Prof. Zaban’s new design offers ten times more surface area, making his new cell a practical choice for solar energy production.

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Breaking News!

$50M Nano-medicine Triplex named!

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From the President

Dear Friends,

The cover story featuring nanotechnology is extremely appropriate, for as we go to press, the exciting news is that, thanks to the outstanding generosity and vision of the Leslie and Susan Gonda (Goldschmied) Foundation, Bar-Ilan’s $50 million Nano-medicine Triplex has been named, through the largest single donation that has ever been contributed to the University – $25 million!

The new 215,000 sq. ft. complex will provide the state-of-the-art home for the University’s ambitious nanotechnology research initiatives, particularly as it applies to issues of health and improving the quality of human life, which Prof. Arie Zaban’s research in solar energy most certainly does. This is part of an unprecedented $150m initiative to establish the largest and most prestigious nanotechnology enterprise in Israel.

As you can see from the broad spectrum of issues covered in this edition, Bar-Ilan University continues to lead the way not only in the natural and life sciences, which is represented here in stories focusing on brain and cancer research, but also in the human sciences. From law to philosophy, Jewish education to gender studies, Bar-Ilan’s outstanding researchers are making an impact, not only in the scholarly world of academia, but also, on society itself. We are extremely proud of this unique balance between world-class research and social action, and see it as a natural extension of the University’s core mission.

What makes BIU so special, I believe, are the people who lead the way – and just a brief walk about our magnificent campus proves the point. Our students, gathered together from all parts of the country and all corners of the world, are what make the University a remarkable place, as you will learn from the highlights which are included in this publication. Each has a very special story, and in their confluence, the rich fabric of the University is enhanced. More important is the contribution that these students make to Israeli and Jewish society.

The Board of Trustees meetings is the appropriate time to celebrate the University’s achievements, and the pictorial included in this edition provides a birds-eye view of the many festivities that were held under its auspices during the 2007 Board.

Bar-Ilan’s many friends and supporters are key stakeholders in the University’s advancement, and we are pleased to have an opportunity to host them on campus and to provide them with a true BIU experience, as illustrated in the many pictures which grace these pages.

As you can see, the University and you, as its extended family, have much reason to be proud.

May we continue to go from strength to strength.

Sincerely,

Prof. Moshe Kaveh
People who follow nanotechnology news have become accustomed to hearing how scientists are making super-small devices even smaller. But here’s a headline from Prof. Arie Zaban, Head of Bar-Ilan University’s Nanotechnology Institute. Using nano-based methods, he’s managed to create a solar cell that’s 100 times bigger than his previous design. So why is this man smiling?

Prof. Zaban is a leading expert in photovoltaics, a technology that uses the sun’s rays to produce electricity. In a recently patented technique, Prof. Zaban demonstrated how metallic wires mounted on conductive glass can form the basis of solar cells that produce electricity with efficiency similar to that of conventional, silicon-based cells, but are much cheaper to produce. Now, this line of research has taken a “giant” step forward. While Prof. Zaban’s earlier efforts produced photovoltaic cells just one square centimeter in size, he has now achieved a cell measuring ten by ten – something that Prof. Zaban says will significantly boost its usefulness in technologies that seek to produce commercial amounts of solar power.

“Initially, we created linked arrays of very small cells, which led to a loss of efficiency because the sunlight hitting the space between the cells was not converted to electricity,” Prof. Zaban explains. “Our new design offers ten times more surface area, which means that more of the array is actively capturing the sun’s energy. This makes our new cell a practical choice for solar energy production.”

Practical solar energy, says Prof. Zaban, depends on both efficiency and cost. Another of his recent discoveries brings costs down by economizing on platinum – an expensive metal embedded on the glass cell’s surface. “We’ve found a way to produce platinum nanodots – tiny crystals measuring only a few nanometers in diameter,” Prof. Zaban explains, adding that this highly reactive metal is an important part...
of his solar cell’s operation. “Thanks to this technique – now under consideration for a patent – we reduce the amount of platinum needed by a factor of 40.”

In his previous research, Prof. Zaban pioneered a low-cost solar technology in which nano-sized particles of an inexpensive semiconductor material are arranged in a sponge-like array on top of flexible plastic sheets. Key to his system is the use of an organic dye that allows the semiconductor-transparent in its natural form – to absorb light.

“Cost is an important factor in the success of any solar technology,” Prof. Zaban says. “To become widely adopted, solar cells must generate electricity at lower cost than what we now spend on fossil fuels. At the same time, we have to make the basic infrastructure extremely affordable – because the third-world countries that stand to reap the most benefit from solar power usually lack the money to invest in it. By making cells more efficient and keeping material costs down, nano-based techniques are moving us closer to that goal.”

Currently, Prof. Zaban serves as an advisor to Orionsolar, a Jerusalem-based company that has entered into partnership with Bar-Ilan and is developing commercial applications for inexpensive, dye-based photovoltaics based on his work. And according to Prof. Zaban, lowering costs are leading to rising expectations in the alternative energy community.

“Given the state of the technology, I believe that the new solar cells will be available commercially within the next five years,” he says. “This will mark the beginning of a whole new path that combines independence from fossil fuels with a greener, more sustainable future.”
The eyes are the mirrors of the soul – this proverb dates back to Cicero, a Roman statesman who lived in the first century BCE. But as we begin the 21st century, Cicero’s romantic estimation has been enhanced by the viewpoint of science, which is more likely to say that eyes – even the most soulful – are actually mirrors of the brain. Visual perception is one of the most-studied neuroscience subjects, and at Bar-Ilan University, vision-related research is revealing how our eyes bridge the gap between the outside world and the world within.

At Bar-Ilan’s Leslie and Susan Gonda (Goldschmied) Multidisciplinary Brain Research Center, Dr. Hamutal Slovin is examining basic structures in the brain that process visual information. “Many scientists are working on artificial vision devices, but progress is slow because the brain is more complex than any computer,” says Dr. Slovin, who joined Bar-Ilan in 2004 after working at the Weizmann Institute under Prof. Amiram Grinvald, a world-renowned expert in brain imaging. “In our lab, we study what I call local CPUs – the brain modules that process visual perception. If we can characterize these modules, it may someday be possible to access them directly.”

The idea of “directly accessing” the brain is not new, and brain stimulation techniques have produced hearing in the deaf. But before this dream can be realized for the blind, scientists must identify vision’s building blocks – something Slovin does with a little help from her friends.

“We work with monkeys,” says Dr. Slovin, adding that her technique – which is completely painless – allows her to observe the electrical impulses that occur in response to visual stimuli. “When the monkeys are shown a particular image, a neural ‘map’ is revealed. These maps are critical to understanding how the brain performs complex functions.”

Dr. Slovin specializes in Voltage
Sensitive Dye Imaging, in which a special dye fluoresces in the presence of neural activity – and glows brighter when more of this activity occurs. Slovin also gathers electrophysiological measurements of brain activity and uses other imaging techniques.

“VSDI is very accurate in terms of both space and time,” says Dr. Slovin, explaining that the method allows her to isolate brain activity taking place in precincts measured in just tens of microns – the area covered by, say, several hundred nerve cells – and to follow this activity at intervals of less than a millisecond – which considering how fast some people change their minds, may be a close approximation of the speed of thought.

Dr. Slovin has shown how the brain establishes functional organization of neural assemblies in real time – for example, the assemblies associated with right- or left-eye dominance. She has also traced neural processes associated with higher visual perception functions.

But alongside this basic research, Dr. Slovin is preparing for that hoped-for device that will make the blind see. “We’re exploring microstimulation – tiny electrical impulses that create neural patterns,” Dr. Slovin says. “If we can artificially create the same patterns associated with sight this will be an important step toward therapeutic computer vision.”

Currently, Dr. Slovin consults with Bar-Ilan researchers from the Departments of Engineering, Mathematics and Computer Science. But she doesn’t rule out more wide-ranging collaborations. “Eventually, neuroscience will map higher brain functions such as language and emotion, and give us a real inside view of psychology,” she says. “For now, we’re just looking at the basics – now you see it, now you don’t.”
Cancer is an elusive killer. But while the exact cause of cancer is still a mystery, more and more is being discovered about how the disease develops at the molecular level. Prof. Uri Nir, Vice Dean of the Mina and Everard Goodman Faculty of Life Sciences, has revealed a "smoking gun," an enzyme that, in several tissue types, plays a pivotal role in cancer onset and progression.

"In normal tissues, there’s a balance between signals that cause cells to replicate, and other signals that induce growth arrest and programmed cell death," Prof. Nir explains. "In cancer, this balance is tipped so that cells start to replicate uncontrollably. It turns out that an important regulator of this ‘tipping point’ is an enzyme called ‘Fer’.

"In our lab, we’ve identified a Fer-based process that occurs only in abnormal cells," says Prof. Nir. "This process is required for the proliferation of abnormal cells in colon, prostate and breast cancers. The fact that this same mechanism appears in all these cancers indicates that we may have found an important molecular junction where normal tissues turn cancerous."

Prof. Nir’s conclusions about what turns cancer "on" were reached using genetic techniques that allowed him to de-activate the Fer enzyme. "We’ve shown that, without the Fer enzyme, the proliferation of prostate carcinoma cells in tissue culture is halted. We’ve had similarly encouraging results using breast and colon cancer cells," says Prof. Nir. Indeed, his group recently discovered that down-regulation of Fer inhibits the progression of prostate tumors in animal models.

The most exciting thing about Prof. Nir’s work is that it provides a clear target for scientists working to develop new anti-cancer drugs. "We are looking for a compound that can bind to the Fer enzyme and prevent it from interacting with other molecules," Prof. Nir says, adding that he is working on a robotic technique that screens for potential Fer inhibitors, making the whole process faster and far less expensive than conventional drug discovery methods. "If we are successful, it
may eventually be possible to use the molecule we find to 'short-circuit' the process that leads to cancer.”

Prof. Nir, in collaboration with two other Bar-Ilan researchers – Prof. Geraldo Byk, an expert in combinatorial chemistry, and biophysicist Dr. Yoav Paas – is working on techniques in which anti-cancer drugs would be attached to a cancer-seeking nano-vehicle. By putting drugs exactly where they are needed, Prof. Nir explains, it will be possible to achieve better results with lower doses, leading to a reduction in the side effects associated with chemotherapy.

“The uniqueness of our program is in the way it combines academic studies with exposure to real-life, practical work in a wide range of biotech companies,” says Prof. Nir, who heads the University’s graduate program in biotechnology. “Students perform research under the joint supervision of an advisor from the Faculty of Life Sciences and a supervisor from industry. Biotechnology is, by its very nature, multidisciplinary, and the program’s curriculum – which includes training in intellectual property law, ethics and business management along with straight science – prepares our graduates to be leaders in this growing area of the Israeli economy.”

And for Prof. Nir, contributing to Israel – and the Jewish people – has always been a priority. “I am at Bar-Ilan because I recognize the important role it plays in bringing different kinds of people together, and introducing them to the beauty of our Jewish heritage,” he says. “My interest in science is connected to my curiosity about God’s creation – which I see as the ultimate source of wisdom – and my desire to make His world a better place.”

