



INSIGHT

news from Jewish Institute For The Blind, Jerusalem

Insight – volume 38 Number 73 Fall 2013

Public Learns about Students' Daily Lives, Dreams and Accomplishments at 'In-House Festival'



Effie Cohen illustrating his weight-lifting & bodily strength

The word 'home' is very small, but it carries with it a lot of baggage. The Jewish Institute for the Blind has served as a home away from home for hundreds of pupils over the years. The doors of the Institute were opened to the public during the first week of July for a theatrical performance, and the school building served as a canvas upon which the lives of students were revealed. As part of the Jerusalem Season of Culture's 'In-House Festival', the Institute was one of many Jerusalem venues opened to the public for theatrical, dance and musical performances.

In-House Festival at the Institute was directed by the talented young director Naama Schendar who realized from the start that the narrative of present and former students would be told to groups

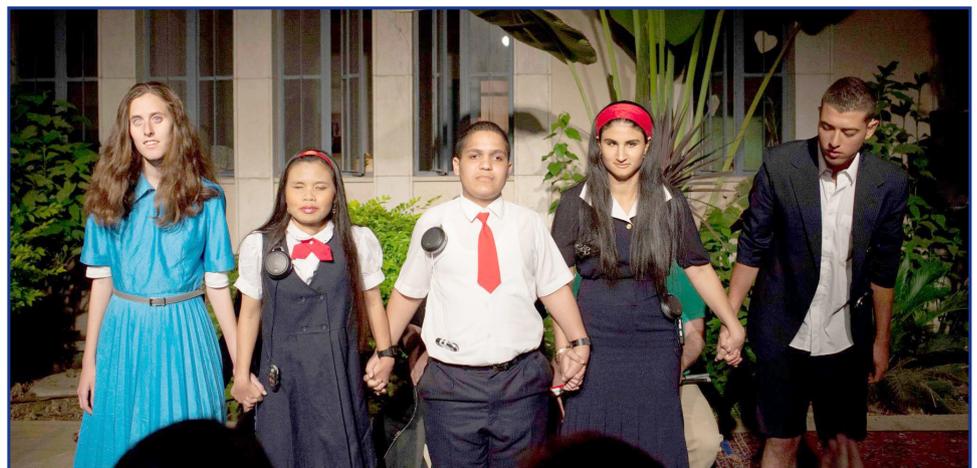
walking through the hallways and visiting parts of the original classroom building of the Institute. One group followed 20-year-old student Dina S. through the halls of the Institute, watching her every move as she applied her make-up perfectly despite her

blindness and as she sang about her mom who has been so influential in her life.

With Dina's guidance the group also got to know former graduate Armand Sabach and hear the story of his childhood as his vision was progressively deteriorating while he was still a young boy. While telling his story he peeled vegetables for the couscous dish that was eaten around the table in the JIB's therapeutic kitchen. Sabach then played haunting melodies on the oud (he is today the lead oud musician of the Ashdod Andalusian Orchestra) and revealed that he spent many of his formative years at the Institute where music was one of his biggest comforts.

Another former student Effie Cohen illustrated his weight-lifting prowess and bodily strength as he told about growing up as a visually handicapped small boy.

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Student actors welcome their audience to the theatrical performance at the Institute

Jerusalem's Top Award Honors Institute's Director

The Jewish Institute for the Blind has been ably directed by Chaim Reshelbach since 1975. Not only has the Institute kept up with the times, but today, although most blind students are mainstreamed, the Institute has become a site of national importance for the blind and partially sighted of Israel.

On *Jerusalem Day* this year, Director Chaim Reshelbach was honored when he was presented with the 'Yakir Yerushalayim' or Worthy of Jerusalem award for his lifetime of activities. We are proud of his achievements and they certainly reflect well on the Jewish Institute for the Blind. Congratulations for a job well done!



Chaim Reshelbach (left), Director of the JIB, is presented 'Worthy of Jerusalem' award by Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat (right)

A Glimpse at One of the Institute's Employees **Shabtai Deutsch**

Shabtai (Shabbi) Deutsch has been a familiar figure at the Institute since 1999, and although he is the Assistant Director of the JIB and wears many hats, everyone associates him with sports. He is already known throughout Israel for widening the scope of the Institute and helping to organize league and individual sports for all of the visually impaired of the country.

At the Institute he also directs the Department of Community Services including the Sports Center. Yachad's program involving the partially sighted and blind from all over Israel is also under his capable management. "Today services extend from the Institute to assist all of Israel's visually handicapped population," explains Deutsch. "We are proud to be able to help them in molding and improving their lives."



