**Citizens Build a Community –**

**Request for Support from the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies**

**Launching into Success: A Project for the Disengaged Arab Youth of Lod**

**“Ready, Set, Go” Model**

**Background on the Organization**

The nonprofit organization Citizens Build a Community was established in November 2004 by residents and professionals living and working in the city of Lod, Israel. The goals of the organization include promoting conflict resolution, working for social change, and finding effective solutions to the problems of poverty, crime, drug use, illegal construction and house demolitions. The organization implements various projects that focus on the needs of the people of Lod, many of whom live in distressed neighborhoods. The population of Lod includes Jews (native-born and immigrants), Arabs, Bedouins, and others, but the communities are almost completely segregated. After many years of neglect, lack of leadership, and numerous committees convened to try to address budget deficits, the city is now beginning to recover.

We believe that despite the severity of Lod's plight, there is a light at the end of the tunnel. Lod is a wonderful cultural mosaic, made up of dedicated citizens, including many young people, who have the potential to make a significant improvement in the life of the city. We see the youth of the city as our “secret weapon” in the struggle for change; therefore, most of our efforts are focused on developing responses to their needs. Our goal is to empower the city's young residents so that they can work together, despite differences of religion and origin, in order to help them all reach their full potential.

The organization’s staff members strongly believe that increasing positive interactions between the various communities in Lod, particularly between Jews and Arabs, will promote coexistence and mutual trust. This, in turn, will help develop mechanisms for peaceful conflict resolution. Most of the conflicts in the city result from mistrust between the communities. We believe that by creating a framework for positive interactions, it is possible to re-position the various communities as partners, striving to solve their common problems.

The organization’s activities and projects include:

* Establishment and operation of youth centers for children and youth at risk (Jews and Arabs) in five Lod neighborhoods. In 2010, the organization transferred the operation of these youth centers to the local authority.
* Onward to the University – a project for students in grades 10 through 12, whose goal is making higher education more accessible to Arab high school students.
* Community Year – a year-long program for Arab high school graduates, with the goal of improving their access to higher education and providing them with opportunities for community involvement that will benefit their integration into academia.
* Year of Cooperative Life for the Benefit of the Community – a year-long project of joint learning and community activities for Arab and Jewish high school graduates.
* Juzoor (Arabic for “roots”) – a project providing academic guidance and counseling for students, and counseling for academics to improve their access to appropriate employment.
* Omnia (Arabic for “wish”) – a community project to develop and reinforce the resilience of women and girls in Arab society, especially by empowering Arab women from disadvantaged neighborhoods in Lod, in terms of their personal and professional lives.
* The Train is Leaving the Station – a comprehensive intervention program operating in the neighborhood of the Lod train station.

**Citizens Build a Community: Our Vision**

Citizens Build a Community is striving to create a society which puts people at the center, honoring their unique traits and diversity. The organization will model high-level activism on behalf of community life, and encourage multicultural dialogue that will serve as an inspiration for all segments of Israeli society, and especially for the majority population.

Preparing young people for social and cultural life is of the utmost importance. They must be educated to be responsible citizens, involved in the life of their community and the country. Our projects aim to create young activists who have economic and employment security, alongside personal and social awareness of the need to work on behalf of their community and society at large.

**The Program: Launching into Success – The Ready Set Go! (RSG) Model**

1. **Rationale**: The Citizens Build a Community organization believes it is crucial to prepare young people for social and cultural life and to educate them to be responsible and active citizens who are involved the life of their community and of the country. In May 2021, violent riots took place across Israel, highlighting the critical need to nurture and support youth in general and disengaged youth in particular. The phenomenon of youth disengagement can be reduced by creating appropriate educational and employment frameworks that meet their needs, including ongoing Hebrew studies, in order to offer them a different reality.
2. **Principles of action**: The program is designed to meet the existing and emerging needs of the labor market in four areas: personal skills, employment capabilities, professional training, and appropriate employment in academia. This program will be carried out through a three-year model of activity: a year of preparation during high school, a year of transition after high school, and a year of integration into an appropriate framework.
3. **Target populations**:

**R**eady: Preparation year, aimed at high school seniors (12th grade)

**S**et: Transition year for high school graduates

**G**o: Alumni of the transition year program will then be successfully integrated into an appropriate framework (academia, employment, technological work, community activism, etc.)

