

## ACTIVITY REPORT for the MATANEL FOUNDATION

**Program: AKIM Equal in Uniform (EIU)**

**Year: 2021-22**

Name of the Program: Equal in Uniform (EIU)

Year of activity: 2021-22

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Number of active participants in the program: 180

Estimated number of impacted participants:180

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

Prior to the launch of EIU, young adults with disabilities were granted an exemption from the IDF. In partnership with the IDF, the program was created in 2006 to enable young Israelis with disabilities a life-altering experience while receiving skills and confidence. Serving in the IDF constitutes a vital platform for inclusion while contributing to Israel's security.

The program continues to have a profound affect on the participants by adding significant meaning to their lives and by boosting self-efficacy and confidence. At the same time, young adults in the IDF gain new attitudes towards their peers who face challenges different from their own. Through the experience of together, they become more aware of the challenges of coping with disabilities and in the long run, more sensitive and empathic adults.

*Ultimately this experience creates a more inclusive and tolerant Israeli society.*

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

Services and Events:

IDF bases hosting the 180 EIU participants expanded from **19 IDF bases to 22** as participants joined the **Military Police and Border Patrol Units** this past year.

Each EIU program participant was accompanied by a social worker and accompanying support staffer (coordinators and regional managers) with expertise in



special education and disabilities. All participants also receive quarterly therapy in the field of social norms and sexual behavior.

During the 2021-22 year of activity, EIU participants served in the following roles in the IDF:

- ✓ Aircraft maintenance
- ✓ Editing texts
- ✓ Intelligence units support (8200)
- ✓ Graphic design
- ✓ Parachute equipment maintenance
- ✓ Auto garage mechanics
- ✓ Assembly of communications equipment
- ✓ Print shop support
- ✓ Kitchen staff
- ✓ Logistics and supply chain support
- ✓ Photography

In addition, the EIU Musical Ensemble, comprised of 3 soldiers, made **five appearances** at IDF events and ceremonies. They served as natural ambassadors of “inclusion” to their fellow soldiers and promoted the importance of inclusion, integration and acceptance. They had a tremendous impact on all who attended these events (estimated 1,000 soldiers).

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

All of the program participants are supervised and accompanied by AKIM staff who make personal evaluations throughout the year. They also interface with IDF personnel in order to keep track of the progress of each participant and ensure that the role they have undertaken is suitable.

In the previous activity year, four new roles were introduced for EIU participants including within the air force, border and military police.

For the 2022-23 activity year, the new roles will be monitored and AKIM would like to further broaden the number of options of roles and responsibilities in order to provide the most suitable service based on the aptitudes and desires of the participants.

One of the key indicators of success of the program is the fact that over 90% of alumni continue to find real jobs (meaningful employment) after completing the EIU program. (accompanied by AKIM staff).



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

Increasing the variety of service opportunities in the IDF, augmenting the post-service program accompanying alumni for placement in real jobs.

**Relevant PDF documents** attached including photos and stories of participants.

Please join a **5 minutes movie** which presents your institution and the particular project supported by the Matanel Foundation.

Due to constraints regarding filming at IDF facilities (army censor), we do not have a movie at this time. AKIM will endeavor to find a solution and produce a video dedicated to the program during the 2022-2023 activity year. We apologize that it is not possible at this time.

**AKIM is grateful to the MATANEL Foundation for supporting the EQUAL in UNIFORM Program - transforming the lives of young adults with intellectual disabilities in Israel.**