The Unit for Social Involvement
Dean of Students Office
UNIVERSITY OF HAIFA

אוניברסיטה נעם
הידע מגיע לכולם

אוניברסיטת חיפה
UNIVERSITY OF HAIFA
جامعة حيفا

Annual Report

2025-2026

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About the Program: 11 Years of Impact

"Access for All" advances a more equitable society in which every individual has the opportunity to realize their potential and contribute meaningfully to their family, community and society at large. The program opens the doors of academia to adults facing social, economic, and educational barriers, creating meaningful connections between universities and underserved populations. Through accessible education, structured dialogue, and sustained interaction, "Access for All" helps narrow knowledge gaps, strengthen participants' confidence and agency, and expands opportunities for social mobility.

Our Vision

To create a more equitable and inclusive society in which people from disadvantaged backgrounds are empowered to learn, broaden their horizons, realize their potential, and transform their lives through access to knowledge, education, and meaningful interaction.

Program Goals

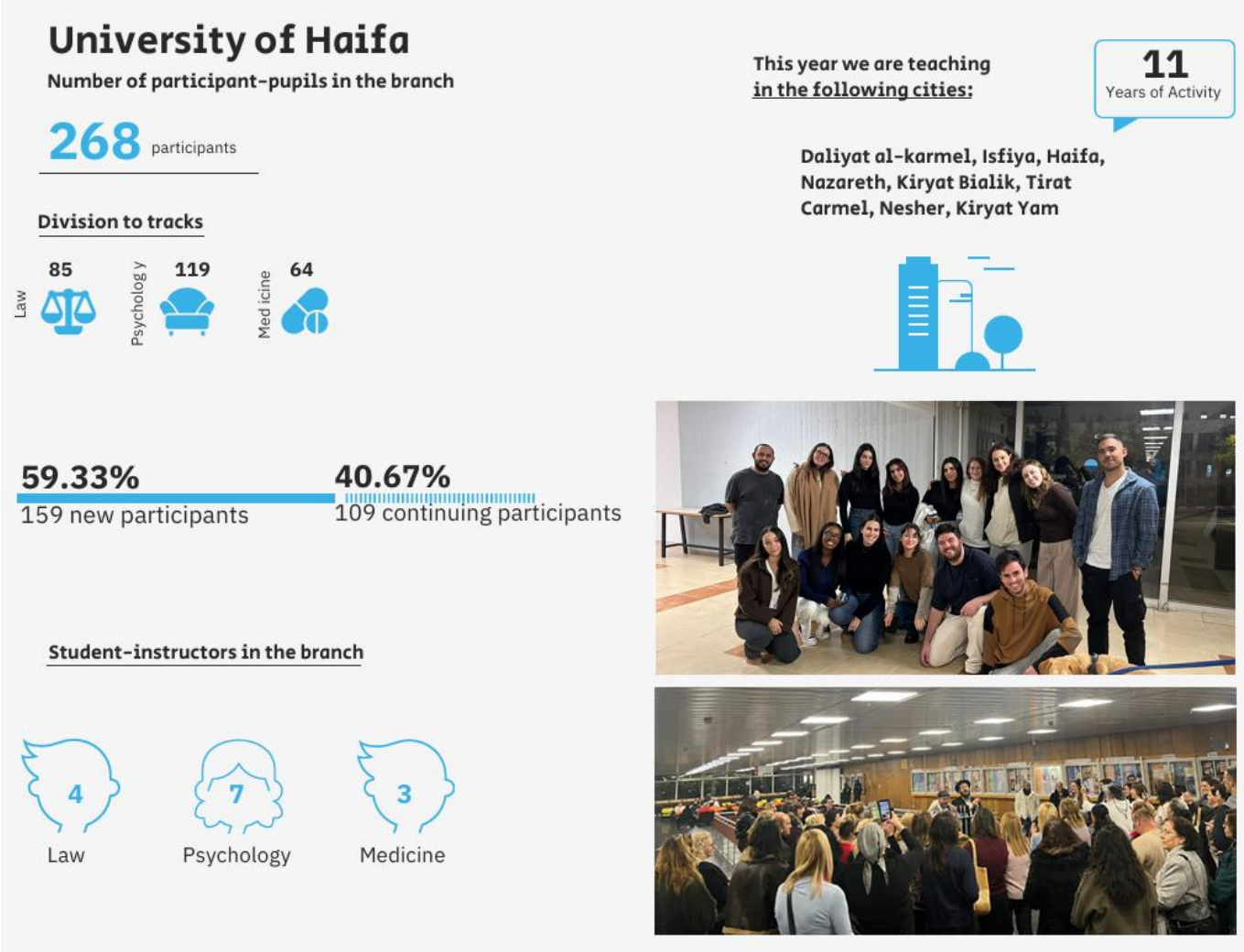
- To make academic knowledge and learning accessible to populations facing social and economic barriers.
- To provide meaningful learning experiences that strengthen participants knowledge, skills, self-confidence, and sense of self-efficacy.
- To build lasting connections between program participants and the university community through shared learning, dialogue, and personal interaction.
- To strengthen participants' sense of belonging and personal responsibility, while encouraging active engagement in their communities.