1. **Method of operation**: Ready, Set, Go! (RSG) is a three-year model of activity, beginning in high school and ending after a year of integration into a framework that is appropriate to the development of the individual’s ambitions and abilities. The RSG model was initiated in September 2021, following a reassessment of the organization’s activities in light of the May 2021 violence that spread throughout Arab society across Israel, and in Lod in particular. This violence caused serious damage to the social fabric and economic infrastructure of the city. The Arab population itself suffered too, as they were overwhelmed by their intense feelings of powerlessness, hopelessness, and lack of a sense of belonging and of being cared about.

**R(eady) -- Preparation Year**

University students who received a scholarship will mentor twelfth-grade students in three areas:

1. Personal development and envisioning a future career path.
2. Developing and reinforcing students’ involvement in the community and society through participation in groups that instill a sense of belonging.
3. Empowering and strengthening students’ sense of belonging and developing their social and community identities.

Currently, the preparation year project involves 15 university scholarship students who work with 300 twelfth-grade students from the four Lod public high schools. Students are organized into 15 groups that meet weekly and are involved in community and social initiatives. The goal is that each year the model will offer a response to all of the twelfth-grade students in Lod – an average of 400 students per year.

**S(et) — Transition Year**

The current transition year program began in September 2021, in the aftermath of the riots of May 2021. The involved youth are organized into five groups according to areas of interest. These groups were established with the help of the university students, alumni of our organization’s programs, and other partners. The goal is that each year, the transition year program will be available to at least 75% of those who completed the preparation year. Participants in the transition year program will be active in various ways, in accordance with their personal abilities, preferences, and dreams. Some general-level activities are designed for all participants, while other activities are designated for certain students according to an assessment and sorting process.

General-level activities:

1. Activities supporting each participant’s personal development, including soft skills and skills for employment integration.
2. Creating a social group of community activists, to strengthen participants’ sense of belonging to a community and to society.

Targeted activities: Multiple and varied types of activities will be offered, in accordance with the needs of the participants and with societal needs, such as:

* Short-term and long-term professional and technological training, including 17-month training programs for various types of practical engineering, and 9-month training programs for other professions.
* Preparatory / pre-academic groups that are connected with institutes of higher education.
* Preparatory / pre-employment groups with connections to the labor market and areas of employment that do not require specialized training.
* Business and entrepreneurship groups with connections to organizations and entrepreneurs that assist in the establishment and development of small and family businesses.
* Groups for marginalized youth, working towards their empowerment and development of their self-image and self-confidence.

**G(o)! — Year of successful integration**

This phase of the program is intended for all alumni of the transition year program. After a training process, they will be integrated into frameworks that are appropriate to their abilities, ambitions, and dreams. This phase will provide guidance to participants as they are integrated into academic, technological, employment, and community frameworks. Both individual and group guidance will be provided, with a clear focus on each individual’s needs. Guidance will operate on two levels:

1. Development of soft skills, specific skills, interpersonal communication skills, and occupational and academic capabilities.
2. Empowering individuals and expanding their social involvement in the community.

**Goals and Objectives**

**The overarching goal:** To build a community and social framework, comprised of groups of youth and representing diverse areas of interest, that will help pave the way for their secure and promising integration into civic life, with economic and employment security.

