

# IMPACT



AMERICAN ASSOCIATES  
Ben-Gurion University  
*of the Negev*

SPRING 2015

## STUDYING ISRAEL

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TRAINING DOCTORS  
TO THINK AND ACT  
GLOBALLY

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IMPROVING  
THE IMPERFECT  
ENERGY MARKET

---

GREEN ARCHITECTURE

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CONNECTING ART  
TO THE COMMUNITY





# ALWAYS VISIBLE: BGU'S UNIQUE SPIRIT

BY LLOYD GOLDMAN AABGU PRESIDENT



When I visit Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, I am always struck by its students' high level of commitment to their studies and to the community. "Service" isn't an abstract ideal; it's visible in how students invest their time, what they're taught and especially in unique programs that epitomize BGU values.

The Medical School for International Health draws students from all over the world, eager to participate in what may be the most unique M.D. program. Beyond mastering the medical fundamentals, they train to become humane physicians able to function cross-culturally anywhere in the world where there is a medical emergency, an underserved population and an unmet need.

Also featured in this issue: The Israel Studies International Program for graduate students. You'll be intrigued to find out about a worldwide interest in the "Israel phenomenon." Students are flocking in from China, Germany, Armenia, and a host of other countries for a fascinating range of reasons. Many will return to their home countries and teach others about Israel; all will share firsthand experience with the real Israel and the Israeli people.

Don't miss the story on BGU's ambitious art exhibition ventures, which enrich opportunities to experience great art both on campus and in Beer-Sheva. And, because this program too embodies the University's sense of mission, it discovers and showcases important local and non-traditional art, and brings it to the community.

Not least, meet two BGU faculty members. Prof. Isaac Meir, an architect and urban planner, connects ideas from the past with new technologies to plan award-winning green buildings. Dr. Ofir Rubin is an energy economist who works to predict our energy future so better, more informed policy decisions can be made.

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**ON THE COVER:** Painted by Nora Stanciu, Untitled, 2006, oil on canvas, displayed in BGU's Department of the Arts exhibition, "I Am a Romanian: The Bucharest-Tel Aviv Route" March 2011. See story on page 23.

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# MAX STEINBERG

## FALLEN SOLDIER MEMORIALIZED WITH SCHOLARSHIP FUND

AABGU is honored to announce the Max Steinberg Memorial Scholarship Endowment Fund, established to remember the fallen soldier by his parents, Stuart and Evie, and his siblings, Paige and Jake.

Max Steinberg was originally from Woodland Hills, California. He joined the Israel Defense Forces as a “lone soldier” (a young adult who moves to Israel without family and joins the IDF), and insisted on serving nowhere else but in the elite Golani 13 brigade. Max was 24 years old when he lost his life last July during Operation Protective Edge, defending the land and the people he loved.



Left: Max Steinberg z”l

Far left: Evie and Stuart Steinberg pay tribute to their fallen son and announce the establishment of the Max Steinberg Memorial Scholarship Endowment Fund at the *Times of Israel* Gala in New York City in February.



Photo © Peter Halmagyi

**“WE ARE DELIGHTED** to know that Max’s legacy will be connected to a university and scholarship program that grants opportunity and promise to the soldiers who have put their lives in harm’s way for the people

of Israel,” said Max’s father, Stuart Steinberg. “We know that Max cared deeply for his fellow soldiers and that he would be whole-heartedly supportive of a program that allows soldiers to pursue their passions and

create a great future.”

The Max Steinberg Memorial Scholarship Endowment Fund will provide scholarships

to Golani and other combat soldiers at BGU in perpetuity, with first preference going to lone soldiers. The Steinbergs will be part of the decision process to ensure that the receiving students mirror Max’s values and vision. The family hopes to raise close to two million dollars to ease the economic burden of multiple reservists studying at the University each year.

BGU President Prof. Rivka Carmi said, “The Steinberg family is memorializing Max in a way that will celebrate his life and his choices in perpetuity and will impact a widening circle of young people. Losing a child is every parent’s worst nightmare, but they have turned this personal tragedy into an opportunity to do a greater good.”

“Max made the ultimate sacrifice and we are forever indebted to him,” said Israel’s Los Angeles Consul General David Siegel. “His memory is a blessing for our people and continues to serve as an inspiration for all of Israel. Ben-Gurion University’s commitment to awarding scholarships to Israel’s most brave defenders is a deeply special way to honor the

young men and women who commit their lives to defending the people and State of Israel.”

During Operation Protective Edge, more than 2,000 BGU students were called to military service, while the University was under continuous threat of missile attacks and forced to close for more than 50 days. With support from AABGU, each

and every student-soldier received a scholarship this past fall.

Recently, BGU was given an award by Israel’s Defense Ministry for its extraordinary services and assistance provided to student-soldiers. ■

Contributions can be made online at [www.aabgu.org/maxsteinberg](http://www.aabgu.org/maxsteinberg).

# THE RALPH I. GOLDMAN GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP IN ISRAEL STUDIES

**IN OCTOBER OF 2014**, Ralph I. Goldman *z”l* passed away at the age of 100. Though largely unknown as an historical figure, he played a critical part in the story of the Jewish people for more than 70 years.

in Israel’s formative years. At Ben-Gurion’s request, he returned to the U.S. to establish and lead the Israel Education Fund, which provided vitally needed resources for the construction and operation of scores of schools, community centers and childcare facilities—critical building blocks in newly established communities across the nascent nation.

Goldman was at the center of planning and developing Israel’s social welfare system and went on to lead the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (the Joint), first in Israel and then returning once more to the U.S. as its chief executive officer.

It was in this role that he was responsible for working with the

regimes of the Soviet Union to negotiate the Joint’s entree behind the Iron Curtain and its access to more than three million Soviet Jews who had been cut off for generations from the Jewish world.

The Joint played a central part in the exodus of Soviet Jewry and in the mass immigration that would transform the modern State of Israel. During this period, Goldman spearheaded efforts to facilitate another great exodus: that of the Jews of Ethiopia who returned to Israel *en masse* beginning in 1984.

In acknowledgment of the extraordinary part that he played in Israel’s modern history, AABGU proudly announces the establishment of the Ralph I. Goldman Graduate Fellowship in the Israel Studies International Program at the Ben-Gurion Research Institute for the Study of Israel and Zionism (see page 12). The Goldman Fellowship will be awarded each year to an M.A. or Ph.D. student whose academic achievements, personal interests and character reflect the values and ideals of its namesake. ■



Ralph Goldman helping David Ben-Gurion on with his coat

A personal aide to David Ben-Gurion, he organized the first visits of the new prime minister to the United States, setting the stage for some of the most critical and prolific channels of philanthropic support from the U.S.

All contributions to the Goldman Fellowship will be matched dollar-for-dollar by the Woodman-Scheller family as part of their generous \$2 million challenge grant for Israel studies (see page 12). Contact the regional office in your area for more information or to make a contribution.



# A LOOK AT PLANNED GIFTS

BY NEAL MYERBERG, PLANNED GIVING ADVISOR

## FINDING THE RIGHT PLANNED GIVING

vehicle depends on a number of factors, including your age, marital status and heirs, as well as the size of your estate and income level. Additional factors may include current or future income needs, applicable income and estate tax deductions and the desire to provide for additional family members.

Here are some examples of giving opportunities that enable you to make charitable gifts, while accomplishing your financial and tax planning goals.

## CHARITABLE BEQUESTS

Leaving a gift to AABGU on behalf of Ben-Gurion University in a will or trust is the most common type of planned gift. Charitable bequests are easy to make. There are no minimum dollar requirements or complex rules to understand. You may leave a designated amount for restricted use that aligns with your educational and research interests, or leave the funds undesignated, allowing BGU to use them where they're needed most. Charitable bequests qualify for a 100 percent charitable deduction for estate tax purposes.

## CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITIES

Gifts of cash or marketable securities may be made to AABGU in exchange for a fixed-rate lifetime annuity for one or two individuals. The rates are based on the ages of the annuitants and are derived from tables filed with New York regulators. In addition to high fixed rates, a portion of the gift is deductible as a current charitable gift, and a substantial portion of the annual annuity may be paid tax-free.

## GIFTS OF REAL ESTATE

Outright gifts of real estate qualify for a full appraised value charitable deduction for income tax purposes. You may also transfer your primary or secondary residence, including a vacation home, by deed to AABGU,

retaining a life estate, and reserving the right to live in the property for life. The advantage of a retained life estate is that you will receive an immediate income tax charitable deduction for the present value of the charitable remainder interest in the property and avoid probate and estate tax on the property at the time of death.

## GIFTS OF LIFE INSURANCE

Transferring a new or existing life insurance policy into the ownership of AABGU is an easy and cost-efficient way to provide a meaningful gift that will have long-lasting impact on the University. You would be entitled to a charitable deduction in the year of the transfer for the cash surrender value of the policy. If you make contributions to AABGU to pay policy premiums, those amounts are fully deductible for income tax purposes in the years the contributions are made.

## GIFTS OF ART AND OTHER COLLECTIBLES

Contributions of art are deductible at their appraised value if the gift is used by AABGU to carry out its mission. If the art is used by Ben-Gurion University for educational purposes or is displayed in a gallery or other public spaces, the appraised value can be deducted as a charitable contribution. When art is contributed to AABGU, the donor is not required to recognize or pay tax on any long-term capital gain.

## GIFTS OF A PENSION, RETIREMENT PLAN OR IRA

Pension plans, retirement plans and IRAs may be subject to high taxes upon a person's death. Since these plans were funded with pre-tax dollars



Neal Myerberg, Esq.

and their growth in value is income tax deferred, they may be subject to both income and estate taxes when given to children, grandchildren and other non-charitable entities after your lifetime. By making AABGU the primary or partial beneficiary of these assets after the owner's

lifetime, both income and estate taxes may be avoided. As another strategy, you may direct that plan assets be used to establish a charitable remainder trust after your lifetime that will provide benefits for your spouse or other heirs by making them the beneficiaries of the trust's annuity payments. In that way, you will reduce or avoid both income and estate taxes on the amount used from the plan to fund the trust.

## CHARITABLE REMAINDER TRUSTS

As you consider ways to preserve your estate for retirement, or when you are faced with a capital gain that will result in substantial taxes, you may want to consider establishing a Charitable Remainder Trust (CRT) with AABGU. A CRT lets you commit funds for AABGU in the future while preserving your financial security now. A CRT is irrevocable, is usually funded with appreciated assets to avoid tax on the capital gain, and may provide substantial financial, tax and estate planning advantages.

*Individuals who make planned gifts during their lifetimes become members of BGU's Living Legacy Society and are recognized in the Legacy Garden on the Marcus Family Campus.*

For more information or to initiate a discussion with me, contact your AABGU regional office or call Melissa Katz, Esq., AABGU's director of donor affairs, at 212-687-7721 ext. 1400.



# THE NEXT GREAT PHASE HAS BEGUN

BY DORON KRAKOW

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT



**FOR MORE THAN 60 YEARS** the development of the Negev has been a dream. David Ben-Gurion called “the transformation of the Negev into a center of agriculture, industry, mining, commerce, learning, and research...the central pioneer task of this generation of Israelis and of world Jewry.” In his retirement from public life, Israel’s founding father attempted to lead the way through personal example when he moved to Kibbutz Sede Boqer, then a struggling young agricultural settlement in the very heart of the region.

The years that followed witnessed the creation of development towns, the growth and evolution of *kibbutzim* and *moshavim* (collective agricultural communities), the advent of increasing numbers of Bedouin villages and towns, the establishment of Soroka University Medical Center, and the creation of the university that bears Ben-Gurion’s name. These important steps forward were formative ones, but the still small numbers of Israelis living in the Negev longed for the expected national commitment to fuel progress on a strategic level. That time has come—at long last.

