

THE SHIMSHON & CHANA FELDMAN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTER



SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Galilee Hospital Heads Convene at BIU with Medical Faculty Deans

The heads of eight hospitals in Israel's north visited the Bar-Ilan campus to confer with the leadership of BIU's new Faculty of Medicine, which will be opening in Safed this Fall. Pictured with the group are Prof. Ran Tur-Kaspa, Dean (far left); Prof. Haim Breitbart, Vice Dean for Research (fourth from left); and Prof. Michael Weingarten, Vice Dean (fourth from right).

BIU's Award-Winning Faculty

BIU Chemistry Profs. Doron Aurbach and Aharon Gedanken rank among the 250 most-quoted scientists worldwide. The number of citations in leading scientific journals is considered a yardstick of research productivity and scientific achievement. Renowned for his work in energy storage and conversion, water desalination and materials science, Prof. Aurbach heads one of the globe's largest electrochemistry research groups. Prof. Gedanken – Director of BIU's Kanbar Laboratory for Nanomaterials – leads a multinational consortium funded by a 12 million-euro EU grant to commercialize his novel technique for mass producing antibacterial sheets.

Prof Arie Zaban, Director of the Bar-Ilan Institute of Nanotechnology & Advanced Materials (BINA), is the 2011 recipient of the prestigious IVS Research Excellence Prize sponsored by Applied Materials for 2011. The Israeli Vacuum Society (IVS), Science, Technology and Applications, awards the prize for outstanding, internationally acclaimed research.

Prof. Eli Barkai of the Department of Physics has been selected by the German Alexander von Humboldt Foundation to receive the Friedrich Wilhelm Bessel Research Award for his original, outstanding investigations in statistical physics on the nano-scale.

He has also been invited to Germany this summer to conduct collaborative research.

Prof. Yosef Steinberger of the Mina & Everard Goodman Faculty of Life Sciences won a lifetime achievement award from the Soil Ecology Society (SES) at its biennial conference held at the University of British Columbia in Canada. Senior Lecturer Dr. Erez Levanon has received an Allon Fellowship for 2011. A returning scientist who came to BIU from Harvard Medical School in 2009, Levanon studies genetic information and how it can be altered.

Bar-Ilan Student Winners

After winning first place in the 2011 Israeli Famelab competition for young scientists, PhD Brain Science student Karen Lavi, proceeded to England's Cheltenham Science Festival to place second in the international science communication contest. Lavi, whose research focuses on memory and learning, is enrolled in both Bar-Ilan and Haifa Universities. Her tip to scientists for improved communication: "Don't explain science, talk science. Imagine holding the hands of your audience as you walk them through. Tell it as a detective story, not as a presentation at a conference."

A teen prodigy pursuing his MA in Math at BIU, 16-year-old Gal Dor recently acquired a gold medal in the Asian Olympiad in Physics. "I love to learn," he says, noting that "the more I am taught, the more I feel I need to know."

A Bar-Ilan team comprising 17-year-old BA Physics major Ido Adiv and other graduates of BIU's Victor Bentata Program for the Advancement of Mathematically Talented Youth won second place in the International Math Olympiad held via the Internet. Adiv's teammates Shuval Tzoran, Eran Bernstein (both 18) and Nimrod Shenker (19) are all BIU students, who will join the IDF after their Bachelor studies.

EXPLORING OUR HERITAGE



Iconic Six-Day-War Paratrooper Absorbed in Jewish History at BIU

As a young, battle-weary IDF soldier – one of the first to reach the newly liberated Western Wall on June 7, 1967 – Jehudah Hartman is an icon of the Six-Day War. Captured on film as he gazed in awe at the *Kotel*, his historic picture is etched into Israel's collective memory. Today, 44 years later, the former paratrooper, who holds a PhD in Mathematics, is engaged in Jewish History at Bar-Ilan. The Hungarian-born recipient of Israel's prestigious Defense Prize is writing his doctoral thesis on Religious Streams in Hungary during Emancipation. Recently returning to Jerusalem's Old City to "update" his famed photo with fellow BIU student, Mordechai Twersky, Hartman donned his trademark blue skullcap.

Torah U'Madah in Action

Bar-Ilan's Torah and Science forums convene authorities in both realms for a synergic encounter with hot-button issues. "Treating Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) in the Religious Sector," interfaced rabbi with psychologist to address how to effectively assist

observant patients. Part of BIU's popular "Psychology and Judaism" Series, the symposium generated special interest for rabbis, halakhic advisers and therapists dealing with emotional health issues as well as for OCD sufferers.

