



Ziv Hagbi

“In spite of the Kassam rocket attacks, life goes on in Sderot. Being accepted to the Jewish Agency’s Net@ program, which continues to operate under very difficult circumstances, and becoming an internationally recognized computer technician and network operator has made an extraordinary difference in my life.”



Rugged-looking Ziv Hagbi, 19, has lived in Sderot all of his life. He has seen his hometown go from a quiet, pastoral community to a city on the frontline. However, his family remains firm in their desire to stay. Even in the face of terrifying attacks.

"A few years ago I was taking my pre-matriculation exam in bible studies," says Ziv. "Suddenly, we heard an incredible crashing noise and the room started filling up with smoke. A Kassam rocket slammed into the 2nd floor above us and landed in our classroom."

Ziv remembers the chaos and the panic. Some of the students and one of the teachers fainted. First-aid responders, firemen and policemen arrived immediately. "It was horrible," says Ziv. "I will never forget it."

Ziv's participation in the Net@ program distracted him from the escalating situation and put him on the track to a high tech future. Net@ is an exciting after school initiative that trains high school youth in the periphery of Israel to design, build and maintain computer networks while learning to work as part of a team and developing a sense of volunteerism and community leadership. Graduates of the four-year program, in which learning English is an important element, proudly receive internationally recognized CCENT certification as advanced network technicians through global technology giant Cisco Systems.

The Jewish Agency is funded primarily by Keren Hayesod, United Jewish Communities and major Jewish federations in North America and the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews.



חופס בבית הורפס של הסוכנות היהודית

"I have always loved computers," says Ziv enthusiastically. "Net@ opened so many doors for me and gave me an edge that I never would have gotten otherwise."

In addition to receiving his certification, Ziv and other Net@ graduates and students operate a free computer maintenance center at Sderot's community center. "It's great to give back to the community like this, after we received so much from Net@," says Ziv.

With the knowledge he gained from Net@, Ziv has applied to an elite computer unit in the army. He looks forward to serving his country and then studying to be a software engineer. "Who knows," says Ziv laughing. "I can be the next Israeli high tech wonder."