How We Achieve Our Goals

- We make the knowledge, experience, and resources of the University of Haifa accessible through academic courses tailored to participants' needs and lived experiences, bridging the gap between academia and everyday life.

- We use innovative and engaging teaching methods to develop participants' abilities, foster curiosity, and provide the motivation and practical tools needed for continued learning and personal growth.
- We cultivate meaningful relationships among participants, student-instructors, and the wider university community within a safe, respectful, and supportive learning environment.
- We remove practical barriers to participation by providing individualized support, logistical assistance, transportation, and refreshments throughout the program.
- We provide student-instructors with professional and academic guidance while deepening their understanding of social and educational disparities.

About Our Participants:



Program Reach and Continuity: Geographic Reach

"Access for All" operated in eight cities across northern Israel, connecting residents with academic learning at the University of Haifa: Daliyat al-Karmel, Isfiya, Haifa, Nazareth, Kiryat Bialik, Tirat Carmel, Nesher, and Kiryat Yam.

Measure	Result
Total participants	268
New participants	159 (59.33%)
Continuing participants	109 (40.67%)
Cities served	8
Years of activity	11
Student-instructors	14

The combination of new and continuing participants reflects the program's ability to expand its reach while sustaining engagement among returning learners.

Three Academic Tracks and Learning Outcomes

Track	Participants	Share of participants	Practical learning and demonstrated skills
Psychology	119	44.4%	Applied psychological concepts to everyday life and developed research, teamwork, and presentation skills through academic posters.
Law	85	31.7%	Applied legal knowledge through a mock trial, strengthening analytical thinking, teamwork, public speaking, and self-confidence.
Medicine	64	23.9%	Connected medical knowledge with healthier daily choices and developed research, critical-thinking, teamwork, and presentation skills through scientific posters.
Total	**268**	**100%**	

From Knowledge to Transformation: Participant Voices and Academic Highlights

The program's impact is reflected not only in what participants learned, but also in how they applied that knowledge to their health, relationships, personal challenges and everyday decisions. Testimonials collected throughout the year from participants across the different academic tracks reveal an experience that extended far beyond the classroom, contributing to their intellectual growth, personal development and sense of possibility.

Law Track: Understanding Rights and Finding a Voice

Participants in the Law Track take an introductory course that explores the fundamental principles of the Israeli legal system, major areas of law, and citizens' rights and responsibilities. The course introduces key concepts from contract law, tort law, criminal law, labor law, family law and other legal fields.

Through lectures, discussions, analysis of current events, simulations and case studies, participants develop critical-thinking skills and discover how legal principles relate to situations they may encounter in everyday life.

For Tatiana K'zhner, the value of the course lay in both the knowledge she gained and its practical relevance:

"The program not only gave me new knowledge and broadened my horizons, but also taught me things that are genuinely useful in my everyday life. Linda, our instructor, made every class clear, engaging and enjoyable."

