LAST WEEK, there was an item in this column about the recognition given to IDC Herzliya founder and president Prof. Uriel Reichman by the Council for Higher Education. Also among the recipients of the CHE awards was physicist and former Bar-Ilan University President Prof. Moshe Kaveh who received his award in recognition of the significant change and extraordinary development of an academic institution as a result of outstanding leadership.

Retired Supreme Court Justice Dalia Dorner, who chaired the Award Committee, explained that when Kaveh assumed office, Bar-Ilan University focused on research and teaching in humanities and social sciences. With much determination Kaveh led a process that transformed the university into a leader in the fields of natural sciences and exact sciences, as well. The award citation noted that the university achieved this feat due to the fact that it absorbed many Israeli scientists returning from abroad. “During Prof. Kaveh’s tenure, the university experienced unprecedented growth and development, both academically and in its physical and research infrastructure, in addition to increasing the number of students studying at the university,” it said.

The committee also noted that during Kaveh’s tenure, the university’s growth was reflected in the construction of a large new campus, which doubled the size of its existing physical facility, and in the establishment of the Faculty of Medicine in the Galilee, which the committee considered to be “the most important and meaningful national and Zionist project” that will make “a tremendous contribution to the advancement of medicine in the State of Israel in general and in the Galilee in particular, in addition to boosting educational and economic development in the Galilee and creating new jobs.”

It was also noted that Kaveh established research centers in groundbreaking disciplines: “He initiated the establishment of the multidisciplinary Institute of Nanotechnology and Advanced Materials, as well as the important Multidisciplinary Brain Research Center, as well as the School of Engineering, which later became an important and central faculty at the university for the research and teaching of many current fields of engineering.”

Kaveh was also commended for promoting a series of academic and social initiatives, such as the establishment of religious-secular dialogue groups to encourage direct communication and foster closer relations between these important sectors of society, offering education and science activities to the general public, making education accessible to Israelis living in the country’s peripheries and to the ultra-Orthodox public, promoting the status of women, and launching various projects in Judaism and Jewish heritage. Kaveh is currently conducting research at the Institute of Advanced Technology and the Department of Physics at Bar-Ilan University, and as a visiting professor at Cavendish Laboratory at the University of Cambridge. He has published more than 300 articles in physics and has won many awards for his scientific work.