

## Onwards and Upwards with More Powerful Batteries

For awarding-winning Chemistry Prof. Doron Aurbach, Director of the Nano Cleantech Center at the Bar-Ilan Institute of Nanotechnology and Advanced Materials (BINA) and head of the Israeli National Research Center for Electrochemical Propulsion, the sky is the limit. Partnering with Dr. Arieh Meitav, Chief Technology Officer of ETV Motors, he is designing rechargeable high energy density batteries that will power unmanned aircraft and motor vehicles. With over six patents filed, these new and improved batteries have received the attention of global investors and venture capitalists, including a leading conglomerate which builds sophisticated unmanned aircraft geared toward civilian use. Aurbach was also recently chosen by the Israeli government to lead a \$11 million national alternative energy initiative, and last year, he and BIU Prof. (Emeritus) Aharon Gedanken, were the only Israeli scientists to be included in the prestigious ISI International list for Highly Cited Researchers in the field of Materials Science.

## BIU Researcher Gets FDA Okay for Gaucher Disease Drug

Elelyso (taliglucerase alfa), an enzyme replacement therapy for the long-term treatment of people with Type 1 Gaucher disease developed by Dr. David Aviezer and colleagues at Protalix BioTherapeutics, was approved by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Dr. Aviezer is an adjunct researcher/senior lecturer in BIU's Mina and Everard Goodman Faculty of Life Sciences and CEO of Protalix. The new drug, which is being marketed by global pharmaceutical giant Pfizer under license from Protalix, offers hope for an estimated 6,000 Americans who suffer from the rare, genetic disorder which causes fatty materials (lipids) to collect and impair proper functioning in the spleen, liver, kidneys, and other organs. Dr. Aviezer has over 15 years of experience in biotechnology management. The recipient of prestigious awards, he holds a BSc in Biology and an MBA from BIU, and a PhD in Molecular Biology and Biochemistry from the Weizmann Institute of Science.

## BIU Partners with Rabin Medical Center to Foster Research

Bar-Ilan University and the Rabin Medical Center have recently joined together to promote important collaborative research projects in genetics, Parkinson's disease and cancer. Adding a personal dimension to the more than one dozen researchers selected for participation in the project from the two institutions – PhDs and MDs – are the Popovtzers. Dr. Rachela Popovtzer, a returning scientist and member of BIU's Faculty of Engineering, with expertise in physics, electrical engineering and nanotechnological bio-imaging, will now be working with her husband, Dr. Aron Popovtzer, a specialist in ENT, Oncology and Radiotherapy at the



Rabin Center. The couple has teamed up in a novel cancer research initiative which integrates gold nanoparticles into the chemotherapy drug "Erbix" to target cancerous cells without destroying surrounding tissue. This approach is meant to mitigate toxic effects usually caused by the penetration of nanoparticles into the body. Once the nanoparticles are placed on the cancerous cells, targeted radiation on the tumor will be easier to perform – an impending breakthrough, according to cancer researchers.

## Medical Briefs

True to its innovative, communal approach, BIU's Faculty of Medicine is spearheading new initiatives. **Med students who have completed clinical training in internal wards will work as physicians' assistants in hospitals** in Tiberias, Safed and Nahariya. Says Faculty Dean Prof. Ran Tur-Kaspa: "The students will admit patients to the wards and later present the cases to the doctor on duty, who will decide what treatment to provide." This, he says, is "an excellent opportunity for students to both upgrade their medical knowledge and earn money."

**The nation's fifth medical school has also signed an agreement with Clalit, Israel's leading health services agency**, which enables nearly 30% of students' clinical work to be performed in Clalit clinics in the north. Physicians will supervise and mentor students in primary care, pediatric and women's healthcare clinics. Notes Prof. Tur-Kaspa: "Community medicine training is integral to the realization of the Faculty's founding vision, and an important step in our educational process."

According to a recent study sponsored by the Haifa-based Public Health Coalition, **Bar-Ilan is the only university in Israel and one of a handful worldwide to include an environmental health course as part of its clinical medicine program**. Unlike Harvard and U of Chicago, where the course is offered as an elective, at BIU's Faculty of Medicine in the Galilee, it's part of the core curriculum, which "focuses not only on patient care but also on healthy lifestyles, with specific regard to environmental factors."