The end of the beginning has been marked by three dramatic physical developments that though long imagined are now unfolding before our very eyes. Beer-Sheva’s Advanced Technologies Park (ATP), more than two decades in the making, was officially dedicated in the fall of

2013. The ensuing 13 months have seen the openings of the first two of what will be 16 commercial buildings; they are home to such high-tech powerhouses as Deutsche Telecom, Lockheed Martin, EMC, Elbit, Oracle, and IBM. In the space of only two years, the number of high-tech jobs in Beer-Sheva has increased ten-fold, and this is just the tip of the iceberg.

The government is in an increasingly active phase of transferring considerable portions of Israel Defense Forces (IDF) infrastructure from bases

for the rapidly growing population.

Two of the IDF’s major high-tech units are scheduled to move into new bases adjacent to the University and the ATP before the end of the decade. The arrival of the strategic communications and intelligence bases will create a technology hub in the Negev that will be the most advanced in Israel. Prime Minister Netanyahu has announced that BGU will be home to Israel’s first national cyber security research center, and is already bringing substantial resources to bear in its

efforts to drive ongoing progress in this critical field.

BGU will respond to the need for further growth through the development of the North Campus: an effort that will effectively double the University’s footprint in Beer-Sheva

over the course of the next generation. BGU, already the major driver of regional development for some 45 years, has now catalyzed the launch of the next great phase of Negev development, a phase in which it is likely to play a larger role than ever.

As we look ahead to the celebration of BGU’s 50th anniversary in 2020, we do so with a profound recognition of the extraordinary work in which we have played a part throughout the pioneering phase of the Negev’s growth and development. And, we begin to understand the extent to which we will be needed to fuel the University in its expanding role during the next great phase, which has already begun. ■

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ	Blessed are You our God,
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם	Creator of time and space
שֶׁהָיָינוּ וְקִיָּמָנוּ	Who has supported us, protected us
וְהָגִיעָנוּ לְזֶמֶן הַזֶּה.	And brought us to this moment.

in the center of the country to state-of-the-art facilities in the Negev. The country’s largest training base, which will house a revolving population of more than 10,000 soldiers together with permanent staff and support, has literally come out of the sand at a major junction 15 kilometers to the south of Beer-Sheva. The establishment of this base and several others at various stages of development has had a profound impact on the expansion of roads and infrastructure and demand for housing in villages and towns across the region. It has also triggered the need for strategic development of educational, cultural, medical, and recreational facilities



**LORRY I. LOKEY** has a straightforward ambition: to give away one billion dollars during his lifetime.

He credits his parents for inspiring this mission. “When I was four years old, it was the height of the Depression, and things were really in bad shape economically. But as a treat my mother would take us to the drugstore about once a month for an ice cream cone. One of the first times we went, she gave me the cone and I licked it. Then she said, ‘can I have a taste?’ I said, ‘no, it’s mine!’ She took it away and ate the whole thing.

“Six weeks later, she bought me another ice cream cone. I held it out for her: ‘Here!’ That was my first experience in giving. Whether it’s giving or sharing or enjoying, that type of training shows up every day in different forms, one way or another.”

It also stuck in Lorry’s young mind when his family pledged \$100 as an annual gift to the Jewish Welfare Society. “That was five percent of my father’s annual salary, and it was all we could do to live on that! But my mother said no, this was something we need to do to help others. As a result, I probably began giving more than a dollar here and there when I was in my twenties, earlier than most people.”

Lorry studied journalism, and his early earnings as a reporter made donating 10 percent of his income difficult, but he did it. In 1961, he started Business Wire, a company that disseminates news releases. It grew, especially after publicly traded companies were required to disclose financial information. Lorry found himself with “more money than I could ever spend in a lifetime. I certainly wasn’t going to spend it on first-class air seats! So I began giving it away.” By the late 1970s he was donating seven figure sums.

From the beginning, Lorry has chosen “to do one thing well” and concentrate solely on funding education. He prefers to make substantial gifts. “It’s wonderful to give big chunks and see things happen,” he says. “A project, better teacher pay, scholarships, a building.”

He gives to institutions he’s known all his life, such as Stanford, his alma mater, the University of Oregon, and schools important to people close to him. He has a special affection for fine “boutique” schools, most located in California’s Bay Area. Wanting to support and nurture



**LORRY I. LOKEY**  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

## WHAT’S FUN? GIVING AWAY A BILLION DOLLARS

Israel’s future, Lorry also became a major benefactor of Israel’s universities.

“I look for schools that are thriving, and when on my first visit to Ben-Gurion University I saw three or four cranes overhead, I knew right away that BGU was up and coming. I knew a lot about the area’s history and had been in the desert. It’s a delightful place. And the town around it, Beer-Sheva, used to be a little outpost, a nomad base, and now it’s a huge city. And population is moving south.”

Lorry generously funded a new chemistry building because BGU leaders told him that was what they needed. “I don’t feel donors should dictate anything. I’m making a grant, free heart, no strings. The proper way of giving is no strings.”

The Lorry I. Lokey Chemistry Building will be the most modern and “green” chemistry building in Israel, equipped with the latest energy saving systems and all the necessary infrastructure to carry out the most advanced research.

“It’s exciting to see what the building will do for students and what will go on inside,” he observes. “A new

chemistry building will ensure quality enrollment and staff.”

In 2006, Lorry sold Business Wire—by then employing 500 people in 30 offices in the United States and abroad—to financier Warren Buffet. Now, at 87, he splits his time between homes in California and Maui. Several hours on the stock market every day produces enough money to make new pledges, he says.

With Buffet and Bill Gates, he is a charter member of The Giving Pledge, a group whose multi-millionaire members promise to give away half their estates. Having passed the \$740 million mark, Lorry finds he is way ahead, because he has already donated about 98 percent of his net income.

“The idea goes back to biblical times,” Lorry says. “The farmer took wide swings around the corners of the field to leave more grain for the poor. The more you have, the more you should give. You are improving the world. And it’s fun.”

He recently told a reporter, “I have bought myself more happiness in the past 20 years doing this than I ever could’ve if I had instead spent my money on a boat or jet plane or country club membership.” ■



**CAROLE AND MARCUS WEINSTEIN** are devoted philanthropists who give time and money to causes they are passionate about, which most often means schools and educational institutions. “Education is central to everything we do,” Carole explains. “We try to invest in the future so the next generations can do the things they do best.”

They also feel a huge commitment to the State of Israel. “As Jews, we stand taller and prouder since the nation was founded in 1948,” says Marcus.

One of the couple’s most cherished memories occurred during their 1973 visit to Israel. While relaxing in their hotel lobby, they witnessed David Ben-Gurion on his way to meet with Moshe Dayan. “As it turned out, Ben-Gurion died at the end of that same year,” Marcus adds. “So it feels as if we’ve come full circle in our connection to the nation’s first prime minister.”

Their generous contribution to underwrite the Carole and Marcus Weinstein Information Systems Engineering and Cyber Security Building on BGU’s Marcus Family Campus is right in line with all their priorities—but it came about through a happy accident.

“We were headed south on our way to visit the ancient city of Petra in Jordan. Knowing of our interest in universities, our driver mentioned that we might want to make a small detour in Beer-Sheva to visit a nearby university,” Carole explains.

Within the hour, the Weinsteins were on their way to Ben-Gurion University. “We stepped out of an elevator and were immediately greeted by the president of BGU, Prof. Rivka Carmi,” Carole says. “We’re accustomed to dealing with people at the highest levels at universities but we’d never been greeted by the president without an appointment. As you can imagine, we were stunned in a very positive way.”

They toured the campus—“an amazing place full of life”—and had a cup of coffee at the student union. “It was a beautiful day; the students were on the lawn; it felt open and free.” BGU also resonated with their admiration for Ben-Gurion, the founding hero who saw the Negev as the new country’s heart.

Yet one more factor appealed to Carole, embodied by Prof. Carmi herself. “I have a long history of discovering and supporting courageous women who lead a cause, make a mark and are recognized.” The Weinsteins were



**CAROLE AND MARCUS WEINSTEIN**  
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

## PASSIONATE ABOUT EDUCATION

enthusiastic about supporting Carmi’s vision in the best way they could.

Carole’s preliminary thought was to develop a new avenue for creative writing. She had studied and taught college English before assuming the marketing and public relations role at Weinstein Properties, the real estate development and management firm Marcus founded. But Prof. Carmi suggested another opportunity that quickly sounded exactly right: cyber intelligence.

The millennial aspect of this emerging field and its importance to new generations intrigued Marcus. Carole’s interest was sparked by the concept of artificial intelligence and the moral dilemmas it presents.

“There is nothing more relevant today than the threat posed by breaches in cyber security and misuse or abuse of artificial intelligence,”

Carole believes. “If any country can be on top of new developments and guide them with moral integrity, it is Israel. What can be more important to the future?”

Ground was broken in November for the Carole and

Marcus Weinstein Information Systems Engineering and Cyber Security Building, which will house labs, classrooms, auditoriums, conference rooms, and offices to promote cyber security training and research. The investment enables BGU to build on its cyber-security leadership position in the Western world as well as in Israel, and positions the university to contribute even more to Israel’s “CyberSpark” initiative: a unique government-academia-industry partnership.

Marcus is now semi-retired but continues to mentor his firm’s three co-presidents, including daughter Allison Weinstein, the chief executive officer. The private real estate company owns and manages approximately 15,000 apartments and other properties in Virginia and North Carolina.

The Weinsteins are also major supporters of the University of Richmond, from which both graduated, Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Davidson College in North Carolina, Florida Southern College in Lakeland, the University of Haifa, and Technion Institute of Technology in Israel, as well as a host of Jewish charities.

Carole says their philosophy of giving comes from “*tikkun olam*—to heal or repair the world with whatever talents or gifts we have. We love the pleasure and privilege of giving while we’re alive.

“The more we give, the more we are able to pay it forward.” ■

# INSPIRED BY STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCE GUIDES A CAREER

**IN SCOUTING FOR AN OVERSEAS** study opportunity as part of her junior year at the University of Pittsburgh, Liza Mitgang discovered the Ginsburg-Ingerman Overseas Student Program (OSP) at BGU. She immediately knew it was unique.

“OSP had the only global health track I found for undergraduate students in Israel.” Global health was Liza’s main interest, and the program’s desert location—which she had briefly visited before and wanted to explore further—added to the attraction.

Her experience began with an *ulpan*, a six-week intensive course in Hebrew, along with an international group of students from all over the world. Although OSP courses are taught in English, speaking Hebrew is important because “unlike in traditional programs, we weren’t put in an ‘American bubble,’ isolated from other students,” Liza says. “We were immersed in BGU and lived in student dorms with Israeli roommates, which encouraged us to speak Hebrew and fostered a connection with another culture.”

The BGU environment offered more advantages. “It was exhilarating in a way I’d never experienced traveling before. But also, being in the Negev rather than in a major city to the north, you find that people are there for a particular reason—to study and explore their interests. This made for a very rich atmosphere that allowed me to grow intellectually and see a more authentic Israel.”

Most rewarding of all was the design of the learning experience. Liza was able to choose among courses such as “Global Health and Development” and “Health in the Age of Globalization.” She was also encouraged to undertake an independent research project. She formed her own research

survey and explored her inquiry through fieldwork.

“I was taken aback by the faculty’s willingness to facilitate my research and help me grow as an academic,” she says. “They introduced me to a community I had no familiarity with at all and made me comfortable. They made me feel I could contribute more in the field of public health than I would have thought possible.”

Three mornings each week Liza traveled with a Bedouin physician, accompanying him to health clinics in three Bedouin towns. She observed the physician-patient interaction, gained perspective on the people’s health issues and came to understand their logistical challenges in accessing the clinics and making healthful choices.

Liza’s research focused on the urbanization of the Negev Bedouin and, specifically, how environmental

and behavioral changes are affecting women’s health. Because her sample was small, she is cautious about stating broad conclusions.



