

SCOPUS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM

Volume 57, 2010



MISSION TO EDUCATE

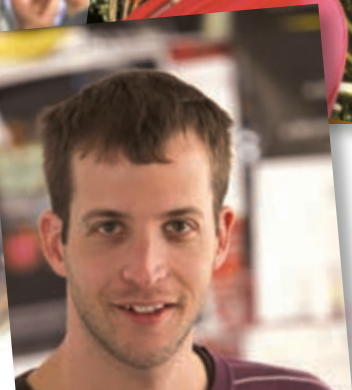


Equal Opportunity



Creating Academic Communities

Fine Fellows



האוניברסיטה העברית בירושלים
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem



THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel's first university, is a multidisciplinary institution of higher learning and research, where intellectual pioneering, cutting-edge discovery and a passion for learning flourish. It is a center of international repute, with ties extending to and from the worldwide scientific and academic community and where teaching and research interact to create innovative approaches that ensure the broadest of educations for its students. Ranked among the world's leading universities, at the Hebrew University Israelis of all backgrounds receive a university education where excellence is emphasized; where advanced, postgraduate study and research are encouraged; and where special programs and conferences attract students and academics from around the world. The Hebrew University's mission is to serve the State of Israel by training its scientific, educational and professional leadership; to serve the Jewish people by preserving and expanding the Jewish cultural, spiritual and intellectual heritage; and to serve humanity by extending the frontiers of knowledge.

LOCATION On four campuses: three in Jerusalem (Mount Scopus, Edmond J. Safra at Givat Ram, and Ein Kerem) and one in Rehovot

ENROLLMENT 22,000 full-time students including 11,400 undergraduates, 6,350 masters students, 2,400 doctoral candidates and 1,850 overseas and pre-academic students

FACULTY 1,026

RESEARCH 4,500 projects in progress in University departments and some 100 subject-related and interdisciplinary research centers

President:

Prof. Menahem Ben-Sasson

Rector:

Prof. Sarah Stroumsa

Chairman of the Board of Governors:

Michael I. Federmann

Honorary Chairmen of the Board of

Governors: **Yigal Arnon,**

Charles H. Goodman, Ralph Halbert,

Harvey M. Krueger

Vice-President for External Relations:

Carmi Gillon

Chairman, Authority for Research &

Development: **Prof. Isaiah Arkin**

Director-General: **Billy Shapira**

Vice-Rectors: **Prof. Oded Navon,**

Prof. Yaacov Schul

Comptroller: **Yair Hurwitz**

Director, Division for Development &

Public Relations: **Yefet Ozery**

SCOPUS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM

Volume 57, 2010



MISSION TO EDUCATE



Equal Opportunity



Creating Academic Communities

Fine Fellows



האוניברסיטה העברית בירושלים
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem





AS one of the top recipients of awards for young scientists from the prestigious European Research Council, the Hebrew University is an undisputed, world-class hub of cutting-edge inquiry and discovery. Notwithstanding its longtime role in every aspect of life in Israel, the ideas of its faculty and of its students are continuing to shape Israel's future, it is where the nation's finest minds come to learn, educate and innovate, and its intellectual vibrancy is a powerful magnet for overseas scholars and students.

This issue of *Scopus* is devoted to the extraordinary range of new teaching initiatives sweeping through the Hebrew University and actively reshaping the idea of a university education. As you will learn, our students are gaining the broadest of educations: they are being inspired to ask big questions, guided to acquire the skills for in-depth scholarship and nurtured to take responsibility for educating themselves and for maintaining open-minded approaches. With the generous support of projects such as the Mandel Initiatives in Humanities and Liberal Arts, new programs such as the Cornerstones and Gateway courses are enriching each undergraduate's basic knowledge while new fellowship frameworks are encouraging cross-fertilization and the exchange of ideas between doctoral candidates — and in doing so, Hebrew University students are acquiring a breadth and depth of knowledge that underpins their core values and propels them towards social and self fulfillment. Each of the students you meet in these pages has their own story. An increasing number are drawn from the social periphery, some would have been unable to pursue a university education without extra financial or educational assistance. Binding them together is a love of learning that we happily encourage.

Despite the burgeoning budgetary challenges, our inspiring students and the innovative teaching initiatives that our faculty members are imparting reflect the ongoing vitality of the Hebrew University. It is in these circumstances that our loyal Friends around the world can take great pride in their crucial role in ensuring that the Hebrew University continues its trailblazing tradition. With your help, we can guarantee that our students and scholars fulfill their potential and go on to make Israel, and the world, a better place.

Michael I. Federmann
Chairman, Board of Governors

Menahem Ben-Sasson
President

Contents

3

President's Pride

Israel's president meets students and faculty

4

Mission to Educate

Enhancing student creativity is on the agenda of the new president of the Hebrew University

8

Broad Horizons

New approaches in teaching offer depth and breadth in learning for undergraduates

11

Designer Engineers

A pioneering program transcends the design-computer engineering disconnect

12

Fine Fellows

Two new fellowship funds benefit outstanding doctoral candidates

14

A World of Friends

Photo gallery of Friends' events

18

Equal Opportunity

Assistance to students aims to level the playing field

22

Welcome to Jerusalem

A soft landing ground for life in a highly diverse city

25

Open Dialogue

Brain scientists and businesspeople meet and learn

26

Creating Academic Communities

Doctoral candidates flourish in dynamic new study frameworks

30

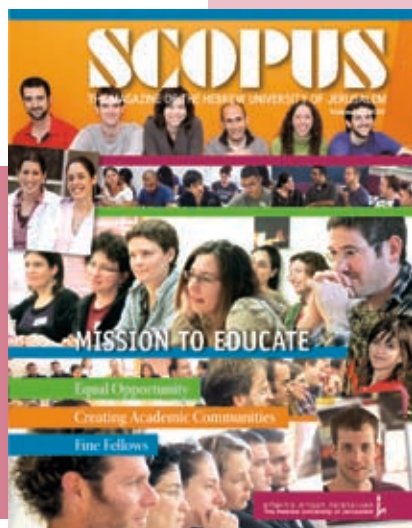
The Teaching Revolution

The School of Education aims to bridge the researcher-teacher divide

32

New Recruits

Medical studies and military training meet in a rigorous new program



Editor: Lisa Clayton
Associate Editor: Leon Weinreb
Design & Production: Janis Ben David
Printed in Israel ISSN 0334-7591

Published by the Division for Development
& Public Relations
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Mount Scopus, 91905 Jerusalem, Israel
Tel: 972-2-588-2843
Fax: 972-2-588-1167
www.hunews.huji.ac.il





President's Pride

“I AM proud of Israeli developments and technology in the area of agriculture and can say wholeheartedly that you, at the Hebrew University, are the best ambassadors of the State of Israel,” President Shimon Peres told faculty and students at the Robert H. Smith Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Environment during a recent visit to the Hebrew University’s Rehovot campus. “No diplomatic reasoning can serve as an alternative to your enormous contribution to agricultural development and the eradication of world hunger.”

For Israel’s forever-young president, there is perhaps nothing more inspiring than his encounters with young Israelis or with the latest blue-and-white innovation that promises a better future for the world — and so when he visits the Hebrew University he is likely to be doubly inspired. President Peres is a close friend of the University who meets with its students and scholars during his frequent tours of its campuses and regularly invites faculty members to participate in his presidential task forces or forums.

Thus at the beginning of the current academic year, he partnered with the University for his second annual President’s Conference. Titled ‘Facing Tomorrow’, the conference brought leading economic, political, intellectual, and technological experts from around the world to Jerusalem in October 2009 for a three-day assembly that focused on ensuring a better future for Israel, the Jewish People, and the rest of the world, with participants also

‘you, at the Hebrew University, are the best ambassadors of the State of Israel’

considering how to turn the financial crisis into an opportunity. Hebrew University faculty members were actively involved in planning the conference which comprised 36 plenary sessions and panel discussions.

During his February 2010 visit to the Rehovot campus Peres met with faculty and students at the Robert H. Smith Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Environment who are engaged in cutting-edge research to solve the

problem of hunger and food insecurity. Faculty Dean Professor Aharon Friedman provided an overview of the wide range of relevant research, with professors Yehoshua Saranga, Shahal Abbo and Berta Sivan describing their respective work in crop adaptation, chickpeas (hummus) as a source of nutrition and fish as an accessible source of protein in Africa.

Peres also visited world-renowned expert on water treatment Professor Avner Adin in his Water Treatment Technology Laboratory and Dr Menachem Moshelion in the hothouses where he experiments with water-saving and high-yield plants suitable for growing in dry regions. ■



Top, from right: Dr Menachem Moshelion, President Shimon Peres, Faculty Dean Prof. Aharon Friedman and students Arava Shatil and Michael Gever Tzadik. Inset: President Peres and student Alon Barash at the Water Treatment Technology Laboratory.

University President Prof. Menahem Ben-Sasson addresses the ‘Facing Tomorrow’ President’s Conference



Photos: Sasson Tiram

FOR the recently elected president of the Hebrew University, Professor Menahem Ben-Sasson, it was his experience outside the world of academe that gave him a clearer understanding of some of the changes that need to be implemented to make the University a more successfully integrated part of modern society. Not a seismic shift in policy or purpose, he says, but nevertheless a new focus demanded by the contemporary needs of both state and university.

It was during his service as a Member of Knesset that Ben-Sasson heard more keenly the voice of the general public, its interests and its concerns. On matters relating to universities, however, that voice was silent — and remained silent even as the universities were facing existential threats. Ben-Sasson became acutely aware of the chasm between the extraordinary achievements of the Hebrew University and the information reaching the Israeli public.

Prof. Ben-Sasson explains that the general public is not only unaware of the achievements of academic research but also does not recognize the Hebrew University's ongoing contributions to every aspect of the life of the country. University professors give expert advice and guidance to government committees formulating legislation and policy decisions that impact on every aspect of our lives, and they likewise advise the financial and corporate worlds and provide expertise internationally in every field of human activity.

'a university education enables people to gain both self and social fulfillment'

The process to heighten awareness of its essential role in the nation's well-being is a major challenge facing the Hebrew University — and Ben-Sasson has identified several channels of communication that must be addressed to ensure dynamic changes in perception and understanding. Within the University, he says, administrative staff members are often unfamiliar with what their academic colleagues are doing even though they may belong to the same department or faculty. Similarly, the University's students are frequently unaware of the contributions of its researchers to public or academic life.

"As a community, we must be well informed," says Ben-Sasson. "We are the conduit for disseminating information to the wider community about what is happening within the University." Communication with the media is essential, he adds, and faculty members need to take every opportunity to engage in direct dialogue with policy makers in government in order to ensure a clear understanding of the essential role of universities within the country.

Mission to

Under the stewardship of its new president, the Hebrew University is committed to enhancing the development of creativity in its students

Creative Thinking

Increasingly innovative opportunities in education being offered throughout the Hebrew University include methods of learning and areas of study that stimulate intellectual skills, nurture creative thinking and provide breadth and depth of knowledge in traditional and emerging fields. These initiatives include:

- University-wide Cornerstones program and Gateway courses at the Faculty of Humanities, both supported by the Mandel

Initiatives in Humanities and Liberal Arts; see pages 8-10.

- A reform of the undergraduate curricula at the Robert H. Smith Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Environment, starting in 2010/11, will see lecture hours reduced by 10 percent and teaching staff empowered to revise courses in order to encourage higher level cognitive processing through critical thinking, analysis, synthesis and application of novel skills.

- Interdisciplinary doctoral fellowship programs such as the Limud B'Chevruta

study groups and President's Fellows are educating, mentoring and grooming a cadre of leading intellectuals; see pages 26-29.

