Herzliya’s Build-a-Neighborhood in its third year

By Annette Lavender

This is the third year that ESRA, in conjunction with the Herzliya municipality and the Yad HaTisha Community Center, are operating the Students Build-a-Neighborhood Project. Six university students, including five from the IDC in Herzliya, receive accommodation in the Yad HaTisha neighborhood, where they each devote 6 hours weekly to mentoring 24 school children, aged 10 to 13. The students and children also work together on community assignments. The first assignment was a neighborhood community garden. A designated area was cleaned and prepared, and seeds and shrubs were planted. The project benefits both the students, by providing them with housing, and the children, for whom the students serve as role models.

During Chanukah ESRA Herzliya visited the project, meeting with the students, children and their parents and ESRA Herzliya has now undertaken to provide afternoon sandwiches for the children on a regular basis.

This year, as in previous years, we had a large number of student applications for the positions available and we were able to choose an outstanding group of students. Three students are continuing from the previous year and three new students were selected.

We were fortunate in 2012 to benefit from a large donation raised in honor of an ESRA member’s 70th birthday, which assisted us in funding its share of the project.

Student Profile

Haim was born in 1986 and grew up in Kfar Maimon (close to the Gaza strip). He studied at the local Bnei Akiva Yeshiva and then finished his education at the HaZvi high school in Netivot. In the army he served in the Southern Division of the Armament Corps. From 2007 to 2009 Haim worked in marketing, and in 2010 was accepted with a scholarship to the IDC to study business administration. He plays the guitar and has a winning way with the boys in his group. Recently he visited Poland with an Israeli delegation and he hopes to utilize the experience from this trip in helping the children to become good citizens.