

Jerusalem International YMCA

Development Report January - July 2016

Dear Friends,

It is with great pleasure that I share with you this report on our wide range of activities here at the Jerusalem International YMCA over the past 6 months.

The report highlights the results of our recent efforts to create additional reasons for visitors to enter and experience the JIY and the range of programs and services it has to offer the Jerusalem communities. Our dedicated staff and volunteers have been working extremely hard to provide opportunities for every citizen of Jerusalem to participate in relevant, thought-provoking, educational and thoroughly enjoyable programming. During the past 6 month the JIY doors have welcomed in babies, toddlers, youth, adults and senior citizens in our clubs, camps, preschool, conferences, youth programs, health and wellness center, restaurant, hotel and special events.

Christians, Jews and Muslims from all walks of life continue to feel at home on our grounds, and now more than ever they have multiple reasons to return in larger numbers.

This is what enables us to create a positive alternative reality to the notion of fear of the "other" that sadly permeates the atmosphere on the streets outside.

Thank you for your continued friendship and support of our important mission towards shared living in our beautiful city.

In friendship,

Elias Khoury

Chair of the JIY Board of Directors



Contents

Welcome from Elias Khoury

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Reflections from our CEO | 1 |
| Key personnel changes | 1 |
| Peace preschool | 2 |
| Youth programs | 3 |

Events

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Women at the JIY | 4 |
| Children's activities | 5 |
| Telling our story | 6 |

The Three Arches

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Hotel and restaurant update | 7 |
|-----------------------------|---|

Health and Wellness

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Latest news and classes | 8 |
|-------------------------|---|

Acknowledgments

Organizational Report

CEO Amos Gil reflects on the last 6 months at YMCA

Still an oasis, still a shared space.

Recent months have once again seen a troubled Jerusalem, a shaky Holy Land. The political unrest and the tensions in the streets have illuminated the special role that the Jerusalem International YMCA plays.

The JIY stands as a sanctuary for our many visitors and guests, as well as the people of all ages who use our services and enjoy our facilities. From the toddlers at our Peace Preschool, through our youth programs serving kids from both East and West Jerusalem, to our family events and workshops, we are ensuring that everyone can find something to do here - together.

It is our great pleasure and privilege to share with you the last 6 months of activities at the Jerusalem International YMCA. We believe that it is predominantly through these shared moments that the JIY significantly and positively impacts our local communities - Christian, Jewish and Muslim alike.

Our work is almost always filled with challenges, both culturally and logistically. For this reason, we invite you all to celebrate with us the last few months of successful programing and to welcome in a summer packed with more occasions/events creating shared memories within our unique city of Jerusalem.

Thank you for your continued support of the mission of JIY. We could not continue our important work without your passion and generosity.

Respectfully,

Amos Gil, CEO



Key Personnel Updated List

Board Chair – Elias Khoury

CEO – Amos Gil

Vice CEO – Yossi Eisenberg

CFO – Yulia Omari

Director of Development – Hannah Rendell

Director of Events – Osnat Yuhuda

Director of Youth – Nazeeh Ansari

Director of Peace Preschool – Alexandra Klein-Franke

Director of Three Arches – Raed Abu Leil

Director of Health and Wellness – Rena Sered

HR Coordinator – Hilla Berman



YMCA Peace Preschool

At our preschool, children learn about colors, letters and numbers, just like in any early learning setting. They learn social skills as they play together. Their imaginations are sparked through stories, art and music.

And yet this is no ordinary preschool.

Our classes are mixed with both Arab and Jewish children. Each classroom has two teachers, one Arab and one Jew. Those teachers work together to teach the students to be multi-lingual. They learn

about each other's culture and traditions, sharing songs, stories, foods and celebrations as an integrated community.

These early experiences help to shape a spirit of understanding in the children. But it's also an important act of faith on behalf of the parents, as they show that they value diversity and tolerance enough to bring their children to the Y.

"Our earliest experiences help to determine if we view the world with fear or hope, curiosity or disdain." Alexandra Klein-Franke, director of YMCA Peace Preschool

Keeping Kids Safe

As caretakers of young children, one of the tasks before us is teaching the children about privacy, boundaries and respectful treatment of ourselves and one another.

During a workshop with a senior expert from ELI, our staff at the Peace Preschool freshened up our professional skills on this issue, and we're now offering this lecture to the parents, too!

Investing in Children by Investing in Teachers

Last month our Arab and Jewish teachers at the Peace Preschool participated in a special workshop about pain, belonging and a sense of home.

Our special thanks goes to The Knox Presbyterian Church for their commitment to support next year's teacher training program.

