

*“Israel's capacity for science and research will be tested in the Negev. It is incumbent upon our scientists and researchers to focus on new areas of research... to desalinate seawater with inexpensive processes; to exploit solar energy which is so abundant in our country, and especially in the Negev.”*

David Ben-Gurion

## **14th Murray Fromson Journalism Fellowship**

**AgTech in the Negev  
Beer-Sheva, Israel**

**Depart Friday, May 31, 2019 – Return Friday, June 7, 2019**

### **Tentative Itinerary**

#### **Hosts:**

**Andrew Lavin, President**  
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**Friday, May 31 - Depart U.S. for Israel Ben-Gurion Airport**  
**Saturday, June 1 - Arrive at Ben-Gurion Airport**  
**Travel to Tel Aviv**

Following is a preliminary list of researchers, areas of research and additional activities.

**Prof. Iris Shai**—Prof. Shai is a researcher at the [BGU S. Daniel Abraham International Center for Health and Nutrition](#) in the Department of Epidemiology, [Faculty of Health Sciences](#). Her comprehensive research focuses on nutrition, obesity, diabetes and coronary heart diseases through long-term intervention studies related to the effect of diet strategies and moderate alcohol intake. We will visit Kibbutz Be’eri where she is conducting research to develop and commercialize duckweed as a high protein food source.  
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**Dr. Edo Bar-Zeev**— Senior Lecturer, [Department of Environmental Hydrology and Microbiology](#) at the [Zuckerberg Institute for Water Research](#) in [The Jacob Blaustein Institutes for Desert Research](#). His work focuses on desalination and water-treatment systems. Specifically,

he is researching the nexus of desalination and the aquatic environment, as well as biofouling in membrane module designs from biofilm formation to innovative cleaning approaches. We will meet with him at Israel's newest desalination plant for a tour and to discuss his research.

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**Prof. Yael Edan**—She heads the [ABC Robotics Initiative](#) and is a professor in the [Department of Industrial Engineering and Management](#). Her research team will demonstrate the variety of agricultural robots and other innovations they are developing.

**Daniel A. Chamovitz Ph.D.** —[Prof. Chamovitz](#) [SHAM-uh-vitz] assumed the presidency of BGU in January 2019 after serving as dean of the Faculty of Life Sciences at Tel Aviv University. A native of Aliquippa, Pennsylvania, he has published extensively on developmental biology, computational biology and botany in scientific journals. He is founder of the Manna Program for Food Security at Tel Aviv University and his 2012 popular science book, "[What a Plant Knows](#)," received critical attention worldwide and has been translated into 18 languages. Prof. Chamovitz is an internationally recognized activist promoting plant sciences and their contribution to feeding the growing world population and is on the editorial board of several important scientific journals.

**Prof. Victor Novack, M.D., Ph.D.**— [Dr. Novack](#) is an internist, director of the BGU-Soroka Clinical Cannabis Research Institute and an instructor in BGU's Goldman Medical School. Dr. Novack will discuss Israel's leadership in cannabis research, development and research taking place at BGU. Prior to his current position, Dr. Novack served as a medical director at Harvard Clinical Research Institute. There, he designed and contributed to the design of more than 40 feasibility and pivotal trials for medical devices and stents.

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**Dana Gavish, V.P. Entrepreneurship, BGN Technologies**— BGN is the BGU tech transfer company. Dana will give a brief overview of how BGU is fostering innovation and entrepreneurship. She will have arranged brief meetings with a number of innovative startups that have been incubated at BGU.

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**Dr. Muhammad Bashouti**—[Dr. Bashouti](#) is a member of the [Jacob Blaustein Institutes for Desert Research, Swiss Institute for Dryland Environmental and Energy Research](#). He has several collaborations with companies to fabricate a new generation of solar cells; eyeglasses for the seriously vision impaired; and molecular detection of disease, using a single drop of blood. His lab focuses on molecular level materials science (nanotechnology).

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**Prof. Aaron Fait**—[Prof. Fait](#) is a member of the [Jacob Blaustein Institutes for Desert Research, French Associates Institute for Agriculture and Biotechnology of Drylands](#). He is an expert on using the latest techniques to cultivate vines and grapes in arid lands. We will visit a winery to discuss his work with local farmers and with French and Italian vinyards who are turning to him for insights in arid viticulture. During his discussion, we will sample a selection of Negev wines with cheese.

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**Prof. Naftali Lazarovitch**—[Prof. Lazarovitch](#) is a member of the [Jacob Blaustein Institutes for Desert Research](#), [French Associates Institute for Agriculture and Biotechnology of Drylands](#). He is an expert in drip irrigation, water flow, high frequency micro-irrigation and saline-water irrigation of bell peppers and other vegetables. We will be visiting different greenhouses in the Negev with Prof. Lazarovitch and learn about his collaboration with drip irrigation pioneer Netafim and Bayer to optimize pesticide control.

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**Prof. Amir Sagi**—[Prof. Sagi](#) is a member of the [BGU Department of Life Sciences](#) and the National Institute for Biotechnology in the Negev. He is a world-renowned crustacean researcher. He will discuss his research on producing shrimp for consumption and the use of crustaceans for bone healing and his two companies, [Enzootic](#) and [Amorphical](#).

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**Dr. Iris Visoly-Fisher**—[Dr. Visoly-Fisher](#) is a researcher in the [BGU Department of Solar Energy and Environmental Physics](#) at the [Swiss Institute for Dryland Environmental and Energy Research](#), Blaustein Institutes. Her research is focused on photovoltaics, thin films and molecular electronics used in solar energy generation and storage. She will lead the group on a tour of [Ashlim](#), one of the world's largest solar plants.

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**Prof. Noam Weisbrod** — [Prof. Weisbrod](#) is the director of [The Jacob Blaustein Institutes for Desert Research](#) and the former director of its Zuckerberg Water Institute. He is an expert in hydrological problems in aquifers and unsaturated systems and its effects on hydrologic systems, and on rural water programs in Africa. He established a course called "Rural Water Development" and annually brings student groups to villages in rural areas of Ethiopia, Zambia and Uganda to establish low-tech water solutions.

**Prof. Amit Gross**—[Prof. Gross](#) is the director of the [Zuckerberg Institute for Water Research](#), Blaustein Institutes. His research interests include issues related to water, effluent and soil qualities, as well as their impact on the environment. He is developing practices to improve water and environmental quality related to contamination by different sources (i.e. aquaculture, wastewater and saline water), and is currently engaged in projects to turn animal and human waste into fuel.

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**Dr. Christopher Arnusch**—[Dr. Arnusch](#) is a lecturer in the [Department of Desalination and Water Treatment](#) at the Zuckerberg Institute. His research expertise includes organic and biological chemistry techniques as tools to investigate problems related to water desalination and treatment. Dr. Arnusch has developed water filtration using inkjet printers to apply anti-bacterial coatings to filters and is working on technologies using graphene.

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