Liza Mitgang

“The steps and processes were more illuminating than the results,” she says. “But the fondest takeaway for me was seeing the positive changes occurring in the Bedouin community, particularly a growing awareness of health and well being.”

“I saw this especially among women who were taking an active role: going to a Bedouin women’s gym, a community conference, a workshop on diabetes. These are conscious, positive lifestyle changes that can be recreated in other communities.”

Liza appreciates how the six months connected her with people who remain among her closest friends. She continues to see them regularly and has already returned to Israel several times.

“OSP enabled me to pursue my interests in a real and lasting way. It gave me firsthand insight as to how changes in health are profoundly influenced by context and environment,

*Continued on page 35*

## THE GINSBURG-INGERMAN OVERSEAS STUDENT PROGRAM

Semester and full-year programs are available. Students can choose from a variety of English-taught courses in Jewish and Israel studies, environmental science, global health, political science, history, anthropology, and arts and literature; or, focus their studies in one of four thematic tracks: Global Health; Israel Studies; Entrepreneurship and Innovation; and Sustainable Development and the Environment. Independent study, volunteer opportunities and research internships may be chosen to supplement classes. Visit [www.bgustudyabroad.org](http://www.bgustudyabroad.org) or call 800-962-2248.





Prof. Isaac Meir in the Administration Building he and colleagues designed in Sede Boqer

# BUILDING A GREEN FUTURE BASED ON LESSONS FROM THE PAST

**PROF. ISAAC MEIR** is an architect and urban planner who strives to capitalize on synergies: buildings and environments that connect old and new architectural ideas, traditional technologies and “green” ones.

The structures we live and work in are important, he points out. “The truth is that for most people in industrialized countries, what is outside is not our natural environment anymore. We spend 90 percent of our time in buildings. So the buildings shape our well-being, health and ability to be productive people. Which too many of us are not.”

Meir studies the past to extrapolate practices that will work in the present. Working on archeological excavations, he analyzes construction, planning and materials in ancient desert settlements.

“I don’t look at precedents to idealize them,” he says. “It takes a more critical understanding. In early

civilizations, people’s ability to build depended on their understanding of the materials available around the site. What they built incorporates the restraints of the materials.

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**“We spend 90 percent of our time in buildings. So the buildings shape our well-being, health and ability to be productive people.”**

— PROF. ISAAC MEIR

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“In the desert there’s no forest, only soil and rocks. These materials don’t work well under tension, so you need compressive systems—arches, vaults and domes. And the walls need to be relatively thick to withstand the weight

and thrust. So indoor air quality becomes problematic, and in late summer it will be too hot indoors.”

Until 50 years ago, Meir says, Mediterranean people used the outdoors more. The Italian Renaissance writer Boccaccio refers to spending nights on verandas and rooftops in his classic poem “Decameron,” and the Bible relates how King David walked around the palace roof at night. The upper classes in Iran, India and central Asia perceived buildings as a series of indoor and outdoor areas with transition spaces so people could “migrate” within the walls.

“Air conditioning made us change our whole perception of a building,” Meir says. “It’s ‘on’ or ‘off,’ rather than the complex and much richer experience in the past.” Now we are constantly exposed to health hazards in environments that promote allergenic algae and mold growth.

Another idea overlooked today, explains Meir, but espoused by the ancient Greeks and Romans, was that of solar rights; buildings were entitled to be exposed to the sun to exploit passive heating in winter. “This affects the height and density of the buildings, but the concept was forgotten as cities became very congested.

“We’re trying to re-introduce that idea,” Meir says. He and his colleagues used it in designing a small neighborhood of 80 detached houses and in a 1,000-residential unit, detailed master plan for the city of Beer-Sheva. Respecting solar and wind rights, and using insulation, ventilation and shutters the way they were originally intended, would give the less affluent breathing space between extreme heat and cold and reduce their need to rely on mechanical systems.

It is entirely practical, Meir believes, to blend ideas from vernacular architecture, traditional building and green technologies to create healthy buildings and cities. “The mantra is that sustainable architecture is not price competitive. So we’ve done a number of research studies on how the cost benefit analyses are calculated. They show that green office buildings in Israel can work and have a reasonable payback period—just like in the other developed countries.”

Meir visits as many drylands as he can to look at things critically, accumulate information and try to understand how things can be changed for the better so desertification—the expansion of deserts into once-fertile land, an accelerating global trend—doesn’t become a death sentence. “We work hard on all fronts to disseminate the knowledge,” Meir says.

He and others from the Desert Architecture and Urban Planning Unit at the Jacob Blaustein Institutes for Desert Research publish research, work with the government and Israel’s Green Building Council, and organize conferences. Meir organized the Fifth International Conference on Drylands, Deserts and Desertification that took place this past November on BGU’s Sede Boqer Campus, and he is a member of BGU’s Energy Initiative research group.

He and his colleagues offer training in better planning and technology



Isaac Meir’s own family home, an energy-saving prototype he designed, part of Israel’s first solar neighborhood

for engineers and architects. The public also needs to be educated, he feels strongly. “People need to be aware how they’ve been wasting resources and can save money. They must have the data to make informed decisions about cities and buildings so we can plan for a more reasonable and safe future.

“For many countries—and many communities—sustainable architecture is not a question of being ‘nice to the environment.’ It’s a question of survivability. We used to talk about ‘fuel poverty’ in poor and extreme climate countries where people couldn’t heat their

buildings. Now we talk about it in warm countries where people can buy air conditioners but cannot afford to operate them.” In the extreme heat wave of the summer of 2003, in France alone, 15,000 people died in August. The more urbanized and dense cities become, the higher the temperatures in the city centers, and the more common it is for electricity systems to collapse during heat waves, Meir observes.

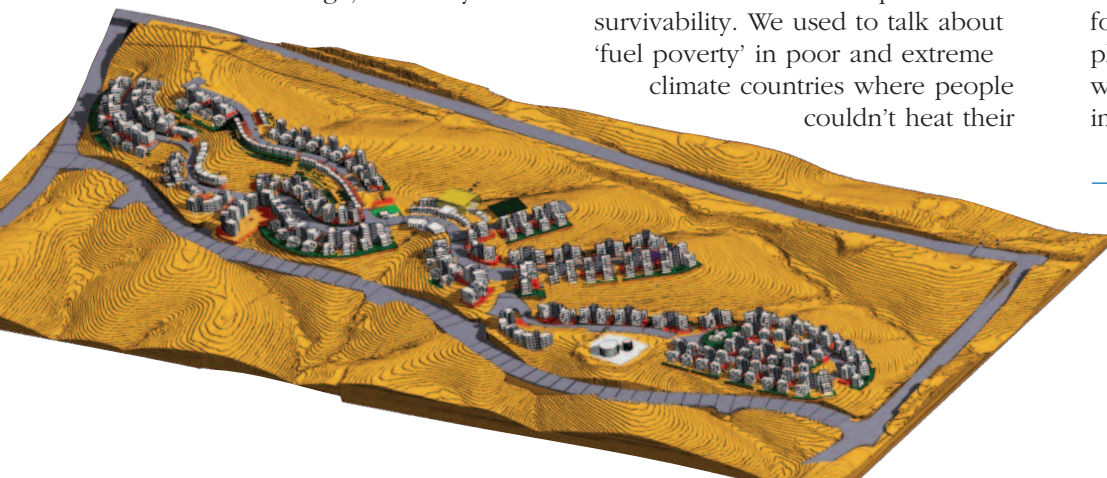
And in recent years we even have “climate refugees,” people who move as the climate becomes intolerable.



The Administration Building at the Jacob Blaustein Institutes for Desert Research, originally designed as a student center by Meir and colleagues

In Australia, there is talk about abandoning desert settlements because they cannot be run economically. As temperatures rise with global warming, water is becoming scarce and livelihoods are jeopardized.

Meir explains his personal outlook on climate change and the possibility of mitigating its effects. “I try to be pragmatic. We can’t afford to put our hands up in the air and say there’s nothing we can do. We owe it to our kids to be optimistic and push things forward that may give them a better place to live. And that has to do with how we invest in research and implement it.” ■



A plan for a 1,000-unit residential community in Ramot, Jerusalem, designed by Prof. Meir and colleagues





# STUDYING ISRAEL AS A NATION-BUILDING SUCCESS STORY

**A FUNNY THING HAPPENED** on the way to creating the Israel Studies International Program (ISIP) for graduate students.

“For many years we assumed that studying Israel was only of interest to Israeli undergraduates and some American Jews,” says Dr. Paula Kabalo, who directs the program. “But gradually we realized that it’s not only Israelis and Americans who are interested in Israel—the world is interested.”

So three years ago, the Ben-Gurion Research Institute for the Study of Israel and Zionism added the M.A. program to its offerings. The program teaches Israeli history, culture and society from a uniquely comprehensive perspective. The faculty includes specialists in history, sociology, philosophy, cultural studies, political science, geography, Middle Eastern studies, and more.

“The field goes way beyond looking at Israel as a state,” says Dr. Kabalo, who’s been associated

with the Institute from its early days. “It’s about an idea, a culture, a society, a political structure.”

The two-year program is taught in English and open to students

growing. Students are finding it on their own. Most are not Jewish and have little or no familiarity with either Israel or Judaism.

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**“There is something amazing about how this small country survived and created a democracy, a society, against all odds—how?”**

— PROF. OFER SHIFF

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globally. Today’s enrollment includes students from China, Azerbaijan, Kenya, Germany, Armenia, Georgia, Korea, Mexico, Hungary, and more. Atypically for a humanities/social science program today and despite little publicity, the program is



Dr. Paula Kabalo



**Left:** Students in the Israel Studies International Program take an archaeological field trip.

What accounts for the attraction, which faculty members agree goes far beyond Israel's frequent starring role in the news? Kabalo and her colleagues find the question intriguing.

"It relates to their own cultures and countries and backgrounds," Kabalo believes. "A student from Georgia wants to understand the Israeli phenomenon because of the difficulties of creating a new government in his country. An Armenian student wants to understand how Israeli society deals with trauma—memories, commemoration.

"A Kenyan candidate came to us and said he wants to understand how Israel deals with underprivileged groups and minorities and the tensions of diversity: Can underprivileged groups eventually 'belong' and feel integrated?"

Many Chinese people have a special enthusiasm for Israel. A relatively large number are enrolled in the master's program, and delegations of Chinese students who are studying other academic subjects elsewhere in Israel are coming this spring for an intensive eight-day seminar sponsored by the Guilford & Diane Glazer Foundation.

"We started with a pilot program for 40, and 70 wanted to join," Kabalo says. Many Chinese are curious about Israel's nature as both an ancient culture and a new one, finding correlations to their own country.

Another special track for Chinese academics was developed in collaboration with SIGNAL, a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting Israel studies in Chinese academia. Young Chinese scholars spend a whole semester studying at the Ben-Gurion Institute, then return to their own universities and teach a course on Israel.

Dr. Avi Bareli, who teaches political history and Zionism, feels that "Israel is interesting in itself and in comparison with problems and processes all over the world.

*Continued on next page*



## SIMONE HORST

Simone's undergraduate work was in Islamic and Jewish Studies at Heidelberg University. She spent a semester in BGU's Ginsburg-Ingerman Overseas Study Program, and another completing her bachelor's degree at BGU.

"I was always interested in religion—Judaism and Islam," she says. "I think because as a German, at one point you have to face your history and deal with your connection to Israel and the Jewish people."

She was happy to join one of the first groups entering the international graduate program two years ago. Its diversity surprised her. "So many different backgrounds! It was very interesting to hear people's opinions and how they view things. We learned so much from each other. I found out, for example, that there are many different ways of learning. We Western people discuss everything and we're emotional. The Chinese know their reading by heart but are a bit quiet. It's a different way of learning—of approaching a topic.

"I found very, very close friends from all these different cultures."

Simone appreciated "the small class sizes that make it very personal," and the basic teaching approach. "It was very rare to hear a professor express a personal opinion. I can't think of a discussion where someone even pushed us in a direction. They don't force us to think their way—but they do force us to think."

