



**Division for External Relations
and Resource Development**

3 March 2016

Issue No. 18 for Academic Year 2015-16



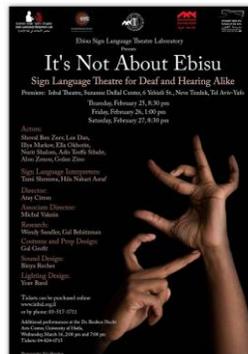
1

Our warmest congratulations to Prof. Eviatar (Eibi) Nevo who is the 2016 winner of the prestigious Israel Prize in Life Sciences. The Prize Committee noted that Prof. Nevo is one of the fathers of modern evolutionary biology, broadening and widening our knowledge of biological species and their adaptation to changing environments. He joined the University in 1972, founding the Institute of Evolution, and the International Center for Advanced Studies in Evolution, both firsts for Israel. Other rationales for the win cited by the Israel Prize committee include: Nevo's studies of blind mole rats as a unique evolutionary model that provides an understanding of the resilience of the mole rat to oxygen-poor environment - which could lead to breakthroughs in cancer research; studies of wild cereals, including wild wheat and wild barley- which will contribute to improvement of cultivating cereals that are the main component of the human diet; and the establishment of one of the largest gene banks of wild cereals at Institute of Evolution at the University of Haifa. See [Jerusalem Post](#).



2

A new production created by deaf and hearing actors has been staged in Tel Aviv recently. *'It's Not about Ebisu'* was devised as part of a multidisciplinary research project headed by Prof. Wendy Sandler, Director of the University's Sign Language Research Laboratory, and funded by an Advanced Grant from the European Research Council (ERC). The name *Ebisu* comes from the Japanese Laughing God – the only deaf God in all world mythologies.



3

Dr. Nitza Mirsky and her team at the Department of Biology at Oranim Academic College, has recently published research on a compound in yeast that mimics the effects of insulin. The findings, published in the journal *Experimental Biology and Medicine*, and featured in the US [Wall Street Journal](#), describes how it could help to prevent cataracts and eye damage in diabetics.



4

70 years after the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, an exciting new project is making them available digitally. The Leon Levy Dead Sea Scroll Digital Library is a collaboration between the University of Haifa, led by Prof. Jonathan Ben Dov of the Department of Biblical Studies, Tel Aviv University, the University of Göttingen in Germany and the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA). The project is funded by the German-Israeli Project Cooperation Foundation (DIP), managed by the German National Foundation for Research (DFG). The digitization will allow international collaborative research, as well as joint digital efforts to piece together the scrolls' thousands of tiny fragments in different ways. The project featured in [Breaking Israel News](#), [The Times of Israel](#), [Ynetnews](#) and [i24news](#)



5

The Israeli Knesset is about to install a 1,000 m² green research roof – the first green research roof on any parliament in the world. The project is in collaboration with the *Kadas Green Roofs Ecology Research Center* headed by Prof. Leon Blaustein, and managed by Dr. Shay Levy. The Center is generously supported by our longtime Friends in the UK, Dr. Gyongyver and Mr. Peter Kadas. The initiative, overseen by Dr. Shmuel Chen, Head of Environment at the Green Knesset Project, will incorporate the roof under a canopy of special solar panels, and will study how the green roof's cooling effect influences the panels; as well as its biodiversity conservation in urban environments. [See Knesset website.](#)



6

The International School recently hosted two high-level delegations from African countries. A delegation led by the Kenyan Minister of Education, and a group including the Zambian Minister of Higher Education and its Ambassador to Israel, met with Dr. Efrat Sher-Censor of the International MA in Child Development and some of its African students. The program is generously supported by a number of different donors in Israel and abroad. The Kenyan delegation also met with the Dean of the Faculty of Education, Prof. Lily Orland-Barak and senior education faculty, as well as visiting the nearby Leo Baeck Education Center schools accompanied by Dr. Arie Kizel, head of the Department of Learning, Instruction and Teacher Education.



7

Last week, the Knesset State Control Committee convened an extraordinary meeting at the University of Haifa conducted chaired by Knesset Member Karin Elharrar. The Committee discussed the State Comptroller's report on air pollution. A wide range of stakeholders took part: representatives of the State Comptroller's Office, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and the Ministry of Health; local municipalities, environmental groups and others. The meeting including some lively discussion and featured widely in the Israeli press including the [Jerusalem Post](#).



8

The study made by Prof. Stephen Levine of the Department of Community Mental Health, on Holocaust survivors' increased risks of developing schizophrenia, has aroused further media interest. The French newspaper [Le Figaro](#) has covered the research.