January – July 2016

Over the last 6 months we have held numerous events for the children, parents and staff.

On Purim we had our traditional parade, led by our music teacher, Etty Rosenthal. The following day, when the preschool was closed on account of the holiday, the staff went on a day trip to Tel Aviv to participate in a silk-print workshop where we printed paintings which we had previously prepared in and around the theme of the preschool.

Late June we celebrated Iftar, the meal breaking the fast of Ramadan. Our community of parents, children and teaches alike enjoyed this wonderful evening together. The children played the traditional Ramadan drums (self-made in the preschool) and sang for us the traditional holiday songs.

One very special staff workshop, held at the beginning of April, focused on the theme 'national narratives.' Mediators, Nitzan and Salwas, led us carefully and skillfully through movement and deep listening, to the moment during which we could start sharing with one another our pains, fears and hopes. This workshop was so effective that staff requested a more extensive and deeper exploration into these topics, all of which make up the communal identity of the preschool. We therefore have planned a year-long training with this team during the next school year.



YMCA Youth Department

Being a teen is challenging no matter where you grow up. In a city like Jerusalem however, the teen years are especially important. The experiences we have as teenagers help shape the adults we will become. At the Jerusalem International YMCA, we use the arts, media and more to engage young people in dialogue. These conversations and experiences together lead to lasting friendships, based on understanding and empathy. The friendships are the seeds of peace that we plant for future generations.

Our programs help young people learn about the lives of their contemporaries, who may live just a short distance from their own homes, but they would otherwise never have the opportunity to meet and interact.

January – July 2016

The JIY and Mechol Shalem Arts Club Performance Ensemble ended the year with an exceptional play "I am another you". The play was developed and written by the youth and performed in two languages to a delighted audience of hundreds.

Our ACTV video youth group are in the final stages of editing their yearlong video projects. After literally hundreds of hours of collaborative filming and editing work, we will soon have this year's installments of youth films ready for screening.

The Young Leaders Youth Group celebrated the end of the year here at the Y with a festive Iftar. Jews and Arabs enjoyed together a great meal, made speeches and were awarded their leadership certificates.

Many of these youth leaders are now working in this year's YMCA Summer Camp of Colors, which opened on the 3rd of July.



Jerusalem YMCA Youth Chorus

We have been focusing specifically on equalizing the musical playing-field. Muhamed Badran and Neta Barel, two expert volunteers from the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance, have been guiding our exploration of Eastern and Western music theory, singing styles, and repertoire from multiple perspectives, assuring that the work that is done in dialogue is expressed through our performances as well.

Forbes recently held the 30 Under 30 Summit in Israel and the YMCA Jerusalem Youth Chorus was part of it! We performed at the opening, and then were joined by Okierite Onaodowan from 'Hamilton' the musical for a special workshop on intent and improvisation.

The YMCA Jerusalem Youth Chorus was featured on CCN's Great Big Story earlier this month. This powerful video shows just how special, and unique, the Youth Chorus experience is. Please take a few minutes to [watch the video](#) and share it with others who might also be moved by this powerful story of change.



Events

An activity for everyone – a shared space for all

The Jerusalem International YMCA is a meeting place like no other. We know that many different people find themselves at home within our walls. For this reason we are committed to creating an exciting, varied and dynamic calendar of events that appeal to all. We also understand that it is not always easy for people from East and West Jerusalem to meet each other on common ground or in a safe space, so we ensure that our content is always meaningful, educational or inspirational and allows the patrons to share an important and significant memory together. Our hope is that by laughing and learning side by side at the JIY, that same spirit of friendship can grow outside our walls as well.

On Women and Business

The Clinic for Social and Economic Development of the Hebrew University and the Jerusalem International YMCA conducted a joint conference called 'Stories of Women Entrepreneurs.'

Sessions included 'Obstacles women face when opening a business.' Students from the Hebrew University presented a position paper on the subject. A panel of three Jerusalem entrepreneurs shared their stories during the session 'From dream to reality.'

The conference attendees also had the opportunity to browse a Fair with services and products for sale by Israeli (religious and secular) and Palestinian women entrepreneurs.



Women's Weaving Workshop

For the last few months women have been meeting at the JIY for relaxing weaving workshops. We love to see women on maternity leave, students and retirees all connecting through creativity, conversation and (rather loud) laughter.



Improvisation

Shlofta Improvisation group brought together the complexities and realities of our city through shared laughter and intelligent observations. Over 300 students and adults participated in this workshop.



