

Bereaved Mother's Loss Inspires Soldiers to Honor Their Past

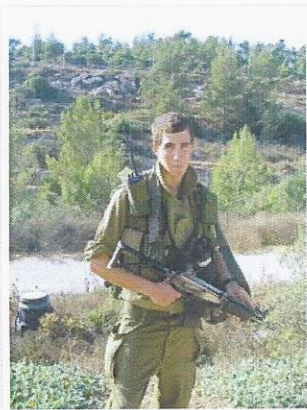
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The moving story of how one short conversation between a bereaved mother and a senior IDF officer became a unique memorial project.

On October 15, 2005, Lieutenant Ariel Buda, a soldier in the IDF's **Field Intelligence Corps**, died after being severely injured in a terrorist attack. During a memorial service seven years later, his mother, Toni Buda, suggested that the unit build a memorial for her son and other fighters who died defending Israel. The idea came up during a conversation with Colonel Oded Halevi, the Commander of the Field Intelligence Corps Training School.



Lt. Ariel Buda, Lieutenant Ariel Buda, an inspiration to future generations of Field Intelligence Corps soldiers

The day after Lt. Buda's memorial service, Colonel Halevi returned to the Field Intelligence Corps training base. "I gathered all of my non-commissioned officers and took them to an old and dilapidated room that wasn't in use any longer," Colonel Halevi recalls. "I told them, 'See this place? In February, **bereaved families** will come to this room, but by then it will be a place that displays the heritage of the Field Intelligence Corps and commemorates fallen soldiers.'"

Last month, after Toni's idea became a reality, the unit received the Chief of the General Staff Award for Excellence in honor of the memorial site.



The heritage site of the Field Intelligence Corps

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The memorial also serves as a heritage site, educating members of the Field Intelligence Corps about the unit's history. During visits to the memorial, commanders and officers share the heritage and values of the unit with their soldiers. "I see how the soldiers are inspired," Colonel Halevi says. "The project has created a deep interest in our connection to the past and our influence on the future."



Lt. Ariel Buda and his parents

Honoring their past

Last year, current and past commanders of the training school came together to share important parts of the Field Intelligence Corps' history. Toni came to participate in the event, speaking to a group of soldiers about her son. "I believe that the relationship between the military and the bereaved families is very important," Toni explains. "Ariel would have loved this. He was a counselor in a youth movement before he was recruited, and he always thought that education was of utmost importance."



As part of their training in the unit, all Field Intelligence soldiers are obligated to visit the exhibit and study the unit's history. The memorial site helps soldiers appreciate the significance of their service in the context of the unit's past. "This gives them a deeper perspective and allows them to feel part of something bigger than themselves," says Lieutenant Sharon Abuluf, an education officer in the unit. "The exhibits and the room itself were all handmade by the soldiers."

After the memorial site opened, bereaved families were invited to see how their loved ones were being remembered. "Everything that the army does to commemorate fallen soldiers strengthens these families," Toni says. "I still miss him every day".

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We shall never forget our Fallen Heroes who have preserved our heritage and cherished freedoms. My prayers and thoughts are with their families. Please help our wounded and the families of the Fallen. I assisted a Medal of Honor mother Mrs. Maureen Murphy (Lt. Michael Murphy, USN, MOH) get a job at a veterans hospital. Whether in America or Israel we must help them. They have given us our life and the precious gift of freedom. They are so much more than just a name on a wall. Always remember Yoni!

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May his soul rest in peace but on the hand thank you Lieutenant Ariel Buda for your hard work and service to Isreal .

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It is right that those who die for Israel should be remembered .

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