

The Jordana Lokash



Foundation

dedicated to the memory of Jordana Lokash

Dear Friends,

The Jordana Lokash Foundation was established by Jordana's family and friends to continue the work we believe Jordana would have done had she had the opportunities.

FOUNDATION'S GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

"to explore and provide ways of using sport as a means of integrating physically and mentally challenged youth into mainstream recreational activities"

BEIT ISSIE SHAPIRO

I have recently returned from a trip to Israel. While I was there, I was encouraged by friends to visit Beit Issie Shapiro (www.beitissie.org.il/eng), a multi-purpose facility that develops and provides services for children and adults with developmental disabilities. It plays a leading role in promoting the inclusion of people with special needs in society. I had heard about the work they were doing, but was excited to learn more about the programs, their accomplishments and what was being undertaken.



Beit Issie, as it is known, is a facility located in Ra'anana. It was started by the late Issie Shapiro, who had emigrated from South Africa. While living in South Africa he started a home for mentally challenged children as a result of friend's child needing special care at a time when inclusion into main stream education and social programs didn't exist. It was small, yet successful. When Issie moved to Israel, he initiated a similar facility, Beit Isse, to provide Israelis with special needs, inclusive programs in mainstream society.

Unfortunately, while in the U.S. on a fund raising trip, Issie's life was cut short as he suffered a heart attack. From that time on, Issie's daughter Naomi Stuchiner took it upon herself to continue what her father had started. Over the past 30 years, Naomi has tirelessly carried on her father's legacy and has grown Beit Issie into a national institution. Many of their programs and philosophies have been adopted internationally.

The Ra'anana facility works with children and adults with special needs, along with their families. It is a day facility that focuses on working with the family to learn how to function as a unit. Additionally, there

is a satellite facility, the Sindian Early Intervention Center, which is the first comprehensive therapeutic daycare service in Kalansua, an Israeli-Arab community, primarily serving local Arab communities.

INTERGRATING SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

"Physical activity improves one's self-image, decision-making, self-awareness, sense of ability and overall satisfaction with life."

Nira Stern, Sport Center Director, Beit Issie

Beit Issie has recently developed a sports and fitness program for the "Orange" Class. The "Orange" class in the Special Education Center selects seven children, between 7 and 9 years old, with a relatively high functional level. While they are all mobile, most have motor skill deficiencies. The program uses Sport Therapy as a means to maintain and improve their mobility and strengthen their social bonds. Most importantly, it is a great outlet for just having fun.

It has been unequivocally proven that sports and physical activity is an excellent resource to provide people, especially children, with a more positive awareness of themselves and a confidence they otherwise lack. Witness the Para-Olympics recently held in Vancouver, which is becoming as much the Olympic dream as are the main events.

It was this aspect of what Beit Issie is doing that was most appealing. It would have been something Jordana would have enthusiastically endorsed and perhaps been part of had she seen what they are doing.

FUNDING FOR THE "ORANGE" GROUP SPORTS AND FITNESS PROGRAM

With this in mind, we have offered to fund the "Orange" class sports program. The program involves a daily class of both group and one-on-one instruction with a physical education teacher and sports specialists. The equipment includes ropes, bars, tumbling mats, balls, and other similar equipment that can be used or adapted to the particular child's needs.

2011 UPDATE

I am so pleased to report that the Orange Class is progressing nicely in their sports program. I wanted to share the following story about Elkana, one of the students:



Elkana is a very small child, physically. He used to be apprehensive when faced with new situations and hesitant to try new activities. In particular, he was afraid to climb the ladder and afraid to swing fast. Today, he hangs alone from the rings, climbs all the ladders alone and is happy to accept new challenges. He tries over and over until he succeeds and he is not scared...he is having fun!

The annual cost of the program is \$20,000 U.S. Our goal is to raise the money needed for this program through the Jordana Lokash Foundation. Your help is, as always, greatly appreciated. This is something we can all feel good about.

TO DONATE ON LINE



OR

Mail a cheque to:

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