

## Student exchange between EVMS and Azrieli Faculty of Medicine in Israel resumes post-COVID

Stephanie Peck

In early June, two Israeli medical students arrived in Norfolk to study at Eastern Virginia Medical School. As part of an exchange



Dr. Steven Warsof with Madrichot in the Israeli army.

program, two EVMS students will travel to study at the Azrieli Faculty of Medicine, Bar-Ilan University in Safed, Israel.

Dr. Steven Warsof, EVMS professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, conceived of this exchange about 12 years ago after reading of the new medical school in Israel. He emailed, asking if he could help, and soon found himself

travelling to Safed to meet faculty and give lectures.

The student exchange continued each year until it was paused due to COVID. After the pandemic, Warsof returned to Safed to continue teaching.

The initial exchange was formalized by a five-year contract between EVMS and its Israeli counterpart; the two parties renewed for an additional five years. While the contract expired during COVID, Warsof received an email this April asking if

Israeli students could again return to EVMS.

A female Israeli Druze student and a male Israeli student were selected for the opportunity. Two Jewish families in Ghent, walking distance to EVMS, offered to host the students. Each Israeli medical student receives a \$2,500 stipend from the Tidewater Jewish community, and EVMS donors provide the funds for their medical students travelling to Israel.

"Students go to Israel to see a different healthcare system, along with the cultural experience," says Warsof, explaining the appeal of studying in Israel.

Warsof credits three colleagues for their roles in re-introducing the medical student exchange. In Norfolk, EVMS President, Provost and Dean Dr. Alfred Abuhamad and Dr. George Saade, chair of EVMS Obstetrics and Gynecology and Associate Dean for Women's Health, approved the students' travel and studies in the United States.

Inbar Ben Shacher, M.D. Obstetrics and Gynecology Chair, Ziv Medical Center, head of Internal Audit Committee, Bar-Ilan University, worked on behalf of his Israeli students to travel to Norfolk.



Hend Hino.

## Meet Israeli med school student Nimrod Truzman

Stephanie Peck

Hend Hino and Nimrod Truzman are the two Israeli medical students studying at Eastern Virginia Medical School as part of a one-month exchange program with Azrieli Faculty of Medicine, Bar-Ilan University.

As they finish their sixth year of medical school in Israel (the equivalent to the fourth year in the United States), Truzman and Hino will return to Israel and start their internship year – 12 months of rotation through various departments, before committing to a residency program in their fields of interest.

"I wish I could stay in the United States longer, but I have finals in August to attend," shares Truzman, a native of Ra'anana near Tel Aviv.

When asked how the atrocities of October 7 impacted his studies, Truzman explains that medical school did not restart until a month or two later. During this time, he volunteered in a hospital, caring for injured civilians and soldiers in neurosurgery and orthopedics. He describes it as a "unique experience."

"Everyone just wanted to help, even to change the trash. It was a great honor to help," he says.

Truzman is not certain which medical specialty he'll pursue, although he's leaning towards Obstetrics and Gynecology. "That's why I wanted to take part in this exchange program," he says.



Nimrod Truzman.