



2025



AFU669

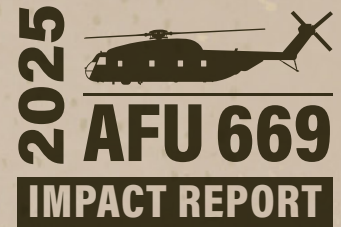
IMPACT REPORT



AFU 669

American Friends of Unit 669

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About Unit 669

Unit 669 is the Israeli Air Force's Airborne Combat Search and Rescue Unit and one of the elite special operations units of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF).

Established after the 1973 Yom Kippur War, when the IDF lacked the capability to rescue downed pilots behind enemy lines, the unit was created to ensure that no soldier would be left behind. Over the decades, its mission has expanded significantly.

Today, Unit 669 is responsible for search, rescue, and medical evacuation of both military personnel and civilians, operating in combat zones, disaster areas, and complex emergency situations.

On call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, the unit responds to everything from battlefield rescues and special operations to terror attacks, mass-casualty events, and civilian emergencies.

During more than 50 years of operations, Unit 669 has rescued over 20,000 soldiers and civilians, serving as Israel's national airborne rescue force and a critical safety net for the country both within Israel and beyond its borders.

Click to watch video



AFU669, In Support of Our Heroes

The American Friends of Unit 669 (AFU669) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting the veterans and welfare of the soldiers of Unit 669.

Many of these veterans go on to become leaders in Israeli society.

Our mission is to provide the resources, programs, and community support that enable Unit 669 alumni to thrive after their military service and to continue applying the skills, values, and humanitarian spirit they developed in the unit.

Through educational scholarships, mentorship, community initiatives, and social impact programs, AFU669 empowers these veterans to maximize their potential while contributing to Israeli society and beyond. Guided by the Jewish value of Tikkun Olam- repairing the world, we strive to ensure that the legacy of service and life-saving dedication that defines Unit 669 continues long after soldiers leave active duty.

Click to watch video



The Symbiosis of AFU669 & the Cat Organization

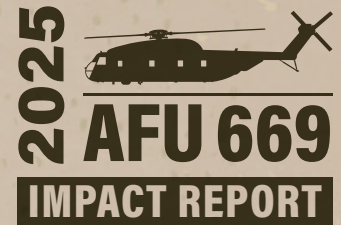
The AFU669 works in close partnership with The Cat Organization- Unit 669 Alumni Organization in Israel, which serves as the operational arm implementing many of the programs that support the unit's soldiers, veterans, and their families.

While AFU669 focuses on building international awareness and raising the resources needed to fund these initiatives, The Cat Organization leads the work on the ground, developing and executing the programs, supporting veterans, and ensuring that the impact reaches those who need it most.

This partnership allows us to combine global support with local expertise, ensuring that every contribution is translated into meaningful action and real support for the Unit 669 community.



A Letter from our Executive Director



Dear Friends and Supporters,

These past 2 years have reminded us why Unit 669 exists.

For more than fifty years, we, the soldiers of Unit 669 have answered the same call: "In your distress you called, and I rescued you" (Psalm 81:7).

Whether rescuing pilots behind enemy lines, evacuating wounded soldiers from the battlefield, or reaching civilians in the most difficult circumstances, our mission has always been simple and sacred-to save lives.

Since October 7, that mission has taken on a new and painful intensity.

Unit 669 has operated across multiple fronts, in Gaza, in Lebanon, in the Middle East, and in countless emergency situations that most people will never hear about. Our soldiers have rescued the wounded under fire, brought families back from the brink of tragedy, and carried out missions in places where the line between life and death is measured in minutes.

This is where our mission begins.

The American Friends of Unit 669 exists to ensure that the soldiers and veterans of our extraordinary unit are never left alone. During our service, in our transition to civilian life, and in the long years that follow. Through your support, we provide life-saving equipment for soldiers in the field, mental health and PTSD treatment for veterans, scholarships for reservists serving hundreds of days each year, mentorship programs for the next generation of leaders, and direct support for the families of our fallen.

Your partnership transforms gratitude into action. But our responsibility goes beyond support alone. Unit 669 veterans represent something larger: a spirit of courage, responsibility, and service that continues long after the uniform is removed. Across Israel and around the world, these veterans are building companies, treating patients, educating the next generation, and strengthening their communities. They carry with them the values learned in the most demanding circumstances; teamwork, resilience, and the unwavering belief that every life matters.

This is the true impact of Unit 669.

At a time when Israel and Jewish communities face growing challenges, your support helps ensure that this safety net, this promise that no one will be left behind, remains strong.

On behalf of our soldiers, our veterans, and the families who stand beside them, thank you for being part of this mission.

Together, we are not only saving lives.

We are building hope.

With deep gratitude,

Captain (Res.) Bar Reuven

Co-founder & Executive Director,

American Friends of Unit 669.

