

ISRAEL CENTRE

Aliyah Department

- The Aliyah Department has seen an increasing number of people making Aliyah over the last year, and especially since November 2015.
- In 2014 - 172 olim left.
- In 2015 - 216 olim left.
- January 2016 - 23 olim have left
- February 2016 we estimate that 20 olim will be making Aliyah.
- We envisage that many more people will consider making Aliyah and our numbers will soar.
- In 2015 we opened 252 new files. So far, 42 new files have been opened between January and 2 February 2016.

Israel Expo: March 2015

- The annual Aliya was incorporated into the Israel / SA expo in collaboration with the SAZF.
- Banks, medical aid schemes, property rental and purchase businesses, institutions of higher learning and others that provide invaluable services to those South Africans contemplating making the move to live in Israel.
- We were honoured with the presence of Jewish Agency chairman Natan Sharansky.

Mini-Expo: Dr Avi Nov - Israeli Tax Consultant June 2015

The Israel Centre had the pleasure in hosting Dr Avi Nov, who is an Israeli Tax Consultant. Discussed various Israeli and international tax issues related to people who currently reside in South Africa and are considering Aliyah. The following issues were discussed: Residency – tax implications, Tax benefits for olim and toshavim chozrim, Investing in Israel.

Partnership2Gether

Israel Centre and the P2G Unit designed a new strategic concept that will expand numbers of participants in P2G projects, with more relevance to SA community

Twinning School: The programme run both in Johannesburg and CT is expanding to high-schools and for the first time in Yeshiva College, and becoming an invaluable part of the school's curriculum.

- Teacher Delegation to Johannesburg 10 – 17 August 2015: Eleven Israeli teachers from Har Tuv Elementary School, Safot VeTarbuyot School and Levi Eshkol Elementary School, visited South Africa to connect and deepen their connections with the King David Twinning Schools.
- Twinning School Teacher Delegation to Cape Town 10 – 17 August 2015: A teachers' delegation from Hadasim in Zur Hadassa came to Cape Town to interact, learn, grow and experience their twin school Herzlia Highlands Primary. Four teachers and a pedagogical advisor were part of the delegation to Cape Town to meet their fellow teachers, the twinned pupils and to plan the activities for the year ahead.
- School Twinning Teachers Development Programme: 3 workshops with Pedagogic advisor from Israel visited the School Twinning schools in Johannesburg and Cape Town, to empower, motivate and support the school twinning teachers.

Maccabim May 2015

A group of twelve Maccabim graduates from various religious and professional backgrounds from the Beit Shemesh - Mateh Yehuda region visited Johannesburg and Cape Town on a Partnership2Gether (P2G) mission, Learning about and gaining an understanding of their "partnership community".

Windows 2015

As part of the School Twinning programme, Gr 5 & 6 learners from the twinning schools in Israel and South Africa participated in Windows 2015. The project encouraged the children to learn more about each other's day to day existence. Participants were required to take a photo

from a building structure, that depicted their daily life, and to upload it to a website with a brief explanation of what they saw. Their twinning counterparts voted for their favourite photo and explanation.

Wonderful Women: August 2015

P2G hosted the screening of docu-film, Wonderful Women, a documentary produced to expose and reveal the complex relationship between Haredi and secular women in Beit Shemesh/Mateh Yehudah. They presented their story in CT Limud, and had a discussion panel with Johannesburg women from different Jewish streams.

CycAlive: August 2015

Grade 11 students of different cultural and religious backgrounds came together to cycle the challenging distance from Johannesburg to Durban, in the spirit of ubuntu. The Group of boys from Torah Academy, Moletsane High and Pace Commercial Secondary School (both in Soweto) were joined by 4 boys from the Partnership2Gether region of Beith Shemesh – Metah Yehudah.

Partnership2gether Annual Steering Committee meeting November 2015

- Discussion of proposed programmes for the upcoming year and how best to achieve our goals of creating meaningful relationships in cultural, educational and social spheres, demonstrating the essence of the Partnership – people to people connections and how this is achieved through projects.

EDUCATION

Beith Ha'am Seminar May 2015

The Israel centre was honoured to host the Beit Ha'am Seminar and delighted to have Mrs. Gusti Yehoshua Braverman – Head of the WZO Department for Diaspora Activities. Individual were put into groups to discuss different identities (Jewish, Zionist, South African & Universal). The goal, to understand the importance of dialogue among diverse

groups of people and to understand that one can be critical of Israel while still standing under the banner of Zionism.

Israel studies at King David Linksfield / Victory Park

- Twice a week a representative from the Israel Centre addressed Matric students at King David Linksfield and Victory Park about Israel's history and current affairs. Students were given the opportunity to ask questions, thereby broadening their knowledge about the State of Israel. This program is run in 2016 as well in KDHL.
- All Shlichim, both in Johannesburg and in CT, are running Zionist educational programs in Jewish schools.
- SABJE has 4 JAFI's Shinshiniot (year of service). First time this model is implemented in South-Africa.

Israel Quiz 2015

The Israel Quiz 2015 has been launched throughout the schools. Educators from various schools as well as the Shlichim took part in writing a new and fresh content for the Israel Quiz Book 2015. Over 60 high school learners from all Jewish schools took part in the first round of the Quiz. 15 of them made it to the finals on the 8th November at the Theatre on the Square in Sandton.