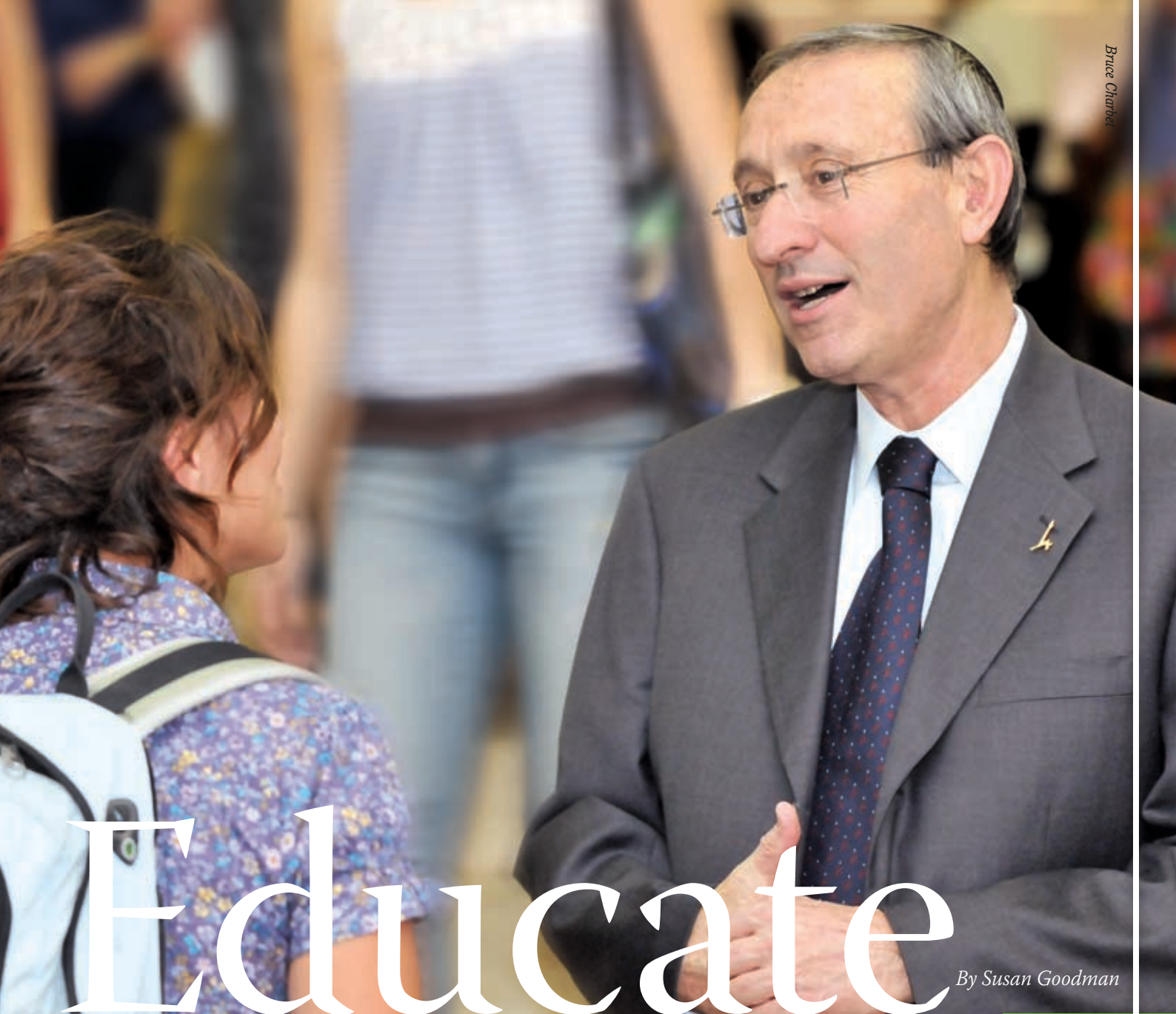
- New initiatives at the Faculty of Social Sciences range from a compulsory undergraduate seminar on using library resources and a reduction in the number of required credits for master's programs to



Yotam Ashtor



Sasson Titum



By Susan Goodman

allow completion within two years to a new master's track, 'The Study of Political Violence and Terrorism', to be taught in English at the Rothberg International School from 2010/11 and an unprecedented joint doctoral program in economics with Tel Aviv University.

At the Faculty of Medicine, 350 medical students are taking a compulsory course in medical humanities (see pages 8-10) in the Wilbush Patient-Centered Medical Forum that began in 2007/8, while 50 new soldier-students this year embarked on the

ground-breaking new track in military medicine; see page 32.

In 2009, the Faculty of Dental Medicine upgraded undergraduate learning and practicing in the fields of all-ceramic esthetic crowns and intra-osseous implants through its acceptance into the Nobel Biocare University Partner Program.

Teaching at the School of Pharmacy was revamped in 2008/9 with the creation of two new study divisions — drug sciences and clinical pharmacy — that facilitate multidisciplinary teaching programs; new

courses in emerging fields of knowledge; a direct-track program for outstanding students leading to an M.Sc. and a license in pharmacy; and a new doctoral program in pharmacy.



Yoram Aschheim



Yoram Aschheim



WHILE it is convenient to dismiss such measures as little more than a massive publicity campaign, they serve a much higher purpose — not only helping to ensure a higher level of awareness of the essential activities of the University but also encouraging more young people to recognize the key role that a university education could play in their own lives. Ben-Sasson emphasizes that students sometimes think of a university education as providing access to the world of employment but its core value, he says, lies in the qualities it aims to develop in the individual: “qualities such as open-mindedness, acceptance of the other and flexibility — a university education enables people to gain both self and social fulfillment”.

Ben-Sasson has been a dedicated educator all his life — and even continued to teach a few hours a week while an MK. It is a commitment he first assumed in 1973 when, as a young man doing his army service, he undertook to teach a special program at Kibbutz Ein Tzurim, near Kiryat Malachi, which provided educational opportunities for youngsters from socially, economically, and emotionally disadvantaged homes. He developed a program over the following three years which included bringing university professors to speak to the students to inspire them to pursue lives enriched through education. He was able to witness how his students broke out of a mold imposed by deprivation and developed successful lives. “It was the most profound experience of my life,” says Ben-Sasson, “of even greater importance to me than my time spent in the Knesset” where he chaired the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee, with his achievements including the completion of a draft constitution for the country.

The immediate impact of this “educational” experience was Ben-Sasson’s decision to transfer from the medical studies he was about to embark on at the Hebrew University and instead study history and philosophy. He felt that the humanities, in particular history, would give him more opportunities to work as an educator. And, of course, it was a subject that profoundly interested him and led to his own ground-breaking research on the social and intellectual life of Medieval Jewry in Muslim countries. Much of his work on this period involved working on Geniza fragments: the remains of documents, manuscripts and books, both holy and secular, stored in special repositories by Jewish communities throughout the ages, and which are now scattered among libraries throughout the world.

His research demanded painstaking work on detail and



The merging of different areas of expertise through three new teaching programs at the Faculty of Science: an undergraduate program in computer engineering and design that is a joint project of the Selim and Rachel Benin School of Engineering and Computer Science and the

Bezael Academy of Arts and Design (see page 11), a master’s program in nanoscience and nanotechnology with a direct track to

doctoral studies opened this year, and a direct-track doctoral program in bioengineering began in 2007/8. At the Interuniversity Institute for Marine Sciences in Eilat, a new research ship (left) to be used for teaching as well as research — and whose purchase was partly funded through the generosity of Heidi Rothberg — was dedicated in October 2009.

At the Baerwald School of Social Work and Social Welfare, there has been high demand for two new programs that began in the 2008/9 academic year: a pilot

master’s track in social welfare and Judaism in cooperation with the Mandel Institute of Jewish Studies, funded by the Wohl Foundation; and a master’s specialization in mental health rehabilitation supported by the Tauber Foundation. A pilot preparatory program for Arab women



an ability to relate to the larger picture. These qualities were essential to Ben-Sasson's committee work in the Knesset and are now finding new application in his role as president of the Hebrew University. And, as one might expect of a historian, he sees his contemporary vision for the University's future as rooted in its founding principles. From beneath the gaze of Albert Einstein, a Hebrew University founder whose portrait dominates his office, Ben-Sasson recalls how the University has been acknowledged since the laying of its foundation stones in 1918, and its subsequent opening in 1925, as "the Cornerstone of Statehood" where the highest principles of education would be fostered.

BUT today, says Ben-Sasson, in order for the University to fulfill its preeminent role as educator, change is required — not just the integration of new technologies into established teaching methods but new thinking on how to enrich the educational experience of students. This is the reason that a range of new initiatives are being implemented that directly impact on the programs of study pursued by the students.

There is "a commitment to enhancing the development of creativity in our students," he says, pointing to innovative programs for doctoral candidates such as the President's Fellows and the Limud B'Chevruta study groups (see pages 26-29). Despite the financial challenges, says Ben-Sasson, "we are committed to providing our doctoral students with dynamic frameworks which enrich their learning experience, facilitate ongoing interchange with peers from their own and other

disciplines, and provide the financial support that allows them to focus on their studies." Likewise at other degree levels, creativity is being cultivated by enabling students to participate in research during their undergraduate studies and to benefit from an ever-increasing diversity of study programs during their time at the University. Most importantly, students are being encouraged to experience the intellectual adventure of studying fields totally unrelated to their main degree courses.

Recently, at the Mount Scopus campus, Ben-Sasson met with a crowd of science students waiting for a bus to the Edmond J. Safra Campus

where they are doing their majors. "Despite the problems of a divided campus" says Ben-Sasson, these students had willingly become frequent commuters, opting for additional courses in philosophy, Talmud, public policy and the like. The enthusiasm of the student body to voluntarily broaden its intellectual horizons is a reflection of the quality of students at the Hebrew University. Indeed, Ben-Sasson is proud that when the University was forced to make further budgetary cuts this year, its students demonstrated in demand of additional teaching hours, courses and academic assignments. "Our students," he says, "expect more and we must meet these expectations."

For Menahem Ben-Sasson, the future of the country and the future of these students clearly is one and the same. His vision is directed at ensuring that the University remains financially secure, and continues to provide innovative opportunities in education that fulfill and expand the potential and achievements of the individual and the State. ■

*'our students expect more
and we must meet these
expectations'*

enrolled on the Schwartz Program in Early Childhood Studies has met with success; see pages 18-21.

📖 The Rothberg International School's 'Spring in Jerusalem' program, starting in Spring 2010 and a new joint initiative with Harvard University, targets Ivy League students whose credit requirements include taking regular University courses taught in English with their Israeli peers.

📖 A growing trend of combined programs at the Faculty of Law allows LL.B. students to take undergraduate degrees in the

humanities, social sciences, business administration and mathematics or an MBA. Exchange programs have seen a significant boost in the past two years through exchange agreements with eight overseas universities to date; some 40 law students studied abroad during the spring semester of 2009.

