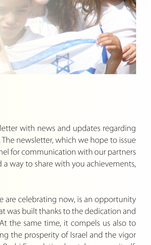
Rashi Foundation
קרן רש"י

Rashi Celebrates Israel's 63rd Independence Day

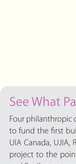
On the eve of Israel's 63rd Independence Day we would like to thank all our partners and friends taking part in leading lasting change for the benefit of the future generation of Israel.



Happy Yom Ha'atzmaut!

The management and staff of the Rashi Foundation

www.rashi.org.il



Dear partners and friends,

I am pleased to send you this newsletter with news and updates regarding the activity of the Rashi Foundation. The newsletter, which we hope to issue on a quarterly basis, is another channel for communication with our partners and friends in Israel and abroad, and a way to share with you achievements, milestones and plans for the future.

Israel's Independence Day, which we are celebrating now, is an opportunity to look back with satisfaction on what was built thanks to the dedication and determination of so many people. At the same time, it compels us also to look forward with the aim of ensuring the prosperity of Israel and the vigor of its society. This is the task that the Rashi Foundation has taken upon itself, and I believe that with joined forces we can accomplish it better.

Happy Yom Ha'atzmaut!

Hubert Leven, *President*

See What Partnerships Can Do

Four philanthropic organizations that seek to spur regional development have joined together to fund the first building of the new Bar Ilan Faculty of Medicine in Tzfat. This partnership of UIA Canada, UJA, Russell Berrie Family Foundation and Rashi has driven the Medical School project to the point-of-no-return, enabling it to open in September 2011. The Government and Bar Ilan are matching partners.

Another building block for Tzfat is the involvement of the Philanthropic Partnership to Strengthen Northern Israel (PPSNI), a group of New York financiers. With the facilitation of the Center for Entrepreneurial Jewish Philanthropy and matching from Rashi, the group is investing in six projects with potential to ignite excellence, growth and social cohesion.

In Arad, four PPSNI members are expanding their joint investment, focusing on strengthening the elementary school system. We expect that this project will help the town attract families moving southwards due to the relocation of IDF bases to the Negev.

Proven Results

93% success in the matriculation exams

A new study of the School of Education at Tel Aviv University shows impressive results of the Tafnit for Matriculation – Last Hurdle program implemented by the Yeholot Association founded by Rashi. The program targets 11th-12th grade students who are expected by their school to fail the matriculation exam in one particular ("obstacle") subject – the "last hurdle" to a matriculation certificate. The study found that 93% of the participants in the 2009/10 school year (1,178 out of 1,270 students) passed the exam in the obstacle subject successfully.

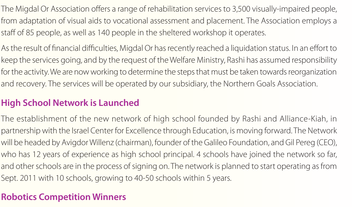
Survey of Katzir Scholarships Graduates – Single Mothers

A survey carried out by Rashi's Planning and Evaluation Unit indicates that gaining an academic degree has increased the monthly income of Katzir graduates who are single mothers by an average of 2,300 NIS. 85% of them no longer need a minimum income allowance and 76% are continuing their studies or consider doing so.

From Vision to Reality

Ma'arag - Arts Center in the Galilee has been completed recently, with workshops for special-need people offering rehabilitation activity, dignified employment and social interaction; a gallery where 60 artists from the region will exhibit and sell their work; and a cafeteria where people with and without handicaps will meet and mingle on an equal basis. The center will be inaugurated in July 2011.

Partners: PPSNI, Legacy Fund, Weinberg Foundation, National Insurance Institute, Shalem Fund.



Ma'arag, Kfar Vradim

Early Childhood Center, Kiryat Shmona

3 Early Childhood Centers - were built as part of upgrading the municipal services for children under the age of 6 and their parents. The services include diagnosis and treatment of development delays, enrichment programs, guidance for parents and training for the staff in educational frameworks. In Kiryat Shmona and Hatzor the early childhood centers were opened in late 2010 and are being upgraded now with construction of daycare centers next to the ECC; the center in Acco will be inaugurated in June 2011.

Partners: UIA Canada, JFN, the Federation of San Francisco, Weinberg Foundation, IDB Group, National Insurance Institute & the Ministry of Housing.

In the News

Winning the Warm Homes Tender

Rashi will significantly increase its involvement in the Warm Homes initiative after winning the new national tender through its operating arms. The subsidiary associations – Northern Goals, Yahdav and the Association for Change in Education – won the tender in 3 out of 4 regions and will operate more than 60 therapeutic day centers for teenage girls at risk throughout the country.