Shabbi Deutsch (pictured front left) poses with Israel's national goal ball team

Israel Represented in International Blind Sport Association

As Director of the Institute's Department of Community Services, Shabtai Deutsch is responsible for the positive emphasis on sport and leisure activity for the blind and partially sighted at the Institute and throughout the country. New congratulations are in order as Deutsch is today the Israeli representative of the

International Blind Sport Association (IBSA). "Today Israel is on the map with participation in the international sports arena for the blind and partially sighted," adds Deutsch. "It is rewarding to see so many Israelis succeeding in sport despite their visual handicaps."

Spotlights

❁ Graduation from the JIB was held in a program highlighting the year's successes. The theme of the evening was 'Tefillat Ha'Derech' or the Traveler's Prayer. In the words of the Psalmist..."Lead us towards peace, direct our steps in peace, ...and cause us to reach our destination in life, gladness and peace." May our graduates have only success in their future ventures.

❁ Popular summer workshops included lots of outings all over Jerusalem—pupils explored the malls, downtown Jerusalem and then back at the Institute, they enjoyed thorough science and computer workshops.

❁ Summer activities included a rousing performance of many of the Institute's students in 'The Sound of Music' as well as a musical concert by students.



Students enjoy challenge of hikes throughout the country



Director's Corner

One of the most important goals of the Jewish Institute for the Blind is that our students be totally integrated into society. Although we constantly welcome new visitors, how often is it that passersby learn about our work? We were particularly pleased when the Institute was chosen as a venue for a theatrical presentation this summer as part of Jerusalem's Season of Culture. Not only did we open our doors to audiences who walked through our halls, learning about the hopes and dreams of our population, but we were able to appreciate our students as mature and able actors, telling their innermost secrets openly and with self confidence.

In deciding on the storyline of the performance, director Naama Schendar interviewed dozens of students as well as former graduates who are still connected to the Institute. The resulting production was a wandering theater throughout the halls of the JIB, and the students' stories will not be soon forgotten. On your next trip to Jerusalem, arrange a visit at the Jewish Institute for the Blind, and see for yourself our many projects. We look forward to seeing you and showing you the work that is done here for the blind and partially sighted population of Israel. May you and your loved ones have a Happy New Year and be inscribed in the Book of Life!



Chaim Reshelbach, Director

Recent Visitors to the Institute



FRANCE

Mrs. Myriam Nathan, La Varenne



PANAMA

Mrs. Suzy Tarazi, Panama



SWEDEN

Mrs. Ella Fejne, Jonstop
Ms. Winni Fejne, Helsingborg
Ms. Judith Gemler-Axelsson, Stockholm
Mrs. Inger Glassman, Stockholm
Mr. Bertil Rossel, Stockholm



UNITED STATES

Mr. Leo Brandstatter, NY

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: 02-6599501/511

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Not only was he the youngest brother, but he was small for his age and always tried to keep up with his older siblings. Eyal Stern, a Jerusalem theater-goer, had barely heard of the Jewish Institute for the Blind before he attended the performance. "My eyes were opened tonite," he said. "I was very impressed to see the accomplishments of these blind people, and realize how they have been motivated to try to do so much with their lives."

The Jewish Institute for the Blind has always played a role in the life of

director Naama Schendar. Her great-grandfather was one of the first pupils at the Institute, and as he was a young orphan, he was literally picked from the streets of Jerusalem as a young blind immigrant boy; moreover he was given a warm home and education. "Although I never met him, the family stories of my great-grandfather's childhood were engraved in my memory, and the first time I visited the Institute I experienced a sense of coming home," explains Schendar who directed the production for the Jerusalem Season of Culture.



Arts and crafts exhibit shows off work of pupils

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Bi-annual Newsletter
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Insights from Abroad



The annual fundraiser and champagne brunch of the Los Angeles Group for the Blind of Israel was celebrated for the 48th year this May. Through the initiative and hard work of Jeannette Cameron Nadell who is ably assisted by Marcia Fink, the Los Angeles Group is known for its continued support for Israel's blind. Thank you for all of your assistance.



The JIB was happy to welcome visitors from the Swedish Friends Committee which is headed by Peter Christensen. We were glad to host Inger Glassman and Judith Gemler-Axelsson of Stockholm who represented the Blindinstitutet I Israel Vanner I Sverige. They toured the Institute, visiting the facilities in order to learn about the present needs of the JIB.