And if Prof. Nir’s research brings us one step closer to a cure for cancer, Dayenu.
As a leading Israeli bioethicist, Prof. Noam Zohar grapples with complex, often painful issues that provoke intense public debate. Should limited health funds be used for drugs that prolong life for certain terminal patients – or instead furnish treatments that can significantly improve the quality of life for many others? Should Israel – which, like many countries, provides pre-implantation genetic testing for illnesses such as cystic fibrosis – allow the same technology to be employed also for sex selection for non-medical reasons? What guidelines should be formulated for stem cell research or for treatment decisions in neonatal intensive care? Should Israel legalize direct-to-consumer (DTC) advertising of medical services and products?

In Israel, where the bioethical revolution is only beginning to get underway, Prof. Zohar is highly sought after. The Bar-Ilan philosophy professor has been invited to participate in Israeli Health Ministry commissions and other advisory teams and is a member of Hebrew University’s “Senior Ethics Committee.” At Bar-Ilan University he initiated Israel’s first and only graduate program in bioethics. An ordained rabbi (he pursued Talmudic studies first at Yeshivat Hakotel and then at the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem) and an authority in both General Philosophy and Jewish Philosophy, he devotes special attention to the dialogue between philosophical bioethics and Halakha. Prof. Zohar holds a PhD in philosophy from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Prof. Zohar is slated for the directorship of the new Center for Bioethics and Public Policy – a joint research initiative between Bar-Ilan University and the Gertner Institute for Health Policy. This Center will undertake to serve as a leading voice in the professional and public discourse on a whole range of bioethical issues, and contribute to the formulation of ethical guidelines.
and recommendations for Israeli health policy.

Prof. Zohar believes that Bar-Ilan University, whose strong connection to Jewish tradition reflects a commitment to moral and spiritual concerns, provides a natural venue for bioethics study and research. How fitting, indeed, that the Beit HaRav Jakobovits-Sami Shamoon Centre serves as the home base for the work of Prof. Zohar and his colleagues. After all, the late Lord Rabbi Jakobovits is widely recognized as the founding father of Jewish medical ethics.

A member of the editorial board of the Cambridge Dictionary of Bioethics, Prof. Zohar has taught at the University of Pennsylvania and at Princeton University. He was a faculty fellow at Harvard University’s Center for Ethics and the Professions, and a member of the School of Social Science at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. He is the author of journal articles in Bioethics, the Cambridge Quarterly of Healthcare Ethics, the American Journal of Bioethics and other venues, and of two important books in the field: Alternatives in Jewish Bioethics (SUNY Press 1997) and Quality of Life in Jewish Bioethics (ed., Lexington Books 2006).

As one of a select few Israeli bioethicists, Prof. Zohar is advancing the bioethics revolution in the State of Israel. "Israeli society contains great variety in values and sensibilities with respect to these delicate yet vital issues. I hope to promote deeper understanding among both professionals and laypeople, so that we may have meaningful social discussion and reach satisfactory decisions regarding the diverse bioethical issues we face every day."
Bar-Ilan University’s advancements capture international headlines on an ongoing basis. The following pages include a small sampling of the stories which have recently made the news.

All photo captions are from left to right unless otherwise noted.

BIU NEWS

BIU RESEARCH
ONE OF THE TOP 6 ARCHAEOLOGY STORIES OF 2006

Every year, DISCOVER digs through reams of newspapers and gigabytes of Web sites to find the 100 most important and interesting science stories of the year. BIU’s Prof. Mordechai Kislev’s discovery that figs found at Jericho are the first cultivated crop is among the top six stories. Dated at 11,400 years old, the figs are much smaller than modern ones. Closer analysis revealed that the ancient figs were seedless. Seedless fig trees, like common modern bananas, could not reproduce without human help, Kislev reasons: “Fig trees could have been the first domesticated plant of the Neolithic Revolution.”

Prof. Kislev was in the news again with his article published in National Geographic, Israel, about his discovery that people who lived over 2,000 years ago ate the same kinds of olives we eat today. “We found that the olive pit has traits that allow us to characterize the species of the tree on which it grew, even after thousands of years” said Prof. Kislev. “We found two kinds of olives that people from the Massada period used to eat which are still very common in Israel today and haven’t changed for thousands of years.” Prof. Kislev, of BIU’s Mina and Everard Goodman Faculty of Life Sciences, performed his research jointly with archaeologists from the Martin (Szusz) Department of Land of Israel Studies and Archaeology. “This discovery will enable us to learn in greater detail about the food people ate in ancient times.”

Decoding the Dead Sea Scrolls

The National Geographic Channel screened a television special recently on the subject of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Among the experts interviewed was BIU archaeologist Prof. Hanan Eshel of the Martin (Szusz) Department of Land of Israel Studies and Archaeology. The TV special examined the modern-day impact of these ancient treasures, and how 60 years after their discovery, they are still revealing new clues and shedding new light on the world as it was 2,000 years ago. Prof. Eshel recently discovered a new Dead Sea Scroll.
International Women of Courage Award

Dr. Ruth Halperin-Kaddari, director of BIU’s Rackman Center for the Advancement of the Status of Women at the Faculty of Law, was the recipient of this year’s prestigious U.S. Secretary of State’s International Women of Courage Award (Globes). She was presented this award by senior US State officials, on behalf of US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, at the residence of the US Ambassador to Israel Richard H. Jones. “The award is being given to Dr. Halperin-Kaddari for her social leadership and her work for the advancement of women and social change in Israel by means of her expertise in feminism and law,” said Ambassador Jones.

A Record at Bar-Ilan University:
214 New Doctorates

This year 214 PhD’s were granted to graduates in all fields of research, a record number for Bar-Ilan University. As in previous years, the majority of doctoral recipients were women (60% this year). The number of doctoral recipients at BIU has increased dramatically over the last several years. BIU President Prof. Moshe Kaveh announced a $1,000 award for encouraging excellence in research, and establishing a fund for post-doctorates which will allow the best of them to attend prestigious universities abroad, qualifying them as researchers and staff members upon their return to Bar-Ilan.

“Omniversity” – New Business Leadership Program Established

In a ground-breaking move, a group of employees with excellent management potential from the hi-tech firm Omnitech, joined a special BIU program in Business Leadership. During the 10 months of the “Omniversity” program, students took part in classes and participated in special projects within their working environment. Omnitech is pleased with the outcome of this program so far, and plans to send more employees to BIU to participate in “Omniversity”.

Bar-Ilan University Law Faculty Takes the Lead!

BIU’s Faculty of Law ranked first this year among all Israeli universities and colleges and universities abroad whose students passed their bar exam in the first sitting. 98% of Bar-Ilan students who took the bar exam for the first time passed it successfully, leaving Tel-Aviv University and the Hebrew University behind (Maariv, Yedio). Among the factors leading to this success: the faculty’s dynamic dean, Prof. Yaffa Zilbershatz, an International and Constitutional Law expert and the first woman to hold this position; the small number of students per class; the helpful guidance of law lecturers; and free preparation courses given by the faculty.
For people who suffer from familial dysautonomia (FD), hope came recently in the form of an Israeli chicken egg. In 2001, a team led by BIU Prof. Ron Goldstein of the Mina and Everard Goodman Faculty of Life Sciences implanted human embryonic stem cells into chicken embryos to study the early stages of normal cellular development. Now, Goldstein is using embryonic stem cells to create FD-carrying human nerve cells in an attempt to better understand how the degenerative genetic disease works and to test possible treatments.

Internet Looks like a Jellyfish

A team of Israeli researchers have created a new map of the Internet that reveals the worldwide network in more detail than ever before. “The Internet evolves in a distributed manner, and therefore its structure is unknown,” Shai Carmi, a BIU doctoral student (under the supervision of physicist Prof. Shlomo Havlin) who participated in the research, told TechNewsWorld. “The goal of this project was to get a better understanding.” The new map was published in the July 3 edition of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

At its most coarsely grained level, known as the “Autonomous Systems level,” the Internet contains about 20,000 nodes. In analyzing the connections among those nodes, the Bar-Ilan team found that the Internet has three principal components, comparable pictorially to a diagram of a jellyfish, Carmi explained.

The result is not just a better understanding of the Internet’s structure today, but also a way to predict and track changes over time. Perhaps more importantly, the new map will help researchers develop more efficient routing practices, Carmi said. Shai Carmi is the recipient of the prestigious “Adam” scholarship, which will help fund his doctoral studies.

The Chicken or the Egg?

The discovery of a new method of killing the parasite that causes sleeping sickness could lead to a drug that eliminates the disease. In the latest issue of EMBO, Dr. Shulamit Michaeli and colleagues in the Mina and Everard Goodman Faculty of Life Sciences, describe a pathway that shuts down the synthesis of spliced leader RNA (SL RNA), leading to the death of the parasite. Exposing the parasite to physiological stress, such as low pH, can trigger the pathway.

TREATING STERILITY IN MEN

Unique equipment at BIU’s Male Fertility Laboratory enables men, formerly considered sterile, to successfully conceive, it was recently reported. The treatment is based on the selection of sperm cells with the help of a novel diagnostic system which magnifies sperm 6,600-fold, executed by BIU internationally-renowned biochemist and fertility researcher Prof. Benjamin Bartoo. This magnification helps in selecting appropriate sperm cells, and does not break them in the process. A 43% success rate has been noted in the Male Fertility Laboratory since implementing this method.

STRESS KILLS SLEEPING SICKNESS PARASITES

For people who suffer from familial dysautonomia (FD), hope came recently in the form of an Israeli chicken egg. In 2001, a team led by BIU Prof. Ron Goldstein of the Mina and Everard Goodman Faculty of Life Sciences implanted human embryonic stem cells into chicken embryos to study the early stages of normal cellular development. Now, Goldstein is using embryonic stem cells to create FD-carrying human nerve cells in an attempt to better understand how the degenerative genetic disease works and to test possible treatments.
According to Prof. Shmuel Shulman of BIU’s Department of Psychology, one third of Israeli young adults are having trouble “finding themselves” (The Jerusalem Post). At a recent BIU conference entitled: “Exploration and Confusion in Emerging Adulthood: The Onrush to India as an Example,” Prof. Shulman and his colleagues revealed that many people in their 20s, referred to by Shulman as “emerging adults” have difficulties in making commitments. The decision-making gets harder since these emerging adults have more choices and less direction.

“They also live in an insecure environment,” Shulman explains, and as a result, they travel overseas to places like India “to find themselves.” Some of these emerging adults return with the knowledge of what they want to do with their lives, while some do not and many have problems committing to relationships.

Jewish Identity

A new report, published by BIU’s Dr. Asher Cohen of the Department of Political Studies, shows an increase in Jewish identity and traditional observance. This increase is taking place despite the mass aliyah from the former Soviet Union – the majority of which is non-observant.

Revitalizing Yiddish Culture in Eastern Russia

Thousands of miles east of European Russia, the Jewish Autonomous Region of Birobidzhan was founded in 1934 as a “homeland” for Soviet Jews. With a population of 50,000 at its peak, it was a remarkable and creative center of Yiddish civilization, before fading to a small Jewish outpost.

