The University is pleased to announce that the University's Senate Committee has chosen Prof. Gustavo Mesch, Dean of the Herta and Paul Amir Faculty of Social Sciences, as the University Rector. Prof. Mesch will commence his term at the start of the next academic year and said on his selection, "I am grateful to the Senate for the confidence they have entrusted in me. My central goal is to work to promote academic and research excellence in the University together with the President elect, Prof. Ron Robin". President of the University, Amos Shapira congratulated the prospective Rector, "From my knowledge of Prof. Mesch, he has the qualities and experience needed to lead University academic research together with President-elect Prof. Ron Robin and all the University staff, to new heights.

Lt. General (retired) Benny Gantz, former Chief of Staff of the IDF recently gave the keynote speech at the Israeli Friends' Association Business Leaders' Forum Annual Gala, held recently at the residence of the Portuguese Ambassador to Israel, H.E. Miguel de Almeida e Sousa. About 150 senior Israeli leaders from business and society attended the event, including Mr. and Mrs. Sami and Tova Sagol and Mr. Yitzhak Ravid – longtime friends of the University – and MK Mrs. Verbin Ayelet. Mrs. Liora Ofer, Chairperson of Ofer Investments and Melisron was presented with the Business Leaders' Forum Award for her contribution to strengthening Israeli society in the presence of President Mr. Amos Shapira and Mr. Yariv Sultan, VP Development and External Relations, while Mr. Yoni Essakow, Honorary Consul of the Embassy of Portugal, and also University Executive Committee Member concluded proceedings. The evening aimed to raise funds for scholarships for outstanding and deserving students at the University.
The 'Ambassadors Online' Program held a moving ceremony to celebrate completing its 5th year of operation. The program operates under the framework of The Elizabeth and Tony Comper Interdisciplinary Center for the Study of Antisemitism and Racism and it is supported by a number of generous Canadian friends and also by Mrs. Nina Weiner of the US and Mr. Charles Milgrom of Israel/US. During the event student participants presented the projects they had worked on during the year and on which they had written academic research. Then, a panel of experts in different aspects of advocacy - education, tourism, diplomacy and communications - discussed the challenges Israel is facing. Registration for the 6th year of the program has already opened.

The staff of the Office of the Dean of Students, led by Dean, Prof. Hanan Alexander, took part in an event for the Erasmus Plus project in the Achva Academic College on the borders of the Negev desert. The Dean's office is a member of the Erasmus DARE project to improve accessibility in Higher Education. The University led workshops and lectures where decisions were made on the characteristics of the project, and plans were formulated to improve accessibility to higher education of socially excluded populations. In an initiative of a group of students at the college, and in collaboration with its management, the delegates, from a range of different countries, marked the end of the Bedouin fast of Rahat with a community *iftar* meal. Prof. Alexander spoke on the delegates' behalf thanking the hosts.

Genetic testing has recently revealed that fish bones found in a 7th century ancient boat found submerged off Dor Beach by the coast of Haifa belong to an extinct subspecies of fish. Prof. Yaacov Kahanov of the Department of Maritime Civilizations, and the Leon Recanati Institute for Maritime Studies led the team which found the fish bones in urns at the bottom of the boat. They were presumably traded or used to make a fish stock common in the period. The find was reported in *Haaretz English*.

The Younes and Soraya Nazarian Library has celebrated book week in Israel in collaboration with the Department of Archeology, conducting a special seminar to mark the new edition of the book Desert Adventure. The book, is an adaptation of a book produced in 1964 in English as *Eli Lives in Israel*, as part of the Children of the World series, focusing on a child growing up in a kibbutz. Researchers in the Archeology department have added a special epilogue to this Hebrew edition. The seminar discussed the image and the reality of growing up in a kibbutz and launched the library’s exhibition of the work of Israeli photographer Anna Riwkin-Brick, who photographed all the Children of the World Series.