

Dear Friends,

We hope you had an enjoyable summer.

Now that the new class of Mechina students has begun this year's program, we're once again awed by the great responsibility for their development, yet very excited to lead them to a new understanding of just how special they are and how bright their futures can be. Many students come from difficult domestic or socio-economic circumstances; many others come from new immigrant families still in transition. Yet, just like we've seen in previous years, we are very confident all of them will acquire a new sense of self-esteem, motivation, and determination that will help them succeed throughout their lives.

"The Mechina taught me about myself, how to solve problems and grow as a person".
Moshe, Graduate of Tamir's 12th Class

Looking Back at Last Year's Achievements

Like every year, we began with a complex and diverse group of students. Many came from homes where serving productively in the IDF was not a priority and they therefore had originally sought ways to serve their three-year tenure in the lightest way possible.

Over the course of the year, however, many of them underwent a serious personality-building transformation. All of them have chosen to serve as best they can. All of them (save for those with medical issues) have even enlisted in IDF combat units.

At the Mechina's End-of-Year Ceremony, the students claimed that without the process they experienced at the Mechina, they would not have enlisted in these units. The Mechina's students have enlisted in all IDF Ground Forces. Most of them have even said they would like to enter the selection process for the IDF's highest elite units!

This Year's End-of-Year Ceremony

On the last day of the Mechina's school year we held our annual End-of-Year Ceremony. The Ceremony, led by the graduating class itself, included a summary of the year by Tamir's staff and the students' parents, blessings from public figures, and a presentation created by the graduating class. The parents movingly spoke about the beautiful change their children underwent. (Hearing this from the parents gives us strength for next year!). The audience was also very moved by a teenager with Down Syndrome who read a personal letter of thanks to the Mechina student who guided him throughout the year as part of the Mechina's Volunteer Activities Program.

"The preparation our sons received here hasn't only made them better soldiers. It has made them better people."

Parent of one of last year's students



10 Years since the Battle of Bint J'bel and the Second Lebanon War

CEO Avichay Yaakov's Story:



Following an intensive year at the Mechina – a year in which I learned not only many values, but mainly how to think and remain determined until success is achieved, as well as leadership skills – I enlisted in the Golani Brigade.

The difficult basic and advanced training periods passed fairly easily because I came prepared – both physically but primarily mentally – for dealing with difficult challenges in the army and as a citizen. In my opinion, the difference between those who succeed and those who don't depends on the ability to remain determined. This is something we work on daily at the Mechina.

In 2006, the Second Lebanon War broke out. At the time, I was a Company Commander in the Golani's 51st Battalion. On July 26th, at the climax of the war, my division encountered dozens of terrorists in the Bint J'bel village in Southern Lebanon.

At 5:00 in the morning a bloody battle began that lasted over six hours. In the battle, the division lost eight soldiers and commanders, including Ro'i Klein HY"D who jumped on a grenade to save his soldiers. Another 26 soldiers were wounded. We eliminated about 60 terrorists and four Katyusha missile launchers aimed at Israel's North.

The company spearheading the battle, which was also the youngest among the three companies in the division, entered the inferno inside the olive grove between the village's houses. During the first minutes of the battle, almost the entire spearheading company was hit, including their commander, Amichai Merchavia z"l.

We, who were at the front, established our positions in the houses at the front of the complex. We heard voices over the radio requesting help to eliminate the terrorists and evacuate the wounded. After some time, we received an order to help the company that was hit.

I gathered my soldiers in a circle and asked who's willing to go. They all raised their hands yet I had only seconds to decide who would come with me and who would remain. I took two soldiers who were beside me and we left towards the grove, together with the platoon sergeant.

When we reached the olive grove we saw a horrid sight: the wounded spearheading company was forced to fight from within the grove. Suddenly, we were fired upon directly from one of the houses where the terrorists were waiting. I saw the bullets digging into the ground 1.5 meters away. From that moment I remembered the values I learned at home and at the Mechina: determination, friendship, and striving for victory despite the odds. From that moment on, I operated "on auto-pilot". I didn't think of anything but two objectives: 1. To win this battle; 2. To ensure everyone returns home to their mother. G-d forbid should there be any kidnappings.

