



Media Alert

YEMIN ORDE'S INTEGRATED TOOLS PROJECT TEACHES ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY SKILLS TO AT-RISK YOUTH

Highly-specialized technology skills will benefit job prospects as immigrant youth enter the workforce and become productive and contributing members of Israeli society.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE. BETHESDA, MD -- Computer coding and cybersecurity are technology skills in high demand in the Israeli army as well as Israel's booming start-up technology industry. The new Integrated Tools (IT) project at Yemin Orde Youth Village aims to give at-risk teens the opportunity to learn and excel in these greatly marketable technology skills which, in turn, will benefit job prospects as they enter the workforce and become productive and contributing members of Israeli society. The Israel Defense Forces's Elite Intelligence Corps partners with Yemin Orde Youth Village on this project. Soldiers from this special unit visit the Village on a regular basis to provide mentoring to the students.

Yemin Orde Youth Village is home, school and safe haven for 430 at-risk youth from around the world. Friends of Yemin Orde is the U.S.-based philanthropic partner of the Village and Village Way Educational Initiatives (VWEI). Visit yeminorde.org for more information the Village and VWEI or call 202-237-0286.



Integrated Tools is designed for youth who demonstrate the academic ability, interest and discipline to study hard and take honors-level high school classes as well as pursue honors-level matriculation credentials for higher level post-high school education.

The diverse at-risk youth population at Yemin Orde presents dynamic and challenging educational environments for teachers. While some IT students show the potential for high-level learning, their language skills and cultural differences can present barriers to academic advancement.

"I've taught engineers from all over the world—America, Africa, Asia and India, Australia and New Zealand, but this challenge is something that I've never faced. The kids don't know the Hebrew language and they have a conceptual gap," said Oz Malach, Integrated Tools project director. "The youngsters from Russia grew up with computers, but those from Ethiopia didn't, so we have to find instructional balance. For example, five years ago the child from Ethiopia was working as a shepherd there; such youngsters don't know the physical world about them because they've traveled in time from Ethiopia to Israel, and I'm trying to teach them the virtual world!"

Commitment to the IT program may seem daunting. Participants learn nine hours/day, five days/week at Yemin Orde High School. Of this time, 18 hours/week are devoted to studying computer communications. The pupils learn about computer networks and routers, firewall security and how to respond to cyberattacks, and all computer-communications protocols (for example, TCP/IP and HTTPS).





Participating students also receive three hours more of added classroom instruction in English and three hours more of math instruction beyond what their classmates receive. They also receive private English and math tutoring at Yemin Orde's Learning Center. IT students go on field trips to the Israel-based corporate offices of eBay, Google and Intel, as well.

The Integrated Tools project was first launched in the 2015–2016 school year. It was offered in an abridged one-year format to 12th graders and an abridged two-year format to pupils then in 11th grade (in June 2017, the latter graduated Yemin Orde).

In school year 2016 – 2017, sixty-eight children (65% boys and 35% girls) have participated in the Integrated Tools project: seventeen 12th-graders, twenty-seven 11th-graders, and twenty-four 10th-graders.

For the upcoming 2017-2018 school year, Yemin Orde plans to utilize IT students and their new skills to further projects in other parts of the Village. For example, there is a plan for a joint venture between IT and Yemin Orde's Eco-Farm whereby the farm's goats will be fitted with GPS monitors to collect agricultural data. Students participating in the Integrated Tools project will build the computer network that can support this technology.

"We foresee the graduates of the Integrated Tools project as expert leaders and workers in their fields, and as socially caring and responsible individuals who will pour their knowledge, skills and expertise back into their communities and the country," said Malach.

Of course, Malach said, the Village aims to prepare all its youth, regardless of academic ability, to break the generational chain of poverty through education. "We encourage them to aspire to gainful professions. In this way, we have empowered them," he said.

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