**Specific Program Goals and Measurable Objectives:**

1. **Goal**: Giving high school youth exposure to and familiarity with the world they will encounter after high school.
* *Objective*: 300 twelfth-grade students will go through a process that is empowering, enriching, and which will help them develop a broad vision for their future.
* *Objective*: 100% of participants will develop a broad and optimistic vision for their future.
* *Objective*: 90% of participating twelfth-grade students will remain active in their groups.
* *Objective*: Organizing two major special events in the city, for over 1000 children.
1. **Goal**: To create interest-based groups of young people who are motivated to achieve occupational, educational, and social mobility.
* *Objective*: During the first year of the transition year program, five interest-based groups will operate. In subsequent years, at least ten groups per year will operate.
* *Objective*: 75 young people will participate in the transition year program, during which they will receive training, responses to their needs, and will undergo processes of empowerment and self-development.
* *Objective*: 100% of participants in the transition year program will be integrated into a setting that is appropriate to their dreams and goals, such as academic study, technological training, employment, etc.; this will occur immediately following the transition year program, or a year afterwards.
* *Objective*: During the transition year program, the number of participants will increase by 10%. Participants will be brought to the program through the various activities offered and the special events.
* *Objective*: Organizing two major special events in the city, for more than 100 youth.
1. **Goal**: Creating a community of program alumni who have been integrated into appropriate employment or educational frameworks, to serve as role models and examples of success stories.
* *Objective*: Expanding the community of alumni by 100%, from 20 participants in the current year, to 40 participants next year, and then continuing to increase by 25% each subsequent year.
* *Objective*: Broadening the program of social involvement and activities of the community of alumni to include other segments of the population.

**Methods of Assessment:**

Within the next month, the organization’s team will begin a learning process with external guidance and funding from several philanthropic partners in order to build an evaluative tool to assess the following measurable parameters:

1. Personal development, self-awareness, leadership, and identity
* The percentage of participants who report successfully developing a vision for their future
* The percentage of participants who report feeling a sense of social and community belonging
1. Academic education, training, or certification
* The percentage of participants who report a sense of their high learning ability
* The percentage of alumni who successfully completed their studies
* The percentage alumni with a positive outlook on broad options for employment
1. Integration into the employment market
* The percentage of alumni who are employed in work that is appropriate to their training, academic degree, or certification
* The percentage of alumni who report a sense of stability at work and employment security
* The percentage of alumni who report feeling satisfied with their employment
* The percentage of alumni who report feeling a strong sense of occupational capability
1. Economic independence and socio-economic mobility
* The percentage of alumni that earns at least 10% above the average wages in their field of employment, relative to the population group to which they belong
* The percentage of alumni who report feeling a strong sense of economic capability
1. Social involvement
* The percentage of alumni with knowledge and awareness of social issues
* The percentage of alumni who say they are willing to live in a socially responsible way
* The percentage of alumni who are actively working for the benefit of general society/others

**Is This Model New or Old?**

Our model is new, though it is based on many other programs that have operated in the area. We decided to create a new model of operation because the needs arising in the field indicate a strong and significant need for this particular program:

* 68% of the young people in the target population may be described as disengaged. After graduating from high school, many of them wind up on the streets, with no direction, framework, or responses to their needs. In Arab society, the street offers the temptation of easy but dangerous, risky, and destructive ways to make money.
* The unemployment rate among this population is high in relation to the Jewish population and even in relation to Arab society in other mixed cities: 26% of Arab men and 67% of Arab women in Lod are unemployed.
* In Lod, only 12% of the Arab population of Lod work in academia, as compared to 24% of the Jewish population of Lod. The percentage of Arab academics in Lod is the lowest among Israel’s mixed cities.
* Only 20% of the targeted population of youth are independently able to become integrated into employment upon graduation from high school.