Co-founder & former CEO, Cat 669

Alumni Organization

Our Team



BAR REUVEN
Captain (Res.)
Co-founder &
Executive Director



ANAT DUVDEVANI
Head of Development



NURIT DROMY
Head of Operations

Board Members

Executive Committee



WILLIAM COHEN
Co-founder &
Former Chairman



AMIT SHUKER
Co-founder &
President



PETER FEINBERG
Co-founder &
Vice Chairman



YORAM BEHIRI
Co-founder &
Former Treasurer



DAVID BEN-ELI
Treasurer

Board



MICHAEL MARIN



DINA WACHTEL



**EFRAT
RAELBROOK**



JOEL EISDORFER



**MICHAEL
MARGOLIS**



YADIN ROZOV



STUART SPODEK



HAROLD LEVY

Unprecedented Mobilization

After Oct 7th, Israel began its longest and largest deployment in history. Two years later, our soldiers and their families are feeling the heavy mental, emotional, and financial toll of the war.

THE SCALE OF THE CALL-UP



125,000

Combat Reservists

78% with families

22-40 age of reservists



250

days of service

8 times more than usual

THE TOLL OF WAR



11%

soldiers with mental injury



63%

children affected



57%

strained marriages



73%

businesses impacted



“I’m exhausted. The PTSD didn’t stay on the battlefield—it came home with us. It’s been two long years of holding everything together. I love my husband, but I’m carrying what he can’t anymore. I just want him back. I want us back.”

Reservist wife

2025 Summary at a Glance

This is the impact we were able to create thanks to your generosity

80



Academic scholarships were awarded with 25% of recipients pursuing medical degrees

10,000



Families in high-risk communities received life-saving medical kits hands-on emergency first aid training

100



Reservists attended our PTSD prevention and resilience workshops

Over 1,000



Operational and tactical items were supplied to reservists in the field

8



Soldiers living with PTSD received therapy dogs and completed the specialized training program

40



Community events were organized to advance awareness, hasbara, and fundraising efforts in the U.S.

200



Reservists stayed at the 669 Villa, participating in recovery and development workshops

\$100k



Was invested in support for injured soldiers and improvements to facilities within the unit

32



Veterans took part in our mentorship program in Israel and the U.S.

6



Families of fallen soldiers received ongoing support for memorial initiatives and daily needs

90



Soldiers completed our post-service transition workshop

PTSD Prevention Workshop

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4 Teams

Were sent to a PTSD prevention workshop; Teams 34, 42, 43, 46

\$115k

Total cost

100 Soldiers

Number of soldiers who participated



Romania, in the mountains



Great Barrington, MA, USA

Project Overview

In response to the unprecedented operational intensity of the past 2 years and the events of October 7th, our organization spearheaded a dedicated project for processing combat experiences for Unit 669 reserve teams. This report summarizes the journeys of the four organic teams- 34, 42, 43, 46, who participated in intensive therapeutic journeys in Romania and the Berkshires, MA.

Program Structure

The therapeutic model designed for both teams consisted of a ten-day program:

- **Opening in Israel (2 Days):** Mental preparation, expectation setting, and establishing a safe group space before departure.
- **Journey in Romania (8 Days):** Staying in isolated cabins deep within the forest, far from daily stressors. The secluded environment allowed the operators to disconnect from operational alertness and engage in profound emotional work.
- **Methodology:** The program focused on group processing circles and workshops held in the heart of nature, facilitated by clinical psychologists and a professional support staff.



Primary Focus

1. Processing personal loss (the falling of Ido Yehoshua z"l) and cumulative trauma from rescues under fire.
2. Bridging the gap between "combat mode" and civilian life; processing continuous operational stress.
3. Processing Loss: For the first time since October 7th, the team held an in-depth group discussion regarding the loss of their teammate.

Key Outcome

1. Transitioning from the "silent warrior" archetype to open emotional dialogue and shared grieving.
2. Strengthening unit resilience and providing tools for a healthier return to family and professional life.
3. Human Connection: The journey allowed them to shed their "combat armor" and reconnect with their shared humanity and brotherhood.

Summarize

The journeys in Romania have proven to be a critical tool in maintaining the mental resilience of reserve operators. Providing a full professional and logistical envelope allowed the fighters to focus solely on the work of healing. As one operator stated: "It wasn't just a trip; it was an opportunity to mend the cracks in our souls."



Testimonials from our participants

To the AFU669 team and our donors.

I'm writing this not only as a member of Team 43, but as a brother who finally feels like he can breathe again.

As you know, the past two years have been brutal. For those of us in Unit 669, the missions have been relentless. Nonstop rescues and extractions under fire in Gaza and Lebanon. We live on adrenaline and immediate action. Then came October 7th, and the unthinkable: we lost our brother, Ido Yehoshua, in Hamas's murderous attack on the southern communities. Losing Ido broke us. We are trained to save lives, yet we could not save his, and the silence surrounding that pain has been overwhelming.

