

## Fundraising in Times of Conflict – Talking Points for Engaging Supporters

The Israel Ride board and staff have put together the below talking points to help riders meet their fundraising goals during this time of conflict in the region. The below points highlight the Arava Institute's critical trans-boundary peace-building and environmental work, which continues during this time of crisis and is arguably more relevant than ever before.

- The Arava Institute was founded in 1996 on Kibbutz Ketura in Southern Israel. The Arava Institute is the primary beneficiary of the Israel Ride, and exists to ensure that environmental challenges provide a catalyst for dialogue, cooperation and trust between the people of the region.
- As a specialized academic institute, the Arava Institute offers **the only** academic program in the Middle East that provides Israelis, Palestinians, Jordanians, and international students the opportunity to study, live and work together for up to two years.
- The Arava Institute also equips students with the tools they need to work through layers of anger and apprehension through the **Peace-building and Environmental Leadership Seminar (PELS)**. The seminar provides a structured space for Jews and Arabs to speak through historic frustrations, cultural misunderstandings and dual historic narratives. Eighty-five percent of participants report that being at the program enhanced their ability to respectfully consider and respond to alternative viewpoints, and respectfully engage in cross-cultural dialogue.
- Founded in 1996 the Arava Institute has over 800 alumni around the world. Many of these alumni have joined the Arava Alumni Peace and Environmental Network (AAPEN), which continues to foster cross-border projects, partnerships and friendships.
- Over eighty percent of Arava Institute alumni keep in touch with classmates after leaving the program, as their relationships are not bound by the high and low cycles of the regional conflict.
- The Arava Institute is home to five renowned research and development centers. Each center has its own trans-boundary environmental mission and applied-technology programs. During the 2013-2014 academic year, center faculty and staff have hosted seven conferences for international experts and regional stakeholders and have presented their work to global leaders at a number of international forums including the United Nations, the European Union's Cooperation in Science and Technology program, and the United Kingdom's House of Lords.
- Center researchers serve as the Arava Institute's core faculty, providing 40-50 students each semester with a cutting-edge environmental education in the critical areas of water resource management, ecology, sustainable agriculture and renewable energy.