Children's Shows and Events

We are continuously looking for creative ways of bringing families from East and West Jerusalem together. Our challenge is always with language, however there are many ways to overcome this. Here are two examples:

One great way to captivate audiences of children who may not speak the same language: MIME! A humorous clown paired with classical masterpieces proved to be a crowd pleasing combination.

The other solution we used in our ongoing children's theater series offered bilingual actors and dialogue. The show, "The Small Lantern" drew dozens of families, including many from East Jerusalem.



"Hundreds of children have entered the YMCA over the last 6 months. It is unlikely that these kids from East and West Jerusalem would have ever met, if not for this place" Osnat Yehuda, Director of Special Events.

Picnics on the lawn

We decided that the rare opportunity of bringing families together through our theatre performances should be maximized. So our team have begun encouraging them to stay past the show and further interact with one another. The families are being invited to a shared picnic with drinks and food supplied free of charge.



Welcoming YMCA's Summer Camp of Colors

Our summer started with over 80 kids making the YMCA grounds their home for the holiday months. The camp is conducted in Arabic, English and Hebrew. We have already enjoyed bouncy castles and water games, arts and crafts, an amazing game room, Zumba, sports, sciences and much more to come, always focusing on equality and pluralism. Our Young Leaders teach campers the about the beautiful YMCA building – children learn about the different animals carved in the columns of the façade, each one representing universal qualities, such as leadership, diversity, charity, compassion and more.

It looks like we are going to have an amazing summer!



The Jerusalem International YMCA's Summer Camp of Colors

First Session: 8.17-8.21
Second Session: 8.24-8.28
Early registration discount until May 31st

Colors

"Different shades but we are all equal!"
For all through 6th grades

Summer Camp with the best leaders and a rich program:
Art workshops Science experiments Performances
Zumba and movement classes Camping and sports
Inflatables Swimming lessons in our indoor pool
English and Arabic through games Environment day

All according to age groups

Each activity will involve different aspects of the color theme, "Different cultures but we are all equal" - this is the vision of the YMCA, supporting tolerance between all people and religions

To register: 02-5652064 | www.jmca.org.il | summercampymca.org.il
26 King David St., Jerusalem | 26 شارع الملك داود 26 القدس 9761707 | 07961707 | 07961707



Simply Singing: Interfaith Musical Event

On Monday the 18th of April, just a few hours after a bomb exploded in another terrorist attack that shook Jerusalem, and in spite of the low-spirited mood, a special event took place on our grass lawn - an Arab / Jewish "just to sing" performance. Some 100 people joined in and we received many compliments for conducting this event "especially on a night like this" as many people referred to it.

The preplanned event was organized by Hillel at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and was an interfaith event unique in its kind. Simply Singing (Pashut Sharim) brings together people from East and West Jerusalem for an evening of song and liturgical poetry.

The event, hosted at the Jerusalem International YMCA, serves as a platform for Arabs and Jews to meet each other in a context that unites rather than divides. Participants in the program come out of an appreciation for the strength of music, which breaks boundaries without speech and dialogue.

The program is coordinated by three Hillel leaders two Arabs and one Jew. Coordinators meet throughout the year to develop the schedule and content of the event. The songs and liturgy sung at the event are borrowed from the rich Jewish and Muslim cultures.

Let Harmony Ring

In June, a very special carillon concert was held as part of the annual 'Israel Festival' and drew around 1000 people to the front lawn of JIY.

For the first time ever, we were able to project Professor Gabi Sheller's (our "house" carillon player) image on to the tower, which captured the imagination of the people gathered here and also attracted more interest from passers-by.



Nighttime and Audio Tours

Nighttime tours of JIY have also turned out to be a unique, and very popular, event.

With waiting lists for each tour, we've relished the chance to explain the symbolism and history of our building, as well as to share the scenic views of Jerusalem.

More and more visitors to Jerusalem are also choosing to hear about our special building and our dedication to the shared future of this city. The Pears Foundation have enabled us to find a great interactive way of sharing the YMCA's story through a fantastic Audio Tour.





Raed Abu Leil, Director of the Three Arches talks us through the last 6 months

During the last 6 months our hotel and restaurant have undergone many improvements. We have employed many new key roles including our chef and F&B manager. Our terrace is buzzing with many different people, reflecting the true diversity of our city. Most recently we hosted many high profile guests, from members of the Israeli Parliament to well-known Arab singers.

Our Hotel has been upgraded by the

ministry of tourism to a 3+ star ranking. The rooms have also received a new makeover with new LCD TV's, bath tubs and mattresses.

Aside from all the aesthetic changes, I am most proud to report that we are investing largely in our staff development and training. This has been reflected in our online reviews and customer and staff satisfaction.