The ten-day processing journey you organized for us in Romania was far more than just a trip, it was a lifeline.

For the first time, truly the first time, we were able to sit together as a team and openly talk about the trauma we have carried over the past two years. The constant operational stress, the weight of the rescues, and the images we cannot forget finally had a safe place to surface. This was possible thanks to the incredible work of the clinical psychologists and the entire professional support team. Knowing that every logistical detail was taken care of allowed us to focus fully on the difficult but necessary work of healing.

Most importantly, for the first time since October 7th, we spoke together about the loss of Ido. We didn't have to be the tough, silent warriors. We were simply brothers grieving one of our own. That shared, tearful conversation was the most meaningful moment of the journey. It wasn't about closure, but about finally opening the wound so that healing could begin, together.

This journey gave us the rare opportunity to step out of the combat zone and into a dedicated space for recovery. It was deep, it was exhausting, and it was profoundly meaningful. You didn't just organize a trip, you gave us the chance to reconnect with our humanity and begin mending the cracks in our souls.

From the bottom of my heart, and on behalf of every member of Team 43, thank you. Thank you for seeing us, for supporting us, and for giving us the opportunity to heal as a unit. We will never forget what you did for us.

With immense gratitude,

I.N.

Team 43, Unit 669

“

"You didn't just organize a trip, you gave us the chance to reconnect with our humanity and begin mending the cracks in our souls."

Testimonials from our participants

To the AFU669 team and our supporters.

We are writing this letter while we still carry the echoes of the quiet forests and the deep conversations from our journey, though now with a different kind of weight in our hearts, one that feels much lighter.

For Team 46, the past 2 years have been a whirlwind of constant readiness. In an instant, we moved from our civilian lives into the cockpits of helicopters and the heart of combat zones. As operators in Unit 669, we are trained to focus on the "now". The next extraction, the next patient, the next mission. In order to save lives, we often learn to silence our own emotions.

The journey you provided gave us the first real opportunity to turn that focus inward.

While every team carries its own story, for us this experience was about rediscovering silence. Away from the hum of the engines and the intensity of the missions, we finally had the professional space, guided by your remarkable clinical team, to process the sights and sounds that stayed with us long after the dust had settled.

This processing journey helped us bridge the gap between the warriors we are in the field and the sons, partners, and friends we are at home. You didn't just give us a trip, you gave us the tools to process our shared experiences as a unit and strengthen the bond that keeps us moving forward together.

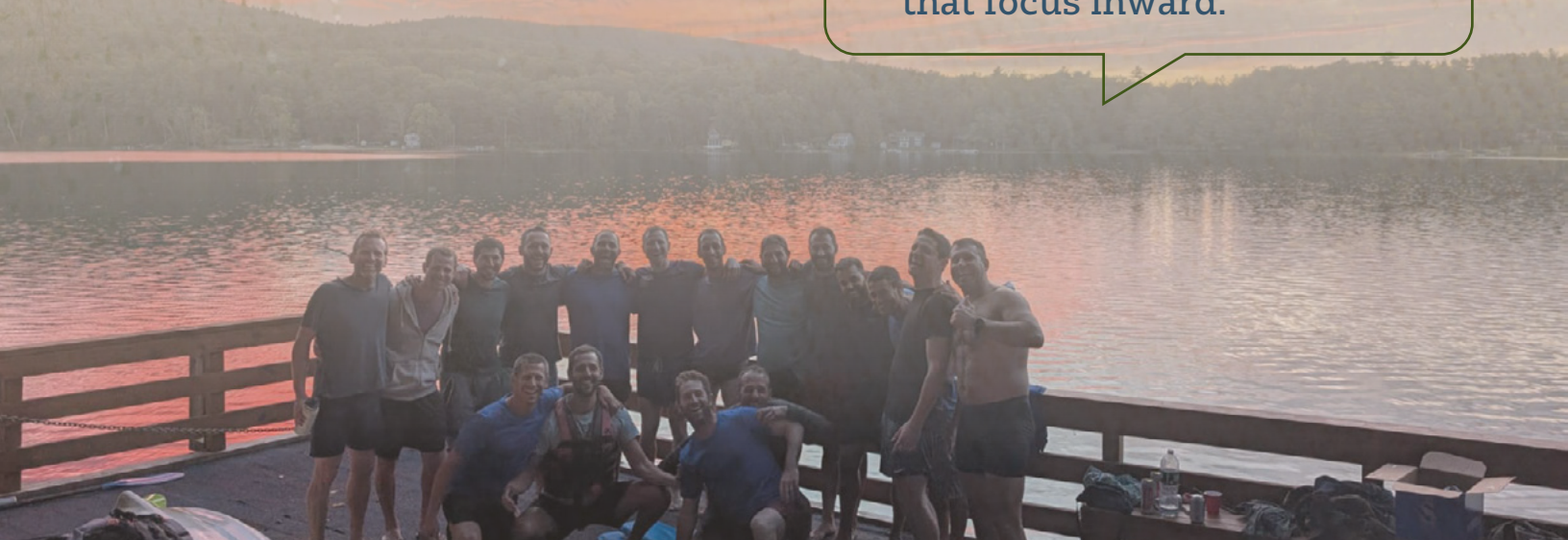
We want to thank the association for the flawless organization and for the deep understanding that our mission does not end when we land. Thank you for recognizing that the transition back to "normal" life requires its own kind of courage and support.

