Dear Students,

This past September, the month when students leave the Mechina and new students arrive, I received some exciting news: Five students of the Mechina had been accepted to the medical program at the Hebrew University - a very high percentage, given how hard it is to get into medical school. We see on average one Mechina student per year gaining acceptance, exceptionally two. Imagine how excited we were when word came that other Mechina students had also been accepted to other prestigious departments, such as psychology, politics-philosophy-economics, computer science and international relations. These departments all require not just a high psychometric score but also a superlative grade from the Mechina. But what was really so surprising?

When I look around me in the university corridors, its labs and its libraries, I see students engrossed in their studies and professors who speak Hebrew in accents unmistakably Spanish, French, Arabic, American, English, Russian… Many of these professors began their careers on the study benches here at the Mechina. It is far from an easy odyssey but a rewarding one.

I am confident that you, just like your fellow students last year, will invest great efforts and study hard, with the help of our team of teachers and advisers, and that the year’s end will bring the news that every door of the university is wide open to you.

Wishing you every success,

(Professor) Mimi Eisenstadt
Provost, Rothberg International School

New to the Mechina – the Basis Program

The Mechina’s students this year include 14 who have already been accepted to various departments in the University, such as economics, mathematics, biochemistry and biology. These students are considered regular students but they are beginning their studies at the Mechina and then proceeding to study at the University.

They hail mostly from France and their admission scores were particularly high. Well done!

Happy Hanukka!
Senses at the ready!

Next month the students of the Mechina are due to visit the Israel Museum -- a Mechina tradition. As every year, students will visit special exhibitions, Israel’s top locations in the field of folklore and art. The visit is a part of the study program and attendance is obligatory.

Hebrew, English, French, Chinese, Arabic, Amharic, Persian...

Where do you hear these languages? At the Mechina!

The madrichim organized an evening of language exchange, with many Mechina students taking part. Francophone students spoke Hebrew with students taking French at the University, Arabic-speaking students spoke with students studying in the University’s Dept. of Middle Eastern Studies, and many other students joined in, Chinese, Koreans, Americans and others, each in his or her own language. It was an enjoyable opportunity for getting to know new people and different cultures. We do hope you didn’t miss it.

They’ve been accepted!

Who? And where?

“They” are five of last year’s crop, who have been accepted to study medicine. There were actually more candidates with top admission scores, but they didn’t clear the interview hurdle. Currently, these students are enrolled in departments like chemistry and biology, and will try again next year. All the candidates took a one-on-one preparatory workshop, conducted by the advisers Luba and Lena, for their oral interview, but it’s a hurdle that defeats many students. In actual fact, hardly a year goes by without Mechina students getting into medical school. The numbers are usually smaller but they do the Mechina proud. So if you find yourself speaking to a doctor in one hospital or another (and we hope you don’t!), ask them if they studied at the Mechina, and see if they smile. A vote of thanks to Luba and Lena! If you too want to go into medicine, read the interview on the next page with Oren Wasser, a Mechina student who was accepted this year for medical studies.

“All the candidates took a preparatory workshop, for their oral interview, but it’s a hurdle that defeats many students.”
Scholarships on the Way

Luba and Lena set out on Wednesday to a scholarships conference, armed with files and forms and firmly resolved to fight for every single application and each and every student. Their efforts were rewarded. The Ministries of Defense and Education have granted the students of the Mechina a total of some 1,200,000 NIS. But the scholarships don’t end there: At the start of second semester, the School and the Littman family will be distributing scholarships to outstanding students. Keep reading those books and binders!

Please take note

A complaint has recently been filed with the Academic Administration that a student in a certain course copied homework from another student. The matter is currently being adjudicated and in all likelihood the Disciplinary Committee will be convened. We would like to draw it to your attention that the University views truthfulness and honesty as foundational values, and has a zero tolerance policy for plagiarism and dishonesty.

Meet our Volunteers

Yael Voronel and Zvi Altschuler used to be mathematics teachers at the Mechina until reaching the age of retirement. But this hasn’t stopped them coming in every week to help our students – Yael with the French-speakers and Zvi with Calculus 1 and sometimes with the Introduction. We wish to thank the two of them for their volunteering spirit and their tremendous assistance.

And another thank you

Many thanks to Professor Yossi Garfinkel for giving of his time to speak to Mechina faculty about his excavations at Khirbet Qeiyafa. His thought-provoking lecture opened our eyes to the disagreements among archeologists about the Biblical narratives of the Judean monarchy in King David’s time. All the disagreements and the finds brought home to us that archeology is much more than digging and unearthing finds. It’s a whole world of scholarly disputes that rage for years around the use of such finds to debunk myths. One thing is sure: Archeology is a fascinating field. Thank you again, Professor Garfinkel!

Condolences

The faculty and students of the Mechina wish to express their condolences to Chen, the Hebrew Coordinator at the Mechina, on the passing of her father.
Interview with Oren Wasser, accepted for medical studies on the Tzameret track

Why did you choose to study medicine?
Medicine is a field that greatly interests me both scientifically and in terms of treating and aiding the sick. I’ve always liked working with people and I think this is the best way of enjoying my work while contributing the maximum to my country, whether it’s in the military or in civilian hospitals and clinics.

What made you choose Jerusalem?
The Hebrew University is the leading university in Israel and one of the world’s best, and its medical school is the top school in the country.

What have you learned and taken with you from your year at the Mechina?
I’ve learned that while life may not be easy, especially in the academic world, with hard work and a little help from your friends everything is possible. All you have to do is to focus on the goal and start the ball rolling – especially if you have Mechina advisers like Lena and Luba, who never stop working until they’re sure they’ve made the maximum effort to help you reach your goal.

Do you have a tip for Mechina students who’d like to study medicine?
I know this is the first thing new arrivals at the Mechina are told every year, but it’s true: Work hard, all day and all night. This is one year where if you really give it all you’ve got and get a high average, everything will be open to you and you’ll be really be able to achieve your dream, just like I’m doing. That’s not to say you shouldn’t be going out to enjoy the amazing city of Jerusalem – that’s also a very important part of this year at the Mechina. But you have to know when you ought to be sitting and studying. And always always listen to your advisers. They really know it all, and with their help the sky’s the limit.

Thanks go to Oren for this fascinating meeting. May all of us take this approach to heart.
Every success to him and the other Mechina graduates now starting Year One medicine!

The Festival of Light
The festival of Hanukka is upon us – the Feast of Lights – and we will all be lighting candles and eating sufganiyot (jelly donuts). Look for details on Facebook, And if you so wish, Jerusalem has a very special place, Teddy Park, with water, light and music. Illuminating the park is a unique water fountain that plays to a musical accompaniment reflecting the mosaic of cultures that is Jerusalem -- and Israel as a whole. Do give it a visit!