## **Nitzotzot Forum Prepares for Rio+20 and a Cleaner, Greener World**

BIU's *Nitzotzot* Forum took an active role in preparing for the Rio+20 – the UN Conference on Sustainable Development -- which was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in June 2012. It joined together with other key organizations to draft a unique position paper on the subject for the Israeli delegation. The resulting in-depth, comprehensive report offered an authentic Jewish approach toward sustainable development.

Prior to the milestone UN summit which "defined pathways to a safer, more equitable, cleaner, greener and more prosperous world for all," a special *Nitzotzot* conference was held jointly with "Jewish Nature," an organization dedicated to Jewish environmental responsibility. There, main points for the position paper were presented by the various bodies involved in its drafting, a panel aired creative ideas for establishing a sustainable economy based on Jewish principles and sources, and an open discussion ensued. Among the panelists: Sagit Porat, Director of Tel Aviv University's Akirov Institute for Business and Environment, a hi-tech entrepreneur, and a *Nitzotzot* scholar.

## **BIU, YU and NYU Jointly Examine Halakhah and Reality**

In a remarkable display of fertile collaboration, law schools from Bar-Ilan University, NYU (Tikva Center for Law and Jewish Civilization) and Yeshiva University (Cardozo), together with NYU's Skirball Department for Hebrew and Judaic Studies partnered in a thought-provoking conference on "Halakhah and Reality." The program explored such topics as the nature of marriage in early Rabbinic legal thought, flexibility and rigidity in Halakhic language, and realism vs. nominalism in the Mishnah.

## **Renowned Authors Highlight Creative Writing Conference**

BIU's Shaindy Rudoff Graduate Program in Creative Writing hosted its bi-annual international conference, featuring hard-hitting writers of fiction, poetry and creative nonfiction, including Etgar Keret, E. Ethelbert Miller, Joy Katz, Rob Handel, and Joseph Skibell. Fulbright visiting scholars Jacob Newberry and Robby Nadler also contributed. The conference launched the Program's new study track in creative nonfiction, which will introduce students to a range of genres: memoir, literary journalism, literary essay, and personal essay. The nonfiction track commences with a prose workshop during summer 2012. In spring 2013 BIU English Prof. William Kolbrener, who has written widely on John Milton and authored *Open Minded Torah*, will teach the first creative nonfiction workshop.

The conference was held in honor of Prof. Allen Hoffman, who recently retired from BIU's Dept. of English after two decades of teaching. Hoffman has served as Permanent Writer-in-Residence and Acting Director of the 10-year-old Shaindy Rudoff Graduate Writing Program.

The conference opened with readings and a dialogue between Allen Hoffman and Joseph Skibell, followed the next day by a panel on Hoffman's fiction and a reading by Hoffman's former students. Two days of free and open-to-the-public workshops on storytelling, poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, and two evenings of readings, followed. These events, hosted by Creative Writing Program Director, Dr. Marcela Sulak, ended in the Shaindy Rudoff Memorial Evening, which marked the sixth anniversary of the passing of the Program's founding director, Dr. Shaindy Rudoff. The Memorial Evening featured a reading by Etgar Keret, and a conversation with Keret and fiction coordinator Prof. Evan Fallenberg.

## **BIU, Duke, U. of Lausanne Probe Religion & Identity in Europe**

Bar-Ilan's Department of General History and the Chair for Judaism and Society co-sponsored a three-day conference on "Religion & Identity in Europe and Beyond: Between Hybridity and Ethnicity," together with Duke University's Center for European Studies and the Institute of Religions, Culture and Modernity at the University of Lausanne. The international roster of speakers addressed issues of religious stereotypes in European cultures, religion and identity in Israel, modernity and transformations of religious identity, religious scholars, and more. A special focus was Judeo-Christian Europe.

## **History in the Making: Medieval Chivalry on Campus**



Donning medieval garb and armed with authentic swords, bows and arrows, BIU General History majors gallantly reenacted a dramatic battle scene from the Middle Ages, as part of the three-day conference. Two of the students, Oleg and Michael, are professional battle reenactment performers who represent Israel in international competitions.

