

## Masa Israel Teaching Fellows in Haifa: Making a Difference and Experiencing Israel

*Oranim International School is thrilled to facilitate the first group of Masa Israel Teaching Fellows (MITF) in Haifa. The fellows came from all over the United States to teach English in Haifa area schools.*



Twenty fellows arrived this September for the first MITF program in Haifa. MITF Haifa is a partnership between Oranim, Masa Israel Journey, and the Ministry of Education.

### **Helping Israeli Students Succeed**

MITF is a yearlong program for young people looking to make a meaningful contribution while experiencing the “real” Israel. The program places English-speaking college graduates as English teacher’s aides in elementary and middle schools throughout Israel, where they provide small group instruction and tutoring. Participants give tremendous help to English teachers who generally work with large classes. The individualized attention participants provide enables Israel’s students to build the English skills that are essential to their success in higher education and beyond.

### **Living in a Multicultural City**

Oranim International School is happy to have the opportunity to bring this program to Haifa, Israel’s third largest city and the perfect setting for MITF participants to experience Israel in all of its beauty, complexity, and diversity. Fellows live in downtown Haifa, one of the city’s most happening neighborhoods. It is a mixed Jewish-Arab neighborhood with many young people and an international feel.

### **Teaching, Learning, and Experiencing Israel**

This year, fellows are teaching at eleven different elementary schools in the Haifa area, including one Arab school, two religious Jewish schools, and eight secular Jewish schools. After a period of

socialization, the fellows began teaching following the Jewish holiday season. Fellows participated in an intensive training period in September preparing them to teach in the schools.

In addition to teaching, fellows participate in a weekly three-hour long Ulpan to learn the Hebrew language. Those fellows who wish to are invited to take academic courses at Oranim College. They also have the option of completing an Israeli teaching certificate within the year. Many of the fellows are volunteering in a variety of settings in Haifa, including working with the elderly, with handicapped people, and in a Jewish-Arab community center.

Fellows also enjoy enrichment programming about Israel and Jewish identity, and touring throughout Israel. Since the students arrived, Oranim has organized trips throughout Haifa and the surrounding area, as well as to Jerusalem. A highlight was a nighttime trip to the mystical city of Safed to experience the traditional Selichot prayers that are recited in the period leading up to Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur.

### **Making a Difference in Israeli Society**

Fellows come from a wide range of backgrounds. Some are interested in exploring careers in education, some are considering making aliyah, and others are looking for a year “off” from their regular lives to do meaningful work and experience Israel. Many were inspired by Birthright to return to Israel in a more intensive program. The fellows are excited about this unique opportunity to fully immerse themselves in Israeli society and make a difference.

For more details on Oranim’s MITF program in Haifa, see our [website](#). For a short video on Oranim International School’s Masa programs, see [here](#).