- Tatiana K'zhner, Law Track

The year culminated in a mock trial that invited participants to put their learning into practice. Taking on the roles of judges, lawyers, witnesses and litigants, they presented legal arguments and conducted a simulated legal proceeding before an audience. This empowering final project strengthened their self-confidence, public-speaking abilities, teamwork and analytical skills, bringing the academic year to a memorable conclusion.

Medicine Track: Turning Knowledge into Healthier Lives

Participants in the Medicine Track take an "Introduction to Medicine" course that provides an overview of medical science, the human body and its systems, common diseases, diagnostic and treatment methods, and important developments in medicine and medical research.

Throughout the year, participants acquire practical knowledge of preventive medicine, healthy living, nutrition, hygiene and first aid. By connecting scientific concepts with everyday life, the course encourages them to make informed choices that support both their own health and the well-being of their families.

Nadia described how this combination of academic and practical learning changed her approach to health:

"The Medicine Track transformed the way I understand health and the human body. Beyond gaining academic knowledge, I acquired practical tools that continue to guide my everyday choices and help me build healthier habits."

- Nadia, Medicine Track

For Elaham, the opportunity to study at the University carried an additional and deeply personal meaning:

"Joining the program fulfilled a lifelong dream. At 63, I returned to the classroom and discovered that learning and higher education can open new possibilities at any stage of life."

- Elaham, Medicine Track

For their final project, participants created scientific posters on a variety of medical topics. They investigated current medical issues, gathered information from professional sources and presented their findings at an exhibition during the closing ceremony. The project showcased the research, teamwork, critical-thinking and presentation skills they had developed throughout the year.

Psychology Track: Understanding Others and Ourselves

Participants in the Psychology Track take an "Introduction to Psychology" course that offers a broad overview of the discipline's fundamental principles and major fields, including social, cognitive, developmental, behavioral and physiological psychology.

The course introduces participants to both classical and contemporary psychological theories and examines how these theories deepen our understanding of human behavior, thought processes, emotions and relationships. It also emphasizes the practical application of psychology in everyday life, exploring decision-making, coping with stress, interpersonal communication, group dynamics and conflict resolution. Further topics—including mental health, sleep and dreams, perception and the senses, and psychological research methods—provide participants with a broader understanding of the processes that shape individuals and society.

For Elad Guetta, studying psychology became part of a much larger process of self-understanding and healing:

"Studying psychology became an important part of my personal journey. After years of coping with trauma and anxiety, the course helped me understand myself better and taught me that asking for help is not a sign of weakness, but an important step towards healing and personal growth."

- Elad Guetta, Psychology Track

The year concluded with a collaborative final project in which participants created academic posters on subjects such as resilience, motivation, interpersonal communication, stress management, self-image and mental health. Drawing on academic sources, they presented their work at the closing ceremony to their families, program staff and University guests—demonstrating the knowledge, research abilities and presentation skills they had gained throughout the year.

Building Opportunity Through Partnership

"Access for All" works closely with local authorities, social welfare departments, mental health services, the Ministry of Health, and other community partners. These partnerships enable the program to identify and

recruit participants, respond to individual needs, provide ongoing professional support and maintain a strong network of care throughout the academic year.

We value the extensive network of partners that has supported the program over the years. By bringing together academia, local authorities, social services and local communities, these collaborations strengthen the program's impact and expand access to meaningful educational opportunities.

The Ministry of Welfare and Social Security: Supporting Participants at Every Stage

The Ministry of Welfare and Social Security is a key strategic partner of the "Access for All" program. Throughout the academic year, professionals from local social welfare departments work closely with program staff at every stage of implementation.

This partnership supports the identification and recruitment of participants, responds to individual and social needs, and provides ongoing professional assistance. Local coordinators and welfare professionals maintain regular contact with participants, helping them overcome challenges, remain engaged, and successfully complete the academic year.