## BIU Strategic Studies & Communication Forums Create Buzz and Headlines

Bar-Ilan University is a popular platform for forums focusing on dynamic political realities and hot-button communications issues, which attract leading political pundits, scholars and the media. Among the most recent: “The Lebanese Arena: Marking 30 Years Since the First Lebanon War,” hosted by the Begin-Sadat (BESA) Center for Strategic Studies, which featured Maj. Gen. Yair Golan, Head of Israeli Northern Command. He was widely quoted as stating that Syria is heading for collapse and will become a “warehouse of weapons” for Islamist militants as it descends into chaos. “The risk to Israel is taking shape,” observed the IDF general.

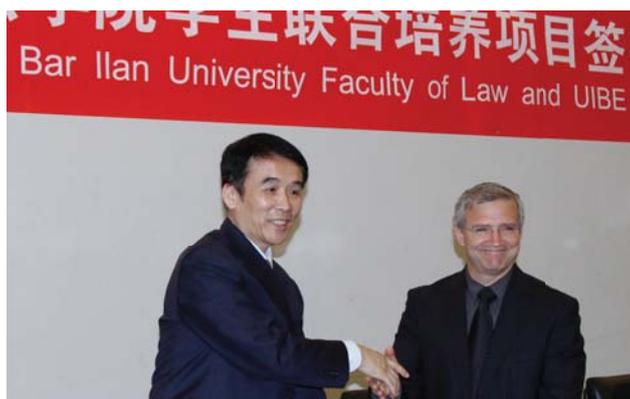
“American-Israeli Relations” was the subject of the 3rd ADL-BESA-CIC International Conference, which included a roster of distinguished speakers including Elliot Abrams of the Council on Foreign Relations in Washington, DC (deputy assistant to the president and deputy national security adviser in the administration of Pres. George W. Bush).

Dr. Shawn Powers, of Georgia State University gave a guest lecture, “The Rise and Fall of the Al-Jazeera Network.” The event was sponsored by the School of Communication’s Center for International Communication (CIC).

“Journalistic Responsibility” was the timely subject of a symposium organized by BIU’s Faculty of Law, School of Communication and Center for Media and Law, in the aftermath of the exposé of classified Israeli military information leaked by former IDF soldier Anat Kamm to *Haaretz* journalist Uri Blau. Discussion centered on the ethical and social responsibilities of journalists. Participating in the conference were prominent Israeli media personalities, judicial and legal authorities, the former chief military censor, the former IDF spokesperson, and academicians.

## First Sino-Israeli Legal Education Agreement Signed

The Chinese *Legal Daily* reports on the signing of an agreement by officials of BIU and the University of International Business & Economics (UIBE) in Beijing to foster an exchange program for law students. Pictured: Prof. Wang Jun, Dean of the UIBE Law School, who noted



that the cooperation between BIU and UIBE has profound significance for students and faculty to learn the law and culture of the other country; with BIU Law Dean Prof. Arie Reich.

## BIU Moot Court Trial on Land and Water Pollution

A distinguished panel of judges, including a justice from the Haifa Regional Court, presided over a special moot court session convened to consider damage claims due to exposure to toxic pollutants in land and water. Hosted by Bar-Ilan’s Mediation Clinic and the Environmental Justice Clinic, the mock trial addressed the interface between law and mediation vis-à-vis land restoration.

## Diagnosing Autism

Professors from the University of California, San Diego and leading Israeli experts convened to discuss “Recent Advances in the Identification and Early Diagnosis of Autism,” which was organized by BIU’s Louis & Gabi Weisfeld School of Social Work and Continuing Education Unit, together with the Mifneh Center. Lectures and workshops centered on early screening for autism, brain and genetic defects in autism and treatment, and variables predicting adjustment of parents of children with autism. The diagnosis and study of autism is becoming a major focus of research at Bar-Ilan University.

