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## JTS to Unveil Plan for Gender and Sexual Equity in Conservative Movement by 2010

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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**New York, NY, March 29, 2005** - This year, the Jewish Theological Seminary of America celebrates the twenty year anniversary of the ordination of women rabbis.

Since the ordination of Amy Eilberg in 1985, women rabbis have been an integral stronghold of the Conservative movement as it progresses into the future. On the evening of Tuesday, March 29 at 6:30, JTS will present the Gerson D. Cohen Memorial Lecture, "A Movement Transformed: Women's Ordination and Conservative Judaism." The event will take place at JTS, 3080 Broadway (at 122nd Street ) in New York City. **JTS will use this historic event to unveil its plan to achieve gender and sexual equity in all ranks of the Conservative movement, with a commitment to achieving full egalitarianism by the year 2010.**

**What:** A Movement Transformed: Women's Ordination and Conservative Judaism

**When:** March 29, 2005, 6:30 pm

**Where:** The Jewish Theological Seminary, 3080 Broadway at 122<sup>nd</sup> Street

The plan will include the following commitments:

- Based on the Conservative Movement's recent study of the gap in pay between men and women rabbis, it is clear that all rabbis deserve to be paid equally for the work they do in our communities, regardless of their gender. **By 2010, we will fully eliminate the salary discrepancies between men and women rabbis.**
- As a part of our ongoing support for pluralism and forward-thinking, the Conservative Movement will begin ordaining Gay and Lesbian rabbis by 2010. The Seminary eagerly awaits the outcome of the Committee on Jewish Laws and Standards' discussion next month on the place of gays and lesbians in our movement. In anticipation of the Committee's decision, the Seminary commits to welcoming all students with open arms, regardless of sexual preference.
- Conservative synagogues and institutions will include and acknowledge women as full and equal participants in community and leadership. More than ten percent of Conservative synagogues in the U.S. are not yet fully egalitarian. **The Conservative Movement is committed to dignity and respect for all persons, and by 2010, all institutions affiliated with the Conservative Movement will be required to be fully egalitarian, counting people as ritual equals** (ie: counting for a *minyan*, leading services and reading Torah,), **regardless of gender.**

These commitments reflect Conservative Judaism's historic connection to tradition and its ongoing response to and growth with the modern world. This plan does not present new ideas, but rather is a culmination of discussions over the last thirty years about reshaping the contours of Conservative Jewish communities and moving a vision of tradition, inclusion, and modernity into the future of the twenty first century.

*Founded in 1886 as a rabbinical school, The Jewish Theological Seminary today is the academic and spiritual center of Conservative Judaism worldwide, encompassing a world-class library and five schools. JTS trains tomorrow's religious, educational, academic and lay leaders for the Jewish community and beyond.*