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Welcome to ic.news – pages written by, for, and about Cleveland's Jewish teens!

In the section titled "ic.news" israel.cleveland.next (icnext) participants reflect on their 10-day Mission to Israel in June, 2017, and comment on current issues of interest. They are creating an ongoing source of news about the community, Jewish teens and Israel, inspired by knowledge gained from the icnext program. They will talk about Jewish identity, changing political, social, and

cultural perspectives of Jews and Israelis, the realities of the Israeli conflict, and more. There will be photos that document their 10-day Israel Mission, and those that document current events, whether in Jewish Cleveland or Israel. icnext is a two-year program that educates Cleveland's Jewish high school students from all denominations in core issues of Israeli society and the geopolitical situation in Israel today. icnext is a project of the Jewish Federation of Cleveland, administered through @akiva.

For information about or to apply for

icnext, contact Tina Keller at tkeller@akiva-cleveland.org.

In "more.teen.news" @akiva presents different teen programs in the community. From preparing students for the challenges on their future college campus, to learning Hebrew and how to advocate for Israel; from theater (testimony.theater.cleveland) to music (HaZamir Cleveland), there are so many opportunities for our teens to form a special community. Most importantly, @akiva fosters an incredibly strong connection to Israel, and trains teens to be Jewish leaders.

ic.news

Looking Behind... Looking Ahead...70 Years

We are icnext. A group of teens dedicated to advocating for, learning about and supporting our homeland, the state Israel. This year we will celebrate Israel's 70th year. In icnext we learned about the last 70 years of Israel's history, and this past summer, as we traveled through Israel, we had many conversations about possibilities for the 70 years to come.

We asked every person we met the same question: "Where do you see Israel in the next 70 years?"

This past summer we understood the magnitude of what Israel at 70 means. We were able to experience why it is so important that we have a state and what it means to have a future in our homeland. Touring through the country we met and shared ideas people from all walks of Israeli life - people with different political views, people who would never converse or cross paths on any given day. Through this dialog we understood what it meant for them to have a homeland. We were able to see

the magic that is Israel.

Our experiences in Israel gave us the tools to understand Israel in ways that we never could in an Ohio classroom. We may see on the news facts about the security wall and formulate an opinion, but that is nothing like driving next to it. We may hear about the debate of holy sites on the news but that's nothing like seeing how these sites affect people. Seeing the way a person can connect to their religion through this land is like nothing else. Going to Israel does not only help you connect to your own religion, but allows you see a space that is special to people from all different walks

of life. It allows you to have a common feeling with people you would never otherwise talk to.

In the upcoming issues of ic.news we will discuss Israel's history along with our visions for the future. We will share stories from the people we met, the places we visited, the experiences we had, and how they shaped our views on Israel.

We are the second year of ic.news and we continue this project with pride.

Welcome to ic.news!

Noa Marcus
Co-Editor-in-Chief

israel.cleveland.next is a project of the Jewish Federation of Cleveland, administered through @akiva



To Transform a Desert

Our 10-day trip began down south in the Negev. It was a powerful and positive place to begin - an area that our group was not very educated about. In Be'er Sheva we visited the headquarters of the "Or" movement - an organization dedicated to building up the Negev and Galilee to relieve future overcrowding in Israel's central region caused by anticipated population growth. The first Prime Minister of Israel, Ben Gurion, had a dream to turn the Negev into a flourishing land for the Jewish people which would otherwise be a vacant desert. "Or's" purpose is to fulfill this dream.

-Natalie Cohen, Cleveland 2017

The "Or" movement is turning David Ben Gurion's dream for Israel's south into

a reality. The "Or" movement's goal is to increase the population in the Negev and in Galilee. The Negev and Galilee make up 75 percent of Israel's land area, but only 25 percent of Israel's population live there. Their plan is to grow Israel's population in this under-utilized area to twice its current size by 2048, Israel's 100th year of statehood. Today we were educated about the ways the "Or" movement is going to turn this desert into a desirable place to live. We began in the welcome center, a room full of exciting technology with no printed brochure in sight. We learned about the people in the Negev by going through an interactive digital exhibit. This exhibit had four separate stations, which were informative as well as persuasive. Next we moved into a simulation room where we could design the future



of the Negev. Our simulation could include anything imaginable that we thought would bring more people to the region; increasing the population in a place that makes up 60 percent of Israel's land area. My Negev design was focused on housing, nature, and education, the three things that all people look for when settling down. When the simulation was over my future Negev had a population of 1,035,000 people, almost double what the population is now.

Next we were introduced to a woman from New Jersey. Her family made Aliyah when she was a young girl. She taught us about the "Or" movement's founders: two men who decided to travel Israel after the army instead of following the path of most Israelis, traveling abroad. Their travels took them to the south, where they established

the "Or" movement in 2002, and since have moved 38,850 people to the Negev and Galilee. The program's goal is to move thousands more to these underpopulated regions through strategy, community, and awareness, providing space for Israel's population to grow. This goal will enable 16 million people to ultimately be living comfortably in a more populated Israel.

