

## Dear Friends,

Now that we're preparing for Pesach, we're delighted to share some of the nachat from our students with you.

This year saw a huge increase in our First-Year Program- 60 students in total! We were delighted to be able to increase the quantity and quality of the Mechina's programs, particularly regarding the scope and variety of the volunteer activities this year.

## Our Students' Physical and Spiritual Progress

It's so exciting to see just how far this year's students are progressing physically, mentally, and spiritually as they prepare for IDF service. The atmosphere in the Beit Midrash is intense, as the study sessions have become more vibrant as the students participate more and more. The Mechina's navigational assignments are now more intense and demanding, yet the students continue to excel in every one of them. Our students are internalizing what they are truly capable of achieving, and this continues to boost their self-esteem, encouraging them to set new goals in life.

**100% of Tamir students this year will be enlisting in the IDF**

**85% will be combat soldiers, including in Egoz and Paratrooper Elite Units**

## The Mechina Holds its Tenth Annual Torch Relay

We recently completed the Mechina's tenth annual 260-km torch relay in memory of the Ten Fallen of Bint J'bel during the Second Lebanon War. At each stop along the way, a different student shared with us background about one of the Ten, who he was and what we can learn from his values and actions- all in the company of the soldier's family. This year, we were joined by the Mayor of Katzrin and the Commander of the IDF's Bashan Division.

The Mechina's Executive Director, Avichai Yaakov, fought at Bint J'bel and lost ten of his friends in the battle (who he tried to save and was later awarded the IDF's Medal of Courage). Since the battle, Avichai took upon himself a lifetime mission to eternalize their legacy.



**"You proved- first of all to yourselves, and then to your friends and families- just how great you are and what you are capable of. You showed just how you can achieve anything you put your minds to."**

Hillel, a psychologist who joined the students on one of the hikes

## Expanded Volunteer Activities

Our students this year enjoyed participating in the Mechina's expanded array of volunteer activities. There are currently twelve different activities, including daycare centers, special education, youth at-risk, elderly, and agricultural activity for the benefit of the community. The Mechina currently provides over 5,700 hours of volunteering!

## Enriched Curriculum at the Mechina and Looking Ahead

Several lectures have enriched our students' outlook. They heard stories of courage from warriors who were wounded in battle and spoke of their recovery, as well as lectures on responsible financial behavior and other important topics.

## Update on Tamir's Returning to Lead Teacher's Training Program

Last year, four students completed the program and were seamlessly absorbed into educational frameworks in Israel's northern peripheries, particularly in special education and at-risk youth. Four new students joined the program this year.

We are presently working to further expand and improve the program's curriculum.

## Avichai and Michal's Recent Trip to the US

Avichai and Michal were in New York and Cleveland in January, and held two parlor meetings in the New York area. They were delighted to meet new people and add them to the Mechina's honorable list of friends overseas.

This summer, Avichai and Michal plan to be in New York and California, and would love to meet you and your friends! Please contact Michal ([michal.natan.1959@gmail.com](mailto:michal.natan.1959@gmail.com)) for further information.



## From Rabbi Ya'ish Hanuna, Dean of the Mechina

Dear Friends,

The Exodus from Egypt marked a great change in the status of the Jewish People, turning them from a nation with a slave mentality into a free people. This sharp turn from slavery to freedom requires an internal transformation as well, a quest in search of who we really are. This is a process that permeates the deepest areas of one's being and created a special frame-of-mind in the Jewish Nation.

Though the Exodus from Mitzrayim/Egypt happened thousands of years ago, the obligation to leave one's meitzarim/boundaries still constantly remains within us. Our role as educators is to enable this spirit to manifest itself in the souls of our dear students.

The cosmic role the Jewish People took upon itself was to serve as a light unto the nations and lift high the light of truth and love. This is indeed the role of every individual Jew: to light a path for those who journey in darkness, and straighten the bends of the material world through Divine holiness.

With blessings for a Joyous Festival of Freedom,  
Rabbi Ya'ish Hanuna

## Shai C.'s Story

A Student Who Spent a Year-and-a-Half at the Mechina

*I grew up in Nahariya in a secular family. At the age of 12, my family moved to a Youth Village in Karmiel, and we took in 12 children besides my three brothers and I. It was too much for me, so I moved to a dormitory high school in Nahariya but eventually dropped out.*

*A cousin of mine pressured me into trying out the Mechina. I finally joined and all my hesitations quickly disappeared. The warmth of the staff, the lessons, the makeup of the students, and the personal attention gave me a strong feeling of identification with the Mechina. Thanks to everyone's support and the encouragement of the staff and my friends, I succeeded in overcoming every hurdle. My daily routine upgraded this feeling of empowerment into a steady, continuous feeling.*

*A year-and-a-half later, I can clearly point to the significant change I underwent at the Mechina from a confused kid going wherever life takes him, into a mature guy who's aware of who he is and isn't afraid to make decisions. My parents still find it hard to believe the transformation I've undergone in only a year-and-a-half, becoming a determined combat soldier full of Emuna in Hashem and the Jewish people.*



**"I discovered new things about people with special needs, such as how friendly they are and how much they need love."**

Mechina student volunteering with children with special needs



The Ancient City of Katzrin. Photo courtesy of Wikipedia



Sign at the entrance to Katzrin. Photo courtesy of the Katzrin Municipality.

## The Story of Katzrin

The story of the city of Katzrin began 1,500 years ago. The remains of the ancient city of Katzrin- its streets, houses, and synagogue- are the keystone of Modern Katzrin. We are so fortunate to live in a place with such a glorious Jewish history.

The Golan Heights were liberated in the 1967 Six-Day War. Later, in 1977, Israel planned the city adjacent to Ancient Katzrin.

Katzrin's human mosaic is a really successful model, consisting of religious and secular people, new immigrants and veteran sabras, young and old – all of whom reach out and support one another.

The Tamir Mechina was founded here in 2003, and is proud to play an important part in the city's daily routine, with its many volunteer activities for the city's different sectors and age groups.

### Dear Friends,

The Jewish People are dealing with a most difficult situation over the last six months. Nevertheless, like the rest of Israel, we are constantly moving forward, as you can see. Many of our graduates are excelling in the IDF as we speak, while their friends at the Mechina are developing their mental stamina and Jewish identity in preparation for the challenges that lay ahead.

We would love to host you on your next trip to Israel!  
Michal is waiting for your call.

Wishing You a Joyous Pesach Holiday and a

**פסח שמח וכשר**

In friendship,

**Avichai Yaakov**, Executive Director

**Michal Natan**, Director of Resource Development

## Become a Partner in Building Israel's Future Leaders!

**For tax-deductible check donations:**  
Write check to "PEF Israel Endowment Funds, Inc.," earmarked for Tamir, and send to 630 Third Ave., Ste. 1501, New York, NY 10017.

**For tax-deductible money transfer via bank account:**  
Account name: PEF Israel Endowment Funds, Inc.

ABA: 026009768, Account: 03-2693-2.  
Include a memo earmarking the donation for Tamir, and then notify us of the amount at:  
michalnatan1959@gmail.com

**For online tax-deductible credit card donations:**  
www.israelgives.org, and type "Tamir" in the search field.

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