

**I am Shay, Nice to meet you!**

My name is Shay Shmoul, and I am the new Shaliach (Israel emissary) to Northwest Indiana. I am 24 years old, and was born and raised in Haifa, Israel. I am the oldest of 3 brothers: Asaf, 20 is an army paramedic, and Uri, 6 who is about to start elementary school. My parents are Avi (Abraham), a spokesman and Liat, a psychotherapist. I take great pride in my family, and we are very united. My parents taught me the values of humanity, hard work and ongoing learning.

I went to Leo Baeck Education Center, where I took matriculation exams in drama, physics, translation and Oral Torah, in addition to all mandatory subjects. As a high school student I participated in multiple “Tikun Olam” programs (Jewish concept of repairing the world by acting constructively and beneficially), and sung in Haifa’s municipal youth group in different events in Israel and abroad.



After finishing high school I drafted to IDF, where I served for a little over 4 years. I finished my permanent service in the rank of lieutenant, and was positioned in Gaza strip for further reserve duties. As an army officer I served in different human resources management roles, participating in Protective Edge, Brother’s Keeper, and Pillar of Defence operations.

Serving in the army was demanding and left very little free time. That said, I feel honored to be able to take an active role in the protection of my country. My grandparents who came from hostile Morocco and the holocaust in Hungary wished for a peaceful country that would not need an army, but are very proud of me for serving in IDF.

Last year I started my bachelor studies in Tel Aviv University, majoring in Neuroscience. I find the connection between body and soul fascinating and very powerful on both directions. I paused my studies to become a Shaliach, and I miss my friends from university very much. But it was for a good cause!

Israel suffers from an unflattering public image in the last few years. I would like to show the other face of my homeland. For example, the city I grew up in, Haifa is a stronghold of coexistence in the divided Middle East. Matter of fact, my best friend, Ram is a Druze – a member of an ethnic religious sect of Islamic origin. I met Ram in high school, and we served in IDF simultaneously. We are friends for 10 years. This special kind of friendship is possible because of the enabling atmosphere of Haifa.

Last summer, Ram and I went on a journey to the capital cities of Western Europe. I loved experiencing the different cultures by direct contact, and wish to continue exploring the world. My other hobbies are cycling, running, music and reading. I am a die-hard Harry Potter fan, and I owe my knowledge of English to the book series.



To conclude, I am very happy to be in Northwest Indiana and feel enthusiastic about starting my work as a Shaliach. I hope to make Israel engaging for the community, and make personal connections with the people I meet. In my opinion, building a bridge starts with the placement of a single brick on each bank of the river. Well, here I am on the other side of the ocean, ready to begin!



**Short Introduction:**

Shay Shmoul was born and raised in Haifa, “the capital city of north Israel”. He attended Leo Baeck Education Center for progressive Judaism, where he participated in different programs of communal work and “Tikun Olam”. Shay served in IDF as a human resources officer, taking different positions in all three regional Commands. After finishing his army service, he started his bachelor studies in Tel Aviv University, majoring in Neuroscience.

Shay comes from a unique family, of both Hungarian and Moroccan heritage. He is the oldest of three brothers, and enjoys music and cycling on his free time.