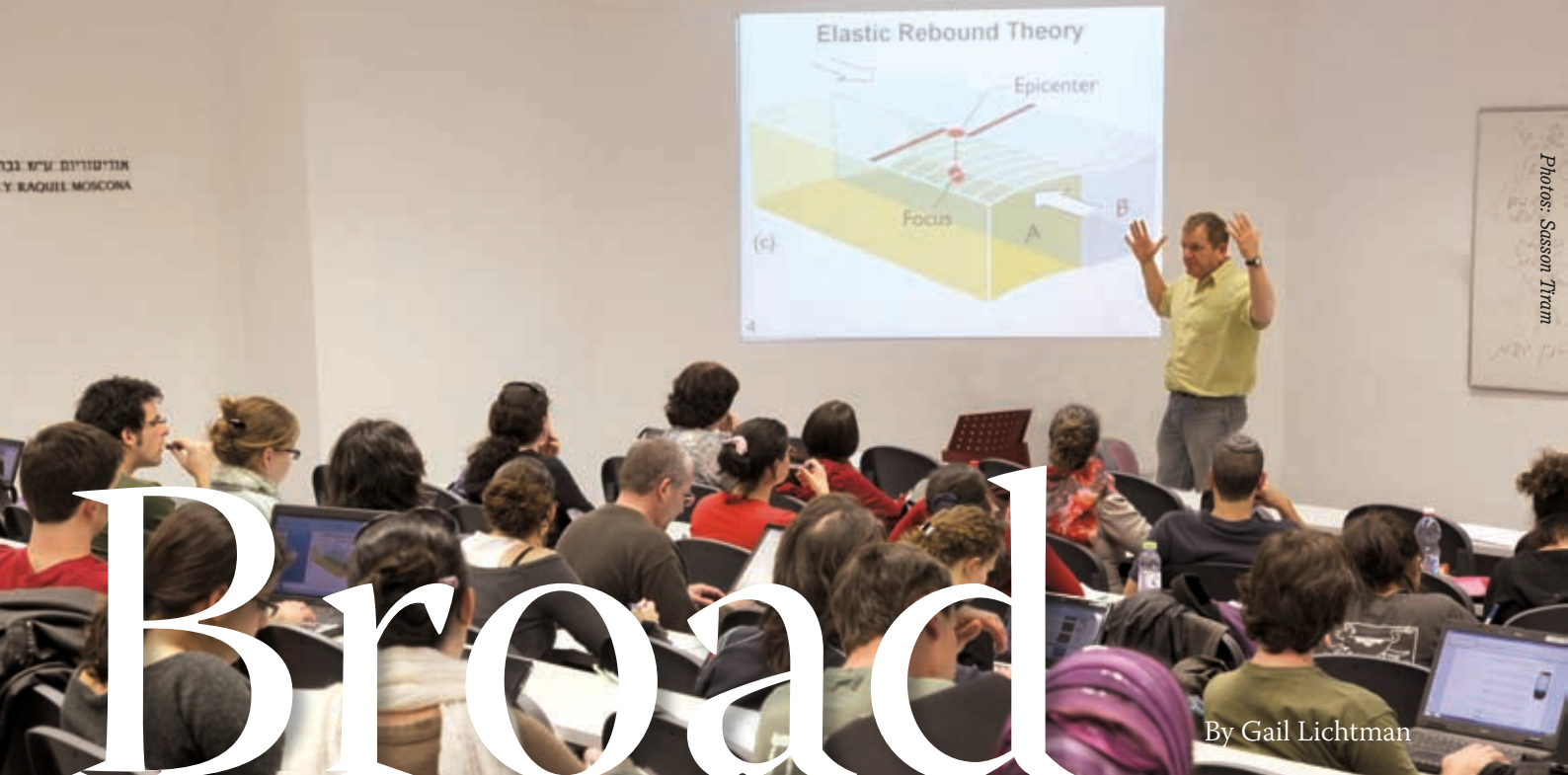
📖 A revised format for the MBA program at the Jerusalem School of Business Administration, introduced in 2008/9, is designed to meet market needs, while top students became eligible for the School's

combined B.A./MBA program with the faculties of Social Sciences and Humanities.

An MBA program taught in English and geared to overseas students is in the planning stages.

📖 The School of Education is revitalizing its teacher education and doctoral programs, with both due to commence in the 2010/11 academic year; see pages 30-31.





By Gail Lichtman

Broad Horizons

New initiatives harness the full range of disciplines to provide depth and breadth in learning



Vice-Rector Prof. Oded Navon teaches a Cornerstones course in geology at the Mount Scopus campus

“FROM its beginning, the Hebrew University’s strength has been a deep, thorough, first-rate disciplinary education,” says Rector Professor Sarah Stroumsa, who is the Alice and Jack Ormut Professor of Arabic Studies. “For years, we assumed that our students acquired a broad, educational background before coming here. But the educational picture has changed and we believe that it is our duty to give our students this broad education.

“At the same time, while there has been a tendency in higher education to dig deeper and split into more specialized fields, science has also been assuming more connections.

Effective and original science often needs to combine several fields of expertise, which forces us to redefine the borders of disciplines. The interdisciplinary of yesterday is a new discipline today.”

These new challenges have led the Hebrew University to introduce a number of programs, described in these pages, which embrace a broader approach. “With our students poised to become leaders in various walks of life,” says Stroumsa, “these teaching innovations will prepare them to take responsibility for educating themselves and for maintaining an open-minded approach. Whatever path they choose, they will have the basic knowledge that makes them educated and cultured individuals. Driven by curiosity and inspired by a broad range of ideas, they will be more likely to produce original results in research, the workplace and life.”

THE Cornerstones liberal arts and sciences program, inaugurated this year and supported by the Mandel Initiatives in Humanities and Liberal Arts and Yad Hanadiv (the Rothschild Foundation), is the first at an Israeli university that encompasses all faculties and schools. With studies divided into three domains, undergraduates major in one and must take Cornerstones courses from the other two. Thus students who are majoring in natural sciences must take courses in humanities and social sciences, and vice versa.

“For the University, which is spread over four campuses, this interaction is not so easy,” says Vice-Rector and the Gerald M. Friedman Professor of Geology Oded Navon, who is overseeing Cornerstones. “This program, however, enables students to encounter other

disciplines without having to go to another campus.”

With the eventual goal of each undergraduate taking a total of 12 credits in other domains during the course of their studies, the pilot currently targets incoming first-year students who must take four credits within Cornerstones — although there has been a strong enrollment for the courses as electives by second- and third-year students, says Navon. Over the next few years, the program will be expanded incrementally.

“Through Cornerstones, we hope to give students an enriched experience at several levels,” says Navon. “A more encompassing general perspective; exposure to diverse research methodologies and thinking in

disciplines other than their own; the opportunity to taste another field before committing to a major; and knowledge that will serve them in life. A biology major, for instance, may become head of a department where knowledge of sociology and economics will be useful.”

While the 42 Cornerstones courses currently available are specifically designed as non-majors, some of the University’s best lecturers are teaching them, from world-renowned molecular biologist Professor Howard Cedar to former Supreme Court Justice Dalia Dorner. “They are full academic courses with exercises and exams,” says Navon.

THE Faculty of Humanities began broadening its approach in 2006, with its division into five broad-based schools — Philosophy and Religion, History, Languages, Literature and the Arts — and by offering basic Gateway courses previously taught in its 23 departments.

The effort was pioneered by the School of History’s introductory course to world history, launched in 1999, which initiated a larger framework for historical inquiry. “It has broadened the intellectual horizons of our students enormously,” says course creator Dr Diego Olstein. “They ask new types of questions that touch on the political and economic impact of events, while there is stronger comparative and relational thinking within a global framework.”

Supported by the Mandel Initiatives in Humanities and Liberal Arts, the courses are designed to help students view their discipline

from a broader perspective, acquire additional tools in specific modes of thinking and facilitate interaction between students and teachers from different fields.

“We have to prepare our students for the new frontiers of science where the seams between disciplines meet,” says Faculty of Humanities Vice Dean for Teaching and the Leo A. Mayer Professor of Muslim Art and Archaeology Professor Rachel Milstein, who oversees the Gateway program.

At present, humanities students take Gateway courses in addition to their major. Instead of taking double majors, they can now take one major with a minor and/or complementary studies. Their Gateway courses are in another department within their school but, as the program advances, courses will be offered between schools. Every student also must take a course in basic academic writing, skills and methodology. “Without foregoing our



Amit Eben Chaime & Lotan Cohen

For Amit Eben Chaime, 25, a third-year medical student from the Beersheba area, the Man and Medicine program “has enabled me

to see the human side of being a doctor. I learned so much from the patients and their insights on medical care. It emphasized the importance of regarding them as people, not just a malady.” As part of the program, Eben Chaime also studied disease through the prism of time, exploring medicine and the Holocaust. “I wrote my final paper on how Nazi doctors violated the Hippocratic Oath. It hurt to see such wrongs justified in so-called medical terms.” Lotan Cohen, 24, from Ma’ale Adumim, was also affected by meeting patients. “I now think more about the patients and the difficult situation they are in. I try and put myself in their shoes when speaking and dealing with them.”



Achia Mor

The Gateway program has been a big plus for third-year student in Jewish thought, Achia Mor, 28, since day one. “I had previously studied at another university, but no one had ever formally explained how you write an academic paper and prepare a

bibliography. I had a seminar paper due in my first semester, so the course in academic writing and skills was invaluable.”

Last year, Mor took a survey course in philosophical writings from Plato through modern times. “It dealt with milestones in philosophy and thought and really opened up my horizons, exposing me to non-Jewish thought and giving me fresh perspectives on Jewish thought,” he says. “When we studied Maimonides, it placed him within a broader context. I gained a more universal, interdisciplinary approach to my studies.”

hallmark depth of knowledge, we are offering breadth of knowledge.” says Prof. Milstein. “Cross-fertilization cannot be overrated. In my own field, the best Islamic art was created when Islam met other cultures. Out of such encounters, the finest works of art are created.”

families — and, in doing so, become more humane as physicians.

In addition to interpersonal skills, the program — now in its third

‘the interdisciplinary of yesterday is a new discipline today’

year and compulsory for all medical students — addresses cultural competence and bioethical issues, as well as demonstrating professional behaviors. Students get to meet with patients in their first year, look at medicine through the lenses of history, literature and art, and deal with social-medical

issues such as domestic violence and addiction.

“The program provides something that was missing from the formal teaching at our Faculty — the human side of medicine,” says program head Dr Dorith Shaham. “No longer an afterthought, the human side has become the focus of our teaching. The patient is at the center.

“Maybe the most telling point is the unanimous feedback we get from those who meet our students: ‘We know they are only students but when they are finished, we want them to be our doctors,’ they tell me.” ■



Hebrew University exchange students (from top) Daniel Jonas studied at the University of Amsterdam, Adi Sarig at Yonsei University in South Korea and Inbal Cohen at the University of Madrid

International Outlook

With Hebrew University scholars in a wide range of disciplines conducting joint research with foreign partners through networks and consortia, the University is actively trying to increase student mobility. “Student exchange programs allow our students to gain from the global research community and help maintain our status as a truly international university,” says Vice-Rector and James Marshall Professor of Social Psychology Yaacov Schul.

For undergraduate and master’s students, the European Union-funded Erasmus Mundus program is the main means of exchange studies, with over 80 Hebrew University students having studied at 10 European universities since 2006. A further 15 exchange programs exist with universities around the globe and the faculties of Medicine and Law run their own exchange programs. In the pipeline are joint doctoral programs with overseas institutes which would allow candidates to study and enjoy facilities at both institutions. “Joining forces with top universities would ensure a better education and better science,” says Schul.

In another effort to broaden the horizons of both its Israeli and overseas students, the University is encouraging its faculty to teach courses in English, with a number of courses starting in Spring 2010. “It is important for Israeli students to be exposed to studies in English, the lingua franca of the scientific, academic and business worlds,” says Rector Professor Sarah Stroumsa. “This also increases the choices available to overseas students and enables interaction with Israelis, it enriches Israeli students by exposing them to peers who have studied elsewhere and it provides everyone with a novel academic experience.”





Designer Engineers

IT has all the elements of a hi-tech start-up: a bold and innovative concept, a grassroots prime mover who has done his homework and is determined to succeed, and a project that garners increasing backing as it progresses. Indeed, this year, the original pilot course morphed into a brand new teaching program — a joint venture of the Hebrew University's Selim and Rachel Benin School of Engineering and Computer Science and the Bezalel Academy of Art and Design — whereby tomorrow's designers will learn to transcend the traditional disconnect between design and computer engineering and develop new solutions informed by cutting-edge knowledge in computer science.

The "entrepreneur" is Michael Fink, a thirty-something doctoral candidate at the Hebrew University's Interdisciplinary Center for Neural Computation that will be integrated into the new Edmond and Lily Safra Center for Brain Sciences, an alumnus of the Benin School and an engineer at Google's Israel office. Fink's expertise in artificial intelligence, computer vision and machine learning combined with his experience in cutting-edge technology and applications led him to connect diverse disciplines — and institutions — to create the exciting new degree program.

