

**Report to the Friends of Yemin Orde Board of Directors  
Executive Summary**



**Yemin Orde Youth Village**

**November 2016**

**Population 2016 - 2017**

We have welcomed 430 children from the following countries of origin: 33% from Ethiopia, 26% from countries of the FSU, 24% from France, 10% native Israeli, and 7% from Brazil.

As for the Class of 2016, once again we are very proud to report that we have an outstanding number of graduates (65%) who have enrolled in pre-army gap-year leadership programs. The other 35% are serving in the Israel Defense Forces or are *Sherut Leumi* (National Service) volunteers.

**Yemin Orde High School – Ministry of Education Merit Prize**

Yemin Orde High School has received a prestigious award through a nationwide Ministry of Education program that rewards schools for excellence. The award provides each of our teachers with a 4,000 NIS (approximately \$1,000) bonus in his or her pay packet over the course of this year. Criteria included these aspects of school performance:

- Relations between pupils and teachers
- Relations between the pupils themselves—specifically, accepting the other
- The percentage of pupils opting to take 4-5 point (honors-level) matriculation exams
- The percentage of pupils active as community volunteers
- The percentage of graduates enrolled in pre-army gap-year leadership programs
- The percentage of graduates who enlist in the IDF and *Sherut Leumi* (National Service)

**Curriculum and Methodology**

Academic subject-specific instruction at Yemin Orde High School currently includes Biology, Chemistry, English, Math, and Physics; also Agriculture, Computer Sciences (est. 2015/16), Electronics, Media & Communications, and Robotics. All courses span a range of learning levels from remedial to advanced.

**Special Education Classes**

At Yemin Orde, Special Education is tailored to the needs of pupils including those with learning disabilities (for example, ADHD) or emotional difficulties. These pupils benefit from exceptionally small classes (no more than 13 pupils per class) and, in addition, each Special Education teacher is paired with a teaching assistant able to give struggling pupils one-on-one attention. A number of young women doing their *Sherut Leumi* (National Service) work at the Village as informal-education counselors. For this year, we've secured an additional ten *Sherut Leumi* girls as Special Education classroom assistants to work with individual kids.

## Highlights

### 2015-16 Outstanding Achievements Ceremony for 9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> Graders

At this Ceremony, forty prizes were awarded to 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> graders. Within each grade, children from each class were honored, some for impressive academic accomplishments and others (selected by their classmates) for social leadership. Prizes were awarded to the outstanding achiever in each of the three grade levels.

### Media & Communications Documentary Shorts

The Village hosted a screening of five short documentary films produced as final projects by seniors majoring in Media and Communications. Pupils chose topics and whom they wished to interview. They mastered the basics and such skills as choosing and recruiting interview subjects (fellow pupils and staff), composing interview questions, and determining where and when to film.

When we asked the young filmmakers how they felt about interviewing Yemin Orde staff members, they told us, "It was frightening at first because these are the people who work with us, but we were counting on them to be fair and honest."

### Photography Course and Gallery Exhibit

The second consecutive extracurricular photography course culminated in an exhibition of participants' final projects hosted by the Jaffa Port Gallery in Tel Aviv. (See photo collage)



For their final projects, each child chose a different theme—Joy, Anger, Honor, Trust, and other powerful topics. Visitors to the show included influential Israelis, among them donors and potential donors. The children told us of their pride in seeing their work exposed to many viewers. One student exhibitor explained:

*"The topic I chose is FAMILY because I feel longing for my family. I left them behind in France in order to come to Israel and go through the experience of a lifetime at Yemin Orde. I'm waiting for my parents and my brother to follow me [but] I've found friends at Yemin Orde who are very close to me, and their warm friendship helps me."*

### 2015-16 Commencement

Journeys of Enlightenment was the theme when Yemin Orde's graduating seniors received their high school diplomas and basked in congratulations from a cheering audience of families, educators, and classmates. In his remarks, Yemin Orde Village Director, Shmuli Bing explored the metaphor of a journey: "You have a new path now, and of course you'll take falls, but that's the challenge for all of us—to get up after a fall. I am sure that what you've experienced here will make for a better Israel. Be proud of yourselves because we're already proud of you!"

### International Leadership Outreach Programs for Youth

Children of Yemin Orde are fortunate to participate in nine International leadership outreach programs for youth. Among them, two of our students participated in the Diller Teen Program Fellows.

**Diller Teen Fellows** is an immersive leadership program that invites a select group of Jewish 10th and 11th graders from the U.S., Canada, South Africa, Australia and Israel to step up, lead their communities, and repair the world.

