

MATANEL FOUNDATION

ACTIVITY REPORT

Program:

Year:

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

Name of the program: Support for Advocacy Efforts to Enhance the Wellbeing of IDF Soldiers

Year of activity: 2016-2017

Name of the report's writer: Shifra Shahar

Function of the report's writer: CEO – A Warm Home for Every Soldier

Mail: shifrashahar@gmail.com Phones: 054-4746958, 02-5662105

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

Several years ago, we began our campaign for raising soldiers' salaries, when wages were extremely low, soldiers were not able to pay basic needs with these amounts, and it was understood that over a third of the soldiers (more than 60,000) could not succeed in their military service due to severe economic problems. Due to our efforts, Soldiers' salaries have been raised dramatically and they now receive nearly three times as much as they did when we began our struggle. However, other payments such as rent subside has not been raised over 19 years and as a result of our advocacy in the past year, they will be raised next month with 20%.

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

In the past year, we concentrated a big part of our efforts in the fight for helping the lone soldiers after their discharge from the army. As a result of our campaign, a new law has been just past, giving lone soldiers a help for their rent of 1,000 NIS for 12 months after their discharge from the army. This will enable for example, many lone soldiers who are new immigrants, to stay in Israel and have an easier beginning of their civil life. This new law is just the first among a few others which we promote, in order to help discharged soldiers.

Another main issue in our lobby activity which began taking action in Free Education for discharged soldiers. At the moment, the beginning of implementing this is with combat soldiers and soldiers from poor background, and it is not for education in all institutes in Israel, but this is the direction of our campaign, as well as giving free education for all IDF soldiers after their discharge, in all academic and profession institutes.

-As for promoting the exemption of discharged soldiers from National and Health Insurance payments in the first year following their discharge, we have succeeded to pass 2 months so far. Thus the soldiers are free from paying 2 months of National Insurance following their discharge from service. We are now working on extending this period with another two months. Our efforts will continue in this arena until we achieve a full year free of charge.

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

- The result of the raise in the soldiers' different payments enables the soldiers avoid debts and helps them being capable of paying their bills.
- Assisting lone soldiers after their discharge will help their transition into civil life easier, we feel this is the very least that can be done after having them serving the country and risking their lives.
- Free education for combat soldiers and soldiers in need, will enable thousands of soldiers who could not consider studying before hand, get an education and succeed in their future.
- Receiving two months free from paying National Insurance helps many soldiers who could not afford it since they do not have the chance to find a job yet, and in many cases they were not even aware of the fact that they need to pay it and thus they accumulate debts and fines.

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

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:

Number of events /Number of beneficiaries:

10,000 soldiers (lone soldiers and married soldiers) will receive 200 NIS more monthly and 2,400 NIS yearly for paying their housing, this will help their finances and avoid falling into debts.

Number of participants: 2,200 discharged lone soldiers, every year, will be paid 12,000 NIS in order to assist their transition to civil life.

More than 30,000 combat soldiers and soldiers from poor families will get extra assistance of 4000-6000 NIS yearly for education which will help them achieve their goals for successful life.

This is of Course a description of our main achievements this past year, and there are many more issues, laws and regulations that we have been promoting on behalf of the soldiers.

Please see the joint photos, sent with this e-mail representing our activity in the Knesset and this project.

Sincerely,

Shifra Shahar, CEO
A Warm Home for Every Soldier