In 2007, Fink began teaching a course — in machine learning and embedded artificial intelligence as tools for interactive media and product design — that he had created for students from the Benin School and from Bezalel's Industrial Design and Visual Communications departments. Upgraded this year to a dual-degree program in computer

By Daniel Avihai-Kremer

engineering and design, it targets "outstanding students with talent in both technology and design," says program head Professor Dani Lischinski of the Benin School. "Furthermore, it leverages two of Jerusalem's great 'natural resources': Bezalel and the Hebrew University."

"We started this year with a pilot program for six students whose studies will focus on integrating knowledge and skills in computer science with visual communication media, video, animation and art," says Fink.

"While this field is taught on the graduate level at leading institutions including MIT, NYU and the Royal College of Design, ours is the first undergraduate program. Courses in areas such as robotics, artificial intelligence

and computer vision will provide the basic knowledge required for modeling, planning, and the design and development of 'smart' devices. The students will acquire the skills to develop creative solutions to challenges in industrial design, computerized animation and visual communication."

Armed with undergraduate degrees in computer science and in fine arts or design, they will have "a strong lead both in terms of knowledge and technological capabilities," says Fink. "They will be uniquely positioned to make a strong impact on today's technologically sophisticated and challenging world." ■



Course co-founders Michael Fink and Liat Segal (center) with students (from left) Or Avrahamy, Jonathan Adler, Adi Dar and Daniel Berkovitz

'ours is the first undergraduate program'



Fine Fellows

By Daniel Avihai-Kremer

Two new programs enable doctoral candidates
to fulfill their promise



Above: Baroness Ariane de Rothschild presents Avital Swisa with her scholarship, top: Swisa and fellow doctoral scholarship recipients (from left) Chaya Keller, Florina Uzefovsky and Huda Abo Much

Avital Swisa

Her passion for knowledge is evident. A doctoral candidate in the Department of Developmental Biology and Cancer Research at the Faculty of Medicine's Institute for Medical Research Israel-Canada, 25-year-old Avital Swisa has already coauthored a number of academic publications based on her research of the LKBl gene in pancreatic beta cells, which are the body's only source of insulin. And as she conducts her research in the laboratory of Dr Yuval Dor, she also has her sights set on studying and practicing medicine.

Growing up in an ultra-Orthodox community in Jerusalem where ambitions for girls generally focus on marriage and raising families, Swisa was conflicted between the norms of her family and culture and her insatiable curiosity and ambition. However, upon finishing high school with just a basic grounding in science, she was determined to continue her education.

While earning her undergraduate degree in medical laboratory sciences in a special extension program for Orthodox women at Hadassah College Jerusalem, Swisa's exceptional abilities were noticed by a faculty member who recommended her to Dr Dor, whose lab she subsequently joined as a technician. He too recognized her potential and, with his encouragement, Swisa switched to become

a master's student and she was then fast-tracked to a doctoral degree.

"I had always been interested in studying medicine but it seemed too long and difficult a path," says Swisa, who plans to apply to medical school. "I am trying to figure out how to merge my academic research with medical studies. I don't see myself as strictly a researcher and I think that a clinician with a research background is a plus."

Swisa, who expects to complete her doctorate within the next two to three years, is one of the first recipients of the new Ariane de Rothschild Women Doctoral Program, inaugurated in July 2009 by the Rothschild - Caesarea Foundation in conjunction with the Hebrew University. Aimed at promoting equality in Israeli academia and society, it supports outstanding female scholars of diverse backgrounds whose fields of study range from neuroscience and cultural pluralism to environmental studies and medicine. The full scholarship including tuition fees and a living allowance allows these women to pursue their research — and, in the cases of those who are mothers, raise their families — without having to seek paid employment.

Recipients must commit to volunteering in a program that encourages the development of the next generation of young scholars from disadvantaged populations. Indeed, there can

be no better role model than Swisa, currently working with at-risk immigrant youth from the former Soviet Union at a Pisgat Ze'ev youth club.

Although Swisa is rumored to be the last to leave the lab each day, she feels that she is not short of time. Besides the demands of her science and the prospect of medical studies, she fits in various hobbies, including playing the harmonica and keyboard, and hiking, and she is interested in philosophy. "I get frustrated because I am a perfectionist," she says, "but my academic studies come first."

Yoel Greenberg

Mathematician, musician and musicologist Yoel Greenberg is a classic example of the music-math fusion. "I was interested in a career in mathematics and I

looked to computer science as a safety net," he says. "I figured it would be important to know how to program."

Thus, armed with a double-major

undergraduate degree in mathematics

and computer science, he embarked on graduate studies in mathematics but soon realized that his heart lay with the study of music.

Greenberg, today a doctoral candidate in musicology, has a strong musical background. He had considered a career as a violist but it quickly became apparent that a musician's life was at odds with religious observance and family life. Indeed, he gave up performing for 10 years, pursuing music as a serious hobby. However, when approached by a string quartet that could accommodate his religious considerations, he was back on stage — and continues to perform in Israel with the prize-winning Carmel Quartet during breaks from Princeton, where he is an exchange student.

Although he has no regrets about changing his academic focus, 34-year-old Greenberg has found his mathematical grounding extremely useful in his current research. "I have been using a lot of mathematics in my doctoral research," he says. "Although musicology does not usually involve much statistics, I believe that it could be of immense use. In my research, I am using statistics as a tool to build a general mathematical model to explain how musical form develops.

"I am not the first to do this but my approach is novel. I am breaking down musical form into 'genes', or smaller building blocks, to show how the evolution of a musical form as a whole stems from the development of each 'gene'". In order to do this, Greenberg is analyzing some 500 pieces composed during a 90-year period. "My approach is working well and my results so far are very encouraging," he says.

This year Greenberg is working on his doctorate at Princeton University as one of the first two Hebrew University participants in Princeton's Tikvah Project on Jewish Thought, a doctoral exchange program sponsored by the Tikvah Foundation. He and his fellow Hebrew University doctoral candidate, whose field is Talmud, are hosted by both the Tikvah Project and the department relevant to their respective fields.

"While at Princeton, I am hoping to benefit from access to two top musicologists there — one a leading Beethoven scholar and another who works in musical analysis," says Greenberg, who is also the recipient of Rotenstreich, President's and Hoffman fellowships (see pages 26-29).

"Although neither is in my specific field, I expect that

the interaction with them could lead me in new directions that I might not have otherwise considered." Indeed, that is the very purpose of the exchange program with Princeton — to expand the horizons and scholarly networks of Israeli doctoral

students and expose them to a variety of intellectual approaches and perspectives.

Although his sights are firmly set on returning to Israel, Greenberg was recently awarded a Fulbright Fellowship that will enable him to remain at Princeton for an additional year. And while he completes his doctorate, his wife Dr Shlomit Greenberg-Yuval — who obtained her doctorate in neuroscience at the Hebrew University last year — will pursue her postdoctoral research at NYU. ■

'the interaction with them could lead me in new directions'

Yoel Greenberg
at Princeton





Israel

During a visit to Israel, Sheldon Adelson gave a talk on business initiative to students in the hotel, food resources and tourism management program at the Robert H. Smith Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Environment. From right: Dr. Miri Adelson, Sheldon Adelson, program head Dr. Aliza Fleischer and Director of the University's Israel Friends Gideon Selinger.

The IDB Group's (from left) Deputy Chairman Isaac Manor, Director Rona Dankner, Chairman Nochi Dankner and Director of BioTech Dr. Tamar Manor met with University President Prof. Menahem Ben-Sasson during a tour of the Mount Scopus campus.

A World of Friends

United States

Internationally acclaimed architect Frank Gehry was presented with the American Friends' Scopus Award by Governor of California Arnold Schwarzenegger at a gala dinner in Beverly Hills hosted by the American Friends' Western Region.

Back, from left: Dinner Chair Mark Vidergauz, keynote speaker Alan Dershowitz, 2006 Scopus Award laureate Jamie McCourt, dinner Chairs Patricia L. Glaser and Richard Ziman. Front, from left: Sharon Vidergauz, Berta Gehry, honoree Frank Gehry and featured performer Herbie Hancock.

From left: University President Prof. Menahem Ben-Sasson, Scopus Award honoree Frank Gehry, American Friends' President Martin E. Karlinsky and Governor Schwarzenegger.

From left: Moshe Safdie, University President Prof. Menahem Ben-Sasson, University Vice-President for External Relations Carmi Gillon and Vidal Sassoon.

The American Friends' Annual Leadership Education Forum (ALEF) included presentations on a range of contemporary issues. From left: ALEF Co-Chair & panelist David A. Lehrer, ALEF Co-Chair Mark Vidergauz, American Friends' Western Region Vice-Chairman Patricia L. Glaser, Hebrew University President Prof. Menahem Ben-Sasson and American Friends' Western Region Chairman Richard Ziman.





Martin and Lois Zelman (left) were presented with the American Friends' Scopus award by the Chair of the Hebrew University's International Campaign Committee and American Friends' Honorary President Barbara A. Mandel at a Palm Beach gala chaired by Barbara and Richard Rothschild. The evening's proceeds went toward student scholarships.



The American Friends' Greater New York Region's 40th George A. Katz Torch of Learning Award Luncheon honored Jay B. Kasner and Andrew J. Levander, with proceeds going to the University's Israel Justice Center: Law Clinics for Social Responsibility. From left: City of New York Corporation Counsel Michael A. Cardozo, Hebrew University lay leader and American Friends' Honorary President Ira Lee Sorkin, Barry H. Garfinkel, honoree Jay B. Kasner, Frances Katz, honoree Andrew J. Levander, Hebrew University lay leader and American Friends' Board Chairman George A. Schieren and Robert J. Jossen.

Attending the American Friends' Western Region scholarship fundraiser, The Bel Air Affaire, hosted by Brindell Gottlieb were (back, from left) Lloyd Berkett, event Co-Chairs Dr David Anson, Helen Jacobs-Lapor and Dr Norman Lepor; and (front, from left) Phyllis Berkett, Brindell Gottlieb, event Co-Chair Renae Jacobs-Anson and American Friends' Western Region Chairman Richard Ziman.

Hebrew University Honorary Fellow and American Friends' Board of Regents member Michael Stein and his wife Louise Stein were honorees at the American Friends' Southeast Region Scopus Award gala dinner in Palm Beach.



Spain

The European Friends' bi-annual conference, 'The World at a Cultural Crossroads', was held jointly with Casa Sefarad, attracting over 150 guests and featuring speakers from the Hebrew University and Europe. Some 250 guests attended the closing event at the home of France's ambassador to Spain. From left: Casa Sefarad Director Diego de Ojeda, Chairman of the Hebrew University's Board of Governors Michael I. Federmann and French Ambassador to Spain Bruno Delaye.





Monaco

Over 1800 guests attended the European Friends' Paths to Peace gala concert by the London Philharmonia Orchestra, held under the patronage and in the presence of Prince Albert II of Monaco. Maestro Lorin Maazel conducted, with a piano recital by Itamar Golan and Bishara Haroni. From left: University President Prof. Menahem Ben-Sasson, Smadar Eisenberg, Bishara Haroni, Prince Albert II, Itamar Golan, Simone Pastor and Hebrew University Associate Vice-President for Europe Yoram Cohen.

Germany

Die Zeit publisher Dr Josef Joffe (right) was awarded the German Friends' Scopus Award by Hebrew University Vice-President for External Relations Carmi Gillon (center) and German Friends President Ron Jakubowicz at a ceremony held at the magnificent Munich Residence.



Brazil

Hebrew University faculty member and Nobel laureate Prof. Israel Aumann visited the Friends' associations in Argentina, Chile and Brazil. From left: Esther Dayan, Brazilian Friends' President Morris Dayan, Prof. Aumann and Alberto Dayan.



France

Over 900 people attended the French Friends' annual Scopus Award dinner honoring Beate and Serge Klarsfeld which was preceded by the annual seminar on brain research organized with AFIRNE, where world-leading experts addressed over 500 participants. From left: gala Chairman Baron Eric de Rothschild, University President Prof. Menahem Ben-Sasson, Philippe Labro, Serge and Beate Klarsfeld, French Friends' President Florence de Botton, Elsa Zilberstein, Bernard-Henri Lévy, Simone Veil and Michel Drucker.



