



INSIGHT

news from Jewish Institute For The Blind ,Jerusalem

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Industrial Training Center Keeps Workers Productive and Happy

The factory floor is bustling and upbeat at the Industrial Training Center, and the working atmosphere is cheerful. Counselor Nati Shironi encourages one worker, patting her on the back, and then checks off the finished products of her neighbor.

"We are constantly looking for new and challenging sources of work for our employees," Shironi explains. Over fifty workers are today employed at the Industrial Training Center of the Institute, a joint venture of the Jewish Institute for the Blind and the Israeli Department of Social Welfare. "All of our workers come from the Institute or they are recommended by local social workers. They learn to travel to work on their own, and they spend a good part of the day at productive jobs."

Although the workers range in age from 21 – mid 80's, there are few jobs they are not willing to tackle. Alighting from local buses, they punch their time cards and begin their day's activities. Most of the work includes sorting, packaging, collating, and binding, but even special packages of treats for children's birthdays and holidays are assembled.

Work occasionally entails overtime hours, and employees know just how much their efforts are appreciated. "Even though my retirement age has long passed, I would like to work as long as possible," explains Benzion Samchov, a blind employee from the former Soviet Union. "When I



Work at the Industrial Training Center fosters independence as well as providing a fulfilling job

moved to Israel many years ago both my blindness and absorption difficulties prevented me from being welcomed into the work force." Benzion was referred to the Industrial Training Center and basically learned his Hebrew skills on the job. According to Nati, it is also the Center that has helped him to integrate into society. If Benzion and many other blind new immigrants sat at home all day, they would be not only bored but also depressed.

Not only do the workers enjoy a healthy snack during their work day, but a full-course meal is cooked on the premises and served daily. According to Chef David Bublil, a great deal of time and thought goes into his menus, and the home cooked fare is greatly appreciated. Bublil, a former student at the Institute is also blind, and although he has worked in catering in the hotel industry, he knows how well appreciated his efforts are at the JIB Industrial Training Center.



The industrial structure of the Training Center was purchased by the JIB in order to give students as well as the blind a job in the work force

During the academic year, the Industrial Training Center also serves as a valuable resource center for Institute pupils who cannot work outside. Not only is the experience in an industrial environment very educational, but the students also acquire good work habits as well as organizational skills. The Industrial Training Center exemplifies proper preparation for the workers, and it illustrates just how the blind can do anything to which they set their minds.

Plastic and Metal Workshop Provides Life Skills

The Plastic and Metal Workshop at the Jewish Institute for the Blind is yet another example of important skills being transmitted to the students at the Institute. "Not only are the students learning to use their hands and work on their organizational skills," explains Yitzhak Steiner, "but each child expresses his or her unique personality in this class."

The pride of the pupils in their work is justified, and they leave the workshop at the Institute with interesting and useful designs that they have created themselves. Yitzhak Steiner has been associated with the Workshop at the Institute since 1986. He studied Mechanical Engineering and served his stint in the Israeli Air Force. As a civilian Steiner looked for a job to define his life and make a

statement. Once he decided on working with special needs children at the Jewish Institute for the Blind, he never looked back.

"These children can accomplish so much and it is a pleasure to help them achieve all of their goals in our classes at the Institute," says Steiner. "Their self esteem is certainly connected to their success, and they all show just how they can succeed in my classes."



Classes in the Plastic and Metal Workshop are educational and challenging

Not only do the pupils learn to use machinery improving their dexterity and patience, but they actually create useful and decorative items such as lamps, serving dishes, clocks and even backyard grills.

The initial training involves hand crafting in order to develop the individual's confidence in their non-visual senses, but they soon improve organizational techniques and motivation. And most important, the class is an important forum for the students to express themselves as well as have fun.

One of the Institute's Outstanding Employees

"As a twin, I still remember the financial sacrifice it was for my parents to pay for my education, and I was determined to give something back to society," says Yitzhak Steiner. Steiner learned Mechanical Engineering but it was his courses in Special Education that helped him realize what he could contribute to society.

Not only does he operate the Plastic and Metal Workshops at the Institute, but Steiner's influence is felt by all of the student body. He is known as the teacher that breaks into song just because it is a sunny day, and he is also known for his informative lectures on religious subjects.

"The Institute is a special place to work because the staff is of such

a high quality," he says. "I feel like I can always depend on Rachel, the principal as well as the rest of the educators, and hopefully they know I am

also behind them 100%." Steiner has been part of the family of the Jewish Institute for the Blind since 1986, and his is a familiar face in the classroom as well as on tour with the youngsters. The Steiners also have seven children of their own.

"This year I will be returning to university to study for my doctorate, but I will continue in my framework at the Institute," he explains. Steiner still enjoys his hands-on work with the students. A favorite with students and staff alike, Yitzhak Steiner is certainly realizing his high school dream, making his contribution to society.