**Strategy Behind the Model**

The transition from adolescence to adulthood presents many challenges. Reaching the age of 18 is a turning point in young people’s lives. Officially, in the eyes of society and the law, they become independent and responsible adults, expected to find their way in the world. This transition to adulthood necessitates complex choices. A common phenomenon among youth is “disengagement” – not being integrated into any educational setting, vocational training, or the labor market. The rate of disengagement among young people in Israel is among the highest in the OECD countries: 28% of Israelis between the ages of 15-29 fit this definition of disengagement. The phenomenon of disengagement is especially prevalent among Arab youth in Israel: almost 40% of Arabs between the ages of 18-22 in Israeli mixed cities are disengaged. In Lod, the rate of disengagement among young people reaches 51%. (Every year, an average of 400 young people graduate from high school in Lod. Of these, 3%-4% go to study in other Middle Eastern countries, 20% enter the labor market in a family business or through a family connection, about 8% enter the year of academic guidance associated with our organization, and the rest, 68%, remain inactive or disengaged). Most importantly, disengagement has a tendency to produce a self-perpetuating cycle: as the period of inactivity and disengagement lengthens, the chances of future integration into the labor market or studies decrease. Therefore, disengagement is a major predictor of future vulnerability. This situation draws attention to a population whose needs may differ from the needs of the majority population. Members of this population are likely to become permanently unemployed or outside the labor market. In Lod, these youth may be drawn by the temptations of street life, and into the world of crime and violence. Recently, 258 young people were arrested in violent incidents in Lod, and 163 were detained for a criminal or security investigation. Criminal or security files were opened for 41 of these youth, which has multiple serious implications for their future and that of their relatives or others in their immediate social circles.

**Unique and Beneficial Aspects of Citizens Build a Community**

Citizens Build a Community has been active in Lod and in Arab in Israel society for 16 years. The organization has gained recognition among the city's population in general and young people in particular.

* There are some families in this target population who have had all of their children participate in our organization’s programs. This indicates there is strong belief in the benefit of the organization’s activities among the community and local families.
* Many national organizations have turned to us for advice and cooperation to help them successfully plan and promote their activities, programs, and projects for youth.
* Our work with the parents is among the most important aspects. This is no less crucial than other aspects of our work because, although we are dealing with youth, their parents still have a significant ability to influence them, particularly in Arab society. Sometimes this influence can be detrimental rather than supportive. It is not uncommon for young men and women to have their plans for the future interrupted or terminated due to opposition from their parents. Our organization always steps into such situations and works closely with the parents; often our efforts are highly successful.
* We are familiar with the target population and have many years of experience in implementing activities in a mixed city of Jewish and Arab residents. The target population has demonstrated their willingness to participate in our activities. We have developed working relationships with all the relevant authorities and entities necessary in order to implement the program. All of this sets us apart from other existing programs and organizations.

**Continuity of the Model**

After the period of support from the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies, we intend for the program to be partially funded by public and governmental entities. We are currently developing and promoting collaborations with the Lod municipal authority and its Youth Division, as well as with national government ministries, in order to ensure long-term funding within the framework of the five-year plan and government resolutions 923 and/or 550.

**Organizational Budget for 2022**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **PERSONNEL**  | ₪**New Israeli Shekels** |
| General Manager (CEO) – 100% | 150,000 |
| Coordinator of program for accessibility to higher education for high school and twelfth-grade students – 75% | 90,000 |
| Coordinator of program for employment guidance for academics and developing relations with employers – 75% | 90,000 |
| Coordinator for RSG model – 100% | 120,000 |
| Student coordinator – 50% | 60,000 |
| Director for project coordinators | 30,000 |
| **Total expenses for personnel**  | **540,000** |
| **ACTIVITIES** |  |
| RSG model: Preparation year, transition year, training, vocational courses, community involvement, etc. for disengaged youth | 398,000 |
| Academic guidance for students: three communities of students in years 1-3 of an academic track will receive individual and group guidance for three years, until the end of their degree program. As part of this guidance, students will gain the relevant and professional skills tools necessary to overcome the social, cultural, academic, and economic obstacles facing Arab students. | 120,000 |
| Access to employment for academics: Guidance, counseling, and training for academics in maximizing higher education and development of relationships with employers  | 50,000 |
| Neighbors - A project to promote an inclusive and respectful community life in a Jewish-Arab neighborhood in Lod  | 70,000 |
| Scholarships for students | 300,000 |
| Special events and cultural events in the city | 60,000 |
| Cultural events for youth | 50,000 |
| Guided visits to academic institutes, businesses, and companies, and hosting representatives of academic institutes, businesses, and companies in order to build connections and collaborations | 30,000 |
| Volunteer projects conducted by the various communities and groups of students, high school alumni, women, and youth | 35,000 |
| **Total expenses for activities**  | **1,113,000** |
| **ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES** |  |
| Equipment and maintenance | 75,000 |
| General administrative costs | 75,000 |
| **GRAND TOTAL** | **1,803,000** |
| **INCOME** |
| **Source** |  | ₪New Israeli Shekels |
| Mifal HaPais (national lottery), Youth Center, and the Lod Municipal Authority | Funding for scholarships and student guidance | 300,000 |
| Caesarea Rothschild Foundation | Guaranteed  | 200,000 |
| Yad HaNadiv Foundation | Guaranteed | 110,000 |
| Pears Foundation | Guaranteed | 70,000 |
| Steinhardt Foundation | Guaranteed | 60,000 |
| SVF | Guaranteed | 125,000 |
| Matanel | Guaranteed | 100,000 |
| Gimprich Family Foundation | Guaranteed | 90,000 |
| Boxenbaum Foundation | Guaranteed | 60,000 |
| Income from independent participation | Guaranteed  | 75,000 |
| New Israel Fund | Guaranteed | 50,000 |
| National Insurance Fund for Special Operators | In process | 263,000 |
| **Sub-total** |  | **1,503,000** |
| Request from Schusterman  |  | 300,000 |
| **GRAND TOTAL** |  | **1,803,000** |

