



The Michael Levin Base

When Michael Levin, a lone soldier from Pennsylvania, arrived in Israel to serve as a lone soldier in 2002, he slept on a park bench for two nights because he didn't know where to go and he didn't speak any Hebrew. This "lonely" feeling convinced Michael that when he was discharged from the army, he would create a place that supports lone service members – a place that young men and women can reach out to for help and call "home". Michael was killed fighting in Lebanon in 2006, but his dream to provide support for lone soldiers lives on through The Michael Levin Base.

Today, lone soldiers are not the only young people serving The State of Israel without family support. Each year, over 300 young women, from all over the world, come to Israel, make *aliya* and do national service (*sheirut leumi*). They deal with many of the same issues that lone soldiers have – coming home after a long day or week to an empty fridge, no parents or siblings to help them with learning the "ropes" of a new country or where to seek help when there is a crisis. These young women are also being served by The Base to meet their daily challenges and help them succeed as new *olim* (immigrants).

"The Base" as it is affectionately called is located in Jerusalem at 10 *Hadekel* Street, adjacent to *Shuk Machaneh Yehuda*. Established by volunteers and professionals who have vast experience working with the lone soldier community, this dynamic *amuta* was established in February, 2020 to meet the social and supportive needs of lone soldiers and lone *b'not sheirut*, while providing them with the opportunities for enrichment and a successful assimilation into Israeli society upon discharge from their service.

Our mission is to create a homogeneous atmosphere for lone soldiers from abroad, soldiers of new *olim* families, Israeli lone soldiers and lone *b'not shierut*. From *Shabbat* and holiday meals to social activities and counseling, The Base offers a variety of programs and services. In its first year of operation, this vibrant non-profit organization made a compelling difference to nearly 600 young men and women who serve The State of Israel. In short, many participants describe The Base as a "welcoming home away from home".

Five pillars of our programming include:

- Pre-army/*sheirut* assistance
- *Olim* services
- Post service
- Social events and activities
- Support for parents of lone soldiers and lone *b'not sheirut*

The Michael Levin Base is made possible through a generous grant from the Michael Levin Lone Soldier Foundation and from supporters around the world. The Foundation is a 501(c)3 organization and all donations are tax deductible in the United States.

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