

MATANEL FOUNDATION

ACTIVITY REPORT

Program: *Mechinat Yiftach*
Year: 2015

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: Yiftach Pre-Military Academy

Year of activity: 2015

Name of the report's writer: Tal Carmi

Function of the report's writer: Program Coordinator

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

The Mechina program continues its success in providing our at-risk students from difficult backgrounds with a sense of security, and developing their self-confidence, identities and personalities. The students report that they feel that the Mechina is their home and that they are learning new things, especially about themselves.

Here are a few reports written by students about the meaning of the Mechina in their lives:

“At the beginning of the year, I didn’t have a lot of self-confidence and I didn’t understand what I was doing here at all. Instead of working and helping out at home, I went to this Mechina for 10 whole months. But now I understand what I am doing here – I came here because I want to change things about me, that without those changes I won’t get along in life and will probably get involved in crime or just not get anywhere in life.”

“My time here is really meaningful and gives me a lot of opportunities to go through a process, influence other people, make people smile, help, support, volunteer, work, study, travel and work on my personal issues.”

We have also developed many new innovations in our program. For example, we have developed a new social venture in construction. The gardening venture also developed both in the terms of the varieties of product grown and the network of customers to whom we sell the vegetables. The revenue from the ventures is also growing and this year and last year, these funds are intended to fund the student’s trip to Poland to study the Holocaust, as well as a trip on the subject of Zionism throughout Israel.

In terms of volunteering, we have increased the number of volunteer locations and the students volunteer in a wide variety of placements: preschools, trade schools, elementary schools, a therapeutic horse riding facility, after-school programs for teens and children, as well as assisting the elderly.

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

This was a very successful third year of the Yiftah Pre-Military Academy. Our primary achievement was growing to 30 students in the 2015-2016 school year, from 13 last year. We are also now an officially-recognized Mechina by the Ministry of Education.

This year, the students opened two new productive agricultural ventures – silkscreening and construction.

In terms of community volunteering, the students are now volunteering in additional locations:

- The Zur Lavon and Adam Hevra Vateva high schools.
- The Eshbal boarding school.
- The Ayalim elementary school in Tiberias
- The Vered Hagalil therapeutic horse farm with special-needs individuals
- At the senior center in Tiberias
- At a preschool for special-needs children
- At after-school programs for teens in Tiberias

Other achievements include increasing our hiking program, which is so important to the growth of the student's feeling of capability and self-confidence, to a 4-day hike in the Negev, a 4-day hike in the lower Galilee and a 5-day sea-to-sea hike. We also took several field trips, which covered Zionist history and current issues in Israeli society, including inequality, the refugee issue, modern agriculture, cooperatives, and more.

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

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 themselves report that they learned so much during the wide variety of courses at the Mechina, that it was a meaningful experience, and it has helped them become people with opinions about society, and feel responsible for themselves and their communities.

During our mid-year event, one of the students wrote:

“I never thought that I would be interested in the idea of a cooperative, or from the other subjects that we studied with strange names that taught us about the IDF and about life after the army. I also never thought that I would want to share my salary that I earned with anybody else. But now I understand that this is a great idea, and maybe I'll come here to live after the army.”

On the subject of volunteer work, a different student wrote:

“The volunteering is very meaningful for me – preparing activities, running activities and seeing children happy and satisfied, and talking to them a bit, getting a hug from a preschool kid and knowing that he is calm because I helped him, or just playing with kids... It gives me great satisfaction and fills me with happiness.”

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

Next year, we plan to recruit 40 students, and place a special focus on recruiting Ethiopian-Israeli youth. In addition, we plan to continue searching for partners to assist in building suitable dormitories for the students. We also plan on increasing the days per week spent working on the productive social ventures to four.

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	23
Number of participants	20	43
Number of beneficiaries of volunteer programs	110	1200
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**.