



Ha'aguda Lema'an Hachayal

Ha'aguda Lema'an Hachayal; the Association for the Wellbeing of Israel's Soldiers (AWIS), is a non-profit organization that was established in 1942 by Israel's founding prime minister, David Ben-Gurion. The Association's purpose is the same today as it was in Ben-Gurion's time, to give serving soldiers the support and wellbeing extras that the army itself could not afford to provide, and to demonstrate in practical ways our gratitude for their service to the nation.

Soldiers of the Israel Defense Forces are there to guard and defend the homeland of the Jewish people. Many of them make huge sacrifices in the carrying out of their National duty. Our organization provides a link between individual civilians, organizations, and corporate bodies that care about the wellbeing and comforts that can be provided to ease the lot of the serving soldier, and, in time of need, his family.

AWIS is well respected in Israel for the diverse activities its' dedicated workers and volunteers carry out for the wellbeing of every soldier. The individual soldier benefits from AWIS programs and projects from his, or her, first day of national service until re-entering civilian life, then through reserve duty, whenever he or she is called upon. It provides each individual soldier with the sense that someone cares for them and is trying to ease the burden of what is their national duty.

AWIS can be found in every corner of the state of Israel. The main headquarters is in Tel Aviv. There are three regional offices in Jerusalem, Haifa, and Beer Sheba. Throughout the country are eighty branches so that every army base and installation has a representative of our organization nearby.

Our commitment to our soldiers is shared by staunch supporters of the IDF from abroad, who are pivotal in providing the means to demonstrate that they, and we, care about the wellbeing of all our soldiers.

Today, Israel is a thriving modern state with an impressive record of achievements in many spheres. However, the threat to its continued existence has not abated to this day, ever since the first settlers came to work on the land in the late nineteenth century. They came to recreate an independent Jewish state and a homeland for the Jewish people. The army is integral in the maintenance of a viable state.

It is the moral duty of everyone who wants to see the continued existence and future development of the Jewish homeland to support the soldiers of the IDF and show them that we are with them in mind and spirit and want to do our utmost to identify with them in their national duty to defend the state. In practical terms, to donate towards any project that will ease the burden and provide a relief from their onerous responsibilities during their service to the nation.

60 Weizmann Street Tel Aviv 62155 Israel

Website: <http://www.awis.org.il>

Israel Registered Charity No. 58-000-430-7

Fundraising Department telephone 972-(0)72-270-2199 fax 972-3-5464249



Activities

AWIS is responsible for the establishment and implementation of many projects within the IDF. These include recreational, educational, and wellbeing programs all designed to give the highest priority to facilitating the well being of the individual soldier or group of soldiers.

Recreation Facilities

Over the years, AWIS has been responsible for the establishment of scores of recreational facilities on IDF bases throughout Eretz Yisrael. These include sports centers, gymnasia, club rooms, auditoria, heritage rooms, classrooms and synagogues. We provide the necessary means for the IDF to create these facilities. These projects range from the provision of some small leisure room in which combat soldiers can relax, to the renovation and building of soldier's homes, and education centers in choice locations.

Rest and Recreation Resorts

The purpose of our resort centers is to host "fun" days and other recreational events. There are also facilities for vacations for combat troops in need of a rest from their grueling duties. The atmosphere allows them to unwind from the tension of their everyday stresses. The centers provide comfortable rooms, good food, and leisure and sports facilities for the well-being of our soldiers.

Soldiers' Homes

These homes provide comfortable lodgings for soldiers with no family, or where there is no accommodation on a base, also for soldiers in transit, or for soldiers on leave with nowhere to go. AWIS operates eight of these facilities; in Kyriat Shmona, Tiberias, Haifa, Tel Aviv, Ramat, Gan, Jerusalem, Beer Sheba, and Eilat. They provide a home, food and recreational facilities to the all alone soldier.

Education Centers

Just like Israel itself, the IDF is made up of a very diverse population. Old established Sabra family's sons serve with new immigrants from all over the world. There are secular and observant, Ashkenazi and Sephardi, town dwellers and kibbutz or moshav children. All have their own cultural background and levels of education. Each of these groups has a different educational need to reach a level that will afford any individual equal opportunity for advancement in the army and subsequent integration into the civilian population.



Thus the Education centers operated by AWIS include courses in Hebrew language, preparatory courses for school matriculation, and pre-army introduction courses, and others. They are conducted in relaxing facilities conducive to optimal learning conditions.

Family Corners

Picnic tables and benches have been set up in IDF bases in shady corners to provide a pleasant environment for family visits at weekends or holydays. They are also used by soldiers to relax and hangout with their comrades.

Clubrooms, Gymnasias, Synagogues

In smaller bases where there is no permanent recreational facility, AWIS has provided small clubrooms, gyms and synagogues for combat soldiers. We appreciate the soldier's need for a way to relax from their stressful occupation often under extreme conditions. These facilities maybe just small structures or even mobile units that can be moved to different locations as required. For a religious individual to be able to pray in the right environment is both a "mitzvah" and a source of spiritual uplifting. Just to be able to relax and listen to music or watch TV in a clubroom at a primitive outpost is invaluable for a soldier's mental state and wellbeing.

Roadside Canteens

At strategic crossroads, AWIS operates canteens to provide free refreshments and drinks to soldiers in transit from one place to another. They are staffed by local volunteers who are really appreciated by the soldiers who understand that they are being shown the appreciation of the local population for their service to the nation.