Israeli culture surprised her. "People in Germany see the news and very few know Israelis. So they think Israelis sit at home thinking about the war and feeling sad and troubled. But I find them happy and welcoming. They're nice, open and have a good life here even through the conflicts."

Having long dreamed of a journalism career, Simone applied to a leading German TV/radio station after completing her degrees. She was thrilled to be chosen from among 500 competitors.

During the long application process, she observed that her language skills and in-depth experience in Israel were viewed as important assets. "The station carries a lot of political background shows, so the Middle East is 'very present' for them. It was so interesting to the people I talked to that I lived in Israel and spent my everyday life there, experiencing the situation."

She hopes that "maybe one day I can be a correspondent in Israel. I'd like to inform people about this country from my own experience. What they [non-Israelis] think is not at all close to the reality."



Its history is so compressed, so dense. If you're interested in state or nation building, we're a kind of lab to explore how that is done."

Prof. Arie Saposnik, whose field is Zionism in pre-state Palestine, offers another angle. "Israel has become a symbol," he says. "It's a highly controversial, polemicized country and acts almost as a funnel to concentrate key issues for understanding the world today—issues in the humanities and social sciences, nationalism and the state, religious minorities and majorities."

And Israel is extraordinarily dynamic. "The changes are very rapid and make it fascinating to study. Some changes are concrete—like absorbing a million Soviet immigrants in the 1990s—others are internal. We excel at being dynamic and changing."

## LOCATION, LOCATION

The program is based on BGU's Sede Boqer Campus, the desert setting that also houses the Albert Katz International School for Desert Studies and a national treasure—the Ben-Gurion Archives. Interested

students can use the Archives to research exactly how the state of Israel was created. Thanks to David Ben-Gurion's extraordinary record

keeping and 70 years of personal diary entries, the resource documents every stage of decision-making, every controversy, and every bit of the citizen correspondence he encouraged to shape the new nation.

Many classes, typically small seminars with eight to ten students, are held in the Institute's

library, holding additional material related to Israel's history. Some courses encourage research projects based on archive materials. Some students, unable to work in Israel legally, receive paid internships to work in the Archives and in the Institute's library, helping to classify its collections. Internships are also available in education and public relations at David Ben-Gurion's desert home and at his burial site, which neighbors the Institute.

Dr. Kabalo finds that the Negev location inspires thinking about how past and present comeingle. Her own work for the Institute began with the

Archives, and evolved to focus on the role of nonprofit and civic organizations in the development of pre-state Israel.

"I'm interested in leadership and society," she says, "and in Israel, these two things don't contradict each other. David Ben-Gurion pioneered civic engagement—he believed that citizenship takes more than paying taxes and voting. He regarded pioneering as an act of civic engagement and expression of involvement and self-reliance." She believes his ideas are "part of Israel's DNA."

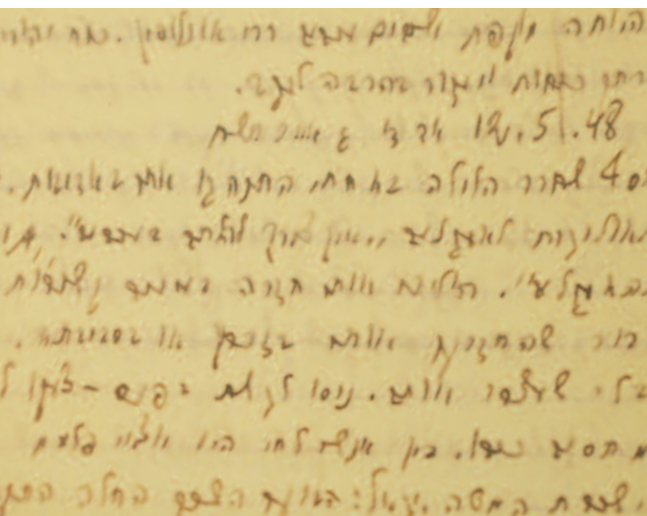
Perhaps there's a "special Jewish experience," she theorizes, which predisposes Jews to become engaged and create groups—clubs, associations, self-help societies—to solve problems. Whether coming from Eastern Europe or Turkey or Afghanistan, Jews in Israel have done this.

"You read about this in the Ben-Gurion Archives, then look at the Negev. Missiles are falling—and people are creating groups and finding ways to be resilient. Look at BGU students; they start groups to help the community, and recently announced a search for pioneers to help one village—that's Ben-Gurion's rhetoric.

"So understanding the past is very relevant to the present."



Prof. Arie Saposnik



A page from David Ben-Gurion's journal housed in the Ben-Gurion Archives



Dr. Avi Bareli on location at the Tel Aviv residence of David Ben-Gurion



Dr. Kobi Peled, right, with his son, Shilo, and Prof. Li, who came from China to learn more about Israel





ISIP students and faculty outside the Ben-Gurion Research Institute for the Study of Israel and Zionism on the Sede Boqer Campus

Photo: Wolfgang Motzafi-Haller

## BACK TO BASICS

Because so few of the students know anything about Israel, they must be taught “from scratch,” Dr. Bareli points out. “It forces me to explain things from different angles. With Israeli students, I share a lot of associations and backgrounds and data. But you have to tell the international students about the history of the Jews and explain things. For example, what are the special problems between Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jews?”

And bigger questions. “What is the meaning of being a Jew? Jews from Yemen and France and Argentina—what is common to them? These are questions Jewish students don’t ask, but the international ones do—and they aren’t easy to answer,” Bareli says. “Sometimes we don’t answer. We leave it to them.”

Prof. Ofer Shiff, who specializes in Israel’s social history, American Jewry and the Holocaust, also enjoys trying to explain his nation to non-Israelis. “When you’re in Israel,

you forget the miracle—how just a few years after the Holocaust, in a magic moment, Israel was created. There is something amazing about how this small country survived and created a democracy, a society, against all odds—how?”

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**“It’s a highly controversial, polemicized country and acts almost as a funnel to concentrate key issues for understanding the world today.”**

— PROF. ARIEH SAPOSNIK

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On the other hand, enabling students to perceive Israel’s “normalcy” is, in Shiff’s eyes, a major program goal. “It’s not only the big issues that matter, what’s in the news,” he

believes. “As a researcher I think that often the story is in the small daily subjects.” He is happy when students move from deep issues to smaller ones during their time in the program.

A student from Germany, for example, elected to study Iranian Jews. “She began with a big-picture subject: Why they left Iran after the Khomeini revolution. But she ended up interviewing Iranians now in Israel about their memories of their homes, their neighbors, what they think of their former homeland—a very different topic. The way they remember the language, the food, smelling the flowers—that’s the story of real people.” The student, Claudia Oesau, was the first student in the four-year-old program to win an Israeli research prize.

Dr. Kobi Peled teaches courses on the Arabs in Israel and puts Israel in context of its region. “I introduce Israeli society from the viewpoint of our neighbors,” he says. “Regardless of political involvement, we need to better understand the people with



whom we live. They are not going to disappear—whether you want to be separate from them or not, they're part of your life, the region, Israel's identity."

For a teacher, getting past cultural barriers is an interesting challenge. "Every year it's a mosaic—students with different disciplines and fields of knowledge and attitude, as well as different backgrounds and cultures. They share an interest in Israel, though their motivations are different. I often use theories and ideas to create a dialogue between all these different students. And the mosaic lets you judge yourself: How do you present your arguments? It creates a critical viewpoint to see yourself."



Prof. Ofer Shiff

## CREATING AMBASSADORS

"They'll go back to where they came from and remain themselves," says Prof. Saposnik of the students he and his colleagues teach, "but they have gained new pieces of themselves to bring back

with them. I hope they walk away with an understanding of the complexity and multiplicity of Israeli society and culture."

Dr. Kabalo hopes the students will choose their own paths and contribute as well-informed intellectuals to how other countries see Israel. "We train them as academics, but I have full confidence they will spread around the world and explain what Israel is

about in a balanced, deep way."

Moreover, each knowledgeable graduate may create a multiplier effect. A current Chinese student, for example, plans to return to China as an expert in Israel studies and is on track to become an influential leader at a major university where she already works.

Prof. Shiff hopes the insight his students carry with them is of Israel's ordinariness. "I hope before everything else that when they go back to Armenia or Bulgaria, they will talk about Israel as a normal place with people—people who live and enjoy and cry, people who have good things happen and bad things happen.

"That's a great message and a big challenge." ■

Thanks to the generosity of the Woodman-Scheller family, all gifts made in support of BGU's Israel Studies International Program will be matched dollar-for-dollar up to \$2 million. To donate go to [www.aabgu.org/donate-israel-studies](http://www.aabgu.org/donate-israel-studies).

ISIP students form close connections that sustain into the future.







# TRAINING DOCTORS TO THINK AND ACT GLOBALLY

**“I’VE REALIZED MORE AND MORE** that a lot of medicine is about talking with patients and connecting as human beings,” 25-year old Nathan Douthit says. “This is more difficult without a common language, but we can still sit with patients and make a connection—let them know someone cares and is on their team.”

This perspective is not what might be expected of a harried third-year med student, struggling with a crammed curriculum and always short of time. But it reflects the special nature of BGU’s Medical School for International Health (MSIH) and why it differs from all other programs.

“Like all medical schools, we want physicians to be extremely well trained and really really good,” says Prof. A. Mark Clarfield, M.D., the school’s director. “We add another mission—to teach how to practice medicine across cultural and geographic and technological boundaries. The doctors we train must know how to treat people who don’t share their values, beliefs or ideas about health.”

When MSIH was established in 1996, it pioneered the idea that

today’s world needs physicians with a global and humanitarian perspective. The school equips its students to work anywhere in the world, provide services to underserved communities

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**“The doctors we train must know how to treat people who don’t share their values, beliefs or ideas about health.”**

— PROF. A. MARK CLARFIELD

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and handle crisis medical situations with limited resources and, typically, no plan to follow. Today, in the wake of AIDS, Ebola, SARS and other outbreaks, there is growing recognition that health observes no borders.

Many medical schools have added a global medicine track or elective as “an interesting flavor,” Prof. Clarfield notes. But MSIH remains the only school fully devoted to this mission.

Teaching is all in English. The majority of students are North American, and others are drawn from Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. Less than one-third are Jewish. The school’s growing reputation as a source of caring, highly capable professionals makes admission competitive.

“Generally we have a self-selected group,” says Sara Sternglass, whose work as administrative director based in MSIH’s New York office includes recruitment support. “Our candidates know they’re interested in global health or helping the underserved and are the most dedicated, committed people I’ve ever met.”

The opportunity for early clinical experience appeals to many candidates. “Many American schools require two years of classroom work before beginning this,” Sternglass explains, “but at MSIH students work with patients from the first year.”

This element was a main attraction for Douthit. He and his wife, Kate,

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**Top Photo:** Jesse Morantz with villagers in India during his overseas internship



are Christians who wanted to live and work overseas, and ultimately, help people in underserved areas. “So when I started to look at medical schools,” Douthit says, “I was frustrated at the amount of time it would take to do what we’re passionate about. I saw a random e-mail that asked, ‘Are you interested in global medicine?’ When I researched the school I heard only good things, and it lined up with our mission.”



Prof. A. Mark Clarfield, M.D.

Everyone begins with a crash course in Hebrew that is amplified by two years of language study, focusing on conversation and medical terminology. In the first two years, the emerging physicians develop their medical knowledge with foundation courses: biochemistry, physiology, cellular and molecular biology, genetics, epidemiology, pathology, and more.

All are also required to take “Clinical and Global Medicine,” which includes the early patient exposure. Every Wednesday, novices accompany doctors on their rounds in local clinics, where they observe the interaction, assist doctors and learn how to take the all-important medical history.

