

People

Dagan is years ahead of his time

By ANNE McDARBY

Glen Rock resident Tiran Dagan is busy these days. A recent college graduate, he has enlisted in the army.

Many young people take the route that Dagan has taken, but his way was a little out of the ordinary. He finished college, earning a bachelors of science in math and computer technology, by the time he was 18 years old (he turned 19 on June 12), and will enter the army in Israel later this month.

Dagan, a citizen of Israel, moved from there to Ridgewood with his family in September of 1984, and has lived in Glen Rock since January. When he was a junior in high school, he took the GED (General Equivalency Diploma), then went to Ramapo College and began taking courses.

Although Dagan admits, "I never even thought I'd finish," he successfully completed his curriculum at Ramapo, and went on to Empire State College in Nanuet, N.Y., a campus of the

State University of New York.

"I took very high-level courses," Dagan said. "My advisor said 'you must be crazy', but then I got all A's. I had no more problems after that."

He described Empire State as a "returnees' college," where students are usually assigned a mentor who in turn assigns work. The student then works on an individual basis. "You need a lot of self discipline," he said of attending Empire State.

Work at the New York college is not graded in the traditional college sense, but instead on a pass/fail system. "That does not mean there are less requirements," Dagan added.

"I took many CLEP exams," Dagan said, referring to the program where students study on their own and take one exam to earn course credits. He also received 12 credits for Hebrew, and most of his credits from Ramapo were transferred.

The language barrier was not too hard to overcome, because he's lived here before. The Dagan family lived in the Bronx, from the time Tiran was ages 3 to 9, then moved back to Israel. They moved back to the U.S. in 1984 when Tiran's father was transferred.



19-year-old Tiran Dagan has already earned a bachelor's degree, and will return to Israel to serve in the army there later this month.

"I felt terrific about coming back here," Dagan said. "I was getting bored there, and I wanted to try something new."

A peek in Dagan's room gives away his true passion: computers. "I work as a consultant," he said. "I've been setting up a computer system for a doctor in Ridgewood."

Dagan will leave later this month to join the army in Israel, a mandatory requirement there. "Everyone in Israel is in the army," he said. "Men usually serve for three years, and women

for two. I'll probably serve five years, then they'll pay for my education."

Although Dagan accepts the fact that, as a citizen of Israel, he must serve, he still voiced reservations. "I don't like the idea, but it is a call of duty," he said. "I get scared sometimes; I don't like the idea of war. I'd rather sit behind a computer."

When his stint with the army is through, Dagan plans to pursue a career in computer technology. "I will go where the opportunities are," he said.



A look in Dagan's room reveals what intrigues him most: computers. Already working as a consultant in the area, he plans to pursue a career in computer technology.