

# Israel's #1 PopSinger in Breathtaking Musical Performance with Special in Uniform Band

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LAKESWOOD, NJ, UNITED STATES, June 2, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- ["A Letter to My Brother"](#) by Elai Botner was chosen by Special in Uniform to express the journey that young adults with disabilities take to achieve independence. In a stirring musical presentation, popular Israeli singer Eden Ben Zaken joined the remarkable young adults in [Special in Uniform Band](#) to produce a spectacular musical performance. In the few days since it went viral, their song has already awed and inspired millions around the world.

Special in Uniform (SIU), a project of JNF-USA and the IDF, integrates young people with physical and mental disabilities into the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), and in turn, Israeli society. Focusing on the unique talents of each individual, the directors identify a role

in the IDF that offers the right fit to each young recruit with the belief that every Israeli possesses the right to realize his or her full potential and the capacity to contribute effectively to society. Special in Uniform focuses on ability as opposed to disability, offering an eye-opening perspective into the lives of people with disabilities and autism that empowers Israelis with special needs, on the spectrum and those around them. Above all, Special in Uniform



Eden Ben Zaken with the Special in Uniform band



Eden Ben Zaken with the Special in Uniform band1

encourages transformation, independence, inclusion and societal integration.

To date, Special in Uniform has incorporated five hundred youths with special needs into multiple IDF bases and proven successful at breaking down societal barriers. The experience doesn't end with the soldier's honorable discharge, but continues as he or she is absorbed into the workforce and mainstream society.

Recently, a delegation from the United States traveled to Israel to learn about the program and meet Special in Uniform's directors and soldiers with the goal of launching a similar program in the U.S.



Eden Ben Zaken with the Special in Uniform band2

Music stimulates areas of the brain that are weak or damaged in many individuals with disabilities, and also builds and strengthens auditory, visual/spatial, and motor cortices of the brain, which are connected to speech and language abilities, social skills, and reading skills and comprehension. Studies indicate that playing a musical instrument vastly improves the concentration and attention span, impulse control, social functioning, self-esteem, self-expression, motivation and memory of people with disabilities. Music is also the means by which people with special needs can channel their intense emotions and energy. It facilitates focusing and connecting to the world and serves as a tool that shares the musician's feelings while inspiring those of the listener.

SIU has recently inaugurated a unique military band with the objective of promoting the smooth integration of its soldiers into military bases and beyond. Through the medium of music, these special soldiers improve their social and life skills and acquire confidence in their ability to succeed. SIU music program coordinator Ido Dekel shares that "We are just in the beginning of the program, but the plan is to identify and recruit candidates with special needs - singers, keyboardists, drummers, guitarists, and bassists; build a recording studio and rehearsal room; purchase professional instruments; establish a resource pool of professional and talented amateur musicians, teachers, and music therapists; and collaborate with existing military bands.

In an interview with JNF Communications Manager in Israel Yael Levontin, pop singer Eden Ben Zaken, who partnered with the SIU Band to produce their brand-new hit single A Letter to My Brother by Elai Botner expressed: "It was such fun doing the song with these amazing soldiers and a real privilege to be a part of it. I deeply admire Special in Uniform soldiers, and I know that we're going to be hearing phenomenal things about the Special in Uniform Band. They're making a difference, an amazing difference, for people with special needs.

"But more than that. We also see how happy they are, and it makes a person stop and think, hey, who are we to be unhappy with who we are? That's what's most incredible in my eyes. I also want to say thank you to the people at JNF-USA for supporting us. We love you from Israel."

Yossi

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