Today, at the request of the Birobidzhan Far Eastern State Academy for Humanities and Social Studies, Dr. Boris Kotlerman of BIU’s Rena Costa Center for Yiddish Studies hopes to revitalize Yiddish culture through the “International Summer Program for Yiddish Language and Culture.” The program will bring participants from around the world – applications and interested queries have been received from Japan, France, Germany, the US and Israel – to study over the summer at a new center established in the Academy’s Faculty of Foreign Languages. As part of the new initiative, the Academy is also founding a new research institute for the study of Yiddish language and culture.
As Israel’s sole female medievalist teaching Jewish History in a university department, Dr. Elisheva Baumgarten is determined to change the narrative of Jewish History. The dynamic, young Bar-Ilan social historian is expanding the traditional focus on men to embrace Jewish society’s other half, women, who played a key role in ensuring Jewish survival. Meshing her two academic passions – Jewish History and Gender Studies – she aspires to give medieval women a voice.

“Thirty years ago, many scholars would have argued that asking where women were in the hierarchy of society was a non-issue,” observes Dr. Baumgarten. “The feminist revolution brought an end to this worldview. Feminist scholars refused to accept a past in which women were not present,” she says, noting that women always appeared in the sources, but were simply not sought out “both because they usually were not leaders and they left almost no written contribution to intellectual history.”

Dr. Baumgarten aims to redress this disparity through “cracking the code” in rabbinic and other medieval texts – reading through the “filters that male writers have fashioned, since they were writing for male audiences.” Since joining the BIU faculty in 2001, Dr. Baumgarten divides her time between the Department of Jewish History and the Gender Studies Program. “It’s a dream job,” says Dr. Baumgarten, who also serves as the director of Bar-Ilan’s Fanya Gottesfeld Heller Center for the Study of Women in Judaism, which advances research and runs conferences on gender and Judaism. She also presents papers at conferences around the globe, from Kalamazoo, Michigan to Frankfurt, Germany.
Dr. Baumgarten contends that studying gender – comparing men to women in society – broadens the horizons of historical inquiry. It provides “an excellent locus for comparative history, viewing women not only as recipients of cultural ideas and artifacts, but also as active participants in the creation and establishment of traditions and practices.”

Her study, “The Business of Holy Matrimony: Jewish Marriage in Medieval Europe,” granted a German Israel Foundation 2006 Young Scientist Award, aims to provide the first comprehensive, comparative social and cultural history of marriage in medieval Ashkenaz. It includes a detailed comparison between Jewish and Christian marriage practices.

An Israeli Science Foundation grant, as well as awards from the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture and the Hadassah Brandeis Institute, have supported her forthcoming novel research on “Piety and Gender: Religion and Practice in Medieval Jewish Society.” This study showcases the religious practices of women, comparing both Jewish and Christian societies and men and women’s deeds.

Dr. Baumgarten, who lives in Jerusalem with her husband and three children, is committed to the feminist challenge of “exposing” medieval women. With her bilingual background in English and Hebrew (she emigrated from North America as a teen) and her working knowledge of French, German and Latin, Dr. Baumgarten has no difficulty pouring over medieval manuscripts, Responsa and Talmudic texts. In fact, she regularly helps her 13-year old son with his Gemara homework. She hopes her research will provide a new understanding of the Jewish family of yesteryear, enriching both Judaic and medieval studies.

Dr. Baumgarten’s pioneering research quests have already gained wide acclaim and prestigious awards. Mothers and Children, Jewish Family Life in Medieval Europe (Princeton 2004) won the 2005 Koret Jewish Book Award in History and was runner-up of the 2005 National Jewish Book Award in the category of Women’s Studies. The book draws on a rich trove of primary sources to give a full portrait of medieval Jewish family life during the period of childhood.

The Mother’s Seven Sons: Photo courtesy of Hamburg Staats-und Universitätsbibliothek, Cod. Heb. 73, fol. 97b, Germany, 1427

Isaac’s Circumcision: Regensburg Pentateuch, Israel Museum, Jerusalem, Cod. 081/25, fol. 81b, Germany, around 1300
Dr. Ehud Weiss

Bar-Ilan’s new resident expert in the frontier field of Archaeobotany (aka palaeoethnobotany), Dr. Ehud (“Udi”) Weiss, scrutinizes thousands of plant remains from archaeological sites in order to learn about life in antiquity. For example, a peach pit or peppercorn found in the ruins of an ancient home suggests that the inhabitants were from society’s elite, who could afford such luxury imports.

Dr. Weiss – formerly a MacCurdy post-doctoral Fellow in Old World Prehistory and Palaeoanthropology at Harvard University – represents a new breed: archaeological scientists who uniquely harness 21st century methods and tools from the “hard” sciences (e.g. physics, chemistry, biology) for exploring archaeological and historical remains. He and two colleagues – Dr. Ruth Shachak-Gross (Geo-archaeology) and Dr. Elisabetta Boaretto (Carbon 14 Dating) – are part of Bar-Ilan’s special collaborative venture with the Weizmann Institute of Science, which enables them to conduct novel multidisciplinary research, working in tandem with field archaeologists from Bar-Ilan’s new Institute of Biblical Archaeology. They also teach courses in their specialty areas in the Martin (Szusz) Department of Land of Israel Studies and Archaeology, within the framework of Bar-Ilan’s double-major program in archaeological science – the first of its kind in Israel and among a select few in the world.

Dr. Weiss’ pioneering research focuses on the interaction between environment, economy and human society in antiquity, reconstructed according to archaeobotanical findings. One hot topic that Dr. Weiss has been extensively exploring concerns the beginning of agriculture – what he calls “one of the most important developments in human history, with enormous consequences that paved the way for settled life and complex society.” As lead author of a groundbreaking article in the prestigious journal, Science, Dr. Weiss presents an entirely new concept based on archaeobotanical evidence

The beginning of agriculture is “one of the most important developments in human history, with enormous consequences that paved the way for settled life and complex society.”
that he and his colleagues, Prof. Mordechai Kislev and Dr. Anat Hartmann, have found. They posit that early Near Eastern crop cultivation (circa 11,000 BCE) was not a single "big bang" event but a process of trial and error. Some crops, like barley and lentils, continued until full domestication, while others, like oats and rye, were abandoned and millennia later, adopted independently by distant societies.

Much of his earlier research centers on findings from Ohalo II, a 23,000-year-old Stone Age camp on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, which was excavated by Dr. D. Nadel of Haifa University. Through analyzing plant remains, Dr. Weiss and colleagues have made breakthroughs in our understanding of prehistoric lifestyles. In a 2004 Nature article, Dr. Weiss and Dr. Dolores Piperno of the Smithsonian Institute, Washington DC, describe how our hunter and gatherer ancestors already ground cereal grains on a grinding stone and enjoyed the dietary advantage of baked food. Dr. Weiss notes that these remains also represent the earliest evidence for considerable use of wild grasses in the human diet, pushing back the dietary shift to grains some 10,000 years earlier than previously recognized.

The "interior design" of Ohalo's brush huts mirrors the modern conception of domestic space. As Dr. Weiss and colleagues documented in PNAS (Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences) 2004, the thick grass bunches arranged in a tile-like manner is the earliest in situ example of the contemporary practice of making the sleeping area comfortable. This soft layer is absent in the center of the hut – the kitchen.

Dr. Weiss obtained both his undergraduate degree (Life Sciences and Land of Israel Studies) and doctorate (Land of Israel Studies and Archaeology) at Bar-Ilan University. His MSc is from the Institute of Archaeology at University College in London.

"Part of our obligation as scientists is to use this data to connect people to their past," says Dr. Weiss, who thinks it especially fitting that such research is underway at an institution such as Bar-Ilan University, which so reveres the Jewish past.
What criteria should judges consider when sentencing an offender – the danger posed to society? The deterrent factor? The severity of the crime? The criminal past?

How may the Israeli legal system minimize widespread disparity in judicial decisions of sentencing, often even in similar cases? How may we bring about more just and fair judgments without depriving Israeli courts of their autonomy?

These are some of the fundamental questions confronting Bar-Ilan jurisprudent, Dr. Ruth Kannai – an authority on Israeli judicial discretion in sentencing. Championing the cause for a more uniform approach in sentencing, Dr. Kannai is working to formulate recommended guidelines for Israeli adjudicators that will help achieve that aim. Her lawful pursuits assume special import at a time of growing dissatisfaction with the sentencing process taking place within legal courts around the globe. While radical reforms have occurred in many countries, Israel still lags behind.

“In Israel, up until the 1990s, the sentencing process was exclusively discussed within the context of criminology research but not by scholars from law faculties,” notes Dr. Kannai. Her contribution has been to open up the legal discussion of sentencing. She conducts extensive research on the subject and trains the next generation of legal experts, through a special course that she herself developed.

Active in this area for more than a decade, she was a member of a 1997 public commission on judicial discretion in sentencing, which was chaired by the then Supreme Court Justice Eliezer Goldberg. The commission’s influential report led to the enactment of a new bill: Amendment 92 of the Criminal Code (guidelines for judicial consideration on sentencing) 2006.

Together with Prof. Uri Schild from the Department of Computer Science, Dr. Kannai received the 2005 prize from the Israeli Minister of Public Security for a novel computer program.
which evaluates an offender’s previous record. This computer system for sentencing support may help the judiciary in passing sentences of great uniformity, without impairing their freedom and independence. It undertakes to bring about more just and fair sentencing and might ultimately lead to a reduction in the number of cases being appealed, thus easing pressure on Israel’s overloaded courts.

In March 2007, Dr. Kannai co-chaired a special workshop on sentencing, which included a session devoted to the new bill: Amendment 92 of the Criminal Code (guidelines for judicial consideration on sentencing). The workshop brought together legal scholars from around Israel for an in depth examination of sentencing considerations, the victim’s role, and the criminal record.

Dr. Kannai, who recently co-authored (together with Lea Vizel) a report on euthanasia for the International Academy of Comparative Law, received her LLB from Hebrew University summa cum laude, and both her LLM magna cum laude and her PhD summa cum laude from Bar-Ilan University.

With a determined focus on the Israeli courts, Dr. Ruth Kannai hopes to effect change as she promotes the case for a more uniform and fair sentencing process and a more just society.
Almost sixty years after the founding of the State, Jewish settlement has again emerged as one of the world’s most fiercely contested issues. As the arguments grow ever louder, Prof. Yossi Katz – a leading expert on the settlement movement – is making a quiet, and highly effective contribution: he has written 20 books about the Land, the State, and Zionist history. By revealing the hidden story behind the Zionist enterprise, Prof. Katz hopes to contribute to the ideological strength of modern Israel – strength that he says will make a critical difference in the challenging years ahead.

"Israelis tend to see things in black and white – or more specifically, right and left,” says Prof. Katz, 53, former Head of Bar-Ilan’s Department of Geography, who is a long-time resident of the Gush Etzion settlement of Efrat. “But in historical perspective, things are much more complex. For example, my research shows that the pre-state Yishuv prepared a partition plan for sharing the land. Although the Arabs rejected it at the time, the plan became the basis for proposals floated by subsequent Israeli governments. So as much as the right would like to blame the left for our current troubles, ‘Land for Peace’ did not begin with Oslo.”

Holder of an endowed Chair for the Study of the History and Activities of the Jewish National Fund, Prof. Katz is the pre-eminent historian of that organization. His books cover subjects never before studied, such as his latest, *Heart and Stone: The Story of the Military Tombstone in Israel 1948 – 2006*, published this past April. In the more “mainstream” field of Holocaust studies, Prof. Katz made headlines when he uncovered records of pre-State bank accounts and property owned by Jewish victims of the Nazis – leading to a Knesset commission of inquiry and efforts to transfer these assets to the victims’ descendants.