With deep respect and appreciation,

D.M.
Team 46, Unit 669



"In order to save lives, we often learn to silence our own emotions. The journey you provided gave us the first real opportunity to turn that focus inward."



PTSD Prevention Workshop

The next team

In early 2026, team 44, who lost Major Ben Shelly in Dec. 2023 is supposed to participate in such a workshop.

Maj. Ben Shelly, 26, a deeply principled and purpose-driven man from Kidron, was killed in a battle evacuating the wounded to a hospital in Shajaiya, Gaza on December 3.

A platoon commander in Unit 669. Ben encountered a fierce battle assisting the Golani Brigade. His team was hit by an exploding device killing Ben instantly. Eight other soldiers fell on that same day.

Always striving for success, Ben was perpetually concerned for the welfare of Israel and its people.



Major Ben Shelly z"l



Therapy Dogs Program for Combat Soldiers with PTSD

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8 Dogs

8 Soldiers

\$8k

Number of soldiers who participated

Total cost

Testimonials from our participants

Dear wonderful people at the AFU669.

I am writing this as a combat soldier from team 45, and as someone who has been given a critical chance to step back into life after the war.

The past two years, particularly during the Iron Swords War and the relentless operations in Gaza and Lebanon, were nonstop. We extracted hundreds of wounded and fallen soldiers from the battlefield. Our job was to run toward the danger and carry the weight of every moment.

But when I finally came home, the war did not stop. I found myself in a constant state of hypervigilance. I was always wired, avoiding anything that reminded me of the missions. I began to realize that I was developing symptoms of PTSD, and the wall I had built around myself felt impossible to break through.

Then you stepped in by giving me a puppy and enrolling me in the Therapeutic Canine Training program.

Over the past six months, through the dedication of the professional staff and the power of the group training sessions, I have gone through a profound transformation. The dog is more than just a pet, he is a partner, a regulator, and an anchor. He forces me to stay present. He senses the shift in my breathing when I begin to spiral and brings me back to the ground. Thanks to him, I have slowly

begun to reorganize my life and face things I could not even approach before.

He has even become part of the team. Having him join us at the recent team PTSD workshop at the villa in the North was incredibly meaningful. It allowed the guys to see the process in action, and for me it reinforced his role as a constant, healing presence.

What you gave me is not just a dog, it is the feeling that I am not alone in this journey back to life after the war. He has become an inseparable part of my healing process and a constant reminder that my focus must remain on the future.

Thank you for your vision, your support, and for investing in this life-changing therapeutic path. You truly helped lift me back up again.

With immense gratitude and appreciation,

A.Y.

Team 45, Unit 669

The Villa of 669

Therapeutic and agricultural space for ongoing PTSD prevention workshops and treatments

1 Villa

Dozens of workshops and treatments

Over 200 Soldiers

Number of soldiers who used the facility

\$30k

Total invested funds



Betzet, Israel



Testimonials from our participants:

Dear supporters,

I want to share a few reflections from a powerful experience our team went through over the past three days.

Twenty members of our team, who fought together over the past two years in Gaza and Lebanon, gathered at a villa in Betzet for a recovery workshop. At first, the atmosphere was familiar; jokes, cynicism, quick hugs, and the usual ways we avoid deeper conversations.

But slowly, something began to change.

Through guided sessions, including yoga and a sweat lodge ceremony led by professional facilitators, the walls began to come down. In the sweat lodge, something remarkable happened. Hearts opened, tears flowed, and voices that had been silent for a long time finally spoke. It became a deeply healing and connecting experience. One that many of us had never experienced before.

For years, our team had struggled to reconnect on a deeper level. The intensity of the war, and the distance that came with time, had left much unspoken. This experience reminded us that the team is more than a unit, it is a home.

Over the following days, through workshops, conversations, and even physical activities like kayaking in the sea, we continued to process what we had been carrying. There was space for difficult emotions, but also for laughter, connection, and release.

When it was time to leave, something had shifted. You could feel it in the hugs. Long hugs filled with genuine love. Tough men allowing themselves, perhaps for the first time in a long while, to simply rest in the embrace of their brothers.

These three days came at exactly the right moment. They gave us the opportunity to reconnect, to heal, and to begin mending the wounds we carry from the past two years.