"Delicious food in tranquil setting. The food menu was very tempting - I could easily have ordered everything on it." Review on Trip Advisor.

A new name, a new menu

We have decided to rename our distinct restaurant to compliment and express the new concept of our menu. We chose a name that we believe you will loveThe YMCA Restaurant.

The Y's unique character is captured in our menu which combines local and authentic flavors with international influences. Our dishes were planned with the utmost detail to give our diners an extraordinary culinary experience.



Fire at the Peniel

During the hottest May in the last 130 years, our beautiful and historic retreat 'Peniel' near the Sea-of-Galilee caught fire. This devastating news broke all of our hearts however, we drew a sigh of relief when we learned that there were NO CASULTIES.

The main building is still standing, but all of its contents are gone.

Sadly, the trees will have to be cut, others will be planted in their place, and the whole area will have to undergo a new landscape design.

The second building is not damaged. The chapel was also undamaged (except for the glass window that broke, and then some debris.

Although this is distressing, there is no bad without some good – or at least comfort. We are relieved to report that the Peniel was insured with a policy that now proves to be very good, and this will also allow us to rebuild and restore it to what it used to be.

Most importantly and miraculously no one was hurt physically.



Health and Wellness has been paramount at the YMCA – Rena Sered, explains how:

Our Y offers so many different ways to be healthy and exercise for all sorts of people.

Our group exercise department offers many women only classes like Zumba, Pilates or Spinning, where members who are concerned with modesty can feel comfortable, dress in clothes that are suitable for exercise, let loose and have a good time. On any given day you can see a mix of secular women and religious Muslim, Jewish and Christian women, all coming together to get fit.

We have an outstanding morning program with many senior citizen friendly classes in the exercise studio and swimming pool.

Some of our members have been exercising

at the Jerusalem International YMCA for over 50 years. Our Y is a very important part of our senior citizen members' life. They come almost daily, in order to stay healthy and keep themselves in shape, but even more so to meet with friends and be part of our Y community.

Our basketball court is a big attraction for some of our young adult members. The players are a mix of local Abu Tor Muslim men, Jewish American Yeshiva boys learning in the old city for the year.

Sports can really bring people together, and no one can vouch for that more than the Jerusalem International YMCA.

NEW swimming lessons in Arabic, English and Hebrew!

Swimming Lessons
at the Jerusalem International YMCA
Jump Right In!

Professional swimming lessons - the American way (stroke/drill first)
Improvement of swimming technique & preparation for water team
Competitive Swimming Team
Swim courses for all ages
Children Ages 4-14: 5:14
When up to 8:00
Women up to 8:00
Course Structure for Children:
14 Sessions 2x 30 minutes each
Once a week: Sundays 10:30 or 16:20
Twice a week: Monday + Wednesday, 11:17 - 11:45 & 16:20
12:20 Swim to Survive / 12:20 Swim to Survive / 17:00 Technique improvement
Women:
12 Sessions 90 minutes each
Twice a week: 11:17 - 11:45 & 16:20

To register: 02-5692684 | info@ymca.org.il | www.ymca.org.il
26 King David St., Jerusalem | 26 דוד המלך רחוב, ירושלים

קורסי שחייה
במרכז הבינלאומי של ה-YMCA
קורסים לשיפור טכניקת השחייה ופיתוח הכושר
קורסים לילדים ונערים
קורסים לנשים
קורסים למבוגרים
קורסים לנכים
קורסים לילדים ונערים: 5:14
נשים: עד 8:00
קורסי שחייה לילדים:
14 סשנים 2x 30 דקות כל אחד
פעם בשבוע: ראשון 10:30 או 16:20
פעם בשבוע: Monday + Wednesday, 11:17 - 11:45 & 16:20
12:20 Swim to Survive / 12:20 Swim to Survive / 17:00 Technique improvement
נשים:
12 סשנים 90 דקות כל אחד
פעם בשבוע: 11:17 - 11:45 & 16:20

לרשום: 02-5692684 | info@ymca.org.il | www.ymca.org.il
26 דוד המלך רחוב, ירושלים | 26 דוד המלך רחוב, ירושלים

Fitness for all ages



Our members did a great job running in the Jerusalem Marathon



Jerusalem International YMCA

26 King David Street
Jerusalem
0546546811

"Here is a place whose atmosphere is peace, where political and religious jealousies can be forgotten, and international unity fostered and developed." Lord Allenby 1933

Find us on the Web:
www.ymca.org.il

Support the Jerusalem International
YMCA at friendsofjy.org



**With thanks to all the
people who have supported
our work.....**

