Crisis Communications

The Challenge: Yeshivat Maharat (YM), the first organization to ordain women to become Rabbis (referred to as Rabbas) in the Orthodox Jewish community, hired TASC to launch a campaign to discourage the Orthodox Union (OU) from ruling against YM’s work and expelling synagogues who employed Rabbas.

Our Strategy: TASC worked to show the positive impact of female religious leaders on the community by strategically placing op-eds by YM President Rabba Sara Hurwitz that built the case and tied it to the #MeToo movement. TASC also organized meetings with Jewish lay leaders and Rabbis to determine who was best positioned and prepared to support YM in the media and defend it to the OU. TASC organized brown bag meetings with key religion reporters from a number of influential outlets, including Jewish newspapers, the AP and the New York Daily News, and briefed them on the complexity of the rabbinical issues regarding the ordination of Orthodox women.

Results: Our coverage, which included op-eds in the New York Daily News and Jewish Forward, generated over 3 million media impressions and significant support from lay leaders in the community. Key media hits in the New York Daily News and New York magazine elevated Rabba Sara Hurwitz as a major religious thought leader in the New York area. TASC’s strategic media work put pressure on the OU not to expel Rabbas, resulting in its ruling that synagogues and shuls could keep their female leaders. YM continues to train and ordain women as Rabbas and show their immense value in prominent places such as Washington, DC; New York and Los Angeles.