“In Zionist ideology, spiritual motivation is critical, and I want to put this spirit back into the public discourse,” says Katz, adding that, in his opinion, Zionism should form the spiritual backbone of Israeli culture. “Along with telling people about the past, I want to influence those charged with maintaining the Jewish future of this country.”
Prof. Katz studies another settlement movement – in Canada. “The Hutterites are a Christian pacifist sect related to the Anabaptists,” explains Prof. Katz, who spent three sabbatical years at York and McGill Universities. “They fled Europe because of their religious beliefs, and formed hundreds of villages where – like the Israeli kibbutz – all property was held in common.” Prof. Katz – the first researcher ever given access to the Hutterites’ archives – recently published By Their Faith Shall They Live - The Hutterite Colonies in North America 1874 – 2006.

Prof. Katz sees an honest reckoning of Israel’s past as essential to the country’s future. “The JNF was formed to take land purchases out of the hands of individuals, and make preserving the land for the Jewish people a national priority,” Prof. Katz says. “I’m against privatization because if we’re not careful, the Land of Israel could literally be sold out from under our feet.”

Despite years of research about Israel’s origins, for Prof. Katz, Zionism is far from academic. He was the driving force behind Bar-Ilan’s decision to allocate aid money for Gush Katif refugees, and also organized volunteers during last summer’s Lebanon war. As he explains it, activism and scholarship are two sides of the same coin.

“In Zionist ideology, spiritual motivation is critical, and I want to put this spirit back into the public discourse,” says Prof. Katz, adding that, in his opinion, Zionism should form the spiritual backbone of Israeli culture. “Along with telling people about the past, I want to influence those charged with maintaining the Jewish future of this country.”
From her Israeli base at Bar-Ilan’s Rabbi Dr. Joseph H. Lookstein Center for Jewish Education in the Diaspora, Dr. Deborah Court works to improve the quality and efficacy of Jewish education in North America, starting from the top. The model Principals’ Program that she directs provides Jewish day school administrators from all religious streams with a unique professional development opportunity, including an Israeli summer seminar and a winter follow-up in the US, and a year-long, in-school action research project.

“It’s a lonely job to be a day school leader, being pulled in so many directions by board members, parents, staff,” observes Court, head of the Curriculum Department at Bar-Ilan’s School of Education. “I see the need they have for a professional community.” The former Canadian teacher and day school principal, who joined the Bar-Ilan academic faculty in 1997, notes that after the program ends, participants remain connected via Lookstein’s e-community – the world’s largest and most active network of Jewish educators.

Now in its 9th year, the Principals’ Program has enriched the careers of over 200 school heads, principals and assistant principals from Phoenix, Denver, Chicago, New York, Toronto, Miami, Los Angeles and other cities, earning “top marks” as well as generous grants from the AVI CHAI Foundation.

Since coming aboard three years ago as director, Dr. Court has redesigned the Principals’ Program into a yearlong format, with a decided systematic approach. Court trains participants to look with “anthropological eyes” at their own school culture, in order to understand values, norms and behaviors and how these help and hinder change. “Any change that we introduce which doesn’t fit the culture is doomed to failure,” says Court, whose academic research and writing focus on school and classroom cultures, and educational leadership in Israel and North America.

The ten-day Israeli summer seminar, says Court, “is incredibly enriching,” featuring presentations by outstanding academics and practitioners, and facilitated discussions and workshops in such areas as curriculum, staff development and school governance. It typically opens with a session focusing on diverse music conducting as a metaphor for leadership styles and a “way in” to each participant’s
examination of his or her leadership. Participants tour the Old City and other key sites, study Torah texts and enjoy a traditional Shabbat experience together.

The 20 participants selected each year come from Jewish day schools from all religious streams. “For many, this is the first time that they are mixing in a professional way,” relates Dr. Court. Throughout the year, each participant is guided by a Lookstein mentor in implementing an action research plan to effect real educational change in their schools. Recent research projects have focused on reducing attrition through investigating causes and planning remedies; teaching Jewish ethics through both formal and informal curricula; and increasing commitment in prayer. Change is a long-term process, but many participants already report the beginnings of real change in themselves and their schools.

The Principals’ Program is making a vital contribution as it nurtures a “culture of professional development” among those seeking to ensure Jewish continuity through education. Staffed with former North American Jewish educators, this unique Lookstein venture “serves as a bridge between Israel and the Diaspora,” says Dr. Court.
In October 2006 Londoner Sarah Balas realized her dream and moved to Israel – and university studies at Bar-Ilan. “For the first two months, I didn’t understand much,” recalls the psychology major. Sitting next to Israelis, Sarah enlisted their help, while improving her Hebrew in a weekly Bar-Ilan Ulpan. “It was a gradual process, and then one day I realized that I understood what was going on.”

Sarah (20) is one of a growing number of young Anglo olim who leave family and familiar surroundings and head straight for Bar-Ilan University. Infused with a genuine love for Israel, these 21st century student pioneers enroll alongside native sabras in a broad range of university programs, determined to make the grade.

In the 2006/2007 Academic Year, Anglos accounted for nearly a quarter of Bar-Ilan’s immigrant student population of 700. Currently, this figure has risen to an unprecedented high of nearly 40%.

Ben Nash, 25, from Seattle, Washington, enrolled in Bar-Ilan’s semester-long Mechina (Preparatory Program) in January 2004. He quickly picked up Hebrew and is doing well in his classes at the Martin (Szusz) Department of Land of Israel Studies and Archaeology. “I had an average conservative Jewish upbringing,” says Ben, whose love affair with Israel began two years ago while on a Birthright tour. “So taking Bar-Ilan’s Basic Jewish Studies component was a plus.”

Ben insists that Bar-Ilan is “the best place for olim. Once people realize you are an English speaker they want to help. I have so many Shabbat invitations. I feel that I have integrated more than many olim – having done army and university,” adds Ben, who served in the reserves during the 2006 Lebanon War. As a volunteer English tutor for teens, he is “repaying Israel for the free education I receive as a new immigrant.” Ben, who spent the past two summers excavating at a Biblical site, hopes to also study for a government tour guide license.

Ben’s classmate, Rivke Rubinstein (22) is completing her BA degree three years after arriving from Cleveland, Ohio. “It was definitely worth the initial struggle,”
she says. Drawn to Bar-Ilan by the “large American constituency” and her department’s special focus on “biblical and Jewish aspects of archaeology,” Rivke finds it exciting to visit ancient sites and “relive history” at places such as Qumran – “we climbed up to the cave where Dead Sea Scroll fragments were found and there, our professor recounted the story of their discovery.”

Talya Adler, who made the move from West Hartford, Connecticut, was attracted to Bar-Ilan because of its “Optometry program not offered in most other places.” The biggest pull, she notes “is the large group of olim here, making for a good support system.” Talya, who performed National Service at the Aliyah organization, Nefesh B’Nefesh, enthuses “I’m very happy with my classes and the beautiful campus.”

Shimi Weiss (24) from Atlantic City, NJ, is finishing his BA studies in English Literature. He aspires to fill Israel’s need for “enthusiastic English teachers.” Education is in his blood – his Rabbi father is a principal, and his mother and several siblings are teachers. In fact, sister Sarah is a Bar-Ilan alumna, who directed a play on campus and married an Australian-born actor who is pursuing his PhD at their alma mater. In good family tradition, Shimi met his actress wife, Miriam, an immigrant from Chicago while directing a play for the English-language Bar-Ilan Acting Society (BIAS). The couple lives with their infant son near the University, where Shimi’s younger brother Yoni is now studying accounting.

Shimi, who attended an Israeli Yeshiva and served in the IDF’s Artillery Corps, says that at BIU you have a “real Hevra, especially with other Anglos who can give advice or empathize.” The University’s Olim Division is wonderful, he relates, echoing the sentiments of many other immigrant students. “Even if it’s just to go there and vent or to help us cut through the red tape.”

As Assistant to the Dean and Head of the Olim Division, Zehava Glanz oversees registration, orientation and tutoring while doing a fair share of troubleshooting. “Kol Hakavod that they are willing to leave family, friends, and comforts to come to Israel and study in a different language and culture,” says Zehava, adding. “After finishing their studies they often remain in touch for years. Recently, a Mexican woman said she remembers me when she was a student. Now her daughter is on campus.”
Eti Yoles: Integrating Science and Success

Bar-Ilan graduate Eti Yoles, Vice President for R&D at Proneuron Biotechnologies, has a lot to be proud about. Her company was recently awarded $430,000 by the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research. The company's success is largely due to its integrated approach, something that Eti Yoles picked up during her doctoral training at Bar-Ilan's Leslie and Susan Gonda (Goldschmied) Multidisciplinary Brain Research Center.

“I did both my undergraduate and graduate degrees at Bar-Ilan,” says Dr. Yoles, a grandmother of five who was raised in Bnei Brak and now lives in Beit Gamliel. “From my PhD advisor Prof. Avraham Mayevsky, I learned techniques that allow simultaneous examination of electrical, chemical and metabolic activity in the living brain. Today, I use a similar approach to study neurodegenerative diseases, such as Parkinson’s.”

Dr. Yoles’ training landed her a plum post-doc with Prof. Michal Schwartz, a Weizmann Institute researcher who made headlines by showing how the autoimmune response – usually associated with disease – might be harnessed to protect the central nervous system (CNS) from secondary damage stemming from injury. With Dr. Yoles on board, Prof. Schwartz’s work took an important step forward.

“When you want to see how the CNS works, you can’t just look at isolated cells. You need integrated models of how the various cells in the brain respond to each other,” says Dr. Yoles, who together with Schwartz, used in-vivo animal models to understand the involvement of the immune system in CNS damage and repair. These advances are being developed into clinical therapies by Proneuron Biotechnologies, a privately-held company that develops products for the treatment of acute and chronic disorders of the central nervous system based on modulating the interaction between the nervous and the immune systems.

Dr. Yoles credits Bar-Ilan with her earliest exposure to the interdisciplinary attitude that would later mark her career. “I was always interested in chemistry, and attended Bar-Ilan Youth Science programs,” she recalls. “My teacher introduced us to how chemistry is a driving force in biology. It’s a lesson I’ve never forgotten.”
Talk about high-flying careers. Yael Katan has shot up through the ranks since her first aviation job, reaching her destination ahead of schedule by being named General Manager of British Airways Israel before the age of forty. According to Katan, her success is built on a commitment to customer service – something that has grown with every step up the industrial ladder.

“As a stewardess, I learned that the most important thing is to listen to people and understand their needs,” Katan says. “This is true whether you’re taking care of one person who lost his luggage, or directing an entire staff.”

Katan joined British Airways in 1993, and five years later – when she was already working as the company’s Marketing Manager – began Bar-Ilan’s Executive MBA program. The program – which concentrated all classes into two days per week – fit her busy schedule. But Bar-Ilan also gave her a fresh perspective on management concepts she had already picked up on the job.

“I am traditional, but not religious, and had some doubts about Bar-Ilan’s required courses in Judaism,” Katan says. “But I was surprised by how much I enjoyed studying the relationship between secular and Jewish law. I realized how the rabbis’ rulings relate to decisions that we – as business people – make on a daily basis.”

In 2000, Katan was transferred to Zurich to manage BA’s Internet Division for Eastern Europe and E. Mediterranean. She says the position helped give her the global perspective needed to market BA’s Israel-based routes.

