

Foundation's grant backs Israel trips

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A local foundation has given \$2.5 million to a program that sends young Jews to Israel to learn more about their roots.

The grant, announced this week by the Jewish Community Foundation of San Diego, is from the Viterbi Family Foundation, which is named for Andrew Viterbi, co-founder of Qualcomm. The grant was given to Taglit-Birthright Israel, which provides Jews ages 18 to 26 with a free trip to Israel.

The money will be used to help alleviate the waiting list in San Diego. Nearly 1,500 young people from San Diego have gone on these trips since 2000, although another 1,000 applicants have been turned down because of a lack of funds, according to the Jewish Community Foundation.

In the past eight years, an estimated 145,000 young adults from 52 countries have traveled to Israel for the first time on Taglit-Birthright Israel trips.

— *Sandi Dolbee*