
ALEXANDER (SANDRO) GOLIS

Yemin Orde graduate Alexander (Sandro) Golis is the recipient of Brandeis University's Laurel and Orrie Friedman Fellowship, a 1-1/2 year program which will enable him to study for a Master's degree in Computer Science. The Fellowship underwrites 100 percent of Sandro's tuition and fees, travel and living expenses for the duration of his studies. Orrie Friedman (z"l) was a close friend of Chaim Peri, Founder, Village Way Educational Initiatives, and a strong supporter of Yemin Orde and its educational methodology.



Sandro, 26, grew up in the former Soviet Union (Georgia) and arrived in Israel in 2005 as part of the "Naale" program, an Israeli government-sponsored program that encourages Jewish youth from abroad to study in Israel. (Many of Yemin Orde's Russian-speaking youth arrived in Israel through the "Naale" program.) Sandro was 15 years old – alone and without any family members in his new country.

He was immediately welcomed at Yemin Orde Youth Village where he excelled in his studies and participated in many recreational and extra-curricular activities including swimming, learning to play the guitar and singing with the choir. The Village provided Sandro with a supportive home environment, an excellent education and a safe haven where he could adjust to his new life in Israel. He developed perseverance, outstanding maturity and strong values, all important elements of the Village Way methodology which helped shape him into the positive role model and leader he is today.

After graduation in 2008, Sandro attended a one year young men's leadership program before serving in Israel's military. This gap year program offered him the opportunity to further strengthen his Israeli identity and academic skills, as well as volunteer in his local community. Sandro then served three years as a "lone soldier" in an elite combat unit of the Israel Defense Forces.

Sandro received his B.Sc. in Computer Science from the prestigious Technion-Israel Institute of Technology. He graduated with honors and received an award for academic excellence. During his studies at Technion, Sandro worked as a software developer at Intel R&D center in Haifa.

Sandro credits the emotional and academic support he received from the Village's staff and educators for his successes as a young adult. *"The supportive atmosphere at Yemin Orde helped me study and succeed while remaining in Israel, alone, without my family," Sandro said. "As a youth in Georgia, I studied at a Jewish school and always felt a connection to Israel. My mother supported me in the decision to come to Israel."*

Sandro said the valuable life lessons he learned at Yemin Orde are still a big part his life.

"One of the most important things I learned at the Village is the ability to contribute to my surroundings wherever I may live. It is eight years since I graduated Yemin Orde and, during all those years, I still always find an organization near me to volunteer my free time. Tikkun Olam (social justice, charity) is a big part of me," Sandro said. "Yemin Orde taught me to be independent, to strive to reach my goals and to make good decisions. From the age of 15, I have lived alone in Israel. Yemin Orde showed me how to dream big things and have the strength to do all that I wish to achieve."



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