(Blog by Hailey Nudelman, Israel 2017. Edited by Natalie Cohen, Cleveland 2017)

Growing Confidence in Sderot

Soon after visiting the Negev we found ourselves traveling in a hot sweaty bus and arriving in Sderot. When someone hears the name Sderot, Gaza immediately comes to mind which for many is scary. However, Netanel, joined our group and gave us an

more.teen.news

2017 - 2018 cleveland.shin.shinim as Interviewed by Hadas Galili and Noa Marcus

Each year @akiva brings Israeli high school graduates to the Cleveland community as volunteers. They spend a year with us before going into the Israeli army. These teen emissaries are called Shinshinim and they work in schools, synagogues, youth groups, at @akiva Hebrew school and with icnext, serving as Israeli representatives to the youth in our community. This year we are fortunate to have five shinshinim; Noam Shalev, Shaked Shahar, Yuval Ganot, Elrom Kalo, and Ron Lev Or.

What is one thing you want people to know about you?

Noam: Something I would like people to know about me is that I love to dance and I have been dancing my whole life. I can be really serious, and I am a hard worker when it comes to things that I love to do, but I can also be a really fun person to be with.

Shaked: Music is a really big part of my life. I make sure it's involved in a lot of aspects of my life.

What is the biggest difference between Israel and Cleveland?

Shaked: The coffee! In Israel it is so simple! Here you have about 50 different options and they all have the longest names! In Israel I usually drink strong coffee, without sugar with very little milk, so anything else is really sweet for me. But the different flavors



are cool, and I'm working on trying as many Starbucks drinks as I can!

Yuval: There are many differences and one of them is the food! I miss Israeli food, the salad, the fresh vegetables and the fresh homemade food!

What is your favorite thing about Cleveland?

Yuval: The Jewish community! It is so welcoming. Lots of families have invited us over for dinners and offered to help us. This is a great opportunity to say thank you to everyone. I really appreciate it!

Shaked: I love Autumn. It's so much different than in Israel. The colors are so warm and calm. It's also fun to play in the leaves.

What would you tell your past self about being a shin shin?

Elrom: It's not what I expected it to be. I thought it would be really difficult to integrate into the community, and it wasn't. I wish I was more relaxed before. At the beginning you have no idea what to expect, and you're nervous, but the people here are really nice and helpful!

Noam: I would tell myself that being a Shinshin isn't all Fun, It's a lot of hard work and planning. Also I would tell myself that in the beginning it's not just like you're superman, that you come from Israel and everyone loves you. You have to earn respect.

Yuval: For a long time it has been a dream of mine to be a shinshin abroad in a Jewish Community. Now, after I've been here as a Shinshin for a few weeks and have experienced how significant it is, I would tell my past self to make sure not to give up on that dream, even if it's hard, it's worth it!

What motivates you?

Ron: I want to do the best that I can in everything in my life. I want to be aware of what happens and be an

Natalie Cohen - Co-Editor in Chief
Noa Marcus - Co-Editor in Chief
Hadas Galili - Managing Editor
Ethan Geis - News Editor
Jacqueline Gold - Creative Editor

interesting and meaningful tour of this small town. As a leader of his community Netanel, a 15 year old Sderot native, told us of the struggles, but also the joys of living in Sderot.

When the Gaza-Israeli war broke out Netanel was only 12 years old. Scared, he had to learn where and how to hide from the rockets being fired from Gaza. Sderot is so close to the Gaza Strip that a rocket landed extremely close to Netanel's house. Recently things have been quiet in this region and he even told us that the security has improved immensely within the past 3 years. Many shelters and safe areas have been built for the citizens to go so that if or when they are hit again they will stay safe. It is obvious that there has been a positive transformation in the past 3 years in Sderot. Netanel is optimistic about the future and motivated to help his community by leading discussions about the Gaza border. He also feels that it's necessary to educate people specifically on Sderot. Netanel and the fellow citizens of Sderot show pride and confidence in their city. Netanel feels that by welcoming visitors and talking about his home, he is helping to keep his community strong and safe.

(Blog by Ben Muencz, Israel 2017. Edited by Natalie Cohen, Cleveland 2017)

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influential person.

Noam: Probably the people here in Cleveland! The people here make us feel so welcomed, the little kids that we have so much fun with and the teenagers we have made such great relationships with, and of course the families that invite us to dinners for the holidays and other special events.

Yuval: My passion and love for Israel. I have passion when I talk about Israel, when I teach Hebrew, when I share my Israeli story. In addition, I'm motivated when I see people who are interested to hear more about Israel from me.

From Israel advocacy, leadership training and college prep for Jewish students to HaZamir Cleveland Choir and original Jewish theatre, @akiva offers Hebrew and so much more!

@akiva is a beneficiary agency of the Jewish

Federation of Cleveland and a partner agency of the Jewish Education Center of Cleveland.

For more info visit www.akivacleveland.org.



JOIN US FOR A FREE DAY OF EXPLORING JEWISH LIFE ON A COLLEGE CAMPUS!

On Sunday, November 19th, @akiva will lead a free communal day trip for sophomores, juniors and seniors to the **OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**. Learn about Jewish life on campuses in the MidWest. We will leave Cleveland at 7am and will return at 7pm on the same day. Kosher food will be provided.

To Register please go to www.akivacleveland.org

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