Teachers make the most of tight time by building “efficiencies” into the experience. For example, insofar as is possible, cross-cultural and medical skills are practiced together. “We teach them how to interview children, adults and geriatric patients beginning in their first year. In the second, they learn to do a physical exam in Hebrew and take a transcription,” Clarfield says.

“They also learn to work with interpreters—a useful skill for every doctor.”

The Clinical and Global Medicine component also incorporates sub-units such as Demography and Health Indicators, Cross Cultural Health Beliefs, Maternal and Child Health, Primary Health Care, Disaster Preparedness, and Infectious and Tropical Diseases. In addition, students choose from more than 16 global health modules taught by experts in international medicine. Among them: Disaster Medicine, Environmental Health, Medical Anthropology, World Health Systems, Alternative Medicine, and Women’s Health.

The courses illuminate cultural differences and global challenges. “Aging in the Developing World,” for example—taught by Prof. Clarfield, a specialist in this field—teaches that “in the developing world you see the power of community, and we learn about community support from them,” Clarfield says. “But even if a sick elderly person has 11 kids, it may not be enough. The children will need help to look after him or her. It’s hard enough for a rich country to look after its elderly—but in places like Tanzania, Peru and Ethiopia, people get old in a country that’s still poor.

## A NATURAL LABORATORY

Douthit found that in Beer-Sheva, “you’re already on location to practice global medicine.” While Israel is a first-world nation and has an impressive medical system, some of the country’s populations, particularly Bedouins, as well as numerous refugees and immigrants in the south, often lack access to sufficient medical care. “It’s true that we have fantastic teachers, but it’s so much easier to learn where global medicine stares you in the face,” Douthit says.







Services like nursing homes need to be integrated into their systems.” As people live longer, aging becomes an increasing problem globally, he notes.

## DIFFERENT IDEAS ABOUT HEALTH

Different cultures hold widely diverging ideas about health, and this presents enormous challenges to cross-border medical care. “In the West we believe that bacteria and toxins are the cause of infectious disease,” Clarfield explains. “But an Ethiopian mother tells us her son is sick because a cold wind blew across his cheek when he was a child. We see Russian immigrants who were taught that you can ‘feel’ high blood pressure when you have it, but in fact 95 percent of the time it’s the silent killer.”

On the other hand, “Why do we in the West believe so many dietary supplements are necessary, when there’s absolutely no scientific evidence that people with a good diet need any of them? It’s cultural.”

The power of culture over medicine, emphasized by the school’s curriculum at every opportunity, is also demonstrated by the challenge of fighting Ebola in West Africa. Success proved difficult, Clarfield points out, partly



because the people believe that a body must be washed and attended to until burial. “To convince people to stop thousands of years of tribal cultural practice, it’s not enough for a westerner simply to say ‘don’t touch the body, it’s a huge reservoir of Ebola virus.’ To the person, it’s her mother, and she must sit with her. We must use the principles of medical anthropology to help people do the right thing for their health, even if they don’t necessarily buy all of our ideas.”

After the two years of basics, students spend the third year engaged in clinical medicine rotations at Soroka University Medical Center and other Israeli hospitals. They also participate in an intensive two-day cross-cultural workshop to further promote their communication skills and cultural awareness.

At this event, prepared actors stage various scenarios. Students must interview them and deal with culturally sensitive issues. One scenario, for example, may feature an Ethiopian woman with a sick child, and another,



1. MSIH third-year student Nathan Douthit with his wife, Kate, and young son. The diversity of his classmates amazed him. “In Alabama, all the applicants were like me. Similar backgrounds, stories, experiences. Here there are different cultures, thoughts, worldviews, just within your own class.”

2. Nicolai Furmanskyy in Ethiopia

3. Students observe examination of a baby during an international health elective

4. Graduate Maria Cornelius in a clinic in Peru during her overseas clerkship

an ultra-Orthodox woman who believes that having been sexually abused when young caused her adult infertility.

“Hard situations to handle, but that’s what we do in global medicine,” Clarfield says. “It’s not enough to be nice. Physicians need skills, methods and techniques, and we do our best to teach them these approaches.”

In tandem with its global dimension, MSIH mirrors the basic curriculum of the typical North American medical school. The students’ fourth year is partially spent at a hospital or medical center in the United States or Canada, undertaking “clerkships” (internships) and taking clinical electives. MSIH has a major affiliation with Columbia University’s College of Physicians and Surgeons and working agreements with a wide range of other medical institutions.

Some students choose to add a master’s degree in public health to their credentials before starting this fourth year. “Advocacy is in their nature,” explains Sternglass. “They realize that a knowledge of policy plus the clinical training enables





# DR. BRIAN NEESE

## USAF MAJOR, CLASS OF 2005 AND HEAD OF THE MSIH ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

“Our alumni go out into the world and they are always well received,” says United States Air Force Major Brian Neese. “Our resumes intrigue residency programs and employers. People want to see what you have to say. And we’re ready to tell them.”

Maj. Neese added a master’s in public health from Harvard University to his own resume, and accomplished his eight-week capstone experience in Kenya. He went on to the University of Virginia for his residency. In 2008, he joined the Air Force as one of 65 international health specialists. Currently, he is division chief of that program at Air Forces Southern, helping to build partnerships for the USAF throughout Latin America. Dr. Neese is slated to assume command of an Air Force multi-specialty medical clinic in Charleston this summer.

“What’s very different about MSIH is that it’s about community health and primary care, and taking care of populations. From day one you learn to look at the whole person and understand that he or she is a product not only of genetics, but of a community and a culture. There’s no magic solution to communicating in different languages, but they teach you guiding principles: patience, humility, how to posture toward someone from a different culture. And they put us in situations to flex and use these skills.”

Neese also appreciates the independence MSIH fosters. “At every stage they teach that ‘you are the expert’—there’s nobody else around, so make an informed decision. Figure it out. Ultimately you start trusting yourself.”

Since 2011, this training has guided Neese through missions to most Central and South American countries. In Honduras, Guatemala, Peru, Brazil, and other countries, he has helped train military and civil medical personnel in aerospace medicine; in El Salvador he supported development of the country’s military medical disaster response capability; in Uruguay he helped train U.N. peace-keeping forces in Ebola preparedness before their deployment to West Africa.

Neese makes time to “give back” to MSIH as head of its growing Alumni Association, which helps recruit future MSIH students, supplies keynote speakers for school events, links alumni with current students as mentors, and helps fourth-year students connect with the American medical system.

“The alumni coming out of MSIH have a strong desire to stay connected with each other and support the school and the success of its students.”

**Donations to support the MSIH Alumni Association and/or scholarships for MSIH students can be made online at [www.aabgu.org/donate-now](http://www.aabgu.org/donate-now).**

**Top Photo:** Maj. Brian Neese, his wife, Shelley, and their four children. “We’re a BGU family,” Brian says. While he was working on his M.D., Shelley—who had never before lived overseas—enrolled in the Ginsburg-Ingerman Overseas Student Program, finished her college degree, then earned a master’s in Middle Eastern affairs at BGU. She subsequently worked in the Israeli consulate in Boston, and now is vice president of a Christian Zionist organization.

them to speak with authority so they can affect change in public policy.”

The final year also puts everything learned to the test with a global health clerkship in a developing country. After intensive preparation, students spend eight weeks in a clinic, community health program or other medical facility in Peru, the Philippines, Uganda, India, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Ethiopia, or Nepal. For most, this is a highly prized capstone experience.

The MSIH faculty looks forward to hearing about these experiences, and how the students’ hard work—and their own—is actualized. Each returning student makes a presentation to the entire medical school at a year-end gala. “That’s a high point for the faculty,” Clarfield acknowledges. “I get a lot of *nachas* [prideful joy] out of it. And then graduation day, seeing those young people going out into the world...it inspires me.”

To date, about 500 MSIH trained physicians have been graduated. Young as MSIH is, its alumni achievements testify to how well the school fulfills its ambitious goal. Examples include a graduate who is working in Botswana on a new technique to detect acute HIV infection for a prevention study; another who returns regularly to Zambia to treat infectious diseases and is helping to build a clinic there; a critical care specialist working on a new way to reverse the effects of pediatric cerebral malaria in Uganda; and a health policy strategist newly appointed as associate director for the American Diabetes Association, focusing on minorities.

Graduates hold leadership positions in hospitals, advocacy groups, government agencies, and research centers. Some non-Americans return to their home countries to fill desperate needs, while many graduates from the U.S. are ready to answer calls for help: to field a disaster, establish a local medical care program, manage a prevention initiative—whether in Peru, Uganda, India, or rural America. ■

# IMPROVING THE IMPERFECT ENERGY MARKET



**DR. OFIR RUBIN** studies energy economics and is a member of BGU's Energy Initiative.

He joined the Department of Public Policy and Administration in the Guilford Glazer Faculty of Business and Management in 2011.

"I felt I would have all the conditions to succeed in my work because of the department's excellent scholars, the interdisciplinary nature of their research and all the energy research going on at BGU."

Energy economics, says Rubin, "uses economic theory to understand, explain and predict, and hopefully change the forms of energy production and consumption, usually by regulatory policy."

The field merits special attention in the world of economics for two main reasons, he believes. "First, the fact is that almost all economic activity requires energy: industrial production, house construction, agriculture, heating and air conditioning, transportation—so a sustainable energy supply

is crucial for economic growth.

"Second, energy commodities have special characteristics associated with many market failures. It's strongly linked to air pollution, which affects public health. Competition is imperfect because the market usually consists of concentrated industries, and energy demands infrastructure—it's not something you can produce and put in a supermarket.

"And our information is incomplete. We don't really know how much energy reserves we have, how much demand will increase, and with all these uncertainties we must account for future generations. So energy markets are very imperfect; therefore, they don't perform optimally without government intervention."

Recent shifts in supply show how fast energy economics can change

and even turn the sector upside down. Most notably, Israel's natural gas discovery a few years ago quickly converted the country from importer

to exporter. New drilling techniques used in the United States and other countries greatly amplify the supply of natural gas. Integrating new sources like wind brings many variables into play, such as the intermittent nature of its supply and complex pricing mechanisms.

"Modeling the markets and accounting for everything is quite a challenging task. The bottom line is that we have to model energy commodities differently than standard commodities. We need to take behavioral factors into account because at the end of the day, that's what drives prices and determines whether a policy is successful or not."



Dr. Ofir Rubin



Rubin's research shows that the behavior economic policy produces is not always as intended. In Iowa, where he obtained his Ph.D., oil prices were up in 2008 and the

Iowa's ethanol subsidies were stopped.

An ongoing study with colleague Dr. Stav Rosenzweig and graduate student Aviv Steren, both in BGU's Guilford Glazer Faculty of Business

were taxed less, and prospective buyers were informed of the environmental rating for each car.

"If the policy is effective, consumers purchase smaller and more efficient cars and less fuel is being consumed," Rubin says. "We looked at the figures and compared different groups: people who kept the car they owned, and people who bought used cars or new cars before and after the tax change. We found that the group who bought new [efficient] cars after the policy was in place used the most fuel. How come?"

Economists call that undesirable consequence a "rebound effect," he says. "Our study isolated the rebound effect. When you have a small efficient car the marginal use cost is lower. It costs you less for gas so you drive it more. Psychologically, you think you're saving more, while encouraging yourself to consume more fuel."

Rubin's team is now more closely measuring this rebound effect and taking into account additional factors, such as demographics and fuel prices. "Hopefully, we'll be able to show a direction for changing current policy. And in the end we'll get more efficient."

With all the new factors—wind energy coming to many locations, new fossil fuel discoveries, and technological developments in solar energy—the future should be interesting, Rubin thinks. Whether or not policy makers listen to energy economists' advice is another matter.

"The government helps support the research with grants, but policy making is very complicated. You do the research and believe it counts, that it's read, and that you make a difference. I believe that we do.

"You have to be there at the right time and present your results in a way that people can read, relate to and hopefully implement." ■

government subsidized Iowa corn for ethanol and soybeans for biofuel. Studies by the Environmental Protection Agency showed the carbon saving to be in line with expectations, but Rubin's team in the Center for Agriculture and Rural Development at Iowa State University challenged the calculations.

