

# LILLIAN AND LARRY GOODMAN OPEN APARTMENTS PROGRAM 2021-2022



אוניברסיטת בן-גוריון בנגב  
جامعة بن غوريون في النقب  
Ben-Gurion University of the Negev



lillian and larry goodman  
open apartments program



## THE PROGRAM: WHO WE ARE

The Lillian and Larry Goodman Open Apartments Program is now celebrating 44 years of activity. Throughout the years, this program has made a great impact on participating students, residents of Beer-Sheva and the geographical area and community where the program is conducted. The students are carefully chosen in a complex selection process and once accepted, take action to realize the program's goal to form a strong and supportive community of residents and students.

Approximately 40 BGU students participated in the Lillian and Larry Goodman Open Apartments Program in 2021-2022. They lived in apartments located in two older neighborhoods of Beer-Sheva – the Dalet neighborhood (in the Hatalmud, Sanhedrin, and Bar Giora areas) and the Gimmel neighborhood (in the Rotenberg and Kalisher areas). Each Goodman Fellow volunteers for an average of six hours per week, but many do much more, investing additional time and effort throughout the year.

The program has a transformative effect on the neighborhoods and their residents. Outreach to the community focuses on three areas: adopted families, enrichment clubs and classes, and community-wide events.



## THE GOODMAN FELLOWS: WHO WE ARE

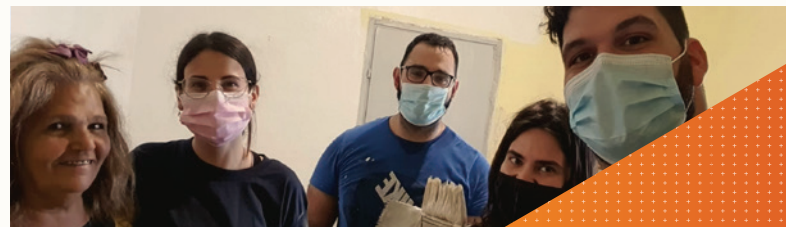
Goodman Fellows study in different university departments and most are studying for their undergraduate degrees. They share a common interest in developing a deeper understanding of the city of Beer-Sheva and they all want to strengthen ties with their neighboring residents and expand their knowledge about the socio-economic situation in Israel. For these students, this program is an opportunity to form a human-local connection to the neighborhoods' residents and to their physical surroundings. Over 2,700 students have taken part in the program to date, opening their hearts and their homes to over 50,000 residents.



### **HADIL ZUABI, GOODMAN FELLOW IN THE KALISHER NEIGHBORHOOD:**

"Hello. I'm Hadil, and I study medicine. I'm originally from a small village in the north called Tamra, a place with 1,200 residents. Growing up, I was socially active and knew most of the neighbors in our village. The village atmosphere was warm and family-like. The population in Beer-Sheva is varied and so different from where I grew up. At first, I lived in a student

neighborhood and didn't feel like I belonged. Beer-Sheva was just a stop on my route, an experience I had to live through. I kept checking other options that would let me continue my studies in the center or the north of the country. The only times I met people were during studies or work. I had a lot of prejudices and didn't understand people's behavior. But this year, I joined the Open Apartments Program and moved to the Gimmel neighborhood. Thanks to the program activities, I met the neighbors and became part of their lives. I started understanding their needs. During the year, I taught a class and helped children with their studies by doing arts and crafts. Each child chose an area that interested him and led an activity for the group. The children enjoyed being able to teach one another, while learning how to stand in front of a group and teach. The class also helped some of the children get accepted to "the gang." Some of the shyer ones began to open up to their peers and feel more comfortable with them. I've formed really strong ties with my adopted family and thanks to them, I've met a lot more people in the neighborhood. Now I feel like Beer-Sheva is home."







**NOAM DAVIDSON, GOODMAN FELLOW  
AT BAR GIORA NEIGHBORHOOD:**

"Hi. My name is Noam, and I've just completed my undergraduate degree in philosophy and psychology. This year was full of activities we conducted for and with the community. I really enjoy working with children and teens. It's important to invest in them because they are the future. I started a basketball club for kids. In the area where I live, the parents are financially challenged and are not always able to spend time with their children. This club let me get to know the kids better, be a big brother to them and most of all, remind them that I'm always here for them. The club also helped the kids become friends by playing a group sport that encourages teamwork. Sometimes they "lost it" and started fighting, but right afterwards we would talk about the argument and try to solve it in ways that encourage dialogue and good communication.