We deeply appreciate the Ministry's continued commitment, trust, and longstanding partnership, which contribute significantly to the program's success and expand educational opportunities for the individuals and communities we serve.

The Ministry of Health and the Eshnav Association: Learning as a Path to Inclusion

The partnership with the Mental Health Rehabilitation Division of the Ministry of Health is an important component of the "Access for All" program. It reflects a shared commitment to expanding access to learning and educational access for people receiving mental health rehabilitation services.

This year marked the second consecutive year of collaboration with the Eshnav Association. Eshnav helps recruit participants eligible for services through the Ministry of Health's Rehabilitation Basket (*Sal Shikum*) and maintains regular contact with them throughout the academic year. Working closely with program staff, the association supports participant outreach, recruitment, and continued engagement.

Through the joint efforts of the Ministry of Health, the Eshnav Association, and the University of Haifa, participants receive academic and personal support that strengthens their participation, sense of belonging, and overall program experience.

We sincerely thank the Ministry of Health and the Eshnav Association for their continued partnership, trust, and shared commitment to promoting equal opportunity, social inclusion, and access to educational opportunities.

Student-Instructors: The People Behind the Program

The success of "Access for All" depends greatly on the dedication, professionalism and commitment of its student-instructors. Serving as educators, mentors and a vital link between the University and program participants, they help transform the academic curriculum into a supportive and empowering learning experience.

Preparing to Teach, Guide and Support

For the 2025–2026 academic year, student-instructors were selected through a comprehensive screening process. They then completed a month-long training program designed to prepare them for both the educational and social responsibilities of their roles.

The program was led by 14 student-instructors:

- Seven in Psychology
- Four in Law
- Three in Medicine

They were supported by four student coordinators: one for each of the three academic tracks, and an Operations and Logistics Coordinator.

Strengthening the Quality of Teaching

Throughout the year, the team received ongoing professional and academic guidance from Mr. Udi Bernstein, the program's senior academic instructor, who has mentored the instructional team for the past five years. His experience and guidance strengthened both the quality of teaching and the learning experience provided to participants.

Commitment that Carried Participants Forward

The team's professionalism, resilience and commitment created a stable and supportive learning environment during a challenging year. Their efforts enabled participants to remain engaged, complete the academic program and celebrate their achievements together at the graduation ceremony.

A Year of Resilience, Partnership and Possibility

"Access for All" continued to provide participants with a stable and supportive framework for learning, personal growth and connection.
This continuity reflected the dedication of the program team, the determination of its participants and the strength of the partnerships that sustained the program.

Student-instructors and program staff maintained regular contact with participants, providing academic guidance, encouragement and personal support. These sustained connections helped participants remain engaged with their studies and feel part of the program community. Participants demonstrated commitment and successfully completed the program.
The year culminated in a meaningful graduation ceremony attended by participants, their families, University representatives and community partners. Together, they celebrated not only academic achievement, but also the determination, personal growth and individual journeys behind every accomplishment.

A Stronger Home at the University of Haifa

The integration of "Access for All" under the management of the University of Haifa strengthened the program's institutional foundation

and more closely aligned its educational and professional activities with the University's academic and social mission.

As an integral part of the Unit for Social Involvement within the Dean of Students Office, "Access for All" continued to deepen its partnerships with local welfare departments, the Ministry of Health, the Eshnav Association and other community organizations. These collaborations are essential to reaching participants, providing sustained support and expanding access to meaningful educational opportunities.

More Than a Program: A Community of Opportunity

This year reaffirmed the value of "Access for All" as both an educational program and a supportive community- one that fosters knowledge, belonging, self-efficacy and personal growth while building meaningful connections between the University and the communities it serves.

With Our Sincere Gratitude

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to the Matanel Foundation for its generous support and continued commitment to the "Access for All" program.

Your trust and support make this work possible. They enable participants to discover their abilities, explore new possibilities and recognize their capacity to shape their own futures.

Together, we are opening the doors of higher education and helping to build a more equitable and inclusive society.

