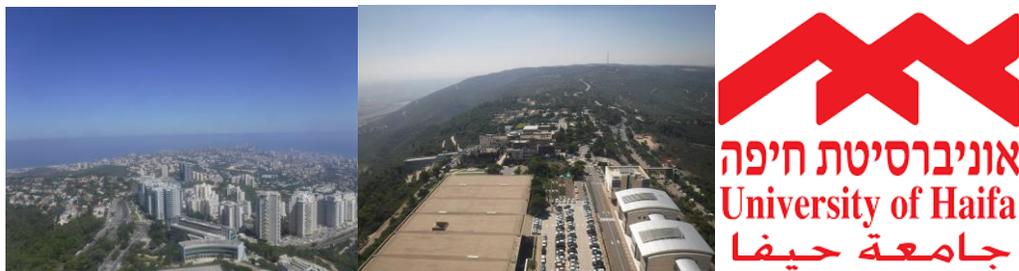


2018 STEM Israel LREC
Marie Jendrysik



The Midshipmen and their tour guides in Rosh Hanikra

For fifteen Midshipmen at the United States Naval Academy, the summer of 2018 was one that will never be forgotten. Guided by Arabic Professor Hezi Brosh in the USNA Languages Department, these Midshipmen took an intensive two weeks of Arabic classes at the Academy before flying to Israel and spending a month enrolled at Haifa University in Haifa, Israel. The LREC, generously funded by the Miller family, included not only classes but several weekend and day trips throughout the country. These students were given the opportunity to study Arabic and Middle Eastern culture all while exploring culturally and historically rich country of Israel.



The University was on the top of Mt. Carmel and afforded excellent views over the city of Haifa

As international students at Haifa University, the fifteen Midshipmen took three courses of study: Modern Standard Arabic, Spoken Arabic, and Cultures of the Middle East. The students lived on campus in the dorms and lived like Israeli university students. The courses focused on key areas like Arabic grammar as well as everyday spoken conversation. The culture class covered topical areas such as the gender, religion, and identity.

When the Midshipmen were not in class, they were out seeing and exploring the beautiful country of Israel. Three multi-day weekend trips and several day trips were planned, and the

Midshipmen travelled from the northernmost point to the southernmost point of Israel and everywhere in between. Overnight trips included: Galilee and the Golan, Jerusalem, and the Dead Sea and Eilat. Day trips included Akko, Yad Vashem, Tel Aviv, Jaffa, and the City of Haifa.



The Western Wall, the Dome of the Rock, and the Mount of Olives in the background. Three faiths: one photo.

The focus of the trips was on the history, culture, and faiths of the region. When in the Golan region and Eilat, major focus was on the international relations between Israel and the neighboring countries of Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt. The Midshipmen were also afforded the opportunity to tour Haifa Naval Base where further conversation with Israeli officers centered around Israeli national security.

The trips to Jerusalem, Galilee, Akko, and Jaffa showcased the unparalleled historical and cultural significance of the region; thousands of years of human development were on display. In Jerusalem the Midshipmen saw Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all contained within one relatively small and dynamic city. The Midshipmen toured the city extensively visiting such sites as the Western Wall, Mount of Olives, Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and the Jewish, Armenian Catholic, and Muslim quarters of the Old City. It was incredible for the students to see a city as ancient as Jerusalem so vibrant and alive today.



The nature of Israel

This LREC was an eye-opening and deeply enriching experience for all the Midshipmen involved. The Midshipmen were afforded the opportunity to learn Arabic in the Middle East as well as learn extensively about the three major religions within the region. The Midshipmen are

thankful for the experience, and they are excited to further their Arabic skills back at the Naval Academy.