

Cool Success

The Jerusalem Foundation along with the Jerusalem Education Authority (JEA) have launched a new and innovative program to enable outstanding students from the city's neediest families to achieve success in the areas in which they are most talented.

Ach L'hatzlacha literally translated as "a brother for success" is also a play on words from using the slang term *achla* meaning cool. This program makes it cool to succeed. 30 exceptional students from troubled families in Jerusalem have been chosen to take part in this new program funded by a Jerusalem Foundation donor who wishes to remain anonymous and who sought to assist talented Jerusalem youth whose families were financially unable to support the development of their special talents.

For a period of 3 years the participants will be given individual attention of a Big Brother/Big Sister who will act as a kind of 'personal trainer' in guiding the youngster through the individual study program developed for him or her and making sure that the gifted student receives all of the help and support they need to succeed. The program aims to help these especially talented students to develop their capabilities and to excel, despite their difficult economic situation.



Photo: Shaul Alfia

Jerusalem Foundation Dedicates Newly Renovated Beit Matanya

In Jerusalem, there are a disproportionate number of people living below the poverty line and particular neighborhoods where large sectors of society have to meet difficult daily challenges. A special community, Kibbutz Beit Yisrael, an urban kibbutz in the Gilo neighborhood of Jerusalem set out to make a difference in the daily lives of the people living around them. The Jerusalem Foundation works consistently to help each Jerusalemite to reach their full potential and to identify projects that make this goal possible.

Located in a former absorption center, Kibbut Beit Yisrael, offers a vision of inclusion and tolerance and creates effective models of pluralism, dialogue, community and social progress. In addition to the wonderful work in their community as a major force advancing change they initiated the establishment of a special academy, the first in Israel to bring together religious and secular participants in a one-year pre-army service program combining Jewish studies and community service. A central part of their program is working with local youngsters to give them the chance to move out of the world in which they are living. The positive values and programs that the kibbutz offers have the potential to change the future of the neighborhood's children and perhaps end their families' cycle of poverty. On January 7th at a festive ceremony, the center was named in memory of one of its own past members, Matanya Robinson, who was killed in military service in Jenin.

Such a project was a perfect match for the goals of the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation of Baltimore, understanding the importance of this project and its meaning for changing the lives of residents in the neighborhood and particularly the next generation. They agreed to partner with the Jerusalem Foundation and contributed the remaining funds needed to complete the renovations after meeting the parents of the deceased soldier. Thanks to their generosity, the 49 members of the pre-army program who delay entering the army to complete these studies and community service will be able to enjoy their new surroundings and provide quality programs for the children of the neighborhood, creating a new reality and a better future for the people of the community.

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