Projects

Adoption

In an attempt to strengthen the bond between corporate business or a specific community both here or abroad, the aim of this project is to link a business or community directly with a particular part of the IDF. This may be in sponsoring anything from a unit of the IDF up to adoption of a whole battalion. This adoption could finance all the recreational activities of that battalion for anything from a year up to three years depending on the size of the donation or contribution. For a unit, the contribution would be smaller. Some of the donation could be specifically put aside for use as emergency aid to help an underprivileged soldier.



Vacation

Combat soldiers are the mainstay of the country's defense. AWIS provides them with a five day annual holiday in its recreational resorts where they can enjoy leisure activities that allow them to unwind and recharge their batteries following their arduous daily operations and training.

Vacations for IDF Bereaved

Nearly 23,000 soldiers have sacrificed their lives in the defense of the Jewish homeland. AWIS recognizes the pain and sense of loss of the people and families left behind, the widows, orphans, and parents. AWIS maintains close contact with them and endeavors to ease the pain of families who have lost a member in the course of their service and have to live with the loss everyday of the year. AWIS provides an annual vacation for bereaved families.

Scholarships

Impact Scholarship Program

AWIS, thanks to its money raising activities, is able to offer scholarships to former combat soldiers from underprivileged families. The scholarships are up to \$4000 per year for a period of 4 years at an institute of higher education in Israel. The "Impact" program provides an opportunity for personal advancement that otherwise would not have been available. The soldier is required to undertake 120 hours of voluntary service annually as repayment. As of next year the project is fully funded by the US. We here at AWIS are planning a new scholarship program to be released soon.

Young Soldier Scholarships

This program funds tuition for underprivileged students at an IDF boarding or day school to the tune of \$1000 per year through grades 9-12. This program has the advantage of being able to cultivate career soldiers of the future in a pre-military educational environment.

President's Scholarships for Outstanding Soldiers.

Every year, at the residence of the Israeli president on Independence Day, 120 outstanding soldiers are awarded scholarships worth NIS4000 in a special ceremony. These are for use after the soldier's discharge to study an approved course. AWIS also awards outstanding IDF musicians scholarships of between NIS 1,500-4,000 to attend master-classes held in Israel.



Wellbeing

Aid for Underprivileged Soldiers

This project provides support to IDF soldiers in severe financial distress. It provides special grants, furniture and electrical appliances for the home, food vouchers, and gift coupons for the "Chagim". AWIS funds this aid from donations to this project so that all serving combat soldiers can perform to their maximum ability without the worry of being considered underprivileged, and in the knowledge that everything is OK back home.

The All-alone Soldier

The IDF has a number of soldiers who have no immediate family here in Israel. This group includes new immigrants, orphans, sons and daughters of Israeli parents living abroad, and Israeli born soldiers estranged from their families.

AWIS provides an aid package that includes a "home" to which he or she may return. It also includes free accommodation during leave, Passover "Seder" at an IDF recreational center, and gift vouchers at "Hanukah". Lone combat soldiers are provided with international telephone call-cards, and airfare for a visit to their parents living overseas at least once during their compulsory service.

Relief Storehouses

AWIS runs two warehouses in the north of the country. They offer aid to thousands of underprivileged soldiers annually by providing canned foods, oil, sugar, tea, coffee, pasta, rice, toiletries, underclothing, bed linen, and towels, wherever there is genuine need.

Gifts

A small gift and a gesture of sympathy and concern mean a lot to a wounded soldier. Our volunteers are by the side of every wounded soldier from the first day of their injury. They visit them in hospital and see to it that all possible care and attention is lavished upon the injured. They supply all the encouragement and sympathy needed to expedite a speedy and full recovery. AWIS will, when necessary, pay for a flight of a lone soldier's parent to be at the bedside when most needed.



In times of emergency, AWIS distributes packages with candies, toiletries, underclothes, board games, and other amenities to IDF combat troops on the front line of a military operation. This "mitzvah" really boosts the spirits of the fighters defending our homeland and is an invaluable morale-booster.

Enlisting for compulsory military service at the age of eighteen is a huge milestone in the life of every eligible Israeli, both male and female. They dedicate themselves to defend and guard their homeland. AWIS makes sure they are welcomed at induction bases, where they receive a personal gift.

Soldiers are entitled to discounts at approved outlets by presentation of a Yoter credit card.

In IDF bases throughout the country, Shiklit soldier's canteens sell refreshments, fast foods, cigarettes, and toiletries, and operate vending machines all at a significant discount.

Volunteers

Our roadside cafes, that offer refreshment free of charge to all soldiers in transit, are only operational thanks to a vast number of concerned citizens who volunteer their time and energy to the cause. The volunteers that visit injured hospitalized soldiers to offer encouragement are also a very dedicated group of people.

Volunteer families open their hearts and homes to lone soldiers and host them at weekends and holidays.

Our volunteers are always there, whether getting an auditorium ready for a show, or delivering food parcels to the underprivileged soldier, or welcoming new recruits at induction centers.

They are the manpower essential to our activities and are saints in their own rights.

All these activities have to be funded. That is where you come in.....

Donations

Please contact us at our fundraising department:

www.awis.org.il

60 Weizmann st.

Tel Aviv 62151

Tel: 072-2702199

Fax: 03-5464249

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SUPPORTING THEM**

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