



## Northern Lights

### ADVANCING HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR DRUZE MEN

The University of Haifa is proud to launch **Northern Lights** (Hazohar Hatzfoni in Hebrew), a first-of-its-kind pre-university program designed especially for young Druze men approaching the end of their military service in the IDF.

**Northern Lights** was created out of both recognition and responsibility – honoring the extraordinary contribution of the Druze community to Israeli society, while helping ensure that this contribution is met with meaningful opportunity. More than an expression of gratitude, the program is a concrete investment in the future of young Druze men as students, professionals, leaders, and contributors to Israel's shared society.

The University of Haifa is uniquely positioned to lead this effort. With more than 19,000 students, approximately 80% from northern Israel, the University reflects the region's diverse and complex social fabric. On our campus, Jewish, Muslim, Christian, Druze, secular, and religious students study together in an academic environment rooted in dialogue, opportunity, and mutual respect.

For more than 55 years, this diversity has been one of the University's greatest strengths and has shaped its mission to expand access to higher education. Our numbers speak for themselves:

- » Over 50% of our undergraduates are first-generation university students
- » Nearly half of our students are from lower socio-economic backgrounds
- » 40% of undergraduates are from Arab society

**Northern Lights** builds on this mission by offering young Druze IDF veterans the academic preparation, personal guidance, and professional tools they need to transition from military service into higher education, succeed in their studies, and ultimately pursue meaningful careers.

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### Voices from the Program

*"I feel like I'm really doing something with my life. I'm here to learn, to succeed. It's been really interesting so far, and I feel like I'm moving forward."*

*– Azal Qizal, First Cohort Participant*

## Program Overview

**Northern Lights** opened its inaugural cohort in April 2026 with 19 participants from Druze communities across northern Israel, including Abu Snan, Buq'ata, Julis, Daliyat al-Carmel, Hurfeish, Yanuh-Jat, Yarka, Kisra-Sumei, Maghar, and Isfiya.

Run through the Dean of Students Office, the four-month program is supported by the Jewish Federations of North America and the Jewish Federation of Chicago, in partnership with the Manpower Directorate in the IDF General Staff and the Defense and Society Department at the Ministry of Defense.

Participants live on campus and receive a living stipend, tuition scholarship, personal laptop, and close professional guidance. They also take part in leadership and empowerment workshops, meetings with Druze community leaders, and educational tours in Haifa, Daliyat al-Carmel, Jerusalem, and northern Druze communities. For many, this is their first experience of university life – a chance not only to study, but to begin seeing themselves as future students, professionals, and leaders.



## Curriculum

Participants complete six enrichment courses designed to build academic readiness, strengthen core skills, and expose them to potential fields of study:

- Introduction to Israeli Law
- Saudi Arabia and Its Role in the Middle East
- Artificial Intelligence in Plain Language
- The World of Work: Here I Come
- English Preparation for the Amir/Amiram Exam
- Hebrew for Academic Studies

The University also provides them with psychometric exam preparation (similar to the SAT), career counseling, and a preferred admissions track to University of Haifa degree programs. Participants meet with an occupational psychologist and receive guidance to help them identify their academic interests, strengths, and career directions.

## For Your Consideration

**Northern Lights** comes at a critical moment for Israeli society, when expanding access, cultivating leadership, and strengthening shared responsibility are more important than ever. Many Druze men move directly from IDF service into the workforce, focused on earning a living and starting a family. Supported by senior Druze leaders, the program offers an alternative path – introducing these young men to higher education as a gateway to broader professional opportunities. Your partnership helps turn service into opportunity and potential into lasting contribution for northern Israel and Israeli society as a whole.

### Suggested Giving Levels:

- » **Northern Lights Scholarship | \$20,000** | Supports one participant's tuition, dormitory housing, living stipend, personal laptop, educational tours, social activities, and counseling.
- » **Cohort Leadership | \$80,000** | Supports four participants' tuition, dormitory housing, living stipend, personal laptop, educational tours, social activities, and counseling.
- » **Cohort Experience | \$100,000** | Provides the full cohort with housing, meals, educational tours, social activities, an activity coordinator, and an academic and personal counselor for the group.
- » **Northern Lights Partner | \$350,000** | Provides full-year support for the entire cohort, including scholarships, dormitory housing, living stipends, personal laptops, academic programming, educational tours, participant activities, and program administration.