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Arava Leadership Academy-2012-2013

Name of program

86

Year of activity

2012-2013

Name of the report's writer

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Function of the report's writer

Resource Development

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Status of program

The fourth year of the operation of "Arava - Leadership Institute" was a year of stability and expansion. The educational process and the study programs stabilized, the number of lecturers on the staff increased, the scope of the volunteering activities was broadened, the involvement with the community was deepened and emphasis was placed on maintaining contact with the graduates of the program. The program keeps a constant number of 40 students. To maximize the personal effect of the process for each of the students, the group is divided into smaller groups each of which have an instructor. In order to provide more guidance for the enlarged staff, an educational supervisor was employed, whose responsibility is to guide and support the manner of working of the staff. During the current year, a coordinator was also recruited for maintain the contact with the graduates and helping them retain the learning skills and values which they acquired in the program.

Main achievements during the last year of activity

A number of main achievements may be noted:

- The enlargement of the team of lecturers and counselors: In the current year a team of lecturers and educators who are not from the region were recruited. The problems involved in their being located at a distance from the institute in the Central Arava, were dealt with.
- The scope of the volunteering activities of the students in the program was extended. The students provide teaching instruction to about 300 children and youth in a range of frameworks in the regions of Beer Sheva and Dimona for school children, new immigrants and even children suffering from cancer.
- In the period before Passover, for the fourth year running, we organized the cleaning operation before the holiday of the homes of needy people in Dimona, in cooperation with the municipal welfare department and with the Australian youth who are in Israel on their annual program.
- During the Operation "Amod Anan" (Pillar of Defense) in November 2012, the students volunteered to help in the bomb shelters in the region of Beer Sheva.
- As part of the educational program of the mehina the students successfully completed 10 annual series (seminars) in a variety of topics such as social series, field studies, a series of acquaintanceship with Israeli society, and content series on key issues (such as Jerusalem series).
- In current year there was a sharp increase in demand for registration for the next year. About 800 youth applied to the "Arava- Leadership Institute" in recent months for acceptance for the next semester. This is an increase of about 50% over last year. Only 40 of them were accepted for the next semester.

Evaluation

- The work method of the mehina, in the course of which the students are divided into three small groups each of which has an instructor, proved itself from the viewpoint of maximizing the personal aspect of the process that every one of the students goes through. Thanks to the division into groups better communication was established between the students and the staff and this enhanced the ability to provide personal attention to the pupil in the study environment concerning educational matters but also personal matters connected with their home and the preparation for army service .
- The enlargement of the team of lecturers enriched and added greater variety to the fields of study at the mehina. The enlargement of the team of counselors significantly improved the ability to address the various types of issues with which the staff has to cope.
- As a direct result of the employment of the supervisor for the graduates, we have succeeded in maintaining better connections with the graduates of the program and in accompanying them during their time of military duties and after that, and to preserve the values and skills they acquired in the year's study at the "Arava- Leadership Institute". At the same time we create a connection between the graduates and the students of the institute in the current year by way of meetings held three times a year with the purpose of maintaining continuity. Of the graduates of semester A, 70% were assigned to command positions in the Israel Defense Forces, and 25% were made officers (as opposed to about 7% in the general population of recruits).

Others

- Continuation of the development of the mehina in the fields of education, learning and volunteering
- In the coming year a new branch of the “Arava - Leadership Institute” is expected to be opened in Moshav Paran, also in the Arava (south of Moshav Hatzeva). With the approval of the Ministry of Education and of the Ministry of Defense, we are at the current time recruiting 20 additional students for the new branch in Paran, that is in addition to the 40 students that we have already accepted for Hatzeva.
- The opening of the new branch at Paran obligates us to changes in the organizational structure of the institute, and to increase the educational staff.
- We believe that the enlargement of the program will enable us to expand to a greater extent the scope of the volunteering activities and our involvement in the community in the South and in the Arava, and will even enable our volunteering to reach Eilat.

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