

Maccabi Canada's **AZRIELI** ISRAEL EXPERIENCE

A Unique Israel Experience for Canada's Junior Athletes ages 15-18

Recognizing the transformative opportunity the experience of the Games presents, Maccabi Canada created a unique Israel Experience for our Junior Athletes. Generously supported by the Azrieli Foundation, and introduced at the 2013 Games, the Azrieli Israel Experience has enabled Maccabi Canada to heighten awareness of Jewish identity, strengthen Jewish bonds, and encourage Jewish pride.

During this 6-day journey of discovery, held prior to the start of the Games and integrated with pre-Games training, Canadian Junior athletes travel to Israel's historic and modern sites, volunteer in Tikkun Olam (repair the world) activities, share in the wonders of the Jewish homeland, and become connected to the beauty of its geography, history and people.

The addition of the Azrieli Israel Experience proved to be overwhelmingly impactful. Significantly, for 45% of the Junior athletes, this was their first trip to Israel. Many Junior athletes ranked the Azrieli Israel Experience as the highlight of their Maccabiah experience.

The intensity and breadth of the Azrieli Israel Experience helps foster a deep bond among participants of the Canadian Junior delegation and creates genuine camaraderie where athletes form life-long, Jewish friendships.

As a result of the Azrieli Israel Experience, many returning athletes become engaged as community leaders and act as ambassadors for the State of Israel, visiting schools, running grass roots programs, and speaking of their experience.

