

From: **THE SAMUEL BRONFMAN FOUNDATION**

Contact: Dan Klores Communications
Bruce Bobbins
212-981-5190

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**BECKY VOORWINDE NAMED 1ST DIRECTOR OF ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT FOR
THE BRONFMAN YOUTH FELLOWSHIPS IN ISRAEL**

Becky Voorwinde, a resident of Brooklyn, NY who most recently served as Corporate Responsibility Project Manager at Ernst & Young, L.L.P., has been named the inaugural Director of Alumni Engagement for the prestigious Bronfman Youth Fellowships in Israel (BYFI), a 21-year old program of The Samuel Bronfman Foundation.

Voorwinde is an alumna of the Fellowship (class of 1997). The Bronfman Youth Fellowships provide a transformative five-week educational experience in Israel for high school students in the summer prior to their senior year. Fellowship recipients travel throughout that country exploring their Jewish identity and meeting leading thinkers, authors, artists, educators, and others who have a profound impact on shaping their adult Jewish lives.

“Our community of over 540 outstanding alumni has exhibited a high level of engagement with the program since its inception, leading to significant contributions in the Jewish community and wider world,” said Rabbi Shimon Felix, Executive Director of BYFI. “By naming Becky to lead our alumni initiatives, we have the opportunity to inspire even greater levels of activity, involvement, and leadership by our alumni community. Becky is committed to the mission of the community and brings to the role skills and experience from both the business, not-for-profit and Jewish worlds.”

In addition to Voorwinde, notable BYFI alumni include: **Angela Warnick Buchdahl**, America’s first Asian-American Cantor and Rabbi, who is now at NY’s renowned Central Synagogue; **Tali Farhadian**, a Rhodes Scholar and Academic Fellow at Columbia Law School, who clerked for U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor; **Jonathan Safran Foer**, award-winning and best-selling author of *Everything is Illuminated* and *Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close*; **Noah Oppenheim**, senior producer of NBC’s “Today” and *New York Times* best-selling author; **Nahanni Rous**, producer of the documentary “Encounter Point,” about peace-making efforts between Palestinians and Israelis; and **Jonathan Tepperman**, assistant managing editor of Newsweek International.

Voorwinde will focus her efforts primarily on the older cohort of alumni, ages 27 and up, empowering them in their roles as active participants and leaders in the Jewish community. To do so, she will work in cooperation with the alumni themselves, the Alumni Advisory Board, and the professional staff of the Fellowship and The SamuelBronfman Foundation.

Voorwinde will also be responsible for envisioning, planning, and implementing a wide range of new and recently enacted pilot initiatives, including a November 9th conference focused

on the topic of Jewish literature and secular Jewish identity, networking opportunities, and mentoring and capacity building support for grant recipients of the Alumni Venture Fund .

The Alumni Venture Fund, which was instituted in 2001, provides grants for BYFI alumni to lead innovative programs, projects, and initiatives around the world. Examples of projects include support for educator training about GLBT inclusiveness in the Jewish community through Keshet and supporting a Yale student-led interfaith service trip to New Orleans. Funding has also supported emergent Jewish communities in North America such as Kehillat Hadar in NYC, Washington Square Minyan in Brookline, MA, the DC Minyan Beit Midrash, and Kavana in Seattle WA. For the past three years, funds have been generated solely through donations by alumni and their families.

Voorwinde's communal involvement includes serving as a member of the Alumni Advisory Board and mentoring a NYC high school junior through the iMentor program. She graduated Summa cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa from Barnard College with a BA in American Studies.

For more information on BYFI and The Samuel Bronfman Foundation, visit www.bronfman.org and www.thesbf.org.

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