MATANEL FOUNDATION

ACTIVITY REPORT

Program:*"Perach Zahav "*
Year: *2019/ 2020 academic year*

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: Perach Zahav

Year of activity: 2020

Name of the report's writer: Dana Shahar

Function of the report's writer: External Relations and Development

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Number of active participants in the program: 19

Estimated number of impacted participants: 25 direct and 100 indirect (circle of families)

Give the actually state of the program (where the program stands at the date of the activity report, no more than ten lines):
The program commenced at the beginning of the academic year (November 2019) after we published a call for participants (September 2019). Two program coordinators and tutors worked hand in hand this year- one for the Hebrew speaking students and the other for the Arabic. The students made connections with neighboring elderly people when the program started and established good relationships. Up until March 2020 the program went according to plans. When the pandemic broke, since the beneficiaries of the program are senior citizens, we had to change our plans and direct our students to find creative ways of keeping in touch with their elderly without the actual close encounters such as phone calls, virtual meetings on social media, letters and distant meetings. This was fairly easy since the relationships between the two ends were already well established. Naturally the pace was slowed down and the project will come to its conclusion, unlike previous years, end of August.

The main achievements during the last year of activity (main achievements, number of events, number of participants, etc.):
The achievement of the current year is that despite Covid19 period and the danger in meeting with the fragile population of elderly people, the students did not give up and struggled to maintain connections while keeping social distancing. At times, when they could not meet the elderly, they helped them by going to the grocery store and running errands for the elderly They constantly thought of ways to react to the feeling of loneliness the elderly felt- a feeling that was elevated during the lockdown. One

student cleaned the elderly's yard with friends so he could come out to the sun and sit in a nice garden. The student and his friends also made with him Kabalat Shabbat meetings on Shabbat evening. Another student, who got infected and staid at a Corona hotel, provided a sympathetic ear during games of cards for elderly tenants in addition to keeping in touch with her assigned elderly. One students developed online chess games with his elderly. Varied initiations within irregular circumstances.

The evaluation (methodology, results, comparisons with the precedent year, conclusions for the future…):
The largest obstacle this year was to cope with forced social distancing- There was a need to find ways of coping with the emotional situation in addition to the physical difficulty caused by the situation and intensified by it. In the coming year we will continue to deal with similar struggles. The uncertainty elevates the elderly feeling of helplessness in our society.
The entire group of students reported, thorough the program period, feelings of satisfactory and accomplishment. When giving to the other you give to yourself- The experience was valuable for the students..

Unfortunately, the number of Arabic-speaking students who were able to take part in the project dropped compared to the previous year. In Arab society there are difficulties, fears, and barriers that prevent people from entering strangers' houses and in this project there is an opportunity to deal with this issue. The one participating student reported a meaningful experience full of giving .she gave but also received and learned a lot about the power and the value of giving

Provisional guide lines for the advancement of the program in the next year:
This year was a special year and conclusions from the activity can't be applied necessarily in the next year. Should the situation continue, next year's challenge would be to find creative ways of coping with what's to come- Connecting to the elderly from a distance or with the aid of digital means.
This year it was impossible to do so, since this is requires a meeting in person, but to invite some elderly people who were part of the project to speak about their experience with the students would be interesting