My family story

My Family Story, run by the Beit Hatfotsot Musium in Tel Aviv, connects the younger generation, between 12-15 years old to their personal stories, their family stories, and the broader story of the Jewish people. It is a heritage journey to the past, where the exploration of one's Jewish family story, genealogy and traditions culminates in an artistic project. The highpoint of the program is the International Competition held annually in June in Israel, where winners of the artistic projects are displayed at a special exhibition hall in the Museum. This is the first year that Jewish Day schools in Johannesburg are participating in this exciting project.

MASA and experiences in Israel

MASA

- Thanks to massive marketing efforts the numbers of individuals from SA taking part in Masa programs have grown from 116 in 2013/2014 to 180 in 2015/2016.
- While the Rand- Dollar rate is the main obstacle for young South Africans to take part in Masa programs in Israel – Israel Centre and the Jewish Agency for Israel are trying to find a comprehensive solution to this together with our partners in Masa in Israel and the government.
- Masa survey is currently taking place in the schools. Questionnaires are given to all grade 10, 11 and 12 students in JHB and CT. Similar questionnaires will be send to the parents and to university students.

SAUJS evening sponsored by Masa – February 2016:

SAUJS is having its Annual Welcome Back Party. This year Masa gives its sponsorship to the evening. Marketing and Sales director from Masa Israel is coming to visit SA and will take part in this evening. There'll be Masa clips and speakers.

Higher Education and Masa Expo – March 2015

Delegates and representatives of various universities and gap year programs from Israel spent a thrilling week addressing high school students at the schools in JHB and CT, informing them of all their options to spend a gap year or study in Israel.

Careers Evening – May 2015:

The Careers Evening organised by the King David Schools was a great opportunity to meet students and their parents. Israel Centre joined the evening and had a busy booth there, giving information on higher education and other options in Israel to the grade 11 and 12 learners and their parents.

Israel Encounter Tour Dec2015/Jan2016:

- 190 participants took part this year in the Israel Encounter tour. The tour is similar to the previous year's putting even bigger focus on the various

options available to young adults in Israel. There were 4 groups from JHB and one from Cape-Town. 6 kids from Durban joined the JHB group.

- This year Yeshiva College students left their Kfar program in Israel for 9 days to join the Israel Encounter tour.

Onwards Israel – Dec 2015/Jan2016

Onwards offers an all-inclusive internship program with various options. There are 700+ host companies in more than 50 key industries. One can select and combine your internship with Jewish learning components. The program is highly subsidised and the cost is only \$350 including the meals, the accommodations and all components of the program (not including airfare). Although this program matched the young SA students in term of finance, opportunities, terms during the summer holiday, only few were registered.

Leadership programs

Diller Impact Projects: The first group had a meaningful year with significant impact on the kids and their families, in school and the entire community. Recently they accomplished the community projects (Discovery – The Healthiest City in South Africa project; Dove and the Women's Jewish Benevolent Fund – Be Beautiful; DEISI and The Holocaust Centre in the March of the Living project; Discovery, Leonard Roveri, Mimos, Moishes', Pick n Pay, Mark Bartkunsky and Pie Worx in the Ubuntu project).

DTF Launch of the 2nd group - January 2016:

18 grade 11 teens were chosen from King David Linksfield and King David victory park. One from Yeshivah College and one from Hirsch Lyons.

I Heart Israel:

Israel Centre-CT new young-adult program aims to cement Zionist and Jewish identities and to have the confidence to defend their identities. This unprecedented and unique three phase programme runs: intensive

6 part dialogue and discussion-based educational course (materials and mentorship provided by Makom) for a core group of participants, with each session focusing on a different aspect of the Israeli – Arab conflict and on their personal relationship to the State, Land and people of Israel; A delegation of 8 people from the group had been sent to Israel. The participants are obligated when they return to run, within their circle of peers, a minimum of 5 workshops based on the skills, knowledge and experience they gained from both the trip and the course.

ISRAEL CENTRE PROJECTS 2015

Guest Speaker: Brig. Gen. (ret) UDI DEKEL April 2015: insightful evening with Brig. Gen. (ret) Udi Dekel, Director of the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS), the leading think-tank in Israel.

Purim competition May 2015: Israel centre organised a Purim competition to celebrate the Chag, together with the Jewish community. Contestants emailed pictures of their children dressed up in costume and the best costume in each age category, won a prize.

Zionist caravan May 2015: In an effort to reach Jewish Communities who do not live within the mainstream hub of Johannesburg and Cape Town, Shlichim took to the road to visit South African Jews from far and wide with the aim of reconnecting with people to Israel. This year Schlichim and representatives of the Israel Centre visited Oudtshoorn, Plettenberg Bay, East London and Port Elizabeth.

Yitzhak Rabin's memorial 20th anniversary November 2015: A memorial in honour of the 20th anniversary of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's assassination, led by the Youth movements' council. The evening proceedings and paid South African Jewish community respect, together with and honorary speakers: his Excellency Israeli Ambassador Mr Arthur Lenk, Avrom Kregel - President of the SAZF and Ben Swartz – Chairman of the SAZF.