'Laughter and Smiling in Judaism' was the theme of the European Friends' annual Scopus Forum in Deauville. It was preceded by a golf tournament in which some 70 golfers participated. From left: Michel Boujenah, film director Radu Mihaileanu, Lionel Abelanski, André Jaoui, Philippe Lelouche, Hebrew University Associate Vice-President for Europe Yoram Cohen and Pascal Elbé.

Canada

The Canadian Friends launched their fundraising campaign for the Hebrew University's Institute for Medical Research Israel-Canada (IMRIC) on Parliament Hill in Ottawa. From left: Dr Norman Barwin, Canadian Friends' National Director Rami Kleinmann, IMRIC Chairman Prof. David Lichtstein, Canadian Friends' past president Ronnie Appleby and Senator Jerry Grafstein.

The Province of Manitoba and the Winnipeg Foundation joined the Canadian Friends in supporting the Global Research Exchange Programme, an initiative of the Friends' Winnipeg Chapter which brings together Canadian researchers in infectious diseases with IMRIC researchers. From left: Manitoba Minister of Science, Technology, Energy & Mines Jim Rondeau, Winnipeg Chapter President Sheryl Rosenberg, senior research coordinator Dr Adrienne Meyers and Director of Canada's National Microbiology Laboratory Dr Frank Plummer.

Former Canadian Friends' president Stephen Lipper and his wife Irene opened their home for a reception in honor of Hebrew University Honorary Fellowship recipient Anna Brojde. From left: Ryan Moskovic, Karen Brojde, Anna Brojde, Ari and Robyn Brojde.



Punta del Este

Hebrew University's Vice-President for External Relations Carmi Gillon (right) and Prof. Mario Sznajder, seen here with University and Argentinean Friends' lay leader Susana Liberman, were panelists at the Argentinean and Uruguayan Friends' annual Punta del Este summer symposium.



United Kingdom

Master of the Rolls Lord Neuberger addressed some 140 lawyers on the subject 'The Supreme Court: Is the House of Lords "Losing Part of Itself"?' at the inaugural event of the British Friends' Young Legal Committee. From left: Rachel Marcus, Young Legal Committee Chair Georgina Peters, Lord Neuberger, Gerard Rothschild, Alastair Goldrein and Adam Wagner.





photos: Sasson Thum

By Gail Lichtman

Equal Opportunity

Ensuring a level playing field for all students is the guiding principle for a broad range of assistance programs



From left: Dean of Students Prof. Esther Shohami and Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation representative Laurie Heller with incoming students on the English-language summer program Naseem Abuata, Shaaban Shaaban, Merav Nassi Simhon, Dinor Elizrov and Dvir Uliel

“WE see our task as helping students fulfill their individual capabilities,” says Hebrew University Dean of Students Professor Esther Shohami, whose office oversees an array of programs designed to help students overcome socioeconomic inequalities, cultural differences, language barriers and disabilities, especially during their first year. “We aim to identify — and then alleviate — the obstacles and difficulties that are blocking maximum achievement.”

For students whose native language is not Hebrew, studying at the University can be especially daunting. The Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation-supported Project Nurture offers assistance to Arab students in the Faculty of Law who receive academic and social support to help them master the academic material and adjust to student life.

“For non-native speakers of Hebrew, studying law is extremely difficult,” says Faculty of Law Project Nurture coordinator Dr Adam Hofri-Winogradov. “Success largely depends on Hebrew language skills, which makes the study of law highly challenging from the very beginning. Project Nurture seeks to both bolster knowledge and build confidence.” Indeed, among the increasing number of Arab students enrolled at the Faculty, most are doing well — with their Project Nurture tutors helping them surmount the challenges of the freshman year.

“The project’s social ramifications are also important,” says Hofri-Winogradov. “Our experience has shown that Arab students, who are often younger and from more traditional backgrounds than their fellow Jewish students, tend to remain isolated, only associating with one another.

Many of the tutors helping them are Jewish and this helps to forge social connections.”

“I was so overwhelmed when I first arrived at the University. I had a very heavy schedule and

everything was so different,” says Raghad Helou, a second-year law student from Nazareth. “My tutors helped me better understand the requirements of the different courses and how to master the material. Whenever I had a question or problem, there was always someone there to help.”

For third-year student Amir Akleh, 21, “the language differences were really hard,” he says. “I was born in Jerusalem and until my family moved to Haifa when I was 11, I attended schools that did not teach Hebrew. My tutor was of invaluable help. I was with him for two years. It was so hard for me to translate the meaning of the legal terminology into Arabic. I don’t think I would have made it without Project Nurture.”

IN addition to Project Nurture, the Dean of Students Office has a special coordinator for Arab students and supports other students from the socioeconomic and geographic periphery through the Landa Center for Equal Opportunities in Education (see pages 22-23), while students with disabilities are assisted by the Accessibility Unit whose services includes the Unit for the Diagnosis and Support of Students with Learning Disabilities (see page 21).

“Until recently, we focused on helping students already enrolled in the University,” says Prof. Shohami. “Now, we are expanding our activities to help freshmen students from the socioeconomic and geographic periphery before they even embark on their degree studies.”

In summer 2009, for example, the University piloted an English-language program, also supported by the Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation, for incoming students from

the periphery. The program brought 65 students — 32 Jewish and 33 Arab — to the Mount Scopus campus for three weeks of intensive English classes, learning enrichment, campus orientation, cultural activities and Arab-Jewish encounters. The students also got help with homework from English-speaking students at the Rothberg International School.

“These were students whose English was at the lowest level that the University accepts,” says Shohami. “They are required to take English classes during their first year and pass the English exemption exam before starting their second year — not easy for those from a background where learning skills are not well developed and who are, in tandem, adjusting to academic studies. Indeed, research has shown a correlation between English proficiency and dropout rate — the lower the level the more likely that a student will drop out.”

All 65 students managed to raise their English one level — which was the program’s goal. “It’s an extraordinary achievement,” Prof. Shohami says. “They still have to advance one more level during the academic year but they are starting their studies feeling more settled and with less on their plates.”

Dinor Elizrov, 22, from Migdal Haemek, knew she had a problem with her English. “I couldn’t really understand the material and needed to look up too many words,” says the first-year political science and Middle Eastern studies student. “The program helped me a lot. I increased my vocabulary significantly, learned to analyze texts and gained an overall better understanding.

“It was good for me socially too. I met other incoming students so that when the academic year started, I didn’t feel alone and could find my way around campus. I am finding it much easier to cope with the English readings for my courses and I am more confident that I can complete the English requirements by the end of my first year.”

STUDENTS from the periphery were also the focus of a special workshop, piloted in the 2008/9 academic year, aimed at encouraging them to pursue master’s degrees. “A survey done at the University showed that only

*‘there was always
someone to help’*



Project Nurture students Amir Akleh (opposite) and Raghad Helou (below)



Bruno Charbit



Sasson Trium



Participants in the workshop for potential master's students from the periphery Rachel Aboulof and David Bronfman

a relatively small number of students from the periphery who are qualified continue on to master's studies," says Prof. Shohami. "Even though they have been studying at the University for three years, something is holding them back from applying for higher degrees — social background, financial constraints or lack of role models in their communities. We created the workshop to try to overcome these stumbling blocks."

The workshop comprised eight meetings that focused on bibliographies, computer programs, sources, critical thinking and academic writing. Participants who completed the workshop and were accepted to a master's program received scholarships. "The workshop whet my appetite to continue," says Rachel Aboulof, 26, an ex-IDF officer from Jerusalem's San Simon neighborhood. Aboulof, who won the Rector's prize for excellence, graduated in sociology and communications and is now studying for her MBA.

"I am glad I did the workshop," she says. "I learned what the requirements are for doing a master's and it helped me develop the skills I need for a higher degree. I especially enjoyed a guest speaker who was also from the periphery and spoke about her research topic and how she chose it."

David Bronfman, 25, from Lod, did his undergraduate degree in sociology and anthropology and was a tutor for a learning-challenged boy during his undergraduate studies through the Perach scholarship program. He initially attended the workshop out of curiosity.

"It gave me a broader perspective on what studying for

'it helped me develop the skills I need for a higher degree'

a higher degree entails in addition to providing practical tools," he says. "It opened new horizons. Plus I got to meet other students and instructors from the periphery. I am now studying for a master's degree in sociology, with a specialization in organizational behavior."

ANOTHER population which hesitates to undertake higher degrees is Arab women. In summer 2009, the Baerwald School of Social Work and Social Welfare initiated a preparatory program to increase the number of Arab women studying for master's degrees in early childhood education through the Schwartz Program in Early Childhood Studies which it runs with the School of Education.

The 15 participants, graduates of higher education institutes and teacher training colleges, met the Schwartz program's stringent academic acceptance criteria. Funded by the Jewish Federation of San Francisco and Ashalim, the full-scholarship program included courses in English and Hebrew reading and writing, plus group and individual counseling.

Meryam Haib, a 25-year-old Bedouin divorcee from Touba Zangaryaa near Rosh Pina, did her undergraduate degree in special education at Tel Hai College and her teaching certificate at the University of Haifa. She coordinates an early childhood education program in her local community center and works with children with learning disabilities and

developmental delays at Ziv Hospital in Safed.

Despite her highly impressive credentials, Haib had no chance of pursuing her master's degree without the preparatory program. "I had all the qualifications for the Schwartz program except for English," she says. "The English teaching at my local high school was weak and, since it was my third language after Arabic and Hebrew, I had little time for it. The preparatory program helped me to pass the English-language exemption exam and gave me the tools for my master's studies."

"Today, I am in the Schwartz Program's track in supervision and instruction, an area I have always wanted to study." ■

Sasson Trium



Schwartz Program preparatory course participant Meryam Haib

Removing Obstacles

"Students come here with horror stories," says Yehudit Danan, head of the Unit for the Diagnosis and Support of Students with Learning Disabilities, a section of the Dean of Students Office. "They have been called lazy, stupid and bad. We help them understand their problem and how best to cope with it. There is nothing shameful about having learning disabilities and no one should have to suffer alone. These disabilities need not prevent academic success.

The Unit offers an array of services and emotional support under one roof. "Since little research has been done on adults with learning disabilities in higher education, we have worked with Hebrew University researchers to develop an unusually comprehensive range of diagnostic methods and treatment models that address every type of disability," says Danan. "We use these to reassess freshmen students who come to us with their original diagnoses and build them a program of individually tailored assistance, including medical referrals if necessary."

This assistance can include one-on-one tutoring and help with reading, organizing study materials, summing up lectures and articles, writing papers and overcoming

administrative and academic hurdles.

"Our students are very bright and, in high school, they learned to compensate for their learning disabilities. But the methods employed then don't always work at university, so we give them the tools to overcome their disabilities in the new environment. Although we currently assist some 450 students, our limited budget means that we cannot always provide help as frequently as required — nor, moreover, assist the students on our extremely long waiting list."

Liat Meck, 28, a recent graduate in art history from Kibbutz Mevo Hama in the Golan Heights, has dyslexia and dyscalculia. "I am a slow reader," she says. "Since my parents are native English-speakers, I speak English well but have a lot of trouble reading it. The course readings were a real problem. The Unit taught me how to use a computer program developed for the visually impaired which reads the material. This really helped.

"The Unit also helped me obtain an exemption from learning a third language, a requisite of art history that I just couldn't do, and take other credits instead. It's thanks to the Unit that I was able to complete my degree and the tools that I acquired will help me for the rest of my

life. I am not some poor unfortunate but rather someone who has specific conditions that I must, and can, learn to cope with."