“Israel is a very special market,” she says, pointing out that after a post-9/11 downturn, BA has bounced back to record levels. “Even in a crisis, Diaspora Jews and Christian tourists – like Israeli business people and leisure travelers – want the comfortable economy options BA has to offer. Today, we’re one of the leading carriers in Israel, and I believe this will only get better.”
Rabbi Sharon Shalom made aliya from Ethiopia in 1982. He was alone and eight years old. The dominant Judaism in Israel, he discovered, differed from the Judaism of Beta Yisrael, the Jewish community of Ethiopia. So he began to ask: “What are my minhagim (obligatory customs)?”

The variance can be striking. While chicken cooked in milk was forbidden outside of Ethiopia, in Ethiopia it was permitted; and while Yom Kippur overrode the prohibition against fasting on Shabbat outside of Ethiopia, in Ethiopia Jews made kiddush and tasted very small quantities of food as their way of avoiding transgressing the Sabbath. Beta Yisrael also maintained strict regulations for purity.

Practices diverged after the destruction of the Second Temple. In response to exile, the sages of Israel and Babylonia transformed Judaism. This process was unknown to the Jews isolated in Ethiopia. Beta Yisrael, therefore, maintained minhagim which, according to the Talmudic record, pre-date the destruction.

“So,” asks Rabbi Shalom, “are Ethiopian Jews obligated [to follow the later customs]?” He continues: “We don’t want Ethiopians to become a cult,” marginalized by their practices. However, in Orthodox Jewish practice, “ideally one continues his own received tradition.”

Shalom’s question bloomed into a desire for synthesis of the Ethiopian legacy and Talmudic Judaism. “We need integration,” he says. After serving as one of the first Beta Yisrael officers in the IDF, he commenced rabbinical studies at world-renown Har Etzion Yeshiva and became the first Beta Yisrael rabbi ordained by the Israeli rabbinate. He soon completed his MA in Talmud at Bar-Ilan University. Now Rabbi Shalom teaches in yeshivas, lectures around the world, and charges forward with his PhD studies at Bar-Ilan. He intends to research the Beta Yisrael wisdom tradition in relation to minhagim and will teach “Law, Custom, and Tradition in the Ethiopian Community.”

Rabbi Sharon and his wife Avital (who as a child made aliya from Switzerland) have two sons. They live in Kiryat Gat, a place they chose for its diversity and potential for Jewish unity.
Dr. Zehavit Gross is no stranger to addressing academic audiences, either in Israel or as a guest lecturer abroad. But the Bar-Ilan University Education lecturer felt a special thrill when she was asked to address the UN recently on the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. She was invited as a representative of the official Israeli delegation to the 51st session of the Commission of the Status of Women (CSW).

“When the President of the General Assembly invited me to the podium I was very moved,” relates Dr. Gross. “I thought to myself that when my father and grandparents left the concentration camps, they would never have thought that over sixty years later their daughter/granddaughter would be giving an official address to an international body such as the UN on behalf of a Jewish State – Israel. If my grandmother would have been asked about it then she would have turned her eyes to heaven and would have said that that could only happen in the days of the Messiah. I feel privileged to live in these important days and therefore am all the more committed to Jewish continuity and Jewish education.”

Just a few days after the UN session, Dr. Gross was invited to participate in the Orthodox Forum in New York – the Annual Meeting of the Rabbinical Leadership in North America – organized by Yeshiva University. There she presented research concerning the attitude of religious Zionist adolescents to the State of Israel after the disengagement.

Dr. Gross received her BA, MA and PhD from Bar-Ilan with highest honors possible. At the Churgin School of Education, she teaches qualitative study methodology for graduate students and problems in Jewish education in the secular schools in Israel, among other courses. She is an expert in a unique research field – the education of Jewish and Arab religious girls in the State of Israel. A Mozes S. Schupf Foundation Fellow and the recipient of a number of academic prizes, Dr. Gross’s most recent coup was winning the prestigious Award for Research in Peace Education from the Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Research at Tel Aviv University.
Seeing the Light at the End of the Tunnel

When Zara* started studying at Bar-Ilan University, it was, for the young woman, the realization of a dream. But although she was achieving her academic goals, Zara was deeply unhappy. As a young child in Ethiopia she had sustained a disfiguring eye injury which strongly affected her self-esteem. In despair, she consulted a social worker at Bar-Ilan's Maria & Joel Finkle Student Counseling Center who sent Zara to an ophthalmologist. He recommended surgery and a glass eye – all far too drastic and exorbitant for her to consider. Then the social worker contacted Dr. Kenneth Koslowe, of Bar-Ilan's Optometry Studies Program.

After a thorough examination of Zara's eye, Dr. Koslowe felt that the problem could be solved with a specially designed cosmetic contact lens – to be supplied free of charge, as a service of the Optometry Clinic. The lens had a tremendous impact on Zara's life. As Dr. Shraga Zim, Director of the Student Counseling Center (who is himself blind!) wrote: "The change that you instrumented provides the hope for our ability to start to help her psychologically. Without (the lens) I doubt if there would be too much light at the end of the tunnel as far as psychological help is possible."

Dr. Koslowe has more moving stories to relate in his role as Director of the Optometry Program's Vision Therapy Clinic. For instance, he relates: "Ours was the only optometry program involved in the Special Olympics Healthy Athlete Program (which took place May 29th in Tel-Aviv). We were part of a multi-disciplinary health team that examined 1,000 athletes as part of the selection process for the Israeli team to be sent to Beijing for the 2007 World Special Olympics." Dr. Koslowe was a member of the medical team at the 2003 World Special Olympics which took place in Dublin.

Dr. Kenneth Koslowe has an OD in Optometry from Pennsylvania College of Optometry and an MS in Educational Psychology from Yeshiva University. He practiced for twenty years at the Sheba Medical Center Eye Clinic, fifteen years at Herzliya Remedial Reading Center and five years at the Kfar Saba Psychological Clinic, before joining Bar-Ilan six years ago to help establish the Optometry Program.

The Optometry Program provides free examinations and subsidized glasses and/or contact lenses to everyone who needs them. The 4-year program (including one year of clinical work) has provided over 300 students with the country's only university-based BSc degree in Optometry. Bar-Ilan is now in the final planning stages of establishing a Master's Program in Visual Science/Optometry.

*not her real name
A Community Interpreter Articulates Immigrants’ Needs

On Sunday evenings, BIU Political Studies major, Ortal Hadar, travels to the O.L.E.I club for Latin American immigrants in Bat Yam. There she helps the Hebrew-challenged communicate their needs and gain fuller access to Israeli legal, health, education, government, and social services.

Translating documents, drafting letters and serving as their mouthpiece, she helps the Spanish-speakers negotiate with their Hebrew surroundings, saving them time, money, frustration and even pain. She escorts them to doctors to ensure proper diagnosis and treatment, helps them negotiate reasonable rentals, has even motivated the police to reopen investigations after a break-in.

Ortal is part of a pioneering Bar-Ilan project in community interpreting, a field which is gaining momentum in multicultural societies such as Israel. She and 50 other students who have fluency in a foreign language, volunteer four hours each week in hospitals, government offices, and various public services, where there is special need for translation in Amharic, Arabic, Russian as well as Spanish, French, English, German and Italian.

The Community Interpreting project was initiated last year by Prof. Miriam Shlesinger, who chairs the Department of Translation and Interpreting Studies. To accompany the volunteer work, she developed a special Community Interpreting course, which she teaches together with PhD candidate Michal Schuster.

"Interestingly enough, most of the participants are not Department students but young immigrants who have strong language skills and want to contribute to their home communities,” notes Miriam.

Ortal is somewhat of an anomaly – the sabra daughter of Iraqi immigrants, she learned Spanish from soap operas and a ten-month course in Tel Aviv. Although she is also fluent in English, she specifically opted to help Spanish-speakers “because there are fewer Israelis who know espanol.” Ortal, who has worked with Birthright missions from Argentina, feels that there should be more awareness that there is a community of Spanish speakers who have difficulty in Hebrew.

"These people fall between the cracks – many are elderly and ill and feel inferior because they are unable to communicate their needs,” explains Ortal, who finds the work immensely gratifying. With a devoted Community Interpreter such as Ortal, they are able to “articulate” themselves and better connect to modern-day Hebrew.
"The Jewish people have always been a minority, and depended on careful intelligence-gathering for their survival," says Dr. Shlomo Shpiro, Director of Bar-Ilan’s Center for International Communications and Policy (CICP), senior lecturer at the Department of Political Studies and a fellow of the Begin-Sadat (BESA) Center for Strategic Studies. As an undergraduate, Dr. Shpiro dreamed of working at the United Nations. But after working in the Israeli Knesset and studying in Oslo, Berlin and at the European University Center for Peace Studies in Austria, he learned that, in a hostile world, it is often intelligence – not trust – that is the key to survival.

"Intelligence is a stabilizing force in foreign policy," says Shpiro, a Jerusalem native whose British-accented English causes many to mistake him for a recent oleh. "Diplomatic relations have ups and downs, but a strong intelligence connection can keep things in perspective."

A single, religious man who joined the university in 1998, Shpiro calls Bar-Ilan the "ideal intellectual home." His research – which focuses on intelligence, terrorism and communication – has taught him that public diplomacy is a battle that should be fought, and can be won. He keenly feels the importance of training Israel’s future leaders. "In time, our students may forget me, but down the line, when they get into positions of power, they will know how to process information, understand the media, and make better decisions."

Noting that an increasing number of Bar-Ilan graduates are working in the print, broadcast and on-line media in Israel, Shpiro believes that communication studies and research are already having a positive impact. "Today’s reporters are much more savvy than they were just a decade ago. Politicians are much more likely to listen to media experts. I believe that these trends will improve Israel’s image worldwide despite our precarious security situation."

The BESA Center for Strategic Studies was founded by Canadian Jewish community leader Thomas O. Hecht.
The Sunflower Project: Improving English through Exploring Moral Issues

“Sunflowering is a term used in education to mean the flowering of new ideas about established subjects, new ways to look at ordinary things,” explains Dr. Goldfrad. “It’s about synergy, growth, and possibilities. The Sunflower Project is a unique learning opportunity using the synergy of an international discussion forum, and the limitless possibilities for closer connections and understanding between American and Israeli young people.”

Dr. Keren Goldfrad

The Sunflower Project is an interdisciplinary, international, distance and e-learning project designed to help students explore the moral questions raised by the genocidal acts of the 20th and 21st centuries. Based on the second edition of Simon Weisenthal’s thought-provoking book, the project requires American and Israeli students to read The Sunflower and related Internet and hard-copy texts and respond to one another about the questions raised by, and examined in, the texts. The unique virtual project is an on-line unit designed and developed by Bar-Ilan’s Dr. Keren Goldfrad and Yeshiva University’s Dr. Karen Shawn. It is monitored by participating professors.

The core subject of study and discussion is the Holocaust, but the questions raised lend themselves to exploring the current issues of our time as well. The themes include the major questions of the possibility and limits of forgiveness, justice, and reconciliation after the Holocaust and other genocides; the rights and responsibilities of the second and third generations of victims and perpetrators of genocide; possible student responses to current genocides; the place of Holocaust and genocide studies in a university curriculum; unique and universal aspects of the Holocaust; and the relevance of the responses in The Sunflower to current events.