"We looked at how farmers performed with incentives. They used more chemicals and tilled more aggressively. If they rotated corn and soybeans before, with corn subsidies higher, they grew more corn. The policy changed their behavior—their practices—as well as what they produced." As a result, land became exhausted so yields were lower in the end, and the social benefit was much lower than assumed. Additional side effects like higher food prices also resulted.

and Management, looked at Israel's "green taxation" of new cars. In 2009, the government moved from

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**"Modeling the markets and accounting for everything is quite a challenging task. The bottom line is that we have to model energy commodities differently than standard commodities."**

— DR. OFIR RUBIN

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a uniformly high tax to one that reflected the car's environmental performance. More efficient cars



# BRINGING ART TO CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY



BGU's Department of the Arts has a colorful vision. In addition to educating future art historians, curators and fine artists, its three-pronged mission aims to enrich and enliven the University's campus life; contribute to the cultural development of Israel's Southern region; and connect the University with its city more closely.

## THE AGENDA MAY SEEM AMBITIOUS

for a small, albeit growing department. Created 16 years ago, the Department of Arts currently serves about 100 undergraduates and 20 master's degree students each year. And it uses a tangible focal point to fulfill its mission: exhibitions.

The department regularly installs art shows in two galleries. One, the Senate Gallery, is located in the George Shrut Visitors Center on

the Marcus Family Campus and is mainly visited by students. The second, the Trumpeldor Gallery in Beer-Sheva's old city, is housed in an ancient Turkish building lent by the municipality. It opened in 2012 and attracts local residents.

Between the two locations, the department mounts at least eight shows annually, explains its chairperson, Dr. Daniel Unger. "In the last few years we've been able to bring to Beer-Sheva important artists, both Israeli and international, with work ranging from various crafts to 'high art,'" he says. "And every year the audience grows. The more



Dr. Daniel Unger

people see, the more they want to come."

He observes that presenting the shows is right in line with the University's own mission. "President Carmi wants BGU to be part of Beer-Sheva in all aspects. The city is growing, and more culture makes it more attractive to educated people. People

in the Negev can feel a little out of the mainstream, so what we do is important."

He is happy to note that activity in the region is beginning to stir.

**Photos:** Renderings of the art gallery to be built on BGU's campus







Contemporary artwork by Bedouin women in a recent exhibition at the Trumpeldor Gallery, curated by Prof. Maor



Professor/curator/artist Haim Maor with one of his own works, a portrait of his grandson, currently on exhibit in BGU's Over Time: Art Work by Members of the Faculty and Staff in Honor of the 45th Anniversary of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

The Museum of Beer-Sheva opened downtown a few years ago and houses temporary exhibits. "I'm very optimistic about Beer-Sheva and its potential as an interesting cultural community," he says. "We can contribute a lot, especially because our faculty is unique: young and full of energy."

Developing the shows integrates seamlessly with art education coursework. Students in the three-year bachelor's program major in art history. The master's program focuses on history and curatorship. Both groups of students take a curatorship course and experience the demands of mounting actual exhibitions. In doing so, they have the opportunity to work with Prof. Haim Maor, a widely recognized artist, writer and curator who directs all the department's shows.

Maor joined the department at its inception in 1999. He had begun writing about art, in addition to creating it, in the 1980s. Prof. Haim Finkelstein, the founding director—who knew Maor as editor of a magazine on Israeli art called *Studio*—invited him to help build BGU's new enterprise. Maor came

to teach painting, drawing and curatorship. With Finkelstein, he also began creating exhibitions. Today, Maor delights in creating innovative shows that are, he says, seen nowhere else in Israel, or the Western world.



Students in the curator class prepare an exhibition.

"I started unconsciously looking for hidden voices in Israeli art: the voices of women, Asians, religious people. And I choose artists and subjects other galleries are afraid of: Arab-Jew relations, mysticism, immigrants. I don't try to do global art, like they do in Tel Aviv. I show local art!"

In the last few years, his shows have included a multi-artist installation depicting Israeli bomb shelters, in both still and video images; work by a religious woman artist; and a show of crafts by Bedouin women. "When they move out of tents into stone houses they have more time, and create contemporary folk art with new images and materials," Maor comments. "They are doing important work."

Once each year Maor elects to focus on a geographic place where Israeli Jews originated—Russia, Morocco or Romania (see cover art), for example. "I want to see if there's an influence visible in their art," he says. He always finds it. "And I want to show that trying to build a monolithic culture of *sabras* [native Israelis] doesn't succeed—that's a synthetic identity, not a real one.

"A real identity includes your heritage. To have two identities and keep the best of both is much richer. Many Israelis are trying to deal with these double identities, and their art is totally different than those born in Israel."

He notes that while many forget their cultural background in favor of



The iconic photograph of David Ben-Gurion was recreated in mosaic by Yaakov Hefetz and exhibited in Beer-Sheva's The "Old Man": David Ben-Gurion and His Legacy in the Mirror of Israeli Art, March 2010.



From the exhibition Portraits of Cain: Representations of "Others," 2012

building new identities, today's young people are interested in new immigrants and their languages, customs and food. "They want to bring these things into the culture. Isn't it much more tasty to eat a salad with different fruits rather than just tomato?"

Maor relishes his role as a "finder of young artists," many of whom have their first showing in the galleries he directs and often go on to wider success. And he has specific ideas about how to train curators-to-be. "Having them help with exhibitions is a way to show them how real curators work." Students visit artists' studios and interview them, write catalog essays, and help with the physical mounting of the shows.

"We teach them how to work with contemporary artists," Maor says. "And we tell them they must learn their own esthetics. It's not enough to be open to the esthetics just of Western art. They must be open to the art of 'the other'—those who come from a different culture, another tradition. They must be open to different kinds of beauty."

The coursework supports this approach with broad interdisciplinary and cross-cultural elements. Maor

is proud that the art department's independent-minded, practically-trained graduates are beginning to seed museums and galleries in Israel and elsewhere. "It's easy for them to find work—they know what to do," he says.

**"All kinds of collectors are ready to lend us work once we have the space and can safely house it. We could make a deeper connection to the community."**

— DR. DANIEL UNGER

Like Unger, Maor views the exhibition program as part of the larger BGU mission. "We want to make the University open to society and community. We want to not only educate, but to show people how to have a good time with art."

Unger, Maor and their department colleagues share a dream: To build

a beautiful, spacious, contemporary gallery on the BGU campus that will act as a magnetic center for art and draw in both students and the community. They have already developed architectural plans for such a building. They just need the benefactors to support it.

"All kinds of collectors are ready to lend us work once we have the space and can safely house it," Unger says. "We could make a deeper connection to the community, and especially with children. We can do the things museums do—expand our program to areas like museology, visual literacy, criticism. We could welcome gifts of art and mount more exhibitions.

"We do a lot. But we can do much more." ■

To learn about funding opportunities to build BGU's art gallery, contact the AABGU office in your region or call 800-452-3688.





# GREAT LAKES

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## BGU FACULTY VISIT THE REGION

The Great Lakes Region is a frequent stop for Ben-Gurion University faculty and researchers participating in conferences and scientific research collaborations.

Recent BGU visitors to Chicago include Prof. Amos Katz, M.D., dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences; Prof. Eilon Adar, director of the Zuckerberg Institute for Water Research at the Jacob Blaustein Institutes for Desert Research; and Prof. Ilan Shelef, director of BGU's Brain Imaging Research Center and head of the Diagnostic Imaging Center at Beer-Sheva's Soroka University Medical Center.

Meeting with AABGU supporters gathered at a private home on Chicago's North Shore, Prof. Shelef discussed his team's research into aberrations of the brain and how BGU and Soroka collaborate closely on a variety of brain research projects.

Prof. Shelef also spoke about the collective role that BGU and Soroka's doctors, nurses, staff, and volunteers played during Operation Protective Edge, the seven-week war fought last summer in Gaza, barely thirty miles from the University's Marcus Family Campus in Beer-Sheva.

AABGU supporters, and all friends of Israel, can take great pride in the selfless care provided to those wounded, injured or displaced in Israel's defense.

## WELCOMING THE CROWN FAMILY FOUNDATION

BGU was pleased to welcome trustees and staff of Chicago's Crown Family Foundation to its Marcus Family Campus in Beer-Sheva. The delegation was led by Barbara Manilow, a member of the Crown family and chair of Crown Family Philanthropies.

They were greeted by BGU President Prof. Rivka Carmi and Prof. Moshe Gottlieb, who leads the BGU side of the University's pioneering water research collaboration with the University of Chicago and Argonne National Laboratory.

## GET TO KNOW BGU

The Great Lakes Region is anticipating several more local visits by BGU researchers and faculty and looks forward to more opportunities to introduce their work to AABGU supporters and make new friends in the area.

For those traveling to Israel, did you know that Beer-Sheva is only a one-hour train ride from Tel Aviv? Be sure to contact the regional office as you plan your trip to arrange a campus tour and meetings with faculty researchers.



1. Prof. Eilon Adar and Regional Director Steve Franklin at BGU's partner in water research, Argonne National Laboratory  
2. Dr. Elliot Baker, Dr. Michael Jablon and Prof. Ilan Shelef  
3. Allen Laporre, Prof. Ilan Shelef, AABGU Board Member Ernie Simon, Alan Cahn 4. Cindy Franklin, Judith Simon and Janet Jablow

# GREATER FLORIDA

## GREATER FLORIDA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Richard N. Bernstein, Robert Colton,  
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## LEARNING ABOUT ISRAEL AND ZIONISM

Two members of BGU's Ben-Gurion Research Institute for the Study of Israel and Zionism recently visited South Florida. Prof. Arie Saposnik captivated new friends speaking about Israel in the 21st century, Jewish peoplehood and the Balfour Declaration. Prof. Zaki Shalom gave presentations about Israeli leadership from Ben-Gurion to Netanyahu. Thanks to Luis Fleischman, executive director of the Jewish Community Relations Council of the Jewish Federation of Palm Beach, for hosting a breakfast briefing.

The region is also appreciative of Jane Berkey for hosting a lovely luncheon at her home; new Living Legacy Society members, Al and Phyllis Newman, for hosting a stimulating afternoon at their home; and Louis Reinstein for hosting a professional group at his Fort Lauderdale law office.

Presentations were also held at the JCC of the Palm Beaches, St. Andrews Country Club in Boca Raton and Harbours Edge in Delray Beach. In Miami, Prof. Shalom spoke in Hebrew to the Israeli Parliament Men's Group, and was a scholar-in-residence at the Palm Beach Synagogue and Temple Israel in West Palm Beach.



## SECRETS OF THE NEGEV

AABGU Board Member Ed Kaplan, and his wife Marilyn, hosted a breakfast for archaeologist Prof. Steve Rosen at the Bocaire Country Club. As BGU's vice president for external affairs, Prof. Rosen also spoke about BGU's exciting growth. The event was attended by members of AABGU's Boca-Delray Advisory Committee chaired by Dr. Rob Colton.

## PROTECTING OUR WORLD IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Prof. Dan Blumberg, director of BGU's Homeland Security Institute and vice president for research and development, presented two powerful presentations about cyber security. Miami leaders attended a reception at the home of Israeli Consul General Chaim Shacham in Aventura. And, Rachel and Max Javit welcomed Palm Beach leaders for a briefing and a lavish dessert reception at the Boca West Country Club.

## CAPTURING THE SPIRIT

Several members of the community recently visited BGU: Morry and Judy Weiss and family; Marty Weinberg and Carol Randman; Joey and Anita Givner; Esther and Roger Shacket; and AIPAC Senate Club mission participants.

Congratulations to Lesli Rosenblatt on completing the Zin Fellows Leadership Program.



