



ISRAEL
PARASPORT
CENTER

2023 Impact Report

Friends,

As I reflect on the previous year and the events of October 7 that shattered our hearts, one thing has been a constant throughout 2023 and beyond - even in the darkest of times, **there is always hope.**

The hope and resilience we've witnessed in our communities, in Israel, and in the spirit of our athletes at the Israel ParaSport Center is nothing short of inspiring. Despite the war, despite the hardship, and despite the unimaginable tragedy that we all feel, hope continues to move us forward.

We have seen this so clearly at The Center, as our athletes have continued to break the chains of societal expectations. They are breaking records, pushing themselves to new limits, and doing their part to create a better future for Israel. THANK YOU for being part of their story.

Our athletes are the hope, and WE are the action. After the war began, we launched the Hope in Motion campaign, a \$2 million effort to aid those who will come to The Center for rehabilitation as a result of the war while continuing to provide vital services to the 3,000 people with disabilities who already call The Center home. We've made incredible strides toward expanding our rehabilitation services to people throughout Israel, but to continue providing these services, your support is needed. **Together, we can exceed our \$2 million goal.**

There are many ways to give, and all are appreciated. Below are a few ways you can help based on your level of comfort:

- Make a one-time gift,
- A monthly gift,
- A quarterly gift.
- Make a gift in honor of
 - A birthday
 - An anniversary
 - A graduation
- Or...a just-because gift – it depends, YOU decide.

The National Anthem of the State of Israel is Hatikva... the hope, the future.

THANK YOU for continuing to help realize that dream, that hope of the future for our athletes and the future of the State of Israel and the Israel ParaSport Center.

Lori Komisar

National Board President
Lori Komisar





“Growing up with a disability isn’t easy. You feel like a normal child, but the world doesn’t treat you like a normal child. At The Center, I wasn’t the different one, everyone was different.”
- Caroline Tabib, Table Tennis Athlete

BY THE NUM

3,000

children and adults with disabilities came to The Center for its rehabilitative and competitive parasport programs.



MEMBERS

45

athletes raised the Israeli flag in more than 25 different countries, with Judo being the newest addition to the international competition roster in 2023.



\$274,000

*Approximately 1M NIS

was used to purchase 25 new custom sport wheelchairs for Center athletes. Fifteen used wheelchairs were also refurbished for approximately \$40,000.

60

tours of The Center were hosted in 2023, including 19 large groups visiting Israel.

5

wheelchair tennis athletes from The Center are ranked among the top 60 wheelchair tennis athletes in the world.

90%

of the players on the national U22 wheelchair basketball team in Israel are athletes from The Center.

30

children competed in the first-ever soccer tournament hosted on The Center's soccer field.

Athlete Achie

Off the Court



Roy Abergil was featured in a Thelma commercial, a national cereal brand that uses accessible packaging for their products.



Swimmer **Sahar Tsilbulski** joined the IDF and is a member of Israel's police force. He wears his uniform to The Center every day.



Executive Director **Boaz Kramer** lent his voice to a history project in Ramat Gan. Audio describing the history of the city can be heard on benches placed around the city.



Noya Sela, our hydrotherapist in the reserves, got married in what is believed to be the very first LGBTQ+ wedding ever held on an army base.

Events

On the Court



Nadav Levi won the Boccia European Championship, his first major championship win.



The **Wheelchair Rugby team** competed in the European Championship and **made it to the Final 8**.



Wheelchair Basketball athlete **Amit Vigoda was named MVP** after his team, Amicia Abruzzo, **won the EuroCup**.



Ayelet Ron won gold in a **judo tournament** in Finland. This was the first year that **The Center's Judo program competed internationally**.



Maayan Zikri won the Israel Paralympic Award for **Breakthrough Player of the Year**.



Guy Sasson climbed the wheelchair tennis ranks, ending 2023 **as No. 3 in the world in Quads**.

"The Israel ParaSport Center is a place of inspiration, hope, and fulfillment of dreams"

Ariel, Boccia & Table Tennis Athlete & Coach



Table tennis athletes Ariel, Omir, and Aviv

Mazel Tov, Athletes!

Past Project UPDATES

Thanks to you, the Israel ParaSport Center has completed several capital projects over the past few years. These upgrades to The Center have enriched the lives of thousands of children and adults with disabilities, and empowered them to thrive.

Aquatics Center

Thanks to our incredible supporters,
more than

\$2.5 million

was raised between 2022 and 2023 for the complete renovation of the Aquatics Center, consisting of The Center's semi-Olympic pool, its hydrotherapy pool and the adjoining locker rooms.

The Aquatics Center construction was scheduled to begin in fall 2023. However, when war broke out in the aftermath of October 7, renovation plans were put on hold. With the rising cost of services as a result of the war, we now anticipate that at least \$1 million in additional funds will be needed to complete both the Atlanta Community Semi-Olympic Pool and the Jimmy Caplan Hydrotherapy Pool.

Fundraising for the Aquatics Center is ongoing. Visit israelparasport.org to learn how you can contribute.