Dr. Goldfrad is a faculty member of the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Department. She developed this project so that her students at Bar-Ilan would be more motivated and challenged to improve their English through discussing with American students an issue that is important to them. Involvement in the project has helped them develop their English reading, writing and vocabularies.

“This year the groups that collaborated with each other were from Bar-Ilan University, Yeshiva University and Florida International University,” says Dr. Goldfrad, who was invited to present the Sunflower Project at the Annual Conference of Distance Teaching and Learning in Madison, Wisconsin this summer.
The Keter Project:
The Definitive Edition of the Bible and Commentary

For five hundred years Jews have turned to the classic Mikraot Gedolot edition of the Bible. Mikraot Gedolot contains a body of annotations on the Bible known as the Messora, the Aramaic translation (targum) and the major medieval commentaries. But over the centuries many inaccuracies have crept into the work. “Scholars have long recognized the need for a newly revised edition of the Bible,” says Prof. Menachem Cohen, incumbent of the Weiser Chair in Medieval Biblical Manuscripts in the Faculty of Jewish Studies. Thus, fifteen years ago Prof. Cohen took it upon himself to direct the ambitious Keter project – the restoration of the Mikraot Kedolot.

The Mikraot Gedolot has a fascinating history. After the People of Israel received the Torah on Mount Sinai, through generations of copying, errors accrued. The prophet Ezra issued an authoritative edition of the Bible, and later in the 10th century, another one was produced by Aharon Ben-Asher. Karaites purchased Ben-Asher’s manuscript and moved it to Jerusalem. Seljuks or Crusaders plundered it and took it to Egypt from where it was redeemed by the Jewish community. Maimonides used it as his source reference. Several generations later, it appeared in Aleppo, Syria (Aram Tzoba), where it was guarded in the Great Synagogue. The manuscript became known as the Aleppo Codex or Keter Aram Tzoba (hence the BIU project’s name).

In 1947, Syrian Arabs murdered Jews and looted their communities. The Great Synagogue, active for nearly 2000 years, was torched. Ben-Asher’s treasure was reported lost. In fact 294 of approximately 380 pages survived. Finally, in 1958, hidden in a washing machine, Syrian Jews brought the precious manuscript to Israel.

Today, using the best ancient manuscripts, such as the Aleppo Codex, Rabbi Cohen’s team is correcting and preparing a new edition of the Bible for the information age. Eleven of the 21 Keter Mikraot Gedolot volumes are now being used in universities, yeshivas, schools and synagogues. Popularity in family libraries is anticipated to explode with publication of the whole set.

Indeed, just as the original Mikraot Gedolot set the standard since 1525, the Keter is becoming the definitive edition of the Bible for generations to come.
For thousands of years, only a few geniuses who had memorized tens of thousands of pages and millions of words, could do what the Bar-Ilan Responsa Project now makes possible for the diverse spectrum of people interested in Torah. Today, rabbis, students, and laymen can specify subjects of interest and, using their home computers, search the world’s largest database of Jewish literature for all relevant passages in seconds. In recognition of this extraordinary and unique achievement, the Responsa Project was awarded this year’s prestigious Israel Prize in Torah Literature.

Mathematician Aviezri Fraenkel initiated the Responsa Project in 1963. The enormous body of she’elot v’teshuvot (questions and answers in Jewish law), he observed, made it practically impossible to search for specific subjects. He proposed an idea so novel in 1963, few experts understood: enter the vast sea of halakhic material into a computer, then, use the computer to search all the text for the words relevant to any particular subject.

In 1974, Bar-Ilan Professor Yaacov Choueka assumed leadership of the Responsa Project and brought it from IBM punch cards to CD-ROM. He also oversaw the expansion of the Project’s electronic library from five volumes of she’elot v’teshuvot to the whole foundation of Jewish literature. Today, the Responsa Project makes available on CD-ROM, Jewish sacred literature from the Bible, the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmud, the Midrash, the Zohar, the halakhic writings of the Gaonim, Maimonides, Yosef Caro, and hundreds of other expositors, the classics of Jewish philosophy, the decisions of today’s rabbis, all 28 illustrated volumes of the Talmudic Encyclopedia and more.

The most cutting-edge search tools for Hebrew and Aramaic were developed for the Responsa Project. The project’s research, furthermore, anticipated Google and all full-text search technologies. “This project completely revolutionized research in Jewish studies,” explains Prof. Choueka. “The Responsa Project is the best example of integrating Torah knowledge with modern technology.”

The Responsa Project broke ground in computer science, and now it is transforming Torah study by empowering users to organize the expanse of Jewish literature around their investigations and questions. While the Responsa Project remains an exciting forum for research, today the focus is commercial. Updated versions of the CD-ROM, with expanded libraries and better algorithms, are issued almost annually.

Today, the Project is headed by Rabbi Yaacov Weinberger, together with a team of scholars and software engineers.
BIU Friends are a dynamic and central component of Bar-Ilan University. Following are some of the activities of our Friends in Israel and around the world.

All photo captions are from left to right unless otherwise noted.

**ISRAEL**

The Israel Desk coordinated and organized a number of Business Forums throughout the past year. On these two pages is a sampling of highlights from these prestigious meetings.

1. Shira Ben-Or, Coordinator of External Relations, Office of the Chairman; Yaakov Neeman, Chairman of the Executive Committee; Benjamin Netanyahu MK, Leader of the Opposition and former Prime Minister; Prof. Moshe Kaveh, President; Roy Vermus, CEO Psagot-Ofek Investment House Ltd. and Judith Haimoff, Associate Vice President

2. Amos Gaver, CEO Division of External Relations; Sigal Cohen, Bank Hapoalim Switzerland; Yaakov Neeman and Shira Ben-Or

3. Prof. Moshe Kaveh; Nissan Khakshouri, Chairman, Israel Friends of BIU; Benjamin Netanyahu, MK; Yaakov Nimrodi, Israel Land Development Ltd. and his daughter Mrs. Smadar Nimrodi-Rinot

4. Mr. Zvi Livnat, Co-Chief Executive Officer, Clal Industries and Investments Ltd.; Mr. Shlomo Wertheim and Mr. Muzi Wertheim, Chairman of the Board, Central Bottling Co. Ltd.
Business Forum at the Residence of the American Ambassador to Israel Mr. and Mrs. Richard Jones

Shira Ben-Or and Dr. Dvora Strassburger, member of the Executive Council

Mrs. Nurit Barbash; Prof. Gabi Barbash, Director, Ichilov Hospital; Mr. Roni Milo, Businessman

Muzi Wertheim, Chairman of the Board, Central Bottling Co. Ltd., receives the BIU Business Forum Award from Yaskov Neeman, Chairman of the Executive Committee, and from Judith Haimoff, Associate Vice President

Meir Shamir, CEO Mivtach-Shamir Holdings Ltd., receives the BIU Business Forum Award from Doug Bergeron, Chairman and CEO of Verifone
USA

Tom Weisz, of Florida; Prof. Aren Maeir, Chairman of the Martin (Szusz) Department of Land of Israel Studies and Archaeology; and Sharon Evans, Director of North American Operations, at the BIU excavations at Tell-es-Safi

Richard Goldman hosts Leora and Yehuda Halevy, Executive VP of American Friends of BIU, at his ranch

Gadi Buganim, BIU engineer; Maurice Kanbar of San Francisco; and Amos Gaver, CEO, Division of External Relations, in front of the Nano Triplex construction site

David Leitner, IBG Student Ambassador; Sharon Evans, Director of North American Operations; Abbie and David Flamholz, of New Jersey; Prof. Alex Flamholz of New York; Dr Elisheva Baumgarten, Dept. of Jewish History and Gender Studies Program; and Gila Slonim, Coordinator of North American Operations, enjoying lunch on the BIU campus

Prof. Ely Dahan flanked by his children Robin and Richard at the Dahan Family Unity Park donated by his parents Aharon and Rachel
1 Prof. Moshe Kaveh; Michael Jesselson, Co-Chairman of the American Board of Trustees, BIU; Elie Weiss; Amos Gaver; Peter Rzepka, President of the American Friends of BIU and Bob Stark during a visit to Stark Enterprises, Cleveland, Ohio

2 Prof. Moshe Kaveh flanked by Kerri and Frank Lee, the Genevieve Atol Foundation, Los Angeles, California

3 Josh Joseph, son of the late Jim Joseph at the construction site of the Jim Joseph Building

4 Joyce Borovoy (sponsor of the Joyce and Dr. Mathew Borovoy Classroom in the Jack and Gitta Nagel Family Jewish Heritage Center), with her daughter Cindy Diskin, grandson Josh, son-in-law Dr. Jeffrey Diskin and his mother Mrs. Dorothy Diskin

5 Debbie Rand of Florida on her first visit to campus, together with Sharon Evans and Gila Sionim

6 Dr. Sarah Anne Lehmann, Barbara Siegel-Lehmann, Karen Eisner-Lehmann, David Eisner and Jason Eisner unveiling the plaque at the dedication of the Jamie Lehmann Music Library
Cocktail reception in honor of Mira Koschitzky, past President of the Canadian Friends of BIU (sitting) and Gabi Weisfeld, National President of the Canadian Friends of BIU, for their dedication and commitment to Bar-Ilan University, the State of Israel and the Jewish People

Reception hosts Marsha and Michael Lax together with Prof. Moshe Kaveh

Sam Gewurz, Prof. Moshe Kaveh, Norman Sternthal and Mike Savatovsky, Director, Eastern Canadian Friends of BIU

Patty (Ontario Regional Director) and Allan Friedland, IBG Student Ambassador David Leitner and Gabi Weisfeld at the Arnold and Leona Finkler Memorial Lecture

IBG Student Ambassador Alaa Abu-Rukin (at far right) travelled to Canada on behalf of BIU and was hosted at a dinner in Toronto by (left to right) Saul and Mira Koschitzky, Dov Altman, Executive VP Canadian Friends of BIU and Elana Fleischmann and Patty and Allan Friedland
INTERNATIONAL BOARD OF GOVERNORS & ANGLO-ISRAEL ACTIVITIES

At the recent BOT meetings Louise Khakshouri was appointed Chairman of the International Board of Governors (IBG). She comes to this position with many exciting initiatives and boundless energy. Louise is taking over from her dynamic predecessor Jane Stern Lebell who so ably established and stewarded the IBG from its inception.

Ezra Yevarkan, former BIU Student and IBG Ambassador, with his bride, BIU student Aviva. The couple married last spring.