1. Al Newman, Prof. Arie Saposnik and Phyllis Newman 2. Carol Randman and Marty Weinberg at the Negev Society wall on BGU's Marcus Family Campus, representing the Zantker Charitable Foundation 3. Stuart Wagner, Jerry Cohen, Prof. Dan Blumberg, Hon. Billy Joel, and Steven Raviv at the home of Israeli Consul General Chaim Shacham 4. At the Protecting Our World in the Digital Age event: Honorary Chairs Max and Rachel Javit, Prof. Dan Blumberg, and new Living Legacy Society members Marilyn and Ed Kaplan



# GREATER NEW YORK

Lite Sabin, *Chair*  
Kevin M. Leopold  
*Executive Director – Northeast*  
Diane Romirowsky  
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## CELEBRATING FRIENDS

In December, the Greater New York Region hosted a festive Chanukah lunch program that included an induction ceremony for new members of AABGU's *Asarot* and Living Legacy Societies. The region was honored to recognize the groups' longtime friendship and show appreciation for their generosity and dedication to Ben-Gurion University of the Negev.

Living Legacy Society members, those who include AABGU in their long-term estate plans, received a ceramic pomegranate representing the idea that "a seed planted today brings beautiful blossoms tomorrow."

*Asarot* means "tens" in Hebrew and members of this society are part of a select group of donors who have contributed 10 gifts or more to AABGU. The inductees received a beautiful certificate expressing AABGU's appreciation for their longtime support.

The event's guest speaker was Prof. Steve Rosen, BGU's vice president for external affairs and a member of the Department of Bible, Archaeology and the Ancient Near East. Prof. Rosen's expertise is in anthropology and he holds the Canada Chair in Near Eastern Archaeology.

As Chanukah is the festival

of lights, Prof. Rosen spoke about the uses of fire and light by a variety of ancient civilizations. His presentation "cast light" on the importance of these two elements and how they were the building blocks of civilizations dating back thousands of years.

A highlight of the event was a surprise "visit" by several BGU students in Beer-Sheva via Skype, who led the group in the lighting of the menorah and reciting holiday blessings.

The three Israeli students were joined by Chad Martin in New York, a BGU alumnus from the Ginsburg-Ingerman Overseas Student Program, who lit the menorah in AABGU's conference room followed by group singing of "*Haneirot Halalu*" and "*Maoz Tzur*."

The successful program left guests with a warm feeling of satisfaction of being part of the AABGU and BGU family.

Based on the positive feedback received, this will become an annual event to celebrate Chanukah and express appreciation to friends and supporters.



1. BGU students Oded, Sivan and Emily led the Chanukah candle lighting ceremony via Skype during the holiday lunch program. 2. Art and Betty Roswell (daughter of Jacob and Hilda Blaustein) accept the Pillar's Award from Prof. Rivka Carmi on behalf of the Jacob and Hilda Blaustein Foundation at a dinner reception in February. 3. Rochelle and Maks Etingin hosted an event in their home with BGU's rector, Prof. Zvi HaCohen (center). 4. National Vice President Jessica Sillins launched AABGU's Max Steinberg Memorial Scholarship Endowment Fund at the *Times of Israel* Gala in February.



Photo © Peter Halmagyi

# GREATER TEXAS

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and Arline Guefen, *Chairs*  
Ellen Marcus, *Austin Chair*  
Deborah K. Bergeron, *Director*  
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## BGU FACULTY VISIT THE LONE STAR STATE

AABGU's Greater Texas Region recently welcomed Prof. Arieh Saposnik, a new member of BGU's Ben-Gurion Research Institute for the Study of Israel and Zionism, to Houston to speak at the regional board meeting. Thanks to Dr. Daniel and Shira Yoshor for hosting the dinner meeting.

BGU's Vice President for External Affairs, Prof. Steve Rosen, spoke at a dessert reception for the region's Austin Chapter hosted by Ellen Marcus and Harvey Malyn.

Prof. Rosen, a member of the Department of Bible, Archaeology and the Ancient Near East, shared how his passion for archeology and anthropology led him to Ben-Gurion University of the Negev early in his career.

## CELEBRATING AN AABGU POWER COUPLE

The 14th Gourmet Kosher Extravaganza paid tribute to Sandra and Steven Finkelman, longtime members of the AABGU family and dedicated leaders of the Houston Jewish community.

The Finkelmans were presented with the AABGU David Ben-Gurion Leadership Award by Extravaganza Chairs Raquel Goldberg and Haya Varon.

An enthusiastic crowd of 400 supporters and friends from around



1. Extravaganza Chairs Haya Varon and Raquel Goldberg present the AABGU David Ben-Gurion Award to Honorees Sandra and Steven Finkelman. 2. Regional Director Deborah Bergeron, Shira Yoshor, Prof. Arieh Saposnik, Arline and Ben Guefen 3. Prof. Dan Blumberg; Doron Krakow, AABGU executive vice president; BGU President Prof. Rivka Carmi; Prof. Steve Rosen 4. AABGU's Austin Chapter hosts Prof. Steve Rosen (back right). 5. Terry Woskow, BGU President Prof. Rivka Carmi, Stephen Breslauer

the world gathered at the Westin Galleria Hotel on a February evening for a delicious multi-course gourmet kosher meal prepared by Houston's and New York's finest chefs.

A special participant was Chef Fany Gerson, of Dough and La Newyorkina in New York, who happens to be Raquel Goldberg's niece.

Guest speaker Prof. Dan Blumberg, BGU's vice president for research and development and director of the Homeland Security Institute, addressed the ongoing importance of cyber security for Israel and the United States, and the leadership role BGU is playing in this field.



# MID-ATLANTIC

Jack R Bershad

*Regional Chair*

Marla and Dr. Robert Zipkin

*Philadelphia Chapter Chairs*

Jeffrey Letwin

*Pittsburgh Chapter Chair*

Claire Winick, *Director*

Seth Bloom, *Associate Director*

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## CREATING AMBASSADORS FOR ISRAEL

A \$2 million matching fund for Israel studies fellowships has been established by longtime AABGU supporters Lisa Scheller and Wayne Woodman and Roberta and Ernest Scheller, Jr. to combat worldwide anti-Semitism.

The Israel Studies International Program at Ben-Gurion University, taught in English under the auspices of the University's Ben-Gurion Research Institute for the Study of Israel and Zionism, draws graduate students from around the world, Jews and non-Jews, to study the Middle East's only successful democracy (see page 12).

Students from Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, China, Georgia, Germany, Korea, the United Kingdom, the United States, and, even the West Bank, aspire to become experts in Israel's history, politics and society.

The Woodman-Scheller matching funds will facilitate many annual fellowships, dramatically increasing the number of students who enroll in the graduate program. A goal of the program is to create an educated cadre of "ambassadors" of Israel around the world.



## EVENTS AROUND THE REGION

- The Philadelphia Chapter's annual gala was attended by nearly 200 people, who gathered to celebrate three outstanding "Partners with Israel": Robert Dunn, Sherrie R. Savett and Murray H. Shusterman.
- Dr. Tal Eyal of BGU's Department of Psychology addressed several groups, including two in Delaware, a new community to the region.
- Continuing the region's engagement in Pittsburgh, Chapter Chair Jeff Letwin and his wife, Roberta, hosted a meeting featuring Doron Krakow, AABGU's executive vice president. The Philip Chosky Foundation made a \$50,000 commitment to fellowships for Israel studies, making it the new chapter's first Founder gift.
- Prof. Alon Friedman, M.D., Ph.D., member of the Zlotowski Center for Neuroscience, spoke before three audiences in Philadelphia, including Watermark, a luxury retirement community.
- Noted filmmaker and community icon Sam Katz, who is AABGU's immediate past Philadelphia Chapter co-chair, presented an insider's look at "The Negev and Israel's Future" at Congregation Beth Shalom.
- In partnership with AABGU, Temple Judea of Bucks County hosted BGU Prof. Emeritus Fred Lazin, who presented "How the Holocaust Happened: Changes in Our Perceptions Since Anne Frank and the Eichmann Trial."

1. "Partners with Israel" Honorees: Murray H. Shusterman and Robert Dunn 2. AABGU Executive Vice President Doron Krakow presents "Partners with Israel" Honoree Sherrie R. Savett with her award. 3. Dr. Tal Eyal, senior lecturer in BGU's Department of Psychology, with Philadelphia Chapter members Violet and Richard Zeitlin 4. Jack R Bershad, Mid-Atlantic Region chair, with Prof. Alon Friedman, guest speaker at an open board meeting, and Dr. Carroll Weinberg, a Philadelphia Chapter officer

## NEW ENGLAND

Max Schechner, *President*  
 Kevin M. Leopold  
*Executive Director – Northeast*  
 Diane Romirowsky  
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### RECOGNIZING A TRUE PATRIOT: MAX STEINBERG ז"ל

AABGU was among several organizations represented at the *Times of Israel* Gala in New York City on February 15, 2015. The gala commemorated the online English-language Israeli publication's third anniversary by telling Israel's story from a broad range of perspectives.

Prior to the star-studded celebration and award ceremony, the gala paid tribute to three fallen heroes, including Max Steinberg ז"ל, a lone soldier who moved to Israel from California. Max was 24 years old when he lost his life defending the land and the people he loved during last summer's Operation Protective Edge.

In addition to his love of Israel, Max was a devoted New England Patriots fan.

Robert Kraft, owner of the 2015 Super Bowl Champion New England Patriots, had the honor of introducing Stuart and Evie Steinberg, Max's parents. Kraft poignantly described Max "as a true patriot, fighting for the country and cause he believed in so deeply."

Max's parents spoke emotionally and with pride about their dear son and the new Max Steinberg Memorial Scholarship Endowment Fund they established at BGU to provide scholarships in perpetuity to students who serve in combat units (see page 3).

### MIT AND BGU BEGIN COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Ben-Gurion University of the Negev recently began work on five jointly funded research projects that focus on environmental, technological and medical research, including sustainable agriculture and marginal water reclamation, as well as treatments for spinal cord injuries.

The projects are part of a program established by the two universities last year during a trade mission to Israel

led by former Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick. It was the first seed funding that MIT has launched in Israel through its MIT International Science and Technology Initiative (MISTI), which was established in 2005.

From its inception in 2005, the MISTI Israel program has recruited, selected and placed outstanding students in unique Israel internship opportunities. In total, 40 MIT students from around the United States and dozens of other countries have held internships at BGU.



Photo © Peter Haiman



1. Robert Kraft, owner of the New England Patriots, introducing Stuart and Evie Steinberg (couple on the left) at the *Times of Israel* Gala 2. Gene and Karen Kroner outside the apartment they donated in loving memory of Karen's father at the American Associates Village on BGU's Sede Boqer campus 3. Gene and Karen Kroner; Kevin Leopold, AABGU's Northeast executive director; Phyllis and Robert Sage



# NORTHWEST

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## TRIBUTE TO SONNY HURST

AABGU's Bay Area philanthropic leaders gathered at Lorry Lokey's San Francisco *pied-à-terre* to honor Sonny Hurst for completing nine years as Northwest regional chair.

AABGU's Executive Vice President Doron Krakow praised Sonny's outstanding tenure, which culminated in the region's best year ever for philanthropic support.

Consul General of Israel to the Pacific Northwest, Dr. Andy David, also spoke, sharing his admiration for BGU's leadership in developing the Negev, and research in diverse fields including cyber security, water scarcity solutions, and new approaches to treating and curing diabetes.

## COMBATING EBOLA

BGU virologist Dr. Leslie Lobel has been studying the immune response

of Ebola survivors in Uganda for the past 12 years with the goal of developing a vaccine. The vaccine would not only prevent the disease, but would also neutralize the virus in patients who are already sick.

Dr. Lobel shared his findings with AABGU supporters, as well as with pharmaceutical scientists and other researchers in the San Francisco Bay Area and Seattle.

