington Post/Newsweek—On Faith* online column.

Rabbi Rebecca W. Sirbu, Director of Rabbis Without Borders, has spent her career looking for new ways to make Judaism meaningful for both rabbis and lay people. As founding director of the MetroWest Jewish Health and Healing Center at JCC MetroWest in West Orange, NJ, she brought Jewish spirituality to a population that had never experienced it before. As Director of Rimon: Collaborative Jewish Learning, she implemented a cooperative vision for adult Jewish education that involved over 40 rabbis and Jewish institutions from across the denominational spectrum. And as a trained hospital chaplain she brought the comfort of Jewish tradition to Jewish and non-Jewish patients alike. Rabbi Sirbu is a graduate of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America and a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Vassar College.