Frank Giron; Prof. Ben-Zion Zilberfarb, former Director General of the Ministry of Finance and currently Prof. of Economics at Bar-Ilan and Chairman of the A. Meir Center for Banking at Bar-Ilan; Lenny Sackstein; and Martin Donner at an exclusive breakfast for some of Israel’s top businessmen hosted by Prof. Moshe Kaveh, President

Sonya Roubeni; Marie Jacoby; Grace De Larossa; Gila Slonim, Coordinator, North American Operations; Louise Khakshouri, Chairman of the International Board of Governors (IBG); Liora Majngarten; Sharon Evans, Director, North American Operations; Hanna Nassima and Elise Einhorn Biran during a visit to campus to advance the Iranian Student Scholarship Program

Norman and Thelma Epstein and Sharon Evans, Director, North American Operations, in the Hall of Human Rights in the Law building
GREAT BRITAIN

Inner Temple Dinner, London

Prof. Moshe Kaveh, President, and Amos Gaver, CEO Division of External Relations welcome incoming Israeli Ambassador to England, Ron Prosor, to campus

Prof. Moshe Kaveh, President, greets London friends of BIU Esther and Romie Tager, QC during their visit to campus

Dr. Sami Shamoon with the Shamoon Doctoral Fellows

Inner Temple panelists Prof. Vernon Bogdanor; dinner host Sir Bernard Rix; Prof. Moshe Kaveh, President; and Chief Rabbi Sir Dr. Jonathan Sacks

Dennis Mosselson; Vera Muravitz, Director of Special Gifts and Armand Rosen

Dr. Everard Goodman with Manny Davidson
Bar-Ilan University mourns the loss of Maurice Wohl C.B.E., one of the greatest supporters of the State of Israel and Bar-Ilan University, an extraordinary individual and recipient of an Honorary Doctorate from the University.

Together with his dear wife Vivienne, z’l, they established The Wohl Centre, a magnificent cultural center on the University campus. This unique, award-winning building, designed by the architect Daniel Libeskind, is shaped like an open book representative of the “People of the Book.”

The Wohl’s had a unique relationship with Bar-Ilan that Maurice summed us as: “We feel very much at home at Bar-Ilan University because this singular institution mirrors our own hashkafa and love of Klal Yisrael. We avidly share the University’s unique Torah U’Madah approach, which promotes academic and scientific excellence, coupled with reverence for our Jewish heritage. We are excited to take part in the Bar-Ilan mission to train and cultivate future generations of Jewish leaders, who will join the thousands of other university graduates who are already making their mark in diverse sectors of society.”

May his memory be blessed.
The recipients of the Ludwig Braun-Ilse Epstein Memorial Prize in Life Sciences receive their certificates from faculty representative Prof. Shula Michaeli, (left, seated) and Epstein family members Dion Epstein, Lisa Gottlieb and Mark Epstein, of Australia (seated).

BIU Honorary Doctorate Recipient, the Hon. Alexander Downer, Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs, is congratulated by BIU President Prof. Moshe Kaveh at a dinner in Minister Downer’s honor hosted by the Israel-Australia Chamber of Commerce and the Embassy of Australia and Vera Muravitz, Director of Special Gifts.

South African friends Motti Sacks (left) and Sol Krok (right) are welcomed to campus by Prof. Moshe Kaveh, President.
Mrs. Daniella Kilstock-Rich congratulating her father BIU honorary doctorate recipient Marc Rich

Prof. Moshe Abeles, Director of the Gonda (Goldschmied) Multidisciplinary Brain Research Center; Dr. Hamutal Slovin and Doron Schlesinger, Director of European Desk at the award ceremony of the Leon and Maria Taubenblatt Prize for Excellence in Medical Research, at the Brain Research Center

Prof. Moshe Abeles and Dr. Edward A. Stern at the inauguration of the Strauss laboratory at the Gonda (Goldschmied) Multidisciplinary Brain Research Center

Research delegation from University Alcalá de Henares, Spain (first four from left) meeting on campus with BIU nanotechnology researchers (Professors Aharon Gedanken, Chaim Sukenik, Arie Zaban and Shulamit Michaeli); Yossef Bar-Magen and Prof. Harold Basch
A highlight of the year was BIU’s Annual Presidential Succot event for the University’s leadership and friends, which took place on October 2, 2007 - 20 Tishrei 5768 in the Succah of the King David Hotel, Jerusalem.
Bar-Ilan University has made a strategic decision to focus its considerable resources and energies on establishing the biggest and the best nanotechnology center in the State of Israel. The scope of this $150,000,000 initiative is far-reaching, with 40 senior researchers, at least 400 doctoral students, scores of technicians, lab assistants, and hundreds of undergraduate and masters students taking part in this research enterprise. BIU’s nano-initiative in general, and nanomedicine in particular, are poised to skyrocket. This huge and unprecedented project will center around the new $50 million Nano-medicine Triplex.

Bar-Ilan’s esteemed partner, the Leslie and Susan Gonda (Goldschmied) Foundation, has made a magnificent gift of $25 million to establish the Leslie and Susan Gonda (Goldschmied) Nano-medicine Triplex. Consisting of three interconnected towers, linked by a beautiful park, the Triplex will be the hub of Bar-Ilan’s Science Quadrangle.

Inspired by the successful model of the Leslie and Susan Gonda (Goldschmied) Brain Research Center on campus, the nano-medicine triplex has been designed to foster multidisciplinary research. Covering 215,000 square feet (20,000 square meters), the three towers will encompass and catalyze the outstanding and highly acclaimed work of the university’s 26 nanotechnology research groups, and will provide the physical ambience and facilities that will continue to energize and expand the exciting research potential and applications inherent in nanotechnology research in general, and nanomedical research in particular. The state-of-the-art “Invariant Zone” at the heart of the Triplex will be a highly advanced lab constructed to optimize conditions for the most delicate of nano-scale experiments.

The Leslie and Susan Gonda (Goldschmied) Foundation’s outstanding generosity and vision will be instrumental in making yesterday’s science fiction become tomorrow’s reality – while saving and improving lives and playing a key role in safeguarding Israel’s future.
Academic Conferences and Events

January 2007
- "Kfar Ofarim" artist's exhibition (Anna and Max Webb and Family Psychology Building)
- Symposium: "Ethiopian Youth in Boarding Schools" (Churgin School of Education)
- Lecture: "Between History and Memory: Zionism and the Jewish Past" by Dr. Yitzhak Conforti upon publication of his new book: Past Tense - Zionist Historiography and the Shaping of the National Memory
- Lecture: "Processes of Globalization: Impact on Contemporary Anti-Semitism" by Prof. Charles Asher, Yale University (International Advisory Board for Academic Freedom)

February 2007
- New "Readiness for University Program" (Social Involvement Unit, Amit school)
- Conference: "Nano Bio Interfaces: Structures, Sensing and Imaging" (Minerva Center for Microscale and Nanoscale Particles and Films as Tailored Biomaterial Interfaces and The Bar-Ilan Center for Nanotechnology and Advanced Materials, Department of Chemistry)
- Conference: "Good Luck"- for high school graduates with sight disabilities (Social Involvement Unit)
- Annual Conference: "New Israeli Philosophical Association" (Department of General Philosophy)
- Tenth Biology Olympics for high school students, awarding First Prize one-year scholarship to BIU (Mina & Everard Goodman Faculty of Life Sciences)
- Lecture: "The Meaning of Purim" by Rabbi Eliezer Melamed, Head of Yeshivat Hesder "Har Bracha"
- Lecture: "The Hebrew Calendar" by Prof. Ely Merzbach, Senior Advisor to the President (Department of Mathematics)

March 2007
- Conference: "Israel’s Science Policy relating to the European Union" (Ministry of Science)
- International Woman’s Day Conference: "She Will Go the Farthest" (Bar-Ilan University, Hi-Tech Women Managers, Lady Globes and the Council for Promoting Women in Science and Technology)
- Ceremony: "Landa Fund for Equal Opportunities through Education" (Office of the Academic Secretary)
- Ceremony: Doctoral Fellowships of Excellence (Office of the Academic Secretary)
- Ceremony: "Newman Prize for a Young Author with Outstanding Achievements" (Joseph & Norman Berman Department of Literature of the Jewish People)
- Round Table Reunion of Schupf Fellows (Office of the Academic Secretary)
- Conference: "Women’s Prayers" (Fanya Gottesfeld Heller Center for the Study of Women in Judaism)
- The Seventh Annual Conference of the Israel Society for History & Philosophy of Science (Graduate Program in Science, Technology & Society and the Israel Society for History & Philosophy of Science)
- Fourteenth Annual Torah and Science Conference (Prof. Nathan Aviezer, Department of Physics)

April 2007
- Jerusalem Conference for Jewish Authors and Poets: "Being a Jewish Author: Longings" (Rappaport Center)
- Inaugural Seminar: "Project 1948: Studying the War of Independence" (Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies)
- Tribute to Prof. Eliezer Don-Yehiya: "Nationality and Religion: Marking 120 Years since David Ben Gurion’s Birth-1886-2007" (The Warhaftig Institute for the Research of Religious Zionism, The Avi Chai Chair in Society and Judaism, Rabbi Moshe Chaim Lau Chair for Leadership in Times of Crisis)
- Israel-British Conference: "Web Interaction" (Department of Information Science)
- Fourth Annual Conference of the World ofIsraeli Music "Who am I? An Israeli Song" (Israeli Folk Music Research Center)
- International Conference: "Social Norms, Self Interest and Legal Compliance" (Faculty of Law, together with the Hebrew University)
- International Conference: "US-Israel Relations in a New Era" (Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies)
- Conference: "Syrian Jewry: History, Identity and Heritage" (Aharon & Rachel Dahan Center for Culture, Society & Education in the Sephardic Heritage)
- Conference: "Contending with Global Islam" (Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies)
orthodox communities: (Department of Sociology and Anthropology)

- Rector's award (Office of the Rector)

July-September 2007

- Israel Bible Festival: One-day lecture series at annual Bible festival at Yoav Yehuda (Martin (Szusz) Department of Land of Israel Studies and Archaeology)
- Seminar: "Violence Within the Ethiopian Family: Causes and Methods of Coping" (School of Social Work, together with Ministry of Immigrant Absorption and Ministry of Health)
- International conference: "Rationality and Suicide" (The Interdisciplinary Department of Social Sciences)
- "The Principals’ Seminar" (Dr. Joseph H. Lookstein Center for Jewish Education in the Diaspora)
- Annual conference: “Phoenix Road Safety Studies” (The Interdisciplinary Department of Social Sciences)

International Conference: "Jews and Muslims in the World of Islam" (at the University of Maryland, US) (Faculty of Jewish Studies, Department of Middle Eastern History, Aharon and Rachel Dahan Center for Culture, Society and Education in the Sephardic Heritage)

Special Learning Program for Yom Kippur Eve: "The Days of Awe: A Time of Grace: Jewish Introspection on the Eve of Yom Kippur" with lectures, discussions, book displays and music (Under the patronage of the President of Bar-Ilan University)

Awards, Distinctions and New Appointments

Dr. Yitzhak Conforti, of the Department of Jewish History, received the Hecht Prize for 2007 and the Mordechai Ish Shalom Prize for his book “Past Tense - Zionist Historiography and the Shaping of the National Memory.”

Prof. Miriam Faust, Head of the Department of Psychology, was appointed a member of the editorial board of the prestigious magazine Brain and Language.

Prof. Max Jammer, formerly of the Department of Physics, won the American Physical Society's prestigious Pais Prize for 2007 for his research in the History of Physics.

Prof. David Kessler, of the Department of Physics, was appointed as a Fellow of the American Physical Society.

Prof. Pnina Klein, of the Faculty of Social Sciences, was awarded a grant from the Harris Fund.

Dr. Zeev Zalevsky, of the School of Engineering, was awarded the prestigious Krill prize for excellence in scientific research for 2007.
Bar-Ilan University Friends came from far and near to participate in the 2007 Board of Trustees Meetings and special events.

All photo captions are from left to right unless otherwise noted.

