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# Summer Track for Peripheral Excellence-2015

## **Name of program**

Summer Track for Peripheral Excellence

## **Year of activity**

2015

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## **Status of program**

Tel Aviv University launched the Youth University in summer 2001 as part of the Dov Lautman Unit for Science Oriented Youth. To date, there have been 15 sessions of the program, all with participants with a high-index care. The program brings high school students with high motivation and achievements from across the country (young Jews, Arabs, Druze and Bedouins, religious and secular, Israeli born and immigrants, from the social and geographic periphery, from towns in the north and the south, development towns and villages), who are first generation in higher education. The program takes place during the summer semester at Tel Aviv University campus, exposing these students to subjects that are not part of the curriculum at their schools as well as empowerment, social and cultural activities.

## **Main achievements during the last year of activity**

During the summer of 2015, as part of Matanel Summer Tracks for Outstanding Students from the Periphery, 55 students participated in the program, from 35 different localities around the country (Or Akiva, Eilat, Ashkelon, Gan Yavne, Jat, Hosen, Horfesh, Hatzor, Tirat Hacarmel, Yanuh Jat, Yaffia, Jerusalem, Kasra-Samia, kfar Meser, Carmiel, Maghar, Maalot Tarshiha, Nahariya, Niin, Nazareth, Akko, Afula, Petah Tikva, Kiryat Gat, Kiryat Tivon, Kiryat Ekron, Kiryat Shmona, Regba, Rehovot, Rehaniya, Ramla, Segev Shalom, Sderot and Shlomi.) Number of events: 2 main events during the duration of the program: opening and closing ceremonies. In addition, at about half way through the program we invite the parents of the participants to an evening in which they have the opportunity not only to ask questions and learn about the program, but also to see their own children present presentations on the subjects and academic courses they are taking. In addition, prior to the beginning of the program we have a meeting with the students who were accepted to the program. Parents also are invited to this meeting.

Number of participants: 55 participants

## **Evaluation**

The importance of the program

Tel Aviv Youth University was established with the aim of generating personal and social change. This change is led by hundreds of young people from all strata of Israeli society, a mosaic of worlds that have in common a fierce desire to learn, to move ahead, to excel, to change and to cause change - in their lives and ours. We are discovering Israel's human capital. We believe that striving for excellence and education is an existential need in Israel. Through integration in academic studies, we are taking steps to make it possible for high school students to realize their potential, and to come up with a dream to follow.

In Israel, there are huge social, economic, and digital gaps between the center and the periphery, both geographic and social. In order to reduce the gaps, it is important to enable citizens from all parts of society to participate in scientific and academic studies. Only 9% of young people living in development towns and the country's geographic periphery go on to study at university, by comparison with 37% from urban centers. Even if we ignore the potential financial obstacles, the main reason lies in lack of awareness that university studies are a practical possibility for people with the desire and the ability.

Accordingly, we are taking steps to remove the psychological obstacle facing young people and help them overcome their anxiety and fears. Empowering students, so we hope, will increase their aspirations for the future, both with regard to employment and with regard to academic studies.

Tel Aviv Youth University, and the summer program in particular, is intended to open the door to higher education for a critical sector of Israeli society that is not aware of this possibility, offering a university experience in a rich intellectual environment, while providing emotional support and creating a learning community of people with shared interests from throughout the country.

In addition, over and over we show that each year our students have higher grades than 'regular' students in most of the academic courses, and 90% of our graduates continue to higher education and attend universities and colleges in Israel and some around the world

## **Others**

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

We are now in the midst of recruiting students for the summer of 2016 program. We have a team dedicated to seek out and reach out to the right students – excellent and hardworking, from the geographical and social periphery – first generation to higher education. We had 4 enrolment days on campus and are continuing the effort.

We plan to open the program of summer 2016 on July 3rd, 2016

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