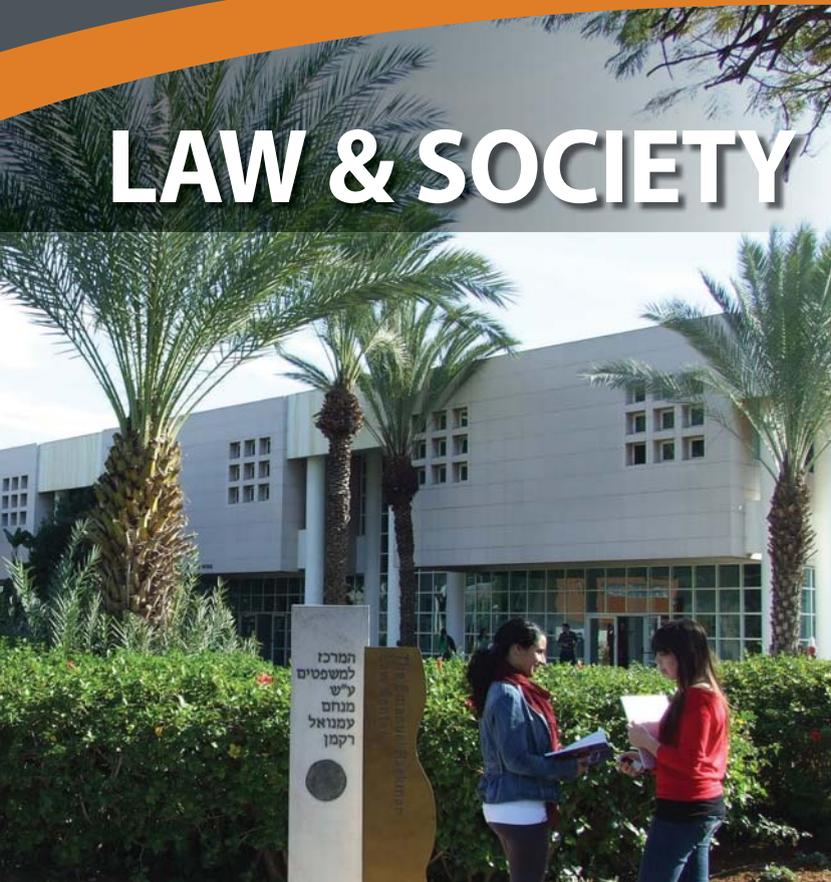
A recent Nitzotzot conference, "The Refugee's Status in Law and Halakha," featured BIU Deputy President and former Law Dean, Prof. Yaffa Zilbershats, who discussed Israeli policy on illegal immigration; and a public activist who spoke of assistance for Sudanese seeking asylum in Israel. Nitzotzot founder, Rabbi Shabtai Rappoport, who heads the Ludwig and Erica Jesselson Institute of Advanced Torah Studies Beit Midrash, relayed the halakhic obligation to help refugees. BIU's flagship dialogue series has also lately examined "Inter-Generation Altruism in Theory and Practice" with Justice (Emeritus) Shlomo Shocham, and "Intuition Challenges and Values in Game Theory" with guest lecturers from the Interdisciplinary Center (IDC) Herzliya and Tel Aviv University.

The Torah and Science interface is also very evident in a new Hebrew book by Rabbi Dr. Michael Abraham of the Jesselson Institute. Evoking great interest, *Elo-him M'Sachek B'Kubiyot (G-d Plays Dice)* addresses arguments about theories of evolution and religion – in particular those criticizing religion and promoting atheism (e.g. Richard Dawkins' *The G-d Delusion*). A former Yeshiva teacher and a theoretical physicist who obtained his PhD from BIU, Abraham opines that "scientific findings support the theory of evolution – and that evolution actually strengthens the philosophical arguments on behalf of G-d's existence."

MA Students Find Bar-Kochba's Secret Tunnels in Judaea and Samaria

Two MA candidates in the Martin (Szusz) Department of Land of Israel Studies and Archaeology have discovered ten elaborate tunnel systems dating back to the Bar-Kochba revolt (135 CE), in northern Judaea and southern Samaria. Until now, it was thought that the rock-cut hiding complexes extended only as far as Israel's Lowlands (*Shfela*). The students, who also identified ancient *mikvaot*, burial caves and the remains of dozens of 2nd-Temple Jewish settlements, presented their novel findings at BIU's 31st Annual Conference of Land of Israel Studies and Archaeology, held recently on campus, in memory of the distinguished Prof. Hanan Eshel. What started in 2008 as a seminar project has evolved into a quest for key archaeological remains in an area where few Israelis tread. "We have a treasure trove right under our noses," notes Dvir Raviv, who with colleague Aharon Tavger, maps, documents and photographs their every find.