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**BOARD of TRUSTEES MEETINGS and SPECIAL EVENTS**

The 52nd Annual Meeting of the Global Board of Trustees (BOT) was a memorable week in which Bar-Ilan’s many ground-breaking academic programs and scientific achievements were highlighted in new and exciting ways.

Starting with a spiritually-uplifting Shabbat in Jerusalem, BOT members and their guests were graciously hosted on Motzei Shabbat at the home of Zvi and Zippora Katz.

The Sunday tour in Jerusalem “In the Footsteps of the Six-Day War” was truly mesmerizing and gave a good sense of the mood and atmosphere of the time. In the evening the group enjoyed a concert of songs celebrating Jerusalem and shared in Yehoram Gaon’s pride in being presented with Bar-Ilan’s prestigious Award of Distinction.

On Monday BOT members and guests were treated to campus touring options of some of Bar-Ilan’s diverse laboratories and classes. They later attended a riveting panel discussion on “Public Diplomacy: Winning the Political War Against Israel” with the participation of 2007 Honorary Doctorate recipient, ADL Director Abraham Foxman and Foreign Media and Public Affairs Advisor to the Prime Minister Miri Eisen. That evening they enjoyed getting to know BIU honorary doctors at dinner at the historic compound of General Allenby.

After the Plenary Session on Tuesday, Board member Gabi Weisfeld was honored at a luncheon on the occasion of the dedication of the Louis and Gabi Weisfeld School of Social Work. The Convocation that evening was as moving as ever when Bar-Ilan’s highest honors were conferred upon Nobel Laureate Prof. Aaron Ciechanover and distinguished philanthropists and public and spiritual personalities from Israel and abroad.

On Wednesday, BIU hosted a breakfast dedication of the Norman and Johanne Sternthal Program in the Institute for Advanced Torah Studies, followed by joyous singing and dancing. Then BOT members and guests partook of a unique and exciting “happening” where they were introduced to some of Bar-Ilan’s outstanding body of students and faculty, all of whom have been sponsored by members of the Board. This was followed by a festive luncheon in honor of this year’s Israel Prize – the BIU Responsa Project and its founders and staff. In the evening was the dedication of the Jim Joseph Building for Jewish Education and Values, including a festive dinner and a one-of-a-kind “virtual” experience. All these events focused on the human impact of these projects – at the BIU campus, in Israel and throughout the Jewish world.

Finally, on Thursday, BOT members participated in a round-table working session which brought together key University and School of Education leadership with Jim Joseph Foundation trustees, just hours after the groundbreaking of the Jim Joseph Building for Jewish Education and Values on campus.

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**MOTZEI SHABBAT – MELAVE MALKA**

BOT members being greeted by Gitta Nagel, at a Melave Malka in the home of Executive Council member Dr. Zvi and Zippora Katz.

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May 13  TOUR IN JERUSALEM AND CONCERT

1  BOT members learning about the remnants of the palace of King David

2  Maurice Rotfarb, Susan Goodman, Allan and Patty Friedland and Eudice Rotfarb

3  Yehoram Gaon, backed by children’s choir, singing about Jerusalem

May 14  CAMPUS TOURS AND PANEL DISCUSSION

1  BOT members meeting with students participating in the Reshit Program for secular students who would like to learn more about Jewish religion and tradition

2  Prof. Uri Nir, of the Nanotechnology Institute, meeting with Suzanne, Mina and Everard Goodman

3  Abe Foxman, National Director, Anti-Defamation League and 2007 BIU honorary doctoral laureate, and Miri Eisen, Foreign Media and Public Affairs Advisor to the Prime Minister
WELCOME DINNER FOR BOARD OF TRUSTEES
AND HONORARY DOCTORS AT KIBBUTZ
NETZER SIRENI

Historic Compound of General Allenby

Prof. Moshe Kaveh, Marc Rich, and Abe Foxman

Ed and Sharon Frank, Rena Slomovic (sister of the late Jim Joseph), Jan and Suzi Czuker and Jack Slomovic

2007 honorary doctoral laureate Nochi Dankner with guests and friends

Jack Slomovic and Dr. Mordecai Katz

Israeli Ambassador to the United Nations and BIU honorary doctoral laureate Dan Gillerman
May 14

PLENARY SESSION

Prof. Moshe Kaveh, President, addressing the Board of Trustees

Dr. Mordecai Katz, being congratulated upon his reelection as Board Chairman; Prof. Moshe Kaveh, President; Yaakov Neeman, Chairman of the Executive Committee and Prof. Joseph Menis, Rector
May 15 HONORARY DOCTORATE CEREMONY

The 2007 ceremony conferring honorary doctoral degrees upon a distinguished and worthy group of individuals was held at the Dahan Family Unity Park. Among the recipients, Patricia (Patty) Friedland, of Canada, was honored for her long years of faithful work for the benefit of the Canadian Jewish community and Israel, and for her unflagging efforts in support of BIU. Everard Goodman, of the UK, was honored in recognition of his extensive philanthropic activity in the UK and Israel, for his support of medical facilities throughout Israel and for his generous assistance to BIU.

Nochi Dankner, of Israel, was honored for being a positive role model of business management and social leadership, for aiding residents along our southern and northern borders, and for supporting the next generation of scientists at BIU. Marc Rich, of Switzerland, was honored for his philanthropic work benefiting institutions of education, culture, health, science and social welfare in Israel and the Diaspora, and BIU, while Jack Slomovic, of the USA, received a doctorate for his philanthropic work in support of Jewish education and Jewish communities in the US, and for his support of the University.

In the public arena, Abraham Foxman, of the USA, received a doctorate for his leadership role in the struggle against hate crimes and racism, anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism, and for strengthening Jewish education and identity as National Director of the Anti-defamation League (ADL). Dan Gillerman, Israel Ambassador to the UN, received a doctorate for standing proudly at the forefront of Israeli public diplomacy and for his important contribution to strengthening Israel’s status internationally.

Menashe Kadishman, of Israel, was honored for his diverse and original works of art that reflect the values of human morality, Judaism and pioneering Zionism, while Prof. Aaron Clechanover, of Israel, was awarded an honorary doctorate for his pioneering scientific research, which earned him the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 2004, and for his efforts to maintain the quality and achievements of higher education and research in Israel.
Nochi Dankner rising to accept his BIU honorary doctorate

Honorary doctoral laureate Nochi Dankner and family

Drs. Everard Goodman and Jane Stern Lebell celebrating the new BIU honorary doctors

Menashe Kadishman, Jack Slomovic, Marc Rich, Abe Foxman, Dan Gillerman, Everard Goodman, Patty Friedland, Prof. Moshe Kaveh, Nochi Dankner, Yaakov Neeman and Prof. Aaron Ciechanover

Honorary doctors Ambassador Danny Gillerman and Nochi Dankner

Jack and Gitta Nagel at the ceremony
May 15  DEDICATION OF THE LOUIS AND GABI WEISFELD SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Prof. Joseph Menis, Rector; Yaakov Neeman, Chairman of the Executive Committee; Prof. Moshe Kaveh, President; and Gabi Weisfeld, National President Canadian Friends

Gabi Weisfeld surrounded by the Children’s Choir

Gabi Weisfeld together with Faculty and students from the Louis and Gabi Weisfeld School of Social Work

Jon Allen, Canadian Ambassador; Gabi Weisfeld and Prof. Moshe Kaveh, at the Dedication of the Louis and Gabi Weisfeld School of Social Work, enjoying the performance of the Alon Junior High School Children’s Choir

May 15  CIECHANOVER LECTURE

Prof. Aaron Ciechanover, Nobel Prize laureate and BIU Honorary Doctor, delivering a lecture “The Ubiquitin Proteolytic System: From the Bench to the Bedside” to a jam-packed audience on campus
May 16

DEDICATION OF THE NORMAN AND JOHANNE STERNTHAL “TORAT ERETZ YISRAEL” PROGRAM, IN THE LUDWIG AND ERICA JESSELSON INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED TORAH STUDIES

Prof. Moshe Kaveh, Norman Sternthal and Rabbi Karpol Bender at the unveiling of the plaque at the dedication of the Norman and Johanne Sternthal “Torat Eretz Yisrael” Program, held on Yom Yerushalayim in the Institute

Joyous celebration in honour of the dedication of the Norman and Johanne Sternthal “Torat Eretz Yisrael” program

Patty Friedland, Bernard Sternthal, Allan Friedland, Nellie Sternthal, Norman Sternthal, Dov Altman, Dr. Mordecai Katz and Gabi Weisfeld

Rabbi Prof. Daniel Sperber, President of the Institute for Advanced Torah Studies; Prof. Moshe Kaveh; Norman Sternthal and Dr. Mordecai Katz
May 16

STUDENT “HAPPENING” AND CEREMONY
HONORING DONORS

1 Gabi Weisfeld surrounded by some of her IDF Combat Soldier Scholarship recipients
2 Aliki and Peter Rzepka with a number of Masters of Achievement students
3 Louise and Nissan Khakshouri with scholarship recipients
May 17

GROUNDBREAKING OF THE JIM JOSEPH BUILDING FOR JEWISH EDUCATION AND VALUES

Al Levitt, President of the Jim Joseph Foundation, Jack and Rena Slomovic, Eng. Shmuel Gan-El, Chip Edelsberg, Executive Director of the Jim Joseph Foundation, Prof. Moshe Kaveh and Ron Solomon, Regional Director of West Coast Friends at the groundbreaking ceremony of the Jim Joseph Building for Jewish Education and Values.

Judith Haimoff, Associate VP and Karen Paul Reuven, Associate Director of West Coast Friends and Planned Giving Director at the podium.

Watching the virtual building of the Jim Joseph Building.
That was the focus of the tachlis-oriented round-table working session which brought together key University and School of Education leadership with Jim Joseph Foundation trustees, just hours after the May 2007 groundbreaking of the Jim Joseph Building for Jewish Education and Values on campus. The meeting of the minds was aimed at building the interface between the School of Education and the Foundation, which was represented by Alvin Levitt, Jack Slomovic and Dr. Charles Marc Edelsberg. Discussion centered on the future thrust of programming that will be emanating from the magnificent new home of Israel’s premier School of Education and the Lookstein Center for Jewish Education in the Diaspora. Foundation trustees expressed some initial ideas about directions that may be productive, especially in the area of professional development.

The session featured presentations from leading Bar-Ilan academicians whose specialty areas can impact on the quality and content of Jewish education in the US. Presenters included Prof. Pnina Klein, head of the Edward I. & Fannie Baker Center for the Study of Developmental Disorders in Infants and Young Children, on developmentally challenged young children; Dr. Rachel Schiff, Director of the Haddad Center for Research in Dyslexia and Reading Disabilities, on reading and literacy; Prof. Zemira Mevarech, former Chief Scientist of the Israel Ministry of Education, on developing educational standards; and Prof. Eric Cohen, an authority on informal Jewish education, on Jewish identity. The event was moderated by Prof. Yisrael Rich, Director of the Stern Institute for the Study and Advancement of Religious Education, who spoke on enhancing students' personal and social Jewish identity.

The session also included a special briefing on the building plans by Bar-Ilan Engineer Shmuel Gan-el and Architect Zadok Sherman, in the presence of Foundation representative, Shai Margolin.
BAR-ILAN UNIVERSITY FRIENDS ASSOCIATIONS AROUND THE WORLD

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