

A brave journey from Ethiopia to Israel

This program is Sponsored by The Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee

When Tamir Temesgen Zalaw first arrived in Israel from Ethiopia at the age of 15, he would eat only biscuits prepared from a baking mix. “I missed Ethiopian food so much, especially the injera (an Ethiopian flatbread), that I didn’t want to eat,” Tamir said.

Eventually, Tamir and his family adapted to Israeli fare. Yet, even after surviving eight traumatic years living in a crowded refugee compound in Gondar, Ethiopia, the challenge of speaking and understanding Hebrew, attending an Israeli school, and living in a temporary housing community in modern Haifa proved to be far more difficult.

A cousin who arrived in Israel a few years before Tamir lived at Yemin Orde Youth Village and persuaded him to visit.

Yemin Orde is a home, school and safe haven to 430 at-risk immigrant youth from around the world.

The Village’s supportive community of educators and professionals, and its successful educational methodology called the Village Way, help troubled youth overcome past trauma; develop self-esteem, strong cultural identity and leadership skills; and embrace hope for a bright future in Israel.

“As soon as I arrived at the Village, it felt like home,” Tamir said. “I learned so much at Yemin Orde. I learned how to dream and how to follow my dreams. My teachers also taught me the meaning of life and how to be an independent youth.”

Yemin Orde helped Tamir develop strong Hebrew language skills and he made many friends at the Village.

Tamir participated in the Village’s robotics program, a popular extracurricular activity geared toward encouraging interest in computer science and mechanical and electric engineering. In 2009, Tamir’s robotics team won first

place in an Israel-wide competition, which qualified them to compete in the international competition’s final round in Atlanta, Georgia.

After high school graduation, Tamir served three years in the Israel Defense Forces’ elite paratrooper unit.

After military service, Tamir attended Ono Academic College, near Tel Aviv, for his undergraduate degree. He is currently studying for a law degree at Ono and will graduate in the Spring of 2019. Tamir is interested in

a legal career, either as a prosecutor or as an attorney in the social impact field.

Tamir and Shmuli Bing, Director, Yemin Orde Youth Village, are the guest speakers at a program at Temple Sinai (4631 South Lockwood Ridge Rd., Sarasota) on Sunday, March 3 from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m. The program’s topic is “From Survival to Leadership: Transforming the Lives of Israel’s At-Risk Youth.” The program is co-sponsored by The Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee and Temple Sinai.



Tamir Temesgen Zalaw



2008 Yemin Orde robotics team that was awarded first place in Israel-wide robotics competition with Israel President Shimon Peres z"l (Tamir Temesgen Zalaw is second from the right)

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