The tender was issued following a pilot project that began in 2006 in partnership with the Welfare Ministry, the National Insurance Institute, the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption, the Oran Foundation and Ashalim-JDC. The pilot's success has led the Welfare Ministry to adopt for nationwide implementation the upgraded model for operation of Warm Homes that we developed.

Education Awards to Full Schools

The investment of Rashi and its partners in the Full School Program in the north, which was launched following the 2nd Lebanon War, in bearing fruit – as indicated by prizes awarded to the schools.

A school in Kiryat Shmona won the regional award for "best educational team", and a school in the Druze town Mrar won the Teachers' Union national award for co-existence.

In addition, the Akiva School in Bat Yam has received the national Religious Education Prize for 2011. The school operates in the Full School model as part of a joint initiative with the National Insurance Institute, and with the support of UIA Canada.

Migdal Or Recovery Plan

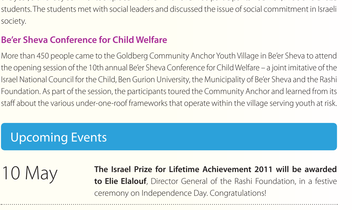
The Migdal Or Association offers a range of rehabilitation services to 3,500 visually-impaired people, from adaptation of visual aids to vocational assessment and placement. The Association employs a staff of 85 people, as well as 140 people in the sheltered workshop it operates.

As the result of financial difficulties, Migdal Or has recently reached a liquidation status. In an effort to keep the services going, and by the request of the Welfare Ministry, Rashi has assumed responsibility for the activity. We are now working to determine the steps that must be taken towards reorganization and recovery. The services will be operated by our subsidiary, the Northern Goals Association.

High School Network is Launched

The establishment of the new network of high school founded by Rashi and Alliance-Kiah, in partnership with the Israel Center for Excellence through Education, is moving forward. The Network will be headed by Avigdor Willenz (chairman), founder of the Galileo Foundation, and Gil Pereg (CEO), who has 12 years of experience as high school principal. 4 schools have joined the network so far, and other schools are in the process of signing on. The network is planned to start operating as from Sept. 2011 with 10 schools, growing to 40-50 schools within 5 years.

Robotics Competition Winners



Students from Kfar Hanoar – Kfar Galim

Rookie all-stars award winners from Ort Beit-Shean

Of the 50 schools participating this year in the First Robotics Competition in Israel, 17 were sponsored by Rashi (schools in the periphery) – and two of them won awards that qualify them for participation in the international competition in the USA. These are remarkable achievements for the students from ORT School in Beit Shean, who entered the competition for the first time, and from the Air Force Technical School in Be'er Sheva who competed for the second time. Well done!

Katzir Seminar on Social Leadership

As part of the community work undertaken by students in the Katzir Scholarships Program throughout the year, a two-day seminar took place in March with over 100 participants – Jewish, Arab and Druze students. The students met with social leaders and discussed the issue of social commitment in Israeli society.

Be'er Sheva Conference for Child Welfare

More than 450 people came to the Goldberg Community Anchor Youth Village in Be'er Sheva to attend the opening session of the 10th annual Be'er Sheva Conference for Child Welfare – a joint imitative of the Israel National Council for the Child, Ben Gurion University, the Municipality of Be'er Sheva and the Rashi Foundation. As part of the session, the participants toured the Community Anchor and learned from its staff about the various under-one-roof frameworks that operate within the village serving youth at risk.

Upcoming Events

10 May

The Israel Prize for Lifetime Achievement 2011 will be awarded to Elie Elalouf, Director General of the Rashi Foundation, in a festive ceremony on Independence Day. Congratulations!

26 June

Ma'ase Annual Event will take place at the Ben Shemen Youth Village on June 26, attended by graduates and participants in the organization's programs. Established in 2004, Ma'ase operates volunteer frameworks for young people with the aim of promoting equal opportunity and social mobility.

28 June

Gvahim Annual Event will take place on June 28 at the Ben Shemen Youth Village. The Gvahim Association, founded by Rashi, aims to help highly qualified new immigrants fulfill their professional goals in Israel. The event will be attended by Mrs Sofa Landver, Minister of Absorption, Gvahim Chairman Mr. Yair Shamir, graduates and volunteers of Gvahim.

July

Revadim Principals' Forum – A meeting of school principals in the Revadim Network will take place in mid-July. Revadim is a joint initiative of Rashi, JDC Israel and the Jewish Federation of Detroit for empowerment and renewal of elementary schools. Representatives of the Ministry of Education and the founding partners will participate in the meeting as well.