Authorized signatories: Amin Eljamal and Manal Albassel

**RSG Model -- Program Budget for 2022**

|  |
| --- |
| **Expenses** |
| **Section** | **Amount in ₪****New Israeli Shekels** | **Comments** |
| **Personnel and scholarships** |  |  |
| CEO (50%) | 75,000 |  |
| Director for “Ready” preparation year program (50%) | 60,000 |  |
| Director for “Set” (or start-up) transition year, academic guidance and vocational training (50%) | 60,000 |  |
| Director of employment and employer relations program (50%) | 60,000 |  |
| Total for personnel | 255,000 |  |
| Scholarships for 15 students – guidance for preparation year program | 150,000 |  |
| Scholarships for 15 students – guidance for transition year program | 50,000 |  |
| Total for scholarships | 200,000 |  |
| Total for personnel and scholarships | 455,000 |  |
| Advanced training and professional conferences for scholarship students who provide guidance to youth  | 48,000 | Intensive training at the beginning of the year, in the middle of the year, as well as weekly |
| **Preparation year for 300 twelfth-grade students** |  |  |
| Training and external workshops on soft skills | 45,000 | 3000 for each group |
| Special community events  | 15,000 | Two per year |
| **Preparation year for 75 disengaged youth** |  |  |
| Personal development workshop using the NLP method | 35,000 | One 4-hour meeting each month for all participants |
| External training and workshops for developing and instilling personal skills – 90 hours  | 36,000 | Three cycles of workshops will be offered, with each participant receiving 30 hours of workshops |
| Courses in language and mathematics – 60 hours | 24,000 |  |
| Preparation course for psychometric exam | 45,000 | For groups preparing for academic studies |
| Professional training: practical engineering – 60 hours; technological training – 30 hours | 90,000 | 3000 for each of 30 participants |
| Business entrepreneurship course | 30,000 | In collaboration with the “Maof” **Business Advancement Network** |
| Volunteer projects in the community | 15,000 | 3000 for each group |
| Special community events | 15,000 | Two per year |
| Total operating costs | 398,000 |  |
| Total expenses | 853,000 |  |
|  |  |  |
| **INCOME** |
| **Section** | **Amount in ₪****New Israeli Shekels** | **Comments** |
| SVF | 125,000 |  |
| Gimprich Family Foundation | 90,000 | For CEO salary |
| Rothschild Foundation | 85,000 | For salaries |
| Matanel | 100,000 | For scholarships |
| Mifal HaPais | 100,000 | For scholarships |
| Yad HaNadiv | 53,000 | Guaranteed |
| Independent participation | 75,000 | 1000 per participant for 75 participants |
| Total income | 553,000 |  |
| Request from Schusterman  | 300,000 |  |
| Grand total income | 853,000 |  |