Additional Project Updates

Table Tennis Center

Since its completion in 2023, the Table Tennis Center has continued to be used for The Center's children's program, adult program, Parkinsons table tennis program, and table tennis tournaments that take place four times per year.

The Expo Center

Completed in 2022, The Expo Center is used for important visits and presentations such as visits from Israeli delegations. It is rented for use by MorFit morning yoga and other third-party organizations, hosts our children and adult program boccia practice, and special table tennis events.

Judo Program

What began as a small group of beginner judo practitioners blossomed into a competitive program in 2023. In July, they traveled to the program's first tournament in Finland where two of our athletes brought home medals.

MVP Scholarship Program

Beginning in 2022, up-and-coming wheelchair basketball athletes were awarded scholarships as part of the MVP program. Each year, 12 athletes are chosen to receive additional training, have individual sessions with a mental coach, a strength and conditioning coach, and one-on-one sessions with The Center's wheelchair basketball coaches.

In the U.S.

The steadfast support and generous contributions of individuals, partners, and foundations who share our passion and purpose drive the work we do. All donations to The Center, big or small, made a difference in 2023.

Thanks to our generous supporters,

**\$4.2
million**

was raised for the Israel
ParaSport Center in 2023.

1,835

gifts from

1,452

donors

made the work we do at The Center possible.





NextGen Gets Moving!

NextGen Leadership teams hosted two events to raise awareness for The Center over the summer. These included a Pickleball tournament in Atlanta and a Rooftop evening in Chicago.



On the Green

The Israel ParaSport Center hosted annual Golf Classic events in Chicago and New York. The golf outings raised more than **\$460,000** combined.



Women of Valor

Four incredible women were honored at this year's Women of Valor Gala. Board President, Lori Komisar received the Moshe Rashkes Heroes of Life award, while Peggy Kirk, Rena Rosen, and Lauren Schrero were presented with the Women of Valor award for their work in the disability and inclusion space. This event raised nearly **\$800,000.**



Teaming With Israel

Supporters in Atlanta and Los Angeles came to express their solidarity with The Center and Israel. Attendees experienced a much-needed evening of comic relief in the wake of October 7. The events raised a combined **\$280,800** for The Center's Hope in Motion campaign.

Looking Ahead: 2024

H

HOPE moves us forward. The Center stands ready to meet the needs of those wounded in the war while continuing to provide world-class services to the 3,000 children and adults with disabilities who already call The Center home.

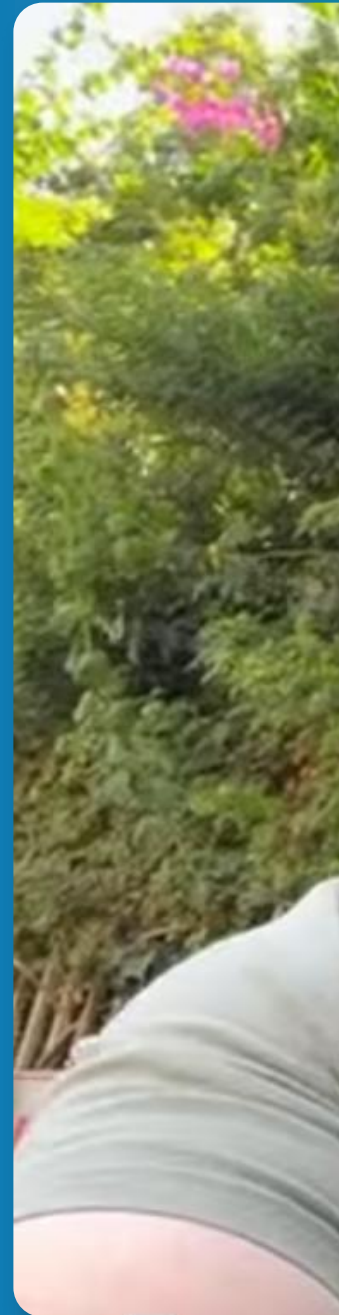
But we can't do this alone.

To address the increased need, the Israel ParaSport Center launched **Hope in Motion**, a \$2 million effort to empower our athletes to live life without limits, even in the face of unimaginable tragedy. The campaign will remain a priority throughout 2024.