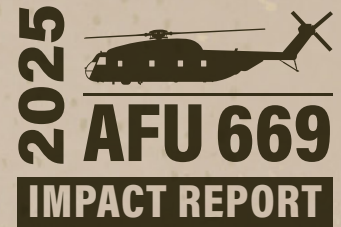
Thank you for making this possible. Your support gives us the chance to care for the people who spend their lives caring for others.

With deep gratitude.

T.S.
Team 40, Unit 669



Emergency First Aid Medical Kits and Training Program



Empowering Israeli Families with Emergency Response Skills

As an Elite Search and Rescue Unit with decades of experience in trauma care and life-saving treatment, veterans of Unit 669 understand one critical truth: in an emergency, the first few minutes determine whether someone lives or dies.

In Israel, even before Oct. 7th, but especially since then, many families live under the constant threat of terror attacks, accidents, and other traumatic emergencies. In these critical moments, medical professionals are often minutes away, and many civilians lack the knowledge and tools to respond effectively.

To address this gap, we developed the Emergency First Aid Medical Kit & Training Program back in 2019- a comprehensive initiative that equips families with both life-saving equipment and the practical knowledge to use it.

Tens of thousands of Israeli personnel have already participated in our workshops and received life-saving kits. The training empowers civilians to act confidently and effectively in moments of crisis, turning bystanders into first responders.

In many cases, the knowledge and tools provided through this program can mean the difference between life and death during a terror attack, car accident, or other traumatic event.

Our goal is simple and powerful- to ensure that every Israeli family has access to a life-saving trauma kit and the knowledge to use it.

\$550k

Total invested funds

10,000

Kits Distributed

**More than 50
Communities**

Each local council received an average of **10 kits**.

Partners



The foundation of the project



Thank you video



In the news



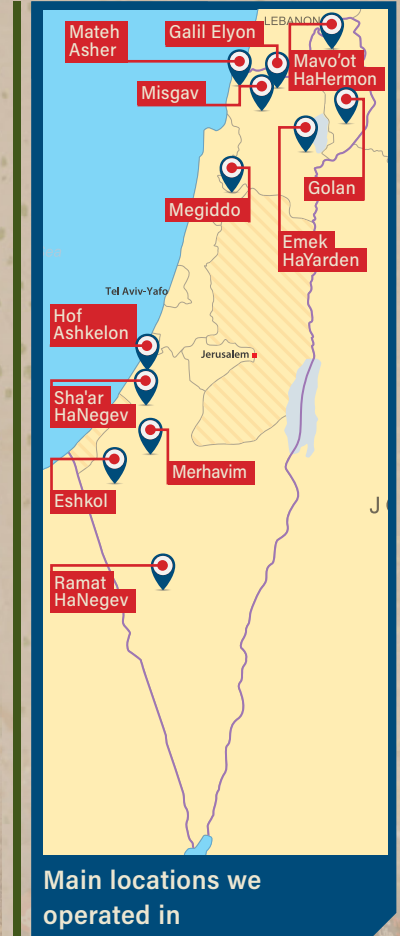
Emergency First Aid Medical Kits and Training Program

The program includes:

- **Life-Saving Trauma Kits;** Specially designed by combat medical professionals, these kits contain essential supplies needed to stabilize victims during a variety of trauma situations until professional medical teams arrive.
- **Interactive Training Workshops;** Led by Unit 669 veterans, including combat medics, paramedics, and trauma physicians. These hands-on workshops teach participants how to properly use the equipment and respond effectively during emergencies.

Together, we can empower communities, strengthen preparedness, and save lives.

“Whoever saves one life, saves the entire world.”



Emergency First Aid Medical Kits and Training Program In the US

Empowering Jewish and Israeli American Communities with Response Skills

\$10k

Total invested funds

In response to the rise of antisemitism in the United States and the growing needs expressed by communities, we adapted our workshops to English and aligned them with American laws and emergency response guidelines. We now deliver these programs across Jewish and Israeli communities, teaching participants how to respond to crisis situations, provide emergency first aid, and potentially save lives.

Click to watch video



After Latest Attack, Some Jews Wonder How Much More Security Is Possible

“We are synagogues — we are houses of worship,” one rabbi said. “We are not Fort Knox.”

Scholarship Program

80

Number of scholarships

25%

For Medical School

7

Special scholarships
(MIT, Harvard, Rice, etc.)

Standard scholarship

Per Year > \$3.6k
Per 4 years degree > \$14.4k

Special scholarships

Per year > \$10k-\$20k

“

"After completing my Transitioning Assistance Workshop, I realized that with hard work and a little support, the sky's the limit. Thanks to our alumni organization, I received an opportunity that truly changed my life."

