

MATANEL FOUNDATION

ACTIVITY REPORT

Program:
Year:2016

Please present your activity report according to the following lines. The whole rapport will not exceed 2 or 3 pages (as word document).

Name of the Program: Yitfach Pre-Military Academy

Year of activity: 2016

Name of the report's writer: Tal Carmi

Function of the report's writer: Program Director

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Give the actually state of the program (where the program stands at the date of the activity report, no more than ten lines):

The Yiftah students report that the Pre-Military Academy year was meaningful, and that they have changed significantly. This year, the Academy's program focused on each student's individual progress. The students report that they are now more prepared for IDF service and grappling with the difficulties in their lives. One student summarized this as follows:

"When I got here, I had no goals at all. I lived in the moment and would do whatever I had to do now, without thinking of tomorrow. Over the last six months, I have undergone significant change. I see ahead, not like I used to. It's a bit hard to explain. I differentiate between good and bad, what I should do and what I shouldn't, for my future. I have also experienced many difficulties and emotions, such as happiness, sadness, anger and a need to be alone with myself. I learned to control my frustrations by disengaging from situations."

The main achievements during the last year of activity (main achievements, number of events, number of participants, etc.):

This year, we opened Mechinat Yiftah's fourth year with 26 students. At the beginning of the year, the IDF did not want to recruit some of these students, but by the end of the year, after experiencing meaningful change, all of the students were recruited to the IDF.

Over the year, the students have studied courses on the following topics: Jewish identity, Ethiopian Jewry, moral dilemmas in the IDF, world leaders, and more. One of the students wrote the following at the end of the Ethiopian Jewry course:

"The truth is that prior to the course of Ethiopian Jewry, I knew nothing. I was even sure that Ethiopian Jews were some tribe that was found just a few years ago, and now I am ashamed of this. I knew nothing about their community and I never stopped and thought about what causes people to leave everything and come to Israel with nothing. The story of the Ethiopian Jews and their Aliya to Israel is a story of Zionism - the most Zionist story I have ever heard."

Over the course of the year, we set out on 5 trips: 3 4-5 day hiking trips in Israel, a week-long trip to Poland and a week-long trip in Israel about the challenges of Zionism. These trips were

significant milestones in the students' processes, and had significant impact on their perceptions of themselves, their capabilities, and Israeli society. Here are some of what the students wrote after their travelling seminar on Zionism:

“My trip didn't start so great, because of personal problems I was having. I don't know if I managed to handle them, but at least I tried and didn't run away from my problems. Now when I look at all this I am proud of myself!”

About the tour of Sakhnin:

“This tour was very odd for me, because in my normal life I would have never believed that I would walk around an Arab village and try to hear the other side without being locked into my opinion. There were things that I didn't really connect to, but on the other hand at least I got to know a different side of this sector that I didn't know about before. This caused me to open up more and hear more, and recognize my ability to stop and listen to the other side. I am very happy that a new line of thought on this issue has opened up for me.”

Additional achievements were in the field of community volunteering. Each student volunteered twice a week in various framework:

- High schools
- Frameworks for the elderly
- After-school programs for children and youth
- Elementary schools
- Preschools
- Guidance of special-needs children at a horse farm

In addition to our educational achievements this year, we have begun construction on permanent dormitories for the students, which will house two groups (up to approximately 50 students).

The evaluation (methodology, results, comparisons with the precedent year, conclusions for the future...):

Our evaluation methods include the following measures:

- Subjective experience of progress, as judged by both students and staff
- Students' level of participation in the program
- Successful social venture projects
- Number of students recruited to the IDF and in what roles

All of last year's students have been recruited to the IDF and they are serving in a variety of roles.

In addition, the students report that their year at the Mechina has assisted them in changing their behavior and without the Mechina, they are not certain that they would have been recruited to the IDF. One of the students wrote:

“Without the Mechina, I would have entered the army as I was in the beginning - a child, without goals in life. I was definitely “problematic”; I did stupid stuff; I wouldn't have survived two months in the army. And if I had survived, it would not be in a position of responsibility. So I really changed, thanks to my friends and counselors who helped me take this step. I am learning to listen to others and to treat people with respect. I am learning to help other people even when it's hard for me and I don't feel like it.”

Provisional guide lines for the advancement of the program in the next year:

Next year, we are planning on stabilizing with about 40 students organized into two groups, and to continue with the challenge of recruiting students from the Ethiopian-Israeli community. This year, we build the dorms, we are looking for partners to assist in constructing permanent classrooms for the Mechina.

We are also planning on grounding the students' social entrepreneurial ventures and increasing their scope of activity.

A summary table – as PDF document – specifying the progress in the program since the beginning of the encouragement by the Matanel Foundation according to the main parameters and objectives such as:

Parameters	Before the beginning of support by the Matanel Foundation	since the beginning of support by the Matanel Foundation
Number of events	15	35
Number of participants	20	78
Number of beneficiaries of volunteer programs	110	120
Number of guides	4	6

Please join the Evaluation Report, the Financial Report and the list of the participants to the program (as PDF documents)

Please join photos – as photos – and any link or any other document connected to the program which will seem to you relevant – as PDF document.