LAW & SOCIETY



BIU's Faculty of Law regularly hosts important conferences and forums, including two Moot Court trials presented before distinguished panels of judges on the subjects of Jewish Monetary Law, and Prenuptial Agreements and their acceptance by Rabbinical Courts in cases where the husband refuses to grant a divorce

Uncontested Achievements and Thought-Provoking Forums

Several BIU Law faculty and students have recently been singled out for distinction. Dr. David Hahn – reputed as Israel's foremost Insolvency expert – has been appointed Administrator General and Official Receiver of the Israel Ministry of Justice. Dr. Ori Aronson, who recently joined Bar-Ilan after obtaining his doctorate from Harvard, is a 2011 recipient of an Allon Fellowship for Outstanding Young Researchers. His specialties include legal procedure and constitutional law. Six Law undergraduates have been accepted into the prestigious Tikvah-Hertog Summer Institute on Law and National Security being held at Columbia University

The Right Honourable Lord Justice Matthew Thorpe, Head of International Family Justice for England and Wales, delivered the keynote address on judicial activism at the conference, "Abduction and Relocation of Children: From the Perspectives of Family Law, International Law and Law of Torts." Held at Bar-Ilan's Emanuel Rackman Law Center and co-sponsored with the Sha'arei Mishpat College, the conference also featured Israeli Supreme Court Justice Neal Hendel.

Indonesian professor Azyumardi Azra, one of the world's leading scholars of moderate Islam, lectured on "The Interplay Between Indonesian State, Democracy and the Shari'a" at the International Conference on Religious Law and State Affairs hosted by the Tager Family Law Program. Shari'a, the religious law of Islam, is very similar to Halacha, according to Law Prof. Zvi Zohar, a member of the conference organizing committee.

Engendering Dialogue between Academicians and Activists

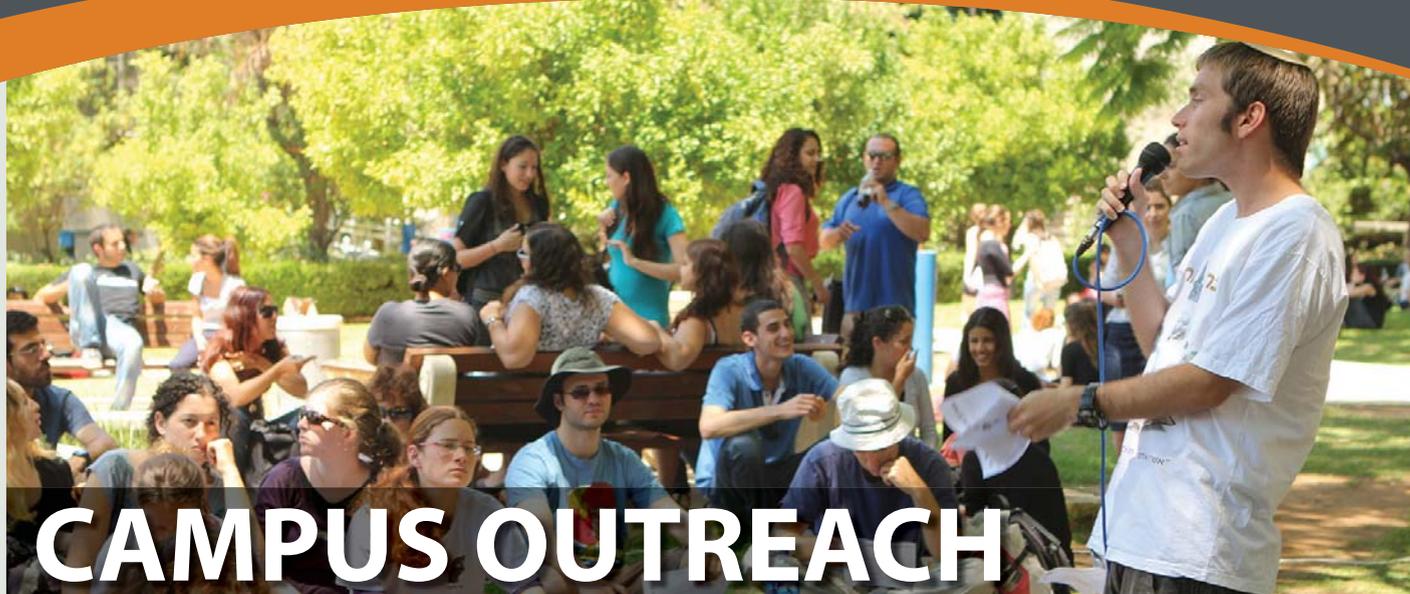
Early marriages, single-parent families, alternative marriages – how have NGOs and researchers influenced social transformations with regard to traditional family patterns? That was the focus of the 3rd Annual Gender Conference organized by BIU's Gender Studies Program in cooperation with the Ruth and Emanuel Rackman Center for the Advancement of the Status of Women, the Gottesfeld-Heller Center for Study of Women in Judaism, the Dafna Fund, as well as WIZO and Sheatufim – The Israel Center for Civil Society. Bearing the title "The Field (Re) Produces Family – NGOs, Academic Research and Developments in Policies Affecting the Institution of the Family," the Conference convened university faculty and feminist activists to advance research and study of potential areas of cooperation between academia and gender-based field work.