(Ido, Team 43)

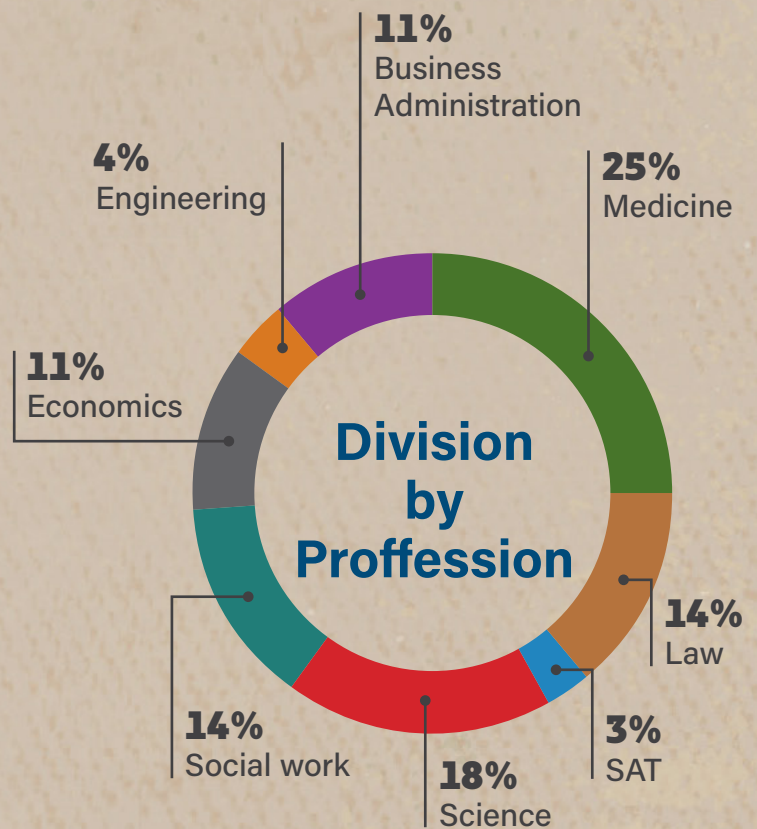
Major partners



SABAN
Family Foundation

\$350k

Total cost



Scholarship Program

As veterans of Unit 669 continue to serve several weeks of reserve duty each year due to the demanding nature of their service, our organization provides academic and professional scholarships to help them pursue their goals in civilian life. Since October 7th, many reservists have served **300-500 consecutive days**, forcing them to pause their studies and significantly increasing the need for support this year.

Each year, we award **80 academic scholarships** to veterans pursuing higher education, with **25% reserved for medical students**, many of whom later return to serve as physicians within the unit.

Scholarships are awarded based on **financial need and exceptional service** in Unit 669. In return, each recipient becomes an ambassador of our **“Pass It Forward” Program**, dedicating **130 volunteer hours annually** to social impact projects in their communities and creating meaningful, lasting contributions to Israeli society.



Testimonials from our participants:

Dear Donors,

First, I would like to thank you for the generous scholarship and for your continued support of Unit 669 veterans.

Let me begin by sharing a bit about myself. My name is R.A., I am 32 years old, and I currently live in Cambridge, Massachusetts. I grew up in Gan Yavne, Israel. I am an only child, and my father was killed in a terror attack while working in Gaza when I was one year old only. In my free time, I enjoy spending time with my two amazing children. I am currently pursuing an MBA at MIT.

During my military service, I served for 12 years in Unit 669, the Israeli Air Force's Combat Search and Rescue Unit, most recently as a company commander. In this role, I led rescue operations and special missions within the unit. I was discharged from active service on August 23, but returned to reserve duty on October 7 as a company commander, replacing Major Ben Shelly (R.I.P.). I continued serving for nearly 320 days before relocating with my family to Cambridge to begin my studies.

I am currently in the first year of a two-year MBA program. I chose this field of study because, as a veteran transitioning from military service, I believe that an MBA will help facilitate my next professional chapter.

Pursuing a master's degree is especially meaningful to me because I am the first generation in my family to attend higher education. Being accepted to a top university like MIT was something I never imagined when I was younger. Much of my confidence and ambition came from my years of service and the

growth-oriented environment in Unit 669, which pushed me to strive for excellence.

Alongside my studies, I continue to volunteer with the AFU669 as a speaker and fundraiser. I help organize visits to the unit and participate in conferences across the United States. This work is very meaningful to me because it allows me to meet incredible people who support both the unit and the State of Israel.

Once again, I cannot fully express how grateful I am for your support. Your generosity not only helps me pursue my studies but also enables me to move forward in the next stage of my life and continue helping others along the way. It is deeply touching to receive such support from individuals who value my service.

Thank you again.
Sincerely,

R.A.
Team 41, Unit 669



Scholarship Program

Testimonials from our participants:

Dear Donors,

First of all, I would like to sincerely thank you for your generous donation, which is helping support my higher education.

