



MATANEL FOUNDATION ACTIVITY REPORT

Mechinat Rabin - The Yitzchak Rabin Pre Army Leadership Academy

Year: 2017-2018

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:

The Hadar-Haifa Branch of the Yitzchak Rabin Pre-Army Leadership Program (Mechinat Rabin Haifa)

Year of activity: 2017 - 2018

Name of the report's writer: Betsy Melamed

Function of the report's writer: VP Development

Mail: betsy_m@hamidrasha.org.il

Phones: 972-54-678-0170

Website / Facebook address
of the organization:

<http://www.hamidrasha-israel.org/young-adults/pre-army-programs/rabin-pre-army-leadership-program/>

Number of active
participants in the program: 22 participants

Estimated number
of impacted participants: strong impact=Tikkun olam community involvement approximately 600
and short term program impact: 2,000

Give the actually state of the program (where the program stands at the date of the activity report):

Now into its fourth month of activity, Mechinat Rabin Hadar-Haifa participants are deeply involved in their *tikkun olam* community service activities, volunteering in 15 frameworks including elementary schools, a senior citizen center, two mental health facilities and afternoon drop-in centers for teens and children. In the beit midrash program they spend four academic hours a week learning and discussing text in *chevruta*. They have studied Shabbat, social justice and are now preparing to celebrate Chanukah in the community. Their studies also include classes on Zionism and pioneering, economics and society, and gender equality, among others.

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

The 22 new participants are now well into their third month of the 2017-18 academic year. The year started with a week-long hiking and camping experience in the north, to immerse them in nature, connect each participant with their strengths and resilience, and galvanize the group. They also engaged in activities to prepare them for communal life, group dynamics, and organizing themselves in order to manage the Mechina operations. The study program began with an in-depth introduction into the Jewish sources, and exploration of Jewish culture and identity in a Beit Midrash study format. Other studies focus on gender issues, sociology and economics – out of the belief that an understanding of these fundamental principles will be critical for the participants as they take on leadership roles in Israeli society.

The Beit Midrash studies, which are an essential part of the Mechina curriculum, take the participants through a meaningful and significant learning process. For all the participants, the Beit Midrash is the first time they are studying and discussing Judaism and Jewish values, and integrates them into the communal and private aspects of their lives.

Tikkun olam through community service work is another integral part of the Mechinat Rabin experience, and the participants are devoting one morning and two afternoons a week to volunteering in a variety of frameworks in the socioeconomically-challenged Hadar neighborhood in Haifa. In the mornings, Mechina participants work in formal education frameworks, assisting teachers and leading their own activities which they developed at the Mechina. Afternoons are spent in the informal educational work, including leading enrichment classes, running a youth leadership program, helping children with their homework, serving as a “big brother” or “big sister”, and volunteering with teenagers at risk and the elderly. **Altogether, each participant will spend 18 hours a week volunteering for 32 weeks.** During this time, the Mechina participants become integral to the community and to the people whose lives they touch through their volunteer involvement, and they also experience their capacity to make a difference in socio-economically challenged areas.

Already this year, the Mechina participants organized and led a community-building olive-harvest activity for neighbors of all ages, including an environmental art project for children. This activity introduced the Mechina participants into the neighborhood, engaged the local residents in a positive, neighborhood-enhancing experience, and gave them a strong sense of community, leadership and agency.

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

- In light of insights gained from our experience during 2016-17, we set a goal this year to improve communication between Mechinat Rabin Haifa staff and participants, and other urban-renewal-driven communities of young professionals, students and young families in the Hadar neighborhood. To that end, at the beginning of the year we invited other neighborhood urban-renewal community residents to welcome the new Mechinat Rabin Haifa participants, and encouraged each community resident to adopt a mechina participant.
- As a result of feedback from the staff last year, this year we are working in a more focused way to ease the participants’ transition into the army, with specific guidance on the importance of pursuing significant roles in their army service. To maximize the effectiveness of this intervention, we are starting this process earlier in the year while the participants are trying out and interviewing for units.
- One of the things we would like to continue to improve in the coming year is the awareness of social issues affecting Israeli society, with increased involvement in social activism. We will focus on topics that are high on the national agenda, such as the status of women, the status of individuals with disabilities, among others, through study and volunteer activism.

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

As Mechinat Rabin Haifa enters its third year, our curriculum, teaching and guidance staff, and volunteer frameworks are all better established and operating more smoothly. In the coming year we aim to impact a larger population by collaborating with other young urban renewal communities in Haifa. We would also like to explore the option of finding a building that will serve as a permanent residence and common area for classes and activities.

In preparation for the upcoming election year, we will place special emphasis on democracy and civics studies – topics which are not generally addressed in the school system. In addition to formal studies, we will organize community activities such as voter registration drives, escorting voters to the polls, etc.

A special thank you to the Matanel Foundation for your partnership in *tikkun olam*, and for helping the participants of Mechinat Rabin-Haifa become engaged and committed leaders who are already becoming agents of change in Israeli society.

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.



with the Encouragements of the Matanel Foundation