"It's important to  
invest in children  
because they are  
the future"

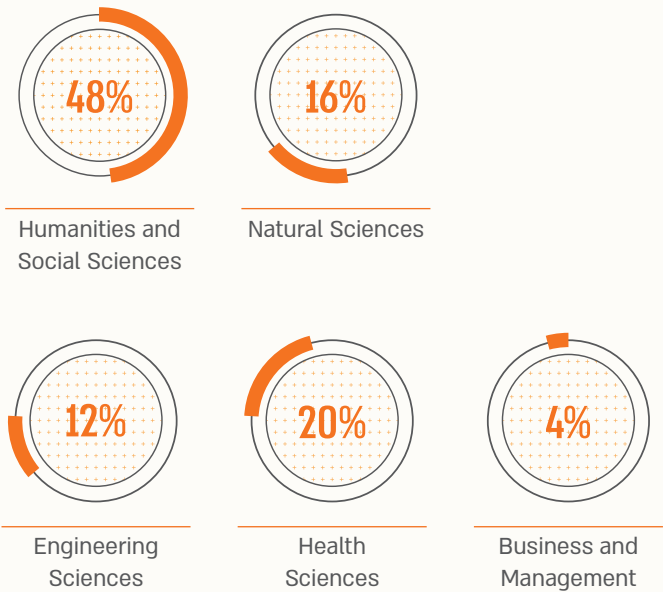
Noam Davidson

My adopted family was a single mother and her fifteen-year-old son. He and I talked a lot about school, friends, and ambitions for the future. We talked about how he plans to get ahead, get a higher education, and find a good job. We tried to move forward by doing homework together and broadening his knowledge in different areas. He was really interested in hearing about my studies at university. His mother was so happy to see her son have ambitions and try to prepare for his future. He wanted to care for a pet but wasn't sure if he would know how. We talked about taking responsibility for an animal, how to train and care for a dog. He then adopted a puppy and is very devoted to it.

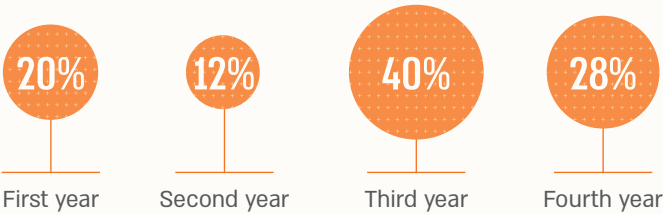
This program and our activities were very meaningful to me. Not just because I became close to the residents, but also because of the community formed with the other students in the program. I developed as a person and learned a lot about myself and the city of Beer-Sheva over the past three years."



**PARTICIPATING STUDENTS BY FACULTY**



**STUDENTS BY YEARS OF ACTIVITY**



This year, 25 new Goodman Fellows joined the veteran fellows.

As future leaders in all areas of Israeli society, the program helps prepare the students for their journey by heightening their awareness of the social problems Israel faces, so they can play a role in bridging social gaps in society and advancing social justice. The program has such a powerful effect on the students that many of them choose to stay active in the program for more than one year.

## IMPACT

### ADOPTED FAMILIES

The program offers personal counseling and support for neighborhood residents. Each Goodman Fellow “adopts” a family and spends at least two hours per week with them. The close personal bonds formed between students and families foster meaningful relationships.



#### NOA CARMEN LUZATTI, GOODMAN FELLOW AT GIMMEL NEIGHBORHOOD:

“Thanks to the program, I’ve become attached to the neighborhood, the city, and the residents who live here. It made me feel much more connected to the area where I live. I was adopted by a family with a five-year-old granddaughter, and we became very close. I would pick her up from kindergarten once a week and spend the afternoon with her. I made her lunch, and then we would play and talk and process what was going on in her life. During this year, I became more accepting of others. I learned to listen and to recognize what makes other people special. I had a very meaningful and positive experience with my adopted family, and I think that the little girl I worked with also benefitted from

“This year, I became more accepting of others”

Noa Carmen Luzatti

our close relationship. The program gave me a lot of human relations tools.”

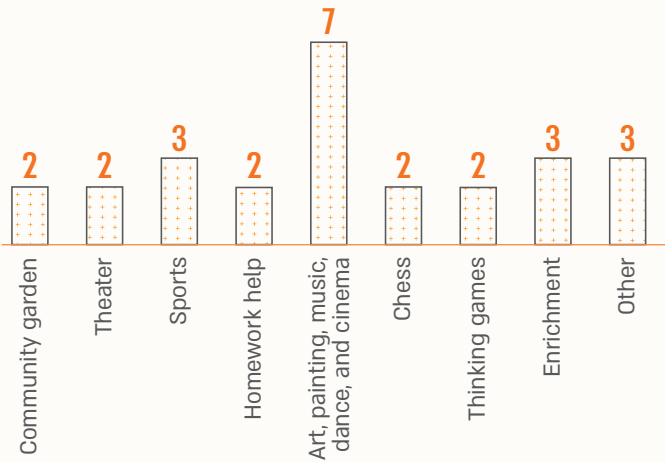
### ENRICHMENT CLUBS AND CLASSES

A diverse array of clubs and classes are open to residents of all ages, free of charge. These two-hour long activities are held twice a week throughout the academic year. The 41 clubs and classes offered by Goodman Fellows this year included homework help, art, theater, sports, cooking, martial arts, community improvement, and other empowering activities. The clubs and classes take place in neighborhood community centers and bomb shelters, the students’ apartments, or clubhouses run by the program. Most of the activities are for children.