Kobi Nachmias, 35, from Netanya, completed his undergraduate degree in philosophy and political science without turning to the Unit. "But it took me six years," he says. "I always knew I had a problem but when I started my master's in philosophy, I decided I could use help. I underwent diagnosis and the staff worked out a plan for me. The hardest part was accepting that I would have to work hard and not look for quick fixes. Since then, I have been working on my study habits, on organizing, planning and then sitting down to study. My problem is not gone — it never will be — but the difficulties are not the same. Now I know I can cope."

Asaf Goldfarb, 24, from Kfar Saba is in his second year studying political science and history. "I was diagnosed with dyslexia and dysgraphia at a young age," he says. "Through the Unit, I got a tutor who was my savior. She has worked with me on reading articles and writing papers, as well as on preparing for exams. She has helped me learn how to find answers on my own. I finished my first year with an 89 average and I would like to go on to a master's in political communication."



Sasson Thran



Asaf Goldfarb is tutored by head of the Unit for the Diagnosis and Support of Students with Learning Disabilities Yehudit Danan



Sasson Thran

Sasson Thran



Welcome to Jerusalem

With the majority of its students from homes outside Jerusalem, the Hebrew University is a soft landing ground for life in a highly diverse city

By Gail Lichtman



Students at the Jerusalem municipality's information desk on the Mount Scopus campus

THERE is perhaps no population that encounters more culture shock upon arriving at the Hebrew University than its Arab students. Younger than their Jewish counterparts, who generally begin their studies after army or national service, these students mainly come from small towns and villages in the periphery. Many have never lived away from home before and, while they know Hebrew, their studies often demand a different vocabulary and approach to learning than Arab high schools.

"They have no idea what the world

of academic learning is like," says Laieth Gayousi, who was appointed as the first coordinator for Arab students in the Dean of Students Office two years ago. "My job is to let them know that they are not alone and that there is an address to which they can turn. It is especially important to provide assistance during the first year of studies when they are more likely to drop out, and to encourage them to strive for excellence."

Gayousi, a Hebrew University graduate in social work now working on his master's degree and who himself joined the Hebrew University fresh

out of high school from the town of Kalansua in the Triangle area, serves as a one-stop shop. He has devised a comprehensive program — funded by the Planning and Budgeting Committee of the Council for Higher Education and the Landa Foundation — that facilitates academic, social and emotional integration, offers workshops on study approaches and tools for learning while a dozen third- and fourth-year student coordinators provide academic and social support.

"I map out the needs of every student and then provide coping techniques," says Gayousi. "I encourage each student to decide for him or herself by showing the possibilities and outcomes of every decision."

"This program has really proven itself," says Dean of Students Professor Esther Shohami. "The success rate has improved, student grades are up and the

drop-out rate has declined. The students are happy and the University is happy.”

AS the spiritual center of Judaism, Jerusalem has much to offer but “unfortunately, many Israeli students see Judaism as irrelevant,” says Heli Tabibi, head of the Hebrew University Beit Hillel, which is affiliated with Hillel Israel. “They equate Judaism with extreme Orthodoxy and have never been exposed to the many expressions of Judaism in the city. They don’t understand that there are many ways to celebrate Jewishness — including through culture, the arts and other forums. We offer students an opportunity to connect to their Jewish heritage, thus providing new depth to how they relate to Jerusalem.”

Beit Hillel concentrates on Jewish renewal, helping students explore the Jewish components of their identity through innovative programs. Yoga is combined with the study of Jewish texts, a human rights beit midrash integrates Zionist and Jewish thought, and students work with Holocaust survivors. Israeli culture is promoted through tours of the city, films and meetings with Israeli authors, and students are encouraged to present their own creative works.

Beit Hillel reaches out to the wider community through a social justice program for children from families with cancer patients and a Big Brother/Sister program. It also works closely with the Rothberg International School, running programs that enhance overseas students’ overall Jewish/Israeli experience such as holiday celebrations and joint activities with Israeli students. Creative writing and theater workshops for Russian-born immigrant students

impart Judaism through the arts.

“We operate in the spirit of Hillel the Elder,” says Tabibi, a Hebrew University alumna. “We let each person view Jewish identity from his or her perspective and then decide how to relate to it.”

FROM day one, students are assisted by the Student Union, says its Chairman Ofri Raviv. There are campus orientation tours for freshmen and representatives of the municipality, banks and other service providers are brought to the campuses to ease the settling in process.

As the official representative of the student body, the Student Union provides students with information on their rights, represents them in matters related to student housing, assists with specific problems or disciplinary matters and monitors on-campus prices at cafeterias. It also lobbies to enhance conditions for students. “For example, we run a lending library with longer loan periods and campaigned to

reinstate longer opening hours for University libraries,” says Raviv. The Student Union advocates for

students on public transportation matters, offers discounted bus tickets, organizes social events and cultural performances, and facilitates student discounts to cultural institutions and events throughout the city.

The city itself recently launched Academic City, an initiative which seeks to redress Jerusalem’s negative migration of young people while fulfilling academia’s potential as a growth engine by offering a wide-ranging package of benefits, grants, discounts and study experiences that attract students and

Shiran Dadon & Ohad Shalem

One third of the Faculty of Law’s students participate in its Israel Justice Center: Law Clinics for Social Responsibility, attending weekly preparatory classes and gaining hands-on experience weekly in one of its 13 legal aid clinics, most of which are in Jerusalem.

Last year Shiran Dadon, 24, from Rishon Lezion, worked with Ethiopian immigrants in the law, society and welfare clinic. “Most of the cases — which involved people deceiving or cheating the new immigrants — never went to court,” says the third-year student. “Once unscrupulous employers got a letter or call from the clinic, they backed down. It was so important to let the immigrants know they have rights. I realized that the law is just a piece of paper unless people demand their rights.”

Jerusalemite Ohad Shalem, 26, now doing his master’s degree in law, worked in the youth representation clinic last year with youngsters who had given up on their Orthodox upbringing. “These kids leave religion, drop out of school and start hanging around. Eventually, they get into trouble. I tried to gain their trust and help. I was half nanny and half legal aid.

“This was the real thing. However much I study, in the end this is what the law is. I was using my knowledge to better someone’s life — to help youth that the system just spits out. For me, this project embodies the real ideals of Zionism.”



Bruno Chirbit

Sasson Trum



Bruno Charbit

help them to connect to Jerusalem.

The Academic City program, a joint project of the municipality and the city's institutions of higher education, has altered the approach of the Hebrew University Student Union, says Yakir

Segev, a former Union chairman who today serves on the Jerusalem city council. "In the past, we concentrated our activities on campus to the point where students never needed to go

into town. This has now changed. The Student Union is working to connect students to the city, while the University itself is highly cognizant of the potential contribution of students to Jerusalem."

Today, the Student Union works with the city to organize cultural events both on and off campus while the city provides students with information on housing in different neighborhoods, bus routes and the location of the city's cultural and entertainment venues.

"We firmly believe that students have to be involved with their surroundings and influence them," says Union Chairman Raviv. "Studying in Jerusalem means being culturally and socially engaged with the city." ■

Reut Marciano

"We called one nine-year-old girl the 'invisible child'. The victim of very negative attention at home, she never spoke or asked for anything. I tried to get her to open up and trust me. When she finally asked me to play with her, I was so moved." Reut Marciano, 25 (top), is reminiscing about her volunteer experience at an after-school club in the poverty-stricken Jerusalem neighborhood of Neve Yaakov. "Although I come from a low socio-economic neighborhood in Beersheba, it was the first time I was trying to treat problems, not just observe them."

Marciano was a participant in the Landa Program for Social Leadership, one of several scholarship programs run by the Dean of Students' Unit for Social Involvement which strive to raise students' social consciousness while benefiting Jerusalem's wider community.

"The Landa program gave me the concepts, tools and social language to understand what is going on in Israeli society and the desire and power to change things for the better," says the philosophy, economics and political science graduate. Indeed, Marciano is now studying for a master's in public policy at the Federmann School of Public Policy and Government and coordinates a student leadership program run by the Unit for Social Leadership.



Bruno Charbit



Sasson Trum

Helly Hirsh

Last year, 25-year-old Helly Hirsh was one of 12 students doing their second-year placements at the Baerwald School of Social Work and Social Welfare's Academic-Community Learning Center in Pisgat Ze'ev, Jerusalem's largest neighborhood. Hirsh chose to help set up a Time Bank, where residents donate their time in exchange for a service from another resident. It has proven a phenomenal success.

"Although people can't contribute money, they can give their time and talents — and

this empowers them," says Hirsh. "As I went door-to-door to understand their needs, I found that most people didn't know their neighbors. The Time Bank enabled them to get to know one another and help each other. We started with six people and today there are more than 100 members. I am glad I was part of it."

The program for Brain Circle participants at the Saturnia retreat included a presentation by artist Michal Rovner, seen here with 'Makom II' in Israel. © Michal Rovner. Courtesy of the artist and PaceWildenstein, New York



Open Dialogue

I WANT to share what I do. I feel a duty to explain," says Professor Idan Segev. This urge has led Segev, the David and Inez Myers Professor of Computational Neuroscience and the former director of the internationally acclaimed Interdisciplinary Center for Neural Computation (ICNC), to pursue several outreach efforts. Among the most successful is the Brain Circle, which Segev established with Hebrew University Associate Vice-President for Europe Yoram Cohen in 2005, and which was inspired by a conversation with Munich-based businessman Yaakov Chai who had hosted a presentation at his home by ICNC researchers and their Max Planck Institute colleagues.

The Brain Circle brings together brain scientists and curious businesspeople who are interested in learning about the mysteries of the brain. Once a year, the group convenes for a three-day retreat on the latest findings in brain research and their implications at workshops, lectures and informal conversations during gourmet meals and visits to art exhibits and tourist sites.

The dialogue continues between retreats through lectures, conversations and two exclusive projects: the annual *Gray Matters* magazine and the Brain Book website where researchers provide updates and answer questions. In return, each Brain Circle member — there are 50 to date — commits to supporting an ICNC doctoral student for five years. So far, retreats have been held in Israel and Europe — Jerusalem, Château Lafite in Bordeaux and Saturnia in Italy — although

Segev hopes to form Brain Circles in America and Israel.

"The idea of being part of something, of being involved in the research, is very exciting to me," says Hebrew University lay leader Nathalie Rodach Berrebi of Switzerland. "And it is not only an idea — I feel we really do collaborate."

The interaction is mutually beneficial, says Segev. "Our mission is to explain what we do in an understandable way. When you get questions from a layperson, you are forced to revisit the

fundamentals and that can help me gain new insights. Going outside of my community also exposes me to new ideas and I gain knowledge in fields beyond my expertise from my Brain Circle friends." Indeed, the

Brain Circle is playing a key role in the Edmond and Lily Safran Center for Brain Sciences (ELSC), a bold new endeavor — and the largest of its kind in Europe and the Middle East — into which the ICNC will be integrated. Much advice, says Segev, has come from those with experience in the construction industry.

"When Professor Hagai Bergman showed his film of Parkinson's patients being treated with the deep brain stimulation technique stemming from his basic research, it had a huge impact," says President of the University's European Friends, Nilly Sikorsky of Switzerland. "Usually dialogue between scientists and the rest of us is so difficult that we restrict ourselves to the fields we know. The Brain Circle opens up a completely unknown, but now approachable, world." ■

'I feel we really do collaborate'



Creating Academic Communities

By Heidi Gleit



New study frameworks for doctoral candidates facilitate vibrant peer interchange and broaden intellectual horizons

THE pursuit of a doctoral degree can be a solitary experience. Gathering data, analyzing information, and writing a dissertation are traditionally done alone — indeed, this has been the approach at the Hebrew University since its founding nearly a century ago, with doctoral candidates embarking upon an independent research project under the supervision of a faculty member.

Today, says Vice-Rector and James Marshall Professor of Social Psychology Yaacov Schul, it is increasingly clear that doctoral candidates are put in an awkward position, having to negotiate between

“an identity of belonging to a specific department academically, while also belonging administratively to the Authority for Research Students.”