Strategic Developments at BESA

The Campaign Against Democracies, The Moral-Philosophical Debate, Constraints on Israel's Use of Force, and Media Coverage of Warfare – these charged issues were targeted at the Greg Rosshandler International Conference on Democracies and the Right of Self-Defense, hosted by the Begin-Sadat (BESA) Center for Strategic Studies and the Center for International Communication at BIU. Conference speakers included American political thinker, Prof. Michael Walzer of Princeton University; Prof. Irwin Cotler, MP and former Canadian Minister of Justice; Fiamma Nirenstein, Vice President of the Committee on Foreign Affairs in Italy; and Israeli national security experts.

Other recent BESA lectures include: "Power and Willpower in the American Future" with Prof. Robert Lieber of Georgetown University; and "Russia's Reaction to the Arab Revolution and the Libyan Intervention" with Prof. Stephen Blank of the US Army War College.

BESA research associate Dr. Yaeli Bloch-Elkon (who is also a member of BIU's new School of Communications and on the faculty of the Dept. of Political Studies – her *alma mater*) authored her first book, *Selling Fear: Counterterrorism, the Media, and Public Opinion* (Chicago Studies in American Politics). The work uniquely affords a detailed look at the role played by the media in counterterrorism.



CAMPUS OUTREACH

A Weekly Torah Encounter

Perusing Biblical texts and commentaries along with contemporary poems and writings, more than 50 BIU students gain an insightful look at the weekly Torah portion on Wednesdays at 1:30 pm (pictured above). Sitting on straw mats in a central North Campus venue, the participants – who are both religious and secular and hail from diverse faculties – enjoy an uplifting break between classes. The initiative of the Bar-Daat movement, which works to enrich the University experience and deepen Jewish identity, the *Parashat Shavuah* encounter is dedicated to the memory of Gili Zamir, a student devotee, who gave the closing session before the 2010 summer break and his death in an accident abroad. “Bar-Ilan is a value-added university,” stresses Land of Israel Studies undergrad Ori Kraushar, who, together with Information Science major Yehuda Vansover, runs the venture.

Showcasing Israel’s Nano Advances to Europe’s Top Students



“Nano is Green” was the message of a five-day Nanotechnology Conference organized by BIU’s StandWithUs Fellows, which brought to Israel 16 award-winning young scientists from all over Europe (pictured here). Hearing lectures from the experts –including Nobel laureate Prof. (Emeritus) Robert J. (Yisrael) Aumann

– and touring state-of-the-art green nanotechnology facilities, participants learned about Israel’s scientific prowess and its innovative nano solutions for creating a greener world. They also had a chance to enjoy the small country’s diverse culture and visit key cities and sites. The conference, held in partnership with the Bar-Ilan Institute of Nanotechnology & Advanced Materials (BINA) and the BIU Student Union, was the final project of BIU’s 2011 SWU fellows, who have just completed year-long training to be effective global advocates for Israel. “This conference has been not only a marvelous opportunity for professional networking, but I have also had the privilege of discovering Israel first hand, accompanied by Bar-Ilan University’s finest students from the StandWithUs Fellowship,” enthused Mostafa, an Iranian-born student studying in Germany. (StandWithUs is an international education organization that ensures that Israel’s side of the story is told on campuses, in communities, the media, libraries and churches around the world.)

Bar-Ilan Earns High Marks for its Student Services Upgrade

In a survey of the country’s best campus services, Israel’s daily *Maariv* cites Bar-Ilan University’s state-of-the-art Student Information & Service Center, which operates throughout the day and even employs specially-trained students receptionists; its Gradel & Weisfeld Day Care Centre that provides quality childcare as young parents pursue their academic studies; and its free WiFi access all over campus. BIU is also commended for creating digital folders for each student in an attempt to cut administrative red tape. Notes Director General Haim Glick, who has led these initiatives since assuming his post three years ago: “Not only should a university have high academic and professional standards, but it must also relate and cater to its student needs.” The enterprise, while costly, has contributed significantly to the high level of student satisfaction with the BIU experience.