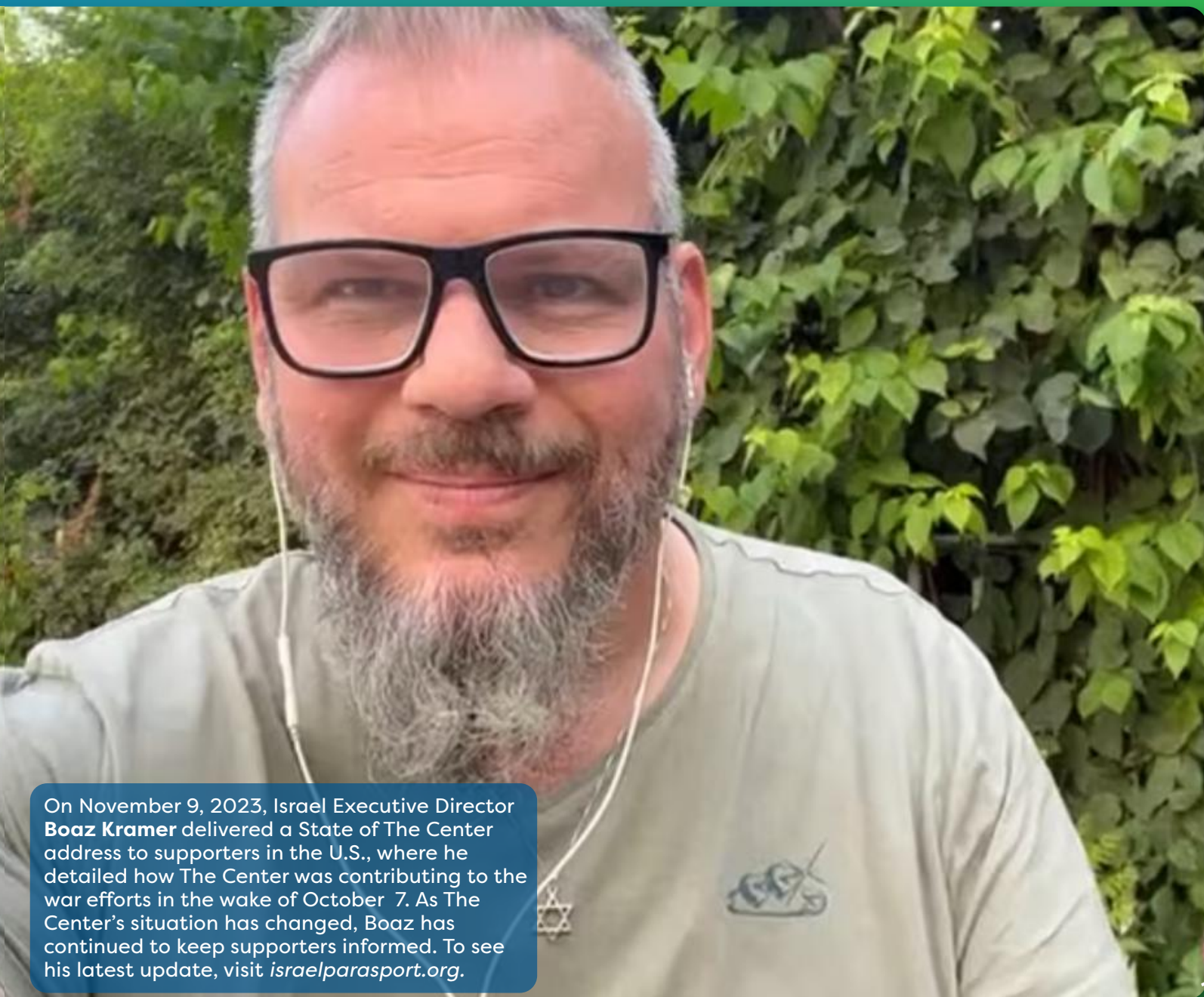
You Can Make a Difference!

The Center is an integral part of Israel's efforts to rehabilitate the wounded and permanently disabled children and adults from the horrific events of October 7th. **To date, we have raised nearly \$750,000 for the Hope in Motion campaign**, which has enabled us to create new programs to assist those wounded and displaced by the war, while also keeping our current athletes safe.

In early 2024, The Center was named an official partner in rehabilitation with the IDF, enabling us to reach even more people with disabilities throughout the country.



HOPE IN MOTION



On November 9, 2023, Israel Executive Director **Boaz Kramer** delivered a State of The Center address to supporters in the U.S., where he detailed how The Center was contributing to the war efforts in the wake of October 7. As The Center's situation has changed, Boaz has continued to keep supporters informed. To see his latest update, visit israelparasport.org.

Looking Ahead

Hope In Motion

New above ground shelter



Above Ground Shelters

The top priority of the Hope in Motion Campaign was the installation of two free-standing shelters, totalling \$260,000.

The free-standing shelters are prefabricated, approximately 200 square feet, wheelchair accessible, and can accommodate 65 people standing and 15 wheelchairs.



*“From the very first time I sat in a sport wheelchair, I felt fast, I felt strong. **Finally I excelled at something in my life.** It gave me the confidence to try to succeed in other realms.”*

– Amit Vigoda, Wheelchair Basketball Athlete



Shesek

Through partnerships with the Israel Social Security Development Fund and the ILAN Foundation for Children with Disabilities, the Israel ParaSport Center launched **Shesek**, a program for evacuees

with physical disabilities who have been displaced by the war and are not geographically located near Ramat Gan.

Shesek provides sports therapy, hydrotherapy, Pilates, floor exercise classes, and more.

These rehabilitative services are being offered at hotels, guest houses, host Kibbutzim, and other locations where refugees are staying. In more remote locations, activities may be offered online. These services are provided free of charge.





Our Mission

The Israel ParaSport Center is committed to providing ongoing financial support to The Center, empowering children and youth with physical disabilities from all backgrounds to participate in physical and psychological rehabilitation through sports in order to attain the goal of leading productive and successful lives in Israeli society.

Israel ParaSport Center

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