University President Amos Shapira has been busy recently visiting the US in order to develop academic ties and meet with donors and friends of the University. He met with Mark Rosenberg, President of FIU (Florida International University), to examine possibilities of future collaborations between the institutions. Another stop included an event that took place at the Zuritsky residence in Philadelphia. Over 40 businesspeople and leading community members all watched video clips that showcased the significant research success stories of the University throughout its existence. "The University of Haifa is at the forefront of academic research in Israel, and its great uniqueness lies in the human mosaic of which it is composed," said the President to the honored guests. On the same visit, President Shapira was told that the event organizers and hosts, Joseph and Renee, were planning on visiting Israel this coming April to observe up close the research taking place at the University. Finally, the President met with Ali D. Ata in Chicago to establish a managing body to a unique coexistence scholarships fund, a fund to be financed by both Jewish and Arab donors.

When the month of Adar comes, one must be very joyous! Hundreds of University staff, both administrative and academic, celebrated Purim together last week. The celebrations took place at a Purim ball organized by the Administrative Staff Workers Committee and the Department of Human Resources, the highlight of which was a costumes contest. In first place was the Graduate Studies Authority for their costume: Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. In second place came the Tuition Department for their original costumes for "on sale" degree recipients. Third place was tied by the International School with their costumes of the "Students of the World" and by the Budgets Division who were all dressed according to the actual roles of its employees.
In the midst of contact made to establish international collaborations, a University of Haifa delegation set out last week for a reciprocal visit to Moi University in Eldoret, Kenya. The delegation included Prof. Hanan Alexander, the Dean of Students, Prof. Yitzhak Samuel, Dean of the Faculty of Management, Prof. Moshe Inbar, Head of the Department of Evolutionary and Environmental Biology, and Tsameret Zohar, Managing Director of the University of Haifa International School. In discussions on academic collaborations, five main fields of knowledge were agreed upon: management and sustainability, biology and agricultural sciences, social sciences, humanities and health and welfare sciences. The delegates met with local and central government officials of various levels as well as with Kenya’s former President and current Vice President. Soon Moi University’s Board of Governors and those with senior positions will come to Israel to sign agreements.

Congratulations go out to Prof. Guy Bar-Oz of the Department of Archeology for his winning the European Union’s research grant for his study on the subject of: "Consolidator Crisis on the margins of the Byzantine Empire: A bio-archeological project on resilience and collapse in early Christian development of the Negev Desert." The grant for a single researcher is among the most prestigious and unique grants. It funds ambitious and novel projects, and it is awarded to novel, groundbreaking research studies.

The American Society of the University of Haifa organized an encounter last week with Dr. Emma Maayan-Fanar from the Department of Art History who is a guest lecturer at the University of Connecticut. Dozens of people came to hear Dr. Maayan-Fanar lecture about "Finds and Forgeries in the 19th Century: Photography in the Holy Land."

Congratulations also go out to Prof. Anna Sfard from the Department of Mathematical Education for winning the honorable title of Associate of the American Educational Research Association, the largest and one of the most prestigious associations in the area of educational research.
Six excellent students, along with Dr. Keren Omry of the Department of English Language and Literature and Prof. Yuval Shaked, Head of the Department of Music, recently returned from an "Etymologies of Jazz" workshop, held in cooperation with Potsdam University in Germany. During the first part of the workshop, participants discussed varying jazz issues and its connection to literature, language, philosophy and aesthetic theory. The unique collaboration continues this month as a delegation of lecturers, musicians and students from Germany will be guests at the University of Haifa for a series of discussions, lectures and appearances throughout campus.