## CONNECTING WITH ISRAEL'S CYBER SECURITY LEADERSHIP

Silicon Valley high-tech entrepreneur Dr. Harry Saal chaired an exclusive cyber security mission to Israel, where participants had the opportunity to interact with cyber security experts from a variety of spheres of influence, including academia, industry, government, and military.



1. AABGU Executive Vice President Doron Krakow presents Sonny Hurst with a framed photograph of David Ben-Gurion in appreciation of her leadership. 2. Joanne Harrington and President's Pillar Lorry I. Lokey hosted the tribute to Sonny Hurst. 3. Dr. Leslie Lobel addresses a packed auditorium of scientists at Seattle's Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. 4. At Israel's CyberTech 2015 Conference: Daphna Noily, Prof. Yuval Elovici, Eldad Matityahu, Peter Wexler, Prof. Bracha Shapira, Victoria Livschitz, Kira Makagon, Riki Dayan, Coby Dayan, Dr. Harry Saal





# SOUTHWEST

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## SAVING LIVES DURING OPERATION PROTECTIVE EDGE

Dr. Oren Wacht of BGU's Department of Health Systems Management was the guest speaker at a recent Los Angeles event held at the Intercontinental Hotel in Century City.

Dr. Wacht is one of BGU's leading paramedic instructors and an expert in emergency medicine. His riveting presentation focused on how BGU's Emergency Medicine Program helped save lives during Operation Protective Edge in July.

He also gave a personal account of his service as a paramedic during the Operation, underscoring the importance of BGU's program.

## ISRAELI INSIGHT ON CALIFORNIA WATER ISSUES

Prof. Eilon Adar, director of BGU's Zuckerberg Institute for Water Research, made two presentations as part of California's memorandum of understanding with Israel on water issues.

He spoke before the Governor's State Water Commission and addressed the Los Angeles City Council. He shared some possible solutions to California's water issues based on his experience with water scarcity issues in Israel and other areas of the world.

## LOCAL SUPPORTERS REMEMBER FALLEN IDF SOLDIER

Max Steinberg ז"ל, of Woodland Hills, California, lost his life during last summer's Operation Protective Edge, while serving as a member of the Israel Defense Forces. Max had



1. Prof. Eilon Adar (third from left), Southwest regional leaders and members of the Los Angeles City Council 2. BGU President Prof. Rivka Carmi presents the President's Pillar's Award to Diane Glazer (widow of Guilford Glazer ז"ל) in Los Angeles. 3. Ben Marandy, Dr. Oren Wacht, Campaign Chair Ruth Flinkman-Marandy, Regional Director Philip Gomperts 4. Consul General David Siegel, BGU President Prof. Rivka Carmi, Stuart Steinberg, Ruth Flinkman-Marandy



enlisted in the IDF and served in the elite Golani 13 brigade after making *aliyah* in 2012.

Max's parents, Stuart and Evie, and his siblings have chosen to create a memorial legacy to honor their son's love for Israel by establishing the Max Steinberg Memorial Scholarship Endowment Fund at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (see page 3). The Steinberg endowment will provide scholarships to Golani and other combat reservists at BGU in perpetuity, with first preference going to lone soldiers.

At a meeting spearheaded by Israel's Los Angeles Consul General David Siegel, prominent AABGU supporters, including Stuart Steinberg, met to strategize how best to raise funds for the endowment. **Contributions can be made at [www.aabgu.org/maxsteinberg](http://www.aabgu.org/maxsteinberg).**

## MOURNING THE LOSS OF GUILFORD GLAZER

The members of the AABGU and BGU community mourn the loss of Guilford Glazer ז"ל, who passed away in December. BGU's Guilford Glazer Faculty of Business and Management reflects his generosity and commitment to Israel.

Passionately believing that educational opportunities and job creation for Palestinians and Bedouins was the gateway to peace, he inspired the business school to develop a unique Bedouin Managerial Training Program, as well as various economic initiatives with its Arab neighbors. May his memory be a blessing.



# WASHINGTON/ BALTIMORE

Edie and Art Hessel  
*Washington D.C. Chapter Chairs*  
 Keren M. Waranch, *Director*  
 David K. Speer, *Development Associate*  
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## EXPLORING THE DECISIONS OF DAVID BEN-GURION

Dr. Natan Aridan, a researcher who specializes in Israel-Diaspora relations at BGU's Ben-Gurion Research Institute

## A TRIBUTE TO THE BLAUSTEINS

The Washington/Baltimore Region hosted AABGU's Mid-Winter Meeting in February at the Four Seasons Hotel in Baltimore.

The region was pleased to welcome back to Baltimore BGU President Prof. Rivka Carmi, M.D., who spent two sabbaticals at the University of Maryland in Baltimore early in her career. During the meeting, Prof. Carmi participated in a panel discussion about genetics, "The Promise and Perils of Personalized Medicine," with Dr. David Valle, director of the Institute of Genetic Medicine at Johns Hopkins University.

The Mid-Winter Meeting put a spotlight on the unique history and culture

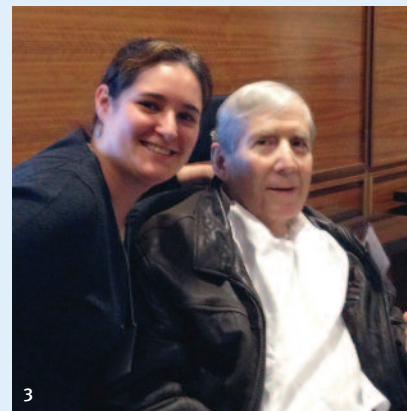
on the status of American Jews and Israel known as the Ben-Gurion-Blaustein Agreements.

Jacob and his father, Louis, formed the American Oil Company, now part of the petroleum giant BP Amoco. His family continues to make an indelible mark on BGU's efforts to combat desertification.

The guest speaker at the dinner was United States Senator from Maryland, the Honorable Ben Cardin. Local AABGU national board member Ira Wagner introduced Senator Cardin as one of the many students his father, Stanley Wagner, mentored as the head counselor at City College in Baltimore.



1. Dr. Natan Aridan (second on the left) with AABGU supporters Shelly London and Sue and Lew Winarsky 2. Members of the Blaustein family, foundation representatives and others at the dinner reception at AABGU's Mid-Winter Meeting 3. Medical School for International Health alumna, Dr. Olga Charnaya, with former AABGU National Board Member Frank Dye z"l



for the Study of Israel and Zionism, spoke about the "Dilemmas and Critical Decisions of David Ben-Gurion and their Consequences Today" at the Park Heights Jewish Community Center in Baltimore. Dr. Aridan gave a personal and historical perspective on the decisions of this great leader to a diverse audience of supporters and new attendees from both Baltimore and Washington. The event was co-sponsored with the Baltimore Zionist District and BioAbroad, a nonprofit organization helping Israeli scientists, physicians and entrepreneurs abroad return to Israel and keep in touch with Israel from afar.

of "Charm City" and the Jewish community in Baltimore through tours of the Jewish Museum of Maryland; Camden Yards, home to the Baltimore Orioles; and the Visionary Arts Museum.

A highlight of the meeting took place at the dinner reception, where the Jacob and Hilda Blaustein Foundation was honored as a President's Pillar in the presence of several members of the Blaustein family. The namesake for the world-renowned Jacob Blaustein Institutes for Desert Research in Sede Boquer, Jacob Blaustein z"l was a titan in the Baltimore philanthropic community and a world leader in the Jewish community. Jacob's close ties with David Ben-Gurion led to an accord

## REMEMBERING A MENSCH

The Washington/Baltimore Region, along with AABGU's national board and staff, mourn the passing of Frank Dye z"l. A former member of AABGU's national board and BGU's Board of Governors, Frank was a beloved part of the AABGU and BGU family. His quick wit and brilliant mind were only surpassed by his generosity toward and sincere interest in and compassion for others. Frank and his wife, Ahuva, are members of BGU's Negev and Living Legacy Societies, and have hosted a number of events on behalf of the University in their home. Frank will be sorely missed.

# INSPIRED BY STUDY ABROAD

*Continued from page 9*

and how every community is unique and requires a tailored approach.”

Liza graduated from the University of Pittsburgh in 2013. Now 24, she is a research assistant at the Harvard

School of Public Health, and believes her OSP experience helped guide her toward this career. The department she works in focuses on a diverse research portfolio, including the value of vaccination and its

economic importance to families, communities and countries.

Liza plans at some point to earn a master's degree in urban planning and global health.

“I hope my future plans will be international,” she says. “And that I’ll go back to Israel in a professional capacity—or at least to visit.” ■

## MAXIMIZE YOUR CONTRIBUTION FOR BEN-GURION UNIVERSITY WITH MATCHING GIFTS

### COMPANY MATCHES

Millions of people throughout the United States work for companies that have matching gift programs, supporting the charities their employees care about. Most companies offer a 1:1 match. If an employee gives \$100 to AABGU, they will give \$100. But some companies offer a 2:1 match or more. And, while each company has a limit on how much they will match, some will match as much as a \$50,000 contribution.

Research shows that billions of dollars budgeted by corporations for matching gifts go unused each year. In many cases employees may not be aware that their companies offer matching programs, so it's a good idea to check. Ask your human resources department if your company will match your gift to AABGU, a nonprofit 501(c) (3) organization. And, maximize your impact for students, researchers and the communities of the Negev.

### AABGU'S MATCHING GIFT FUNDS

Thanks to the leadership and generosity of some members of the AABGU family, if you make a contribution to one of the following programs, your gift will be matched. Add a corporate matched gift and triple your impact!

### Woodman-Scheller Graduate Fellowships in Israel Studies

All gifts made in support of BGU's Israel Studies International Program will be matched dollar-for-dollar. See pages 4 and 12 in this issue of *Impact* for more information. [www.aabgu.org/donate-israel-studies](http://www.aabgu.org/donate-israel-studies)

### Bedouin Scholarships

Help more Bedouins enroll in BGU and improve their quality of life and Israel's security. Your contribution will be matched dollar-for-dollar by the Arnow family of New York. [www.aabgu.org/donate-bedouin](http://www.aabgu.org/donate-bedouin)

### Lillian and Larry Goodman Open Apartments Program

This program provides free housing to more than 100 highly motivated undergraduate students each year who live in five distressed neighborhoods of Beer-Sheva, in exchange for serving these communities. Donations will be matched by the Goodman Supporting Foundations. [www.aabgu.org/donate-apartments](http://www.aabgu.org/donate-apartments)

### ISRAELI GOVERNMENT MATCHING RESEARCH FUNDS

#### Cyber Security

BGU's Cyber Security Research Initiative allocates grants for innovative cyber research at BGU and builds needed infrastructure. Funds have been provided by Israel's National Cyber Bureau on the condition that the University provide \$1.5 million in matching funds each year. This will enable BGU to create a national research center for the protection of cyber space that is surpassed by none in the world. [www.aabgu.org/donate-cyber](http://www.aabgu.org/donate-cyber)

#### Nanotechnology

The Israel National Nanotechnology Initiative provided millions of dollars to BGU for its research efforts in developing night-vision goggles that are as lightweight as eyeglasses. They also provided significant funds for researchers to develop nano carriers to target drug delivery in the body. These grants require BGU to supply substantial matching funds. [www.aabgu.org/donate-nano](http://www.aabgu.org/donate-nano)

*Donations can be made online at [www.aabgu.org/donate](http://www.aabgu.org/donate), via the donation envelope enclosed, or by contacting your regional office.*





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## Plant a Tree to Seed Desert Research

You can advance agricultural research that benefits Israel and offers hope to millions of people around the world. Plant an olive tree at Wadi Mashash, the experimental farm of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, and you will help make the Negev desert bloom. You will also be supporting invaluable research that could mean the difference between starvation and sustenance for men, women and children who live in drylands and deserts.

You and a person you choose to honor will be recognized with a beautifully designed certificate, and your contribution is 100% tax-deductible.

[www.aabgu.org/olivetrees](http://www.aabgu.org/olivetrees)