This situation also means that many students lack a peer group, in particular if they are not members of a research team in a lab. Largely due to the bottom-up initiative of its younger faculty members, many of whom are familiar with the American graduate school system, change is in the air. New programs at the Hebrew University are bringing together doctoral candidates from different disciplines, providing them with peer support and interaction and exposing them to academic and practical tools.

Human Breadth

In 2007 professors Gannit Ankori, Ronnie Ellenblum, Ruth HaCohen and Ilana Pardes decided to address the difficulties being encountered by their doctoral students in the humanities and provide them with an enriching intellectual, interdisciplinary

and creative environment. Thus the President's Fellows program was born.

“Our idea was to create a framework with financial support so that doctoral students could focus on their research, be part of a social framework that allowed them to gel as a group, and be exposed to broad conceptual and ideational frameworks and a variety of subject matters and methodologies,” says HaCohen, the outgoing director of the President's Fellows.

“Our action stemmed from our premise that since the future of the humanities in Israeli society, and at the Hebrew University in particular, was far from guaranteed, it was absolutely essential to invest in creating the cadres of tomorrow's scholars.”

Grantees receive four-year scholarships and a living stipend. Almost 100 President's Fellowships have been awarded to date. Despite the financial difficulties facing Israeli universities, in particular the Hebrew University, the University is committed to supporting research students who

show the most promise, says Schul. Over the past two years, the scope of the President's Fellowship has been broadened, with 23 granted this year to first-year doctoral candidates in the humanities, social sciences, law, social work and business administration.

Support is given for four years, conditional on grantees continuing to excel. The goal, says Schul, is to support the top 20 percent of all doctoral candidates through fellowships, "so that they can focus on their studies rather than constantly seek financial support."

An enrichment program of group activities for President's Fellows in the humanities aims to help rather than overburden. The fellows are joined in these activities by the recipients of

other prestigious doctoral fellowships in the humanities, including the long-established Rotenstreich

Fellowship and more recently created awards such as the Hoffman program (see page 29), generous scholarships in the general humanities and in Asian and African studies provided by Dr Leonard S. Polonsky, and Prizes in Excellence from the Hebrew University's Canadian Friends, including Clara Robert and Stephen and Irene Lipper. Together, these students form the cadre of the faculty's outstanding doctoral fellows.

In the first year, students present their research plans. "Although a presentation is premature at that point, it acts as a launch pad into their doctorate," says HaCohen. "In fact, though most doctoral candidates do not obtain approval of their research proposal during their first year, all of the President's Fellows did.

"Making a presentation at such an

early stage in an environment that is both supportive and critical seems to have helped."

During the second year, the fellows present papers at a conference that they must also organize. Tzakhi (Yitzhak) Freedman, a President's Fellow since the first year of his doctorate in comparative religion and now a Rotenstreich Fellow, was a member of the committee that planned and organized the conference for his cohort. "It was an enriching experience for everyone and well worth the time we invested," he says.

Freedman enjoys the independence of being a doctoral student, but also finds it helpful "to know that there is a group behind my research. It is important to have a place to discuss

things." The interdisciplinary aspect of the fellowship is especially helpful, he says. "If you can

only share your subject with a small group of people, you lose something. But if you learn to relate your ideas to a wider circle, your research gains value."

Ya'ar Hever, a doctoral student in linguistics who received a President's Fellowship in his first year and was subsequently granted a Rotenstreich Fellowship too, says that his field is somewhat interdisciplinary since he learns many languages and studies in different departments to understand the culture and history that accompany each language. "But the enrichment program opens this up even more," he says. "It allows you to meet people from other fields with whom you wouldn't normally exchange ideas. Once we realized that we could understand each other, we realized that we also could help each other. I wrote a paper with a literature student whom I

met through the fellowship."

For the first cohort of President's Fellows, fewer activities are planned during this, their third, year so that they can concentrate on their research. Freedman appreciates the change in pace, though enjoys the ongoing exposure to new ideas. "It's not burdensome to learn something new," he says.

Rotenstreich Fellow Ophira Gamliel recently completed her doctorate in Indian and Armenian studies and benefited from both the financial support and enrichment program.

"The scholarship allowed me to spend three years conducting research in India. My doctorate is about Jewish Malayalam women's songs and Jewish Malayalam is a very difficult language to study anywhere other than Kerala since it is rarely studied elsewhere," she says. "I am not a scholar of Judaism, but the enrichment program gave me the opportunity to meet people who could enhance my understanding of it. I was also able to

'an extraordinarily strong sense of community has developed'

President's fellows
Ya'ar Hever (left)
and Tzakhi
Freedman





Saji James

meet students with similar interests, such as Naphtali Meshel who was studying sacrifice in the Bible and was interested in Vedic sacrifice and Sanskrit."

students every few weeks to explore an issue of mutual interest. While each group has a faculty mentor, they are initiated and run by students, one of whom receives a modest stipend for coordinating the group.

"The goal is to create knowledge and to develop connections for the future," says Levi-Faur, who launched Limud B'Chevruta in fall 2008 with a call for students to submit proposals for groups that would meet regularly for one year, starting the following spring. Five proposals were selected for the pilot.

Renana Elran, a doctoral candidate

'it was an enriching experience for everyone'

in psychology, is leading the Between Psychology and Culture group which meets monthly to discuss an article read by all its members. Elran's group actually began meeting before the creation of Limud B'Chevruta in response to feelings of isolation among a few doctoral friends. On being accepted into the program, they were

able to expand the original group to include peers from different disciplines whom they did not know. "Doctoral studies are a highly independent period, yet people want to talk and at times find that the big questions that interest them are similar," she says. "Some of our group brought in articles they had written to get our feedback."

Sinai Rusinek, a doctoral candidate in philosophy, is leading the Limud B'Chevruta group on Emotions, Language and Thought. "It is a topic that interests us all, but if it hadn't been for the study group, we wouldn't have discussed it on a serious level since it is slightly outside of our research," she says. In her search to learn more, Rusinek came across a book by Dr Thomas Dixon which she presented to the group. Although Dixon was unable to accept Rusinek's invitation to address the group, the two continued to correspond and Rusinek hopes to do her postdoctoral research at Dixon's center in London.

Each of the Limud B'Chevruta groups also has a wiki, an interactive website where members can post



Rotenstreich Fellow Ophira Gamliel (right) in India with linguistics scholar and colleague Sumi Joy Olyapuram

Group Learning

"Although doctoral candidates are no longer at a stage where they need classes, they do need to meet and interact," says Professor David Levi-Faur, a faculty member in the Department of Political Science and the Federmann School of Public Policy and Government since 2007. "That means we need to change our thinking about doctoral studies."

Levi-Faur is involved in several initiatives for doctoral candidates in the social sciences and beyond. These range from teaching one of the only doctoral-level social science courses and running a series of enrichment lectures to the creation of the Limud B'Chevruta study groups, which bring together five to 12



Limud B'Chevruta's Between Psychology and Culture group coordinator Renana Elran (with microphone) and group members



Sasson Tivon

messages and material and edit previously posted material — and which are part of a further initiative by Levi-Faur who has created a wiki for all social sciences doctoral candidates. As the second year of Limud B'Chevruta gets under way, with the number of groups doubled to 10, Levi-Faur says that the groups have created a buzz on campus that has led similar groups to organize. In addition to grouping around themes, he says, the upcoming study groups will also be formed around practical issues, such as a group for foreign students and groups dedicated to improving specific skills, from writing to delivering presentations at academic conferences.

Responsible Leaders

The establishment in 2006 of the Hoffman Doctoral Fellowship Program for Leadership and Responsibility by Harry OAM and Sylvia Hoffman of Perth, Australia came about after the couple's extensive discussions with the University about how they could make a meaningful contribution, says Professor Amalya Oliver of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology who coordinates the program with Professor Ehud De-Shalit of the Einstein Institute of Mathematics.

"While many fellowship programs involve a donor, this one involves a very special relationship," says Baruch Barzel, a Hoffman Fellow pursuing his doctorate in physics. "Mr. Hoffman is actively involved and the fact that he is such an inspiring person gives added value. He contributes both flour and Torah," he says, quoting the Talmud (Pirkei Avot).

The three-year program, open to doctoral students throughout the University, helps grantees finish their doctorates and secure employment within a short timeframe by providing

them with vital tools, encouragement and a generous stipend that enables them to focus solely on their studies — while also developing their potential as social and community leaders. The Fellows meet every two weeks during the academic year for lectures, discussions and workshops and participate in a two-day workshop in the summer. These activities focus on several themes, including theoretical and empirical meanings of leadership; the meaning and individual interpretations of responsibility; life narratives of social leaders; and the complexities of Israeli society.

In addition, all Hoffman fellows contribute to society by volunteering for at least two hours a week and, during their third year, they develop an individual or team voluntary project under guidance from an organizational consultant. Fellows generally select areas unconnected to their research, with their work ranging from advocating for legislation on behalf of people with dyslexia to supporting rape victims and assisting students from Israel's minority communities adjust to academic life.

"The Hoffman program gives me both the tools and a network to help people," says Barzel, who volunteers with a family whose four-year-old son is fighting cancer. "Moreover, there are now 12 people whom I know well, each with one foot in academia and one foot in volunteerism. It also means that when I hear about people who need assistance, I have a network to turn to for solutions."

Although Jennifer Oser is a longtime community volunteer, she had expected that she would need to take a break while pursuing her doctorate in public policy. The Hoffman program, however, allows her to continue. "Those two hours are so important in giving us a



taste of something beyond our regular world," she says.

And within this regular world, she says, "the Hoffman Program provides a lively academic forum and gives you exposure to ideas you wouldn't come across otherwise. I have met people in social work, sociology, and political science who are working in areas similar to mine but whom I would not have met otherwise."

"An extraordinarily strong sense of community has developed among the Hoffman fellows," says Prof. Oliver. "I believe in scholarly networks as the basis for informal learning systems and academic and social exchanges. The fellows' shared values and capabilities allow them to establish a unique — and empowering — joint sense of accomplishment. This stems from the personal qualities that bind them together, coupled with their leadership abilities."

Oliver is not leading the program, she says, but facilitating it. "I'm there to allow them to make it happen — they do it better than anyone doing it for them." ■



*Hoffman fellows
Jennifer Oser and
Baruch Barzel*

The Teaching Revolution

The School of Education is at the forefront of bridging the researcher-teacher divide

By Susan Goodman



School of Education trainee civics teachers and master's students (this page) Yaniv Staimetz (white t-shirt) and Ro'ey Perlstein and (opposite) Shelly Maimon-Lavi and Oren Cohen teaching at Jerusalem's Gymnasias Ha'Tvrit high school

“OUR School of Education is like a university within the university,” says its outgoing director Professor Edna Ullmann-Margalit. Indeed, a glance at the School’s faculty reveals experts from almost every major field of academic endeavor — “many with research standing at the highest international level,” says current Director Professor Philip Wexler. “We are also considered academically distinguished in Israel and are ranked first in research funding,” he says. “And now we aim to lead the way, with our commitment to reforms in teacher education that will provide a more research-based education for teachers.”

The School of Education has traditionally had two distinct functions. It offers undergraduate, masters and doctoral programs in education. But it also prepares professionals in a wide range of educational fields, including administration, counseling, special education and educational psychology. Moreover, it has a large department dedicated to preparing students as high school teachers, while they also pursue degrees in education or at almost any other faculty within the University. It is the increased fusion of these two roles

— the academic and professional — that is driving the School to adopt new programs that will impact on practice, research and theory, not only in Israel but also in educational institutions around the world. This new approach, says Wexler, is exemplified by what, he hopes, will become the School’s flagship doctoral program, now being reformatted to meld in-depth specialization with broad-based courses — and

thereby providing future cadres of school and university teachers with the flexibility to teach a breadth of knowledge that is underpinned by high-level research expertise.

