



**Division for External Relations
and Resource Development**

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1
The City of Haifa is assessing the damage from the terrible fires that ravaged city neighborhoods on Thursday. That morning, as the flames moved through the city, a pre-emptive decision was made to close our Mt. Carmel campus and implement emergency evacuation proceedings. We were able to get 15,000 staff and students off campus, many of whom rushed to collect their children from school. 200 foreign students were also evacuated from the dormitories in another location. In all, about 70,000 Haifa residents were evacuated that day, and it has now become clear that hundreds of homes have been burned out, while many others have been damaged. With 18,000 in our University community, inevitably there are those who will have suffered from this tragedy. Yet, we have been incredibly touched by the outpouring of support from students, staff and residents and all manner of assistance to help those in the community who have been affected. It is with this spirit that we move forward to rebuild. In the next few days we will continue to update you on the activities carried out by the University in this regard.



2
The University recently commemorated the 21st anniversary of the death of Yitzhak Rabin z"l, former Prime Minister of the State of Israel and University Honorary Doctorate recipient. Hundreds of members of faculty, staff and students witnessed a moving ceremony where Rector, Prof. Gustavo Mesch spoke. The audience watched a unique film "Rabin's Last Cigarette" which interviewed many of those close to the great man, who described him very personally – including his chain smoking. The directors of the film, Iddo Bahat and Iddo Zuckerman discussed the film afterwards with Dr. Yvonne Kozlovsky Golan, Chair of the Culture and Film Studies Program.



3
A delegation of 24 State Senators and business people from Ohio USA had an engaging visit on campus to promote Israel-US friendship, and closer academic and business links with the University. Rector, Prof. Gustavo Mesch welcomed the visitors who then listened to Prof. Zion Fahima, head of the Institute of Evolution, talk about the University's wild cereal gene bank. A panel discussion on cyber research, with Prof. Gabriel Weimann of the Communications Department, Prof. Orr Dunkelman of



the Department of Computer Science and Dr. Eldar Haber of the Faculty of Law, provoked some interesting and thoughtful questions from the group. They also heard from Prof. Gal Richter-Levin, Director of the Institute for the Study of Affective Neuroscience (ISAN) at the Sagol Department of Neurobiology talking about PTSD in civilians and the military. Earlier that morning some of the visitors met Mrs. Elka Nir, CEO of Carmel Ltd, the University's economic development company.

4

We are proud that the Faculty of Law at the University of Haifa has been commended for the quality of its education in an international report commissioned by the Quality Assessment Committee of the Council of Higher Education. With experts from international Universities assessing law faculties in Israel, the report found that the "the Faculty of Law at the University of Haifa is a most impressive an academic institution. With a strong faculty and capable students it provides a first class education in the common law".



5

The Department of Music at the School of the Arts has released an evocative new CD about the city of Haifa. Haifa Wakes Up From a Dream sets to music lyrics from different eras, reflecting the rich history, multi-faceted culture, landscape and present day reality of the city. Students chose or wrote the poems, composed and arranged the songs, performed and produced the CD, overseen by the faculty. Click here to hear a sample compilation. This unique project was made possible by the generous support of Prof. Alfred Tauber, Chairman of the Board of Governors, and Mr. Stanley Gold