Let me start by telling you a little about myself. My name is A.P., I am 27 years old, and I currently live in Jerusalem. I grew up in Toronto, Canada, and moved to Israel after finishing high school in order to serve in the military and build my life here.

Growing up in Canada, I developed a strong passion for kayaking. While Israel is not the easiest place to practice the sport, I still try to maintain my skills whenever I can in my free time. I also got married a year ago, and my wife is currently studying medicine at the Hebrew University. I have recently begun my own medical studies as well, and I am now in my first year at Ben-Gurion University's medical school.

During my military service, I served in Unit 669, as a rescue operator and paramedic. My role included airborne rescue missions for civilians and soldiers, as well as supporting special operations in rescue and extraction capacities. I participated in numerous missions and training exercises throughout my service.

My time in Unit 669 was one of the most meaningful experiences of my life. It taught me responsibility, dedication, perseverance, and the true meaning of teamwork. In addition to my operational duties, I also led medical training exercises both within my unit and in cooperation with other IDF units and international forces.

I am currently in the first year of a seven-year medical program. My interest in medicine began with an inspiring high school biology teacher in Canada, and it deepened significantly during my service in Unit 669, where I treated injured and sick patients. These experiences motivated me to expand my abilities and pursue a career in medicine.

Alongside my studies, I volunteer with the Cat Organization, where I serve as an instructor in our first aid courses and speak with soldiers preparing for their post-army travels, helping them plan safe journeys so they can return home safely.

I believe my contribution is meaningful because it allows me to share my knowledge and experience in ways that help others.

Once again, I cannot fully express how grateful I am for your support. Your generosity not only helps me continue my studies, but also helps me move forward in building a life dedicated to helping others. It is deeply touching to receive such support from someone who appreciates my service.

Thank you again.
Sincerely,

A.P.,
Team 43, Unit 669



Mentorship Program

20 Pairs

(Mentor-Mentee)
in Israel

12 Pairs

(Mentor-Mentee)
in the US

\$36k

Total cost

Our Mentorship Program supports 20 young Unit 669 veterans between the ages of 25 and 35, pairing each participant with an experienced volunteer mentor. The program is led by an organizational psychologist and a volunteer project manager.

Through this year-long program, participants receive tools for self-empowerment, critical thinking, creativity, and professional development, along with opportunities for networking and career advancement. The program helps veterans maximize their potential while encouraging their involvement in social initiatives, mutual aid, and civic engagement.

Beyond supporting the veterans themselves, the program also strengthens Israeli society. By remaining active role models in their communities, these veterans inspire younger generations to serve in the military and contribute meaningfully to the country.

Mentors and mentees meet regularly throughout the year, alongside group sessions that focus on shared learning, development, and collaborative problem-solving.

Over the past decade, the program has transformed the lives of many participants, leading to new careers, the creation of startups, stronger family foundations, and significant personal growth.

Building on this success and responding to the evolving needs of our veterans, we have recently launched the program in the United States to support Unit 669 veterans beginning their next chapter abroad.



Podcasts Episodes

Mentors:

Lead by

Dr. Jonathan Feffer

>



Yuval Tal,
team 13 >



Jonathan Preminger,
team 18 >



Yudi Bar On,
team 22 >



Mentees:

Hagai Balshai,
team 30 >



Bar Reuven,
team 37 >



Mike Silberg,
team 31 >



Operational and Tactical Equipment for the Unit and Reserve Forces

Since October 7th, Unit 669 and the broader IDF reserve forces have faced unprecedented operational demands. With more than 300,000 reservists mobilized, the need for specialized operational and tactical equipment has increased dramatically.

As an elite airborne combat search and rescue unit, Unit 669 operates in some of the most complex and dangerous environments. Extracting wounded soldiers under fire, conducting evacuations in difficult terrain, and responding to large-scale emergencies. These missions require advanced medical gear, rescue equipment, protective equipment, communication systems, and specialized tactical tools that must be available immediately and in sufficient quantities.

During wartime, official supply chains prioritize active-duty operational units, which can leave reserve forces and supporting teams facing critical equipment shortages.

In response, our organization has worked closely with the unit to rapidly procure and deliver essential equipment where it is needed most, ensuring that soldiers have the tools required to complete their missions safely and effectively.

At the same time, we recognize that the responsibility does not end on the battlefield. Alongside providing operational equipment, we also support our injured soldiers and reservists, helping them receive the care, rehabilitation, and assistance they need as they recover and transition back to their daily lives.

The experience of the past two years has made it clear that we must remain prepared for future emergencies. As regional tensions continue, including renewed escalations involving Iran in early 2026, maintaining readiness for extreme and rapidly evolving scenarios has become more important than ever. By supporting both the operational needs of the unit and the well-being of its soldiers, we help ensure that Unit 669 and its reserve forces can continue their life-saving missions whenever and wherever they are needed.

