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FEATURES

Yad Sarah provides compassionate care to the people of Israel

Staff report

While fighting in Gaza, Ari, an IDF combat soldier, dropped to the ground to dodge bullets. On the way down he hit his knee but continued fighting on the battlefield despite the pain. Eventually, the pain became unbearable, and Ari was brought back to Israel for a medical evaluation where doctors discovered he had suffered tendon damage in his leg.

He underwent surgery and returned home but could not stand or put pressure on his leg. To aid in Ari's recovery, he reached out to Yad Sarah for a CPM device, as recommended by his doctor.

"I had heard there was a soldier in Rehovot who needed a home delivery – and I live not far away – so I delivered it to him," said Eitan Dahari, head of Yad Sarah's Logistics Division. "We'll be here if he needs anything – medical equipment or support during his rehabilitation process, or [anything else] in the future."

Ari is among the more than 2,500 soldiers Yad Sarah has aided since Hamas' terrorist attacks on Oct 7.

Yad Sarah is Israel's largest volunteer-led social services agency, with more than 7,000 volunteers operating across over 125 branches in every corner of the Jewish State. Yad Sarah lends medical equipment, provides healthcare and home care, supports the elderly and victims of domestic violence and provides other critical services to anyone in need within Israel.

When war broke out, Yad Sarah launched an Emergency Wartime Relief Campaign to maintain access to life-saving equipment and services, evacuate residents from high-risk regions and to provide equipment transportation to wounded soldiers and civilians. Even during the most difficult periods of war, Yad Sarah has continued to offer support from its branches around the country.

For the thousands of evacuees displaced to Jerusalem, Yad Sarah opened the doors of its fully accessible rehabilitation and wellness center, Yirmiyahu33.

Evacuees living in Yad Sarah's Yirmiyahu33 center include 97-year-old Ayisa Zaguri and her caregiver, Reena Raj.

When the Israeli government ordered residents of Kiryat Shmona – a city near the Israel-Lebanon border – to evacuate, Reena Raj, a caregiver from India, grew nervous.

"I didn't know how we could leave," she shared.

Reena cares for Ayisa Zaguri, who lives in Kiryat Shmona and is homebound. Amid the bombings and air raid sirens, Reena wasn't sure how to safely evacuate Ayisa. Thanks to Yad Sarah's wheelchair-accessible vans, the two were safely transported to Yad Sarah's fully accessible Yirmiyahu33 Hotel in Jerusalem.

"I am so thankful that these organizations and the Israeli government are taking care of us," said Raj.

This story is one example of how Yad Sarah has supported the people of Israel during the war, but there are hundreds of others just like it, said Aryeh Cohen, head of human capital at Yad Sarah.

"Throughout the entirety of Yad Sarah's headquarters in Jerusalem people are mobilizing with fire in their eyes to pounce on every task," said Cohen. "It's not to be taken for granted."

Yad Sarah provides support to more than 1,250,000 individuals every year. The organization has been honored with the Israel Prize and became the first Israeli-Jewish organization to be appointed as an advisory body to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations in 2005. Friends of Yad Sarah, headquartered in New York, represents the organization and its essential work to its network of supporters in the USA and internationally.

"We have always been driven by a noble goal, to bring 'help and hope to the people of Israel,'" said Adele Goldberg, executive director of Friends of Yad Sarah. "At a time of such strife and suffering, that mission is now more urgent than ever."

This need is recognized by supporters in the United States. When Miriam and Jose Tabacnic, a couple from Florida, learned that Yad Sarah accepts unused medicines and vitamins for its community pharmacy, they quickly delivered four shipments of vitamins to be distributed across Israel. In addition, they donated drop containers for safely storing leftover medications and traveled to Israel to personally deliver one of the shipments.

"The more you give, the more you earn. And if not, at least you are definitely happier," said Jose Tabacnic.

**Some names were changed due to privacy concerns.*