Yitzhak Steiner

Spotlights

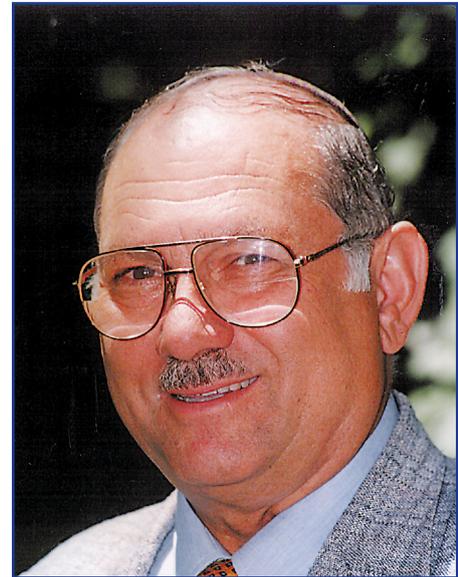
❁ A meaningful graduation ceremony and end of the year festivities were enjoyed by students and families alike at the Institute early this summer. An exhibit of arts and crafts and student projects opened the evening which was called 'Me and My Prayers'.

❁ Six proud blind and partially sighted sportsmen returned to Israel in early May after bringing home a trophy for fifth spot in the European Goalball Championship. In the exciting games, the Israeli team sponsored by the JIB participated as one of 19 countries represented by 29 teams. The games were played under the auspices of the International Blind Sports Association.

❁ Over 200 blind and partially sighted young people enjoyed camping experiences in Jerusalem at the Institute as well as traveling over much of Israel this past summer. The Yachad program included three groups of middle and high school age youth as well as a group of 18-21 year olds that met for different sessions of camping activities. Not only did the young people have a wonderful chance to socialize with other blind and visually handicapped youth, but they were involved in voluntary projects as well as leadership activities.



Many water sports enabled the campers a chance to cool off this summer at Yachad camp activities



Director's Corner

We are proud to introduce our readers to the Industrial Training Center of the Institute, as it is certainly an example of one of our important activities for our students and the wider blind community. The Center in the Givat Shaul industrial area of Jerusalem enables the blind and handicapped to find their way in society, learning organizational skills, and working on various projects.

Every blind citizen of the State of Israel receives a basic income from the National Insurance Institute, but many blind Jerusalemites are happy to supplement their income as well as enrich their day. The Industrial Training Center was purchased by the Jewish Institute for the Blind and is operated in conjunction with the Israeli Ministry of Social Welfare in order to enable our students and the wider blind community the opportunity to maximize their independence. Although an addition to their monthly salary may be a motivating factor, the workers often tell us that just getting out of the house and seeing their peers is one of the most important elements of the job. All of the overhead expenses of the Center are covered by the Institute together with the Ministry of Social Welfare. As in all of our endeavors, the Jewish Institute for the Blind is proud of the work done for the blind and partially sighted community, preparing them with the skills to make them independent and proud citizens of the State of Israel.

Wishing you a Happy and Healthy New Year!

Chaim Reshelbach

Recent Visitors to the Institute



CANADA

Ms. Shoshana Breiner, Ottawa



FRANCE

Mrs. Myriam Nathan, La Varenne



SWEDEN

Mrs. Ingert Glassman, Stockholm



COLOMBIA

Mr. Margarita Bejman, Barranquilla
Mr. & Mrs. Pinhas Gabay, San Andres Isla
Mr. & Mrs. Felix Gateno, Barranquilla



PANAMA

Mr. & Mrs. Malka Zebede, Panama City



UNITED STATES

Mr. Stan Goodman, Thousand Oaks, CA.
Mrs. Fiona Taylor, Thousand Oaks, CA.



ENGLAND

Mr. & Mrs. Moshe Bezalel, London
Mrs. Theresa Freeman, Southport
Mrs. Ruth Hollander, London

COME TO VISIT US

On your trip to Israel we would like to welcome you at our campus situated in Kiryat Moshe, 8 Degel Reuven Street at the entrance of Jerusalem.

To arrange a visit please call: 02-6599501



JIB students enjoy a swim at the Institute's pool

Insights from Abroad

A new computerized wood processing machine has been acquired for the Carpentry Workshop of the Institute through the generosity of *Hilfe Fuer Blinde in Israel*, an organization headed by Dr. Jakob Silbiger of Basel. This advanced equipment will help the students in all of their woodworking courses.

The Hebrew word for children is 'yeladim' and the organization "Yeladim Lemaan Yeladim" never forgets the blind young people of Israel. This summer a generous contribution was sent to the JIB from youngsters in Barranquilla, Colombia.

A new class for young blind and partially sighted children from 6 – 8 years old was recently opened at the Institute and the youngsters need specialized equipment. The National Council of *Jewish Child's Day* in England has donated vital occupational therapy equipment to be used in the development of motor skills and co-ordination.

The *Los Angeles Group for the Blind of Israel* continues to be active in its generous support of the Institute. The annual fund- raising brunch garnered money as well as community support for the needs of the Institute thanks to the hard work of President Jeannette Cameron Nadel, ably assisted by Marcia Fink.



Bi-annual Newsletter

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and multi-handicapped
over 100 years

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