## English-Speakers Pursue BA in Social Sciences at BIU



As their first year of studies comes to a close, freshman students in BIU’s unique English-language undergrad Social Sciences program enjoy a refreshing outing to Acco. The 30 participants from overseas take part in joint activities with local students to facilitate their absorption into Israeli society and campus life. Next year BIU is offering three unique study tracks: Interdisciplinary Macro Social Sciences (Economics, Political Science, Sociology); Interdisciplinary Micro Social Sciences (Criminology, Psychology, Sociology); and Communication and Political Science. For more info, visit: [www.biuinternational.com](http://www.biuinternational.com)

## BIU Convenes its First Annual National Model UN Conference

More than nine Israeli academic institutions dispatched 130 “envoys” to BarMUN2012 – the first National Model UN Conference to be held on the BIU campus, hosted by its Model UN Society. For two days, student delegates to the moot International Criminal Court, the Security Council, the Human Rights Council, the NATO Summit and other committees debated a range of world issues, with the BIU team accruing six of the 15 top awards. BIU’s model UN activities are under the auspices of the Dean of Student’s Office and the School of Communication.

## BIU-YU Summer Science Internship Takes Off



Invited to an Israeli Air Force Base to watch an uplifting ceremony and aerobatics before heading for Bar-Ilan’s state-of-the-art research labs, 43 undergrads from Yeshiva University and an array of other institutions (e.g., Barnard, Cooper Union, Penn, USC, York) embark upon the second annual BIU-YU Summer Science Research Internship program. These talented students from the US and Canada work side by side with top-flight BIU faculty mentors in areas ranging from nanotechnology to brain research to engineering.

## Life Science Majors Explore Career Ops

“What do I do after my degree?” That was the apropos title of a recent panel and networking event for BIU immigrant students majoring in the Life Sciences, which was sponsored by the Mina and Everard Faculty of Life Sciences. The initiative of Biotechnology undergrad Gita Reinitz, the panel featured professionals with experience in genetic counseling, pharmaceuticals, start-ups, and scientific research. Among their suggestions: seek entry-level jobs at large companies which can afford to train novices or work gratis for a few months at a smaller firm, to gain experience. BIU Life Scientist Dr. Don Katcoff, who is an immigrant himself, spoke about cross-fertilization in academia, and how the transfer of ideas, through sabbaticals or learning abroad, is a cornerstone of research.

Following the panel, students mingled and networked with professionals, a rep from an Israeli non-profit which helps new immigrants find employment, and PhD candidates, and were left with ideas and possible leads to follow up with in the future.

## BIU Undergrads Bring Jewish Learning and a Holiday Atmosphere to Belarus



When eight BIU students arrived in Minsk for the Shavuot Holiday laden with not-to-be-found kosher dairy products, they created excitement and an enriching Jewish learning experience. Indeed, it was the first time in six years that Jews from outside Belarus came to town to run Jewish programming. The Bar-Ilan “emissaries” – who all hail from North America – gave classes, ran a Jewish-themed carnival for children and afforded local youth with a role model of modern, committed Jews who study at university. “We told them that we attend Bar-Ilan and are Olim (immigrants) who have made a life for ourselves in Israel, something which a lot of them aspire to do,” relates psychology freshman Peninah Lamm (fifth from left), who is the granddaughter of the former YU President, Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm.

Since their return, the students have been overwhelmed with thank-you emails proposing that they schedule two trips next year. The group’s next step is to invite Minsk Olim to see the Anglo community in Givat Shmuel, and show them how to create a support system to help fellow immigrants in Israel.

Looking back on the trip to Belarus, the New York-born Lamm relates: “As much as the local Jews benefited and the community was re-energized, we personally gained a great deal out of seeing people who walked three hours to synagogue – a sacrifice made to be Jewish.”

## Thousands of Grads Welcomed into BIU’s Newly-Launched Alumni Community

As Bar-Ilan’s graduates prepared to don gowns and march in procession, they were greeted by banners and a smiling team of staff and students easily identifiable



in their special Alumni t-shirts, who presented them with their very own Bar-Ilan Logo pin, fliers and an invitation to join the new alumni community initiative. At the ceremony, BIU Rector Prof. Haim Taitelbaum urged nouveau grads to visit the new online site at Biubogrim.org.il, which will enable them to maintain contact with peers, receive updates on

the latest alumni happenings and advanced study ops, and access a valuable conduit for networking with BIU’s more than 109,000 alumni, many of whom have risen to leadership positions in Israeli society.