These clubs and classes enrich the residents’ lives and help them develop their skills. Were it not for the program, many of the neighborhood children would be out in the streets without supervision and with nothing to do for many hours a day and could be exposed

to negative influences. The high-quality recreational activities create a safe environment for the children, in the company of students who serve as positive role models. This is true for adults as well – the children's activities give them breathing space, so they can engage in social activities, enjoy quality time, and invest in themselves.

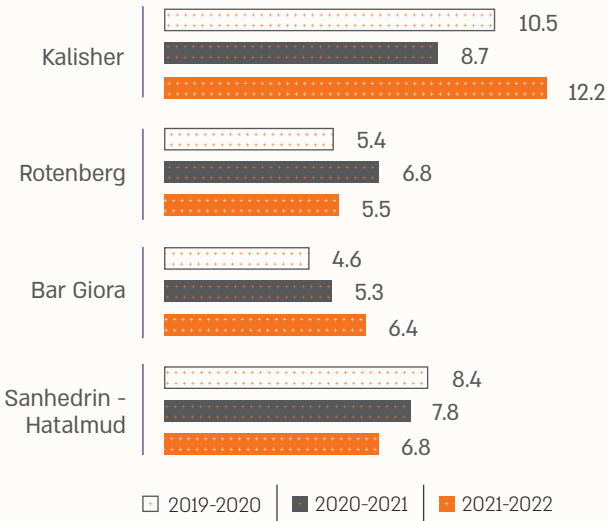
NUMBER OF CLUBS AND CLASSES BY SUBJECT



The subjects offered in the clubs and classes vary and are based on the participating Fellows' interests and teaching strengths, as well as the neighborhoods' needs and the residents' interests. Some are led by more than one student.



AVERAGE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN CLUBS AND CLASSES



The Lillian and Larry Goodman Open Apartments Program runs four neighborhood activity centers in the Dalet and Gimmel neighborhoods. Every month, close to 400 neighborhood residents – children, teenagers, and adults – take part in the 41 clubs and classes run by the program.



## COMMUNITY-WIDE EVENTS

Despite social distancing requirements imposed by the coronavirus (which affected us earlier in the year), we managed to hold various community events, including planting trees and plants for Tu Bishvat, lighting Hanukkah candles with

neighborhood residents, and our annual Passover apartment painting drive, carried out together with volunteer BGU employees.







## THE LILLIAN AND LARRY GOODMAN OPEN APARTMENTS PROGRAM COMMUNITY THEATER

Now in its eleventh year, this project is led by Dr. Zmira Ron-David, a theater director and pioneer in community theater in Israel. Goodman Fellows lead theater groups for adults and teenagers, providing a platform to share their personal stories, challenges, and struggles, allowing their voices to be heard and enabling personal growth. At the end of the year, the University hosts a theater event produced by the Goodman Fellows, where residents perform plays for the BGU community and neighborhood participants. This event enables all of the actors to bond together - new immigrants and veteran residents, Jews and Arabs, and teenagers and adults.

In 2021-2022, undoubtedly a dramatic year, neighborhood residents who are originally from the Ukraine, Russia and neighboring countries were greatly affected by the ongoing war in the Ukraine. In their personal monologues, the actors shared their emotions



about the war. These monologues were presented in an exhibition of photos and video art, called "Between Light and Shadow," based on dialogues between Ukraine-born senior citizens from the Sanhedrin neighborhood. The exhibition dealt with issues of "Between Light and Darkness," "Between Despair and Hope," "From Pandemic to Pandemic," "From War to War," and "Enough of War!"



## WE NEED YOU!

The last few years have been very challenging. Dealing with the coronavirus pandemic combined with operating in the shadow of frequent military operations, rocket attacks and terrorist attacks in the south made it difficult to continue running the program as usual. But we didn't let this stop us! We are deeply committed to our neighbors, the residents of the veteran neighborhoods, and we will always stand by them, no matter what.

The activities of the Lillian and Larry Goodman Open Apartment Program during this challenging past year were made possible

through the generosity of the Lillian and Larry Goodman Foundations and other friends from all over the world, including:

- Zita and Mark Bernstein Family Foundation
- Marion House
- Tami Luhby
- Robert Rosen
- Charles & M.R. Shapiro Foundation







lillian and larry goodman  
open apartments program

## How can you help?

To keep this outstanding program going,  
we need your support. To give to the Lillian  
and Larry Goodman Open Apartments  
Program, please contact your local associates  
organization or write to us at [donors@bgu.ac.il](mailto:donors@bgu.ac.il)