### **Integrated-Learning Pilot Projects**

Last year, in collaboration with the IDF's elite Intelligence Corps and Israeli high-tech partners, we developed the "Integrated Tools" pilot program at Yemin Orde High School. The objective is to give a group of children in the Village the opportunity to excel academically in computer fields prized by the Israeli army and "Start-up Nation." A first group of twenty-four 10th graders began studying in the three-year track in September 2016.

We also opened up a condensed two-year version of the project to accommodate twenty 11th graders. The children receive one-on-one mentoring once every three weeks by soldiers serving in the intelligence units partnered with Yemin Orde for this initiative. These soldier-mentors, who have developed an excellent relationship with the pupils (now in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade), will accompany the children throughout the program. We are delighted to report that this year, a new cohort of 10<sup>th</sup> graders has entered the program; they too will benefit from tutoring by Intelligence Corps soldier-mentors.

In the same spirit, this year we've launched two new integrated-learning pilot projects to give weaker pupils academically the opportunity for similar achievement including professional certification: one course of study will enable successful graduates to work as smart-appliance technicians, and a second course will qualify graduates to work as fitness instructors.

We want to prepare all Yemin Orde children to break the generational chain of poverty; if we can encourage them to aspire to higher education and gainful professions, we will have empowered them!

### **TED-Talking at the Village**

During Shavuot this year, half the Village (children and staff) stayed up all night learning together with guests from a pre-army gap-year program. Every person stood up and spoke for three minutes each in TED-talk format about a particular Jewish value dear to his or her heart. The children were visibly excited by the extraordinary experience of learning all night long.

### **Yom Kippur**

This year as in previous years, all the children remained here on Yom Kippur to worship as a community, and 85 graduates stayed with us in the Village.

### **The Eco-Farm**

The Eco-Farm has launched a pilot work-study scholarship project. Each participating youngster chooses a branch (e.g., the goat herd, the beehives, the greenhouses) and commits to working two shifts per week (one morning shift from 6:00 – 07:30 AM and one evening shift from 4:30 – 7:00 PM) side by side with the professionals. 70 children applied for this year's 25 available positions. Preference was given to three applicant categories—agriculture majors, kids who've already worked on the farm but are majoring in other subjects, and girls (who currently make up 20% of the participants).

### **Capital Projects**

Progress has been made on the following projects:

- Two new Children's Homes are slated for completion by the beginning of December. One has been donated by the Davidson Family Foundation (UK); the other has been donated by Friends of Yemin Orde

- The Ministry of Education has provided funding for the renovation of two additional Children's Homes. Work will begin in January and should take six months.
- \$1M in funding toward building an additional Children's Home has been pledged in challenge-grant format by the Krupp Family; the Village is diligently working with FYO to raise \$1M in matching funds to meet the overall \$2M construction cost that will deliver two new homes.
- Two new High School classrooms are currently under construction.
- Our Art and Music Center (located in Beit Joie) has been renovated by the Schwartz Family (Boston).
- Renovation of the Amphitheater, funded by the Levy Family (Chicago), is in its final stages.
- Beit Florence, the Village's medical facility, has received a new dental chair and new dental X-ray equipment courtesy of the Henry Schein Company (Bergman Family).
- During a Sukkot visit, the Davidson Family Foundation in the UK has agreed to construct an auditorium with music and dance facilities.

## Looking Ahead

### **Best Practices in Educational Justice**

Yemin Orde Youth Village is the only educational community from Israel that has been invited to participate in the "Herrenhausen Symposium on Best Practices in Educational Justice: Boarding Schools for Marginalized Youth," taking place in Hannover, Germany on November 9 – 11, 2016. The conference brings together distinguished international experts on residential education and representatives of leading boarding-school style institutions. Susan Weijel will represent Yemin Orde and share the Village Way model.

### **Graduate Day 2016**

Graduate Day 2016 will take place on November 29<sup>th</sup>. Over one hundred and ten recent alumni will receive scholarships for higher education. This year, Board Members who participate in the Friends of Yemin Orde Mission to Israel will be with us.

### **American Volunteers**

In early February, 28 American youngsters, accompanied by 3 counselors, will arrive from the Nativ academic gap-year leadership program for Jewish high school graduates. The volunteers will live at the Village for four months and work four hours per day in various Village branches. We also look forward to hosting Young Judea gap-year leadership program volunteers. Young Judeans will be with us for ten weeks.

## Thank You!

Yemin Orde's dedicated professional leadership and staff could not possibly create for our children the matrix of healing and educational experiences offered here without compassionate and visionary partners. Our staff members understand and appreciate that what we are able to do for the kids could not be done without you. Our children and graduates are empowered by the knowledge that the Village has partners who care about them.