With these objectives before me, I thought of nothing else. I entered the olive grove and exited with wounded or dead soldiers in my arms, nine times. The gunfire continued constantly, digging into the ground beside me while grenade shrapnel was wounding the soldiers around me. Among the casualties we evacuated was the deputy battalion commander, the division commander, the killed deputy division commander, and other senior commanders of the division.

At this point I understood that no division commanders were left, so I took several soldiers, and we again entered the grove- this time to protect the bodies of those who were killed.

When I reached the house where we were positioned, I entered the shower room which became a firing position. There was great tension in the air because all our commanders were hit. I stood facing the mirror and washed my face. I remembered the leadership lessons at the Mechina in which they taught us that every difficulty can be solved by correct thinking and persistence. I told myself, "You don't have the privilege to break. No division commanders are left."

I returned to the soldiers outside. We continued fighting until the Evacuation Unit came at around 1:00 in the afternoon.

Everyone can succeed in life! Whether it's in extreme situations such as war, or routine challenges one encounters at work or in school etc. Everything depends on the tools a person acquires and the mentality he adopts.

Today I'm the director of the Mechina which prepares our amazing youth to protect our homeland. Eventually this preparation will greatly contribute to the personal development of these young men, but no less to the State of Israel as a whole.

This lesson is what we try to impart to the younger generation at the Mechina: the will to succeed and the path to get there.

Sincerely,
Avihay Yaakov

Updates for the 5777 Mechina School Year

This year we began with 53 students in the Mechina's Fourteenth Class in our First-Year Program, and another 12 students who returned for our Second-Year Program.

The new group of First-Year students is diverse. Many come from Israel's northern cities, development towns and peripheries, such as Acco, Haifa, Beit She'an, and Kiryat Shmona. The rest come from all across Israel.

The First-Year Program includes ten students from Ethiopian immigrant families, who blend in very nicely at the Mechina. They are quiet students with great respect for values and their peers. They are strongly determined and naturally advance to become high-ranking commanders in the IDF.

During the first few days of the program, we emphasized the intensive educational process on the individual level, and the staff's constant availability for every student. For our Second-Year Program, we emphasized the importance of diligence in their studies. We wish them all a year of great success in their every endeavor.

Forty percent of our students have no ability to fund even a portion of their tuition. Therefore, this year we launched a new program in the US called "Ametz Chanich" (Adopt a Student), in which participants (individuals, schools, and shuls) "adopt" one or more students and sponsor a scholarship for them. The adoption program will help them too reach new horizons.





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

Dear Friends,

Last year was an incredible year, full of productive activity and companionship. We succeeded in imparting important values to our students – particularly love for every person, “for G-d created man in His image”. We teach our students love for Torah and the Land of Israel, and educate them about the Jewish People’s aspiration to repair the world in G-d’s Kingdom until we merit the fulfillment of the prophets’ words: “I will bring them to My holy mountain and gladden them in My house of prayer”. “I will reside among you and you will be My people” and “I will bestow upon you boundless blessing”.

Thank you for your blessed partnership and generous support which enable us to reach these objectives.

May we all benefit another year of blessing, success, health, and great prosperity.

With great love,

Rabbi Yaish Hanuna and the Tamir Mechina

To Our Dear Friends and Supporters,

The year 5776, which is about to end, was a complex one both in Israel and throughout the world. We witnessed Islamic terror and political instability around the globe. Nevertheless, despite this terror we see the fulfillment of the verse, “The more they beat them, the more they increased.” (Exodus 1:12)

This year was a year of great success. The number of students at the Mechina was higher than ever before, almost beyond capacity. The Mechina’s graduates are serving in the IDF and we hear very good things from them. This year, as well, we have a higher-than-average enrollment, and thus the students’ activity and influence on their surroundings is increasing and strengthening. All of this is thanks to the educational staff, tirelessly led by the dean of the Mechina, Rabbi Ya’ish Hanuna.

Dear friends- we know none of this would have been possible without your material and spiritual support. For this we thank you dearly. In the name of our students and staff, we bless you and your family with a wonderful New Year, and may all of your wishes be fulfilled.

Avichay Yaakov, CEO

Michal Natan, Director of Resource Development

Shana Tova! שנה טובה



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