“What we are achieving is a synthesis between the world of academic research and that of teacher education,” says Director of Teacher Training Dr Yehoshua Mathias who has worked in every aspect of education — from academic research on modern French intellectual history and teaching history and philosophy in high school to developing textbooks and designing curricula at the national level. Undoubtedly, this rich experience helps Mathias as he facilitates active dialogue between researchers and teachers and leads the way in establishing programs that will bring about more effective teaching within schools and universities.

The School of Education can already boast considerable successes in bridging the researcher-teacher divide with results that are impacting on teaching practice worldwide. One project has sought to construct and introduce new teaching methods utilizing the latest computer technology. Another takes a fresh perspective on the perennial problem of motivation.

THE Kishurim research group at the School of Education is a preeminent example of the “university within a university”, with the three members who direct its activities having pursued academic studies in mathematics, educational



Photos: Sasson Thum



psychology, biology, archaeology, literature and economics. The team, headed by Professor Baruch Schwarz, and including Dr Reuma De-Groot and Dr Raul Drachman, specializes in the development of new teaching methods that integrate computers within the classroom.

Their innovative software packages are designed “to make school more interesting and teachers more effective,” says De-Groot, by enabling students to participate in collaborative learning through Internet-mediated discussion. Although utilizing modern technology, the teaching method is theoretically rooted in the well-proven premise that reasoned argument is a powerful tool in the construction of knowledge and the fostering of high-level, critical thinking.

In 2002, the Kishurim Group — which is also affiliated with the Hebrew University’s NCJW Research Institute for Innovation in Education — initiated a major European Union-funded project known as DUNES (Dialogic and argUmentative Negotiation Educational Software), which brought together participants from eight countries to develop and test a software program called Digalo. The program allows students to engage in on-line discussions and builds a picture of the dialogue: each exchange is classified according to a particular shape of box — for example, claims are in rectangles — with arrows of different colors, indicating opposition or support, linking them. This construction of a dialogue is a highly analytic process and its graphic representation allows participants to see the whole structure of a discussion.

This approach not only encourages critical thinking but also helps equip students with the multidisciplinary skills they will need in work environments of the future, including the ability to collaborate on-line with team members in other places. Schwarz stresses that the type of collaboration required by these software programs also helps students “hear and respect each other, and learn how to work together”. The challenge to teachers in assuming new roles within this high-tech classroom cannot be underestimated, he says.

WHILE the Kishurim Group is fully committed to supporting teachers who introduce these new learning approaches and regards the classroom teacher as a research partner, this attitude is far from the norm, with teachers primarily seen as purveyors of information.

“I think researchers have failed to engage with teachers because they are not interested in them in their own right — as people,” says Professor Ruth Butler of the School

of Education, whose own pioneering research places the teacher center stage. Butler studied the well-established field of student motivation for many years and came to realize that a very important influence on student motivation had been ignored — teacher motivation.

Early experiments in the field of student motivation produced some astonishing counter-intuitive findings, namely that if you reward people for things they like doing then they lose motivation! Subsequent research developed a model of student motivation which,

among other things, demonstrated that students fall into two distinct groups: those with ‘ability goals’ are driven to show how well they can do compared to their peers but are reluctant to pursue anything that proves difficult; those with ‘mastery goals’ are able to persevere when confronted by challenge and are generally recognized as “problem solvers”. Butler adapted this model to investigate motivation in teachers.

Her research has shown that teachers with mastery goals not only enjoy teaching and are less likely to suffer burnout, but also provide a classroom environment more conducive to students developing optimal motivation and learning skills. Her results have been replicated in studies that she initiated in Germany and have far-reaching implications for teacher training methodology.

It is this type of enhanced integration between research and teacher education that will bring “increased professionalism for teachers” says Wexler. And anything that’s good for the teachers is good for our children — and the future of society. ■

*‘a synthesis between
the worlds of academic
research and teacher
education’*



Sasson Tzuri



Denny Oshari

New Recruits

By Daniel Avihai-Kremer



Prof. Shmuel Shapira with the first class of student-soldiers

THIS past fall, 50 young, bright, highly motivated Israeli soldiers joined the Hebrew University. The first recruits to a rigorous new program at the Hebrew University-Hadassah School of Medicine, they are training to be physicians in the broad spectrum of medical practice known as “military medicine”.

While the demanding six-year program follows the School’s basic curriculum, the student-soldiers will also be trained extensively in such specialties as disaster and terror medicine, crisis management, medical ethics and leadership, military occupational medicine, diving and flight medicine, and public and mental health.

A seventh year will be spent in hospital internships.

The military medicine track represents a “unique partnership” between the Hebrew University and the Hadassah Medical Organization on the one hand and the Ministry of Defense and the Israel Defense Forces on the other, says Dean of the Faculty of Medicine Professor Eran Leitersdorf. “It is our response to a national priority of ensuring that the IDF has the full complement of physicians.” Indeed, the program will “provide expert manpower to fill leadership positions — in both military and civilian medicine — in clinical practice, research and administration in the decades to come,” says program director Professor Shmuel Shapira. Alongside their MD studies, almost half of the students will be able to pursue a master’s degree in any field

at the University and 12 outstanding students will be able to pursue doctorates.

Overall, the students have taken on a basic 12-year commitment. They completed their basic training before starting their studies and will continue their military training while studying, including attending the IDF Officers School and the Medical Corps paramedics course. On completion of their studies and internships, they will serve as battalion medical officers for three years, with two additional years elsewhere in the Medical Corps. “They will have been trained to respond to all possible scenarios a military physician

may face, from day-to-day duties to emergency situations,” says Prof. Leitersdorf.

The program’s recruitment effort is hands-on, with new recruits drawn from a cross-section of Israeli society. High-school students from the country’s periphery are the primary

target population, followed by graduates of the various pre-army preparatory institutes and young people from Israel’s central region. A smaller percentage of places are reserved for applicants currently serving in the IDF or who recently completed their compulsory service.

During their studies, the students are actively encouraged to pursue a broad educational experience by taking Cornerstones courses in other disciplines at the University, through the medical humanities course at the Wilbush Patient-Centered Medical Forum (see pages 8-10) and via an extracurricular program of lectures and tours that enhances their understanding of Jerusalem, Zionism and aspects of Israeli society. The perfect recipe, it seems, for each class to provide the IDF — and Israel — with 50 top-notch, socially aware and culturally adept medical professionals. ■

‘expert manpower to fill leadership positions in both military and civilian medicine’

Faculty Dean Prof. Eran Leitersdorf at the inauguration of the military medicine program



Sasson Itam

Highlights of Friends of the Hebrew University scheduled events during 2010/2011:

- April 14** **Washington, DC** American Friends' Torch of Learning Award dinner honoring Kenneth R. Feinberg
- April 25** **Vancouver** Canadian Friends' Gala honoring Dr Phil Switzer, in support of the Institute for Medical Research Israel-Canada and Spinal Cord Research
- April 28** **Toronto** Canadian Friends' 'Best of Hebrew U: The Best is Yet to Come' symposium
- April 29** **Melbourne** Australian Friends' Richard Pratt memorial oration by Hebrew University President Prof. Menahem Ben-Sasson
- May 5** **Sydney** Australian Friends' luncheon with the Sir Zelman Cowen Universities Fund in support of medical research, with keynote speaker Prof. Menahem Ben-Sasson
- May** **Sao Paulo & Rio de Janeiro** Brazilian Friends' Judaism seminar
- May 17** **Miami** American Friends' Scopus Award Gala honoring Cesar L. Alvarez
- May 31-June 3** **Israel** Canadian Friends' Dessert Magic and City Rhythms Friendship mission
- June 4-9** **Jerusalem** Board of Governors annual meeting
- June 16** **Washington, DC** American Friends' Judah Magnes Award dinner honoring Congressman Henry Waxman
- July** **Mexico City** Mexican Friends' brain science seminar
- August** **Buenos Aires** Argentinean Friends' innovation seminar
- September 14** **New York** American Friends' Maimonides Award dinner honoring George Barrett
- September 28** **Chicago** American Friends' Torch of Learning Award dinner honoring Daniel L. Schlessinger, with keynote speaker the Rt. Hon. Lord Woolf
- October** **Santiago** Chilean Friend's education seminar
- October 10-22** **Israel** Canadian Friends' 'Live, Learn & Explore' mission
- November 7-8** **Jerusalem** Board of Governors' Executive Committee meeting
- November 11** **London** British Friends' annual legal dinner
- November 15** **Toronto** Canadian Friends' Gala dinner honoring Senator Jerry Grafstein, in support of the Institute for Medical Research Israel-Canada
- November 15** **Montreal** Canadian Friends' Gala dinner honoring McGill University Principal Heather Monroe Blum, in support of projects between the Hebrew University and McGill University
- November** **St. Petersburg** Russian Friends' 2010 Tolerance Prize ceremony
- January** **Punta del Este** South American Friends' summer symposium
- February** **Mexico City** 'Three Women, Three Expressions' annual symposium

Hold the Date



Contact your local Friends of the
Hebrew University for full listings

Friends Associations

of The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

ARGENTINA

T/F 11-4374-7045

info@huji.org.ar

www.huji.org.ar

AUSTRALIA

T 2-9267-7144 F 2-9267-2148

nswfhu@austfhu.org.au

www.austfhu.org.au

AUSTRIA

T 1-795-300 F 1-798-6101

A8906578@unet.univie.ac.at

BELGIUM

Brussels T 2-343-5546

F 2-345-7505

anne@uhjerusalem.be

Antwerp T 3-218-6414

F 3-281-0369

suzy.szm@telenet.be

BRAZIL

T/F 11-3849-9786

www.amigosuhj.org.br

CANADA

T 416-485-8000 F 416-485-8565

Toll Free 1-888-HEBREWU

inquiry@cfhu.org

www.cfhu.org

CHILE

T 56-2-4815600 /56-2-4204293

uhj.chile@gmail.com

www.uhjchile.cl

COSTA RICA

T 520-1013 ext. 3 F 220-1951

cisdcrc@centroisraelita.com

DENMARK

T 45-838-407 F 35-320-704

solovej@math.ku.dk

EUROPE

T 33-1-47-55-43-23/1-72-89-96-95

F 33-1-47-55-43-90

europandesk@uhjerusalem.org

www.efuh.org

FRANCE

T 1-47-55-43-23 F 1-47-55-43-90

contact@uhjerusalem.org

GERMANY

T 89-24-23-16-71 F 89-24-23-16-72

info@fhuj.de

ISRAEL

T 02-658-5881 F 02-658-4900

gideons@savion.huji.ac.il

ITALY

T 2-7602-3369 F 2-7600-8596

aug.it@tiscalinet.it

JAPAN

T 81-754614603 F 81-754649959

tsujita@h2.hum.huji.ac.il

LUXEMBOURG

T 2-402-545 F 2-497-345

MEXICO

T 55-9150-2995/6 F 55-5280-3461

amauhj@prodigy.net.mx

THE NETHERLANDS

T 6-5434-6641

info@nvhu.nl

www.nvhu.nl

NORWAY

amycons@online.no

PANAMA

T 269-0188/263-2136/ext. 208

F 2643844

ibtesh@grupomulticredit.com

RUSSIA

T 495-660-91-95 F 495-777-0881

inf@rfhu.ru

www.rfhu.ru

SOUTH AFRICA

T 11-645-2506 F 86-522-7425

safhu@beyachad.co.za

SPAIN

Madrid T 91-386-7258

Isaac_tabor@yahoo.com

SWEDEN

T/F 8-665-4949

petergoldmanhome@gmail.com

SWITZERLAND

Zurich T 43-488-6883

info@huj-friends.ch

Geneva T/F 22-732-2567

huniv@bluewin.ch

UNITED KINGDOM

T 020-8349-5757

friends@bfhu.org

www.bfhu.org

UNITED STATES

T 1-800-567-AFHU F 212-809-4430

info@afhu.org

www.afhu.org

URUGUAY

T 2-908-3385 F 2-908-9407

susanamauri@adinet.com.uy

VENEZUELA

T 212-201-7541 F 212-201-7500

mapeloig@activadores.com