\$250k

Total cost



Memorial Projects & Fallen Soldiers' Families

In the Unit's first 50 years, we lost 11 soldiers, and in the last 2 years, since Oct. 7, we have lost an additional 9 brave brothers, all of whom fell on the battlefield while making the ultimate sacrifice- giving their lives while saving the lives of others.

Each fallen soldier left behind grieving families: parents, siblings, friends, and in some cases wives and young children. Many of these soldiers were reservists, and had already built families, and careers. Their loved ones now face the difficult challenge of rebuilding their daily lives - Emotionally, financially, and professionally.

Our organization works closely with these families to provide the support they need. For some, the help is financial or professional. For others, it is emotional and personal guidance. One widow shared with us that she had never managed the family's finances or investments and did not know where to begin. We connected her with a professional investment manager who now guides her through these decisions and helps secure her family's future.

Last year, we completed a Memorial Monument inside the Unit's base, creating a meaningful place where soldiers, families, and friends can gather to remember and honor those who fell.

\$75k

Total invested

Activities

Memorial events,
Memorial ceremonies,
Shiva support,
Memorial monuments,
Special Financial
Support to
the Families,
Professional Guidance

Memorial Monument



Memorial Projects & Fallen Soldiers' Families

In another case, we helped renovate from the ground up the home of the Ayeli family from Ashkelon, who lost their son, Lt. Shay Ayel (z"l), who served in the unit. Shay, who always put others first, was a 21-year-old soldier who fell in northern Gaza on December 21, 2023.

Shay was a true lifesaver. During combat, one of his fellow soldiers found himself caught between life and death. For Shay, the mission was clear - save him. And he did.

As a soldier, Shay viewed every challenge as an opportunity to grow and improve. His next step had already been set: he aspired to become an officer in the IDF.



Shay Ayeli z"l



Memorial Projects & Fallen Soldiers' Families

Additionally, throughout the year we support and participate in various memorial events honoring our fallen soldiers. These include activities such as soccer tournaments, memorial swims, family runs, and surfers' gatherings. One such event was held in memory of Daniel Alush (z"l), who was killed in a helicopter crash in Gaza on September 11, 2024, together with his teammate Tom Ish Shalom (z"l).



Daniel Alush z"l



Tom Ish Shalom z"l

For the first time, we also held a memorial run in Central Park in New York City, which we plan to make an annual event. A "Save the Date" for the 2026 run has already been published.



Veterans Post Service Workshop

3

Number of workshops

90

Total number of participants

\$45k

Total cost

Our Veterans Post-Service Workshop helps Unit 669 soldiers successfully transition from military service to civilian life after completing five years in the unit, two years longer than the standard compulsory service.

This extended period often creates a significant gap when veterans return to civilian life and reconnect with their peers.

Held several months before discharge and led by experts and professional mentors, the workshop provides practical tools, guidance, and psychological support to address both the emotional and practical challenges of this transition.

Participants gain knowledge in career development, education, personal growth, and life management, helping them bridge the gap between military excellence and civilian success while preparing them to become impactful leaders in their communities.



Awareness, Hasbara and Fundraising Efforts

3 Annual Tribute Events

LA, NYC, Memorial Run

\$75k

Cost of ongoing events

40 Community Events

Our presence



▲ Europe

◀ North America

Throughout the year, we lead a wide range of awareness, hasbara (public diplomacy), and fundraising initiatives, along with our PodCats (which is also part of ELAL multimedia system) to strengthen support for Unit 669 and the State of Israel. Through community events, speaking engagements, educational programs, media outreach, and digital campaigns, we share the story and values of the unit while building a strong network of supporters across the United States and beyond. These efforts not only help secure the resources needed to support the unit's soldiers, veterans, and families, but also serve to strengthen Israel's image, foster understanding, and connect Jewish communities to the life-saving mission of Unit 669.



Click to listen

Our Partners

Our partners empowering Israel's heroes



Sara Chait Memorial Foundation

Help us Reach our Goal and Fulfill our Needs in 2026

\$210k



PTSD prevention workshop

\$45k



Veterans Post Service Workshop

\$20k



Therapy Dogs Program for Combat Soldiers with PTSD

\$250k



Operational and Tactical Equipment For The Unit and Reserve Forces

\$550k



Emergency First Aid Medical Kits and Training Program

\$75k



Memorial Projects & Fallen Soldiers' Families

\$100k



Emergency First Aid Medical Kits and Training Program In the US

\$75k



Awareness, Hasbara and Fundraising Efforts

\$30k



The Villa of 669

\$36k



Injured Soldiers

\$350k



Scholarship Program

\$73k



Training Facilities

\$36k



Mentorship Program

\$350k



Office and Organizational

Total \$2,200,000

2025



AFU 669

IMPACT REPORT



AFU 669

American Friends of Unit 669

**“IN YOUR DISTRESS
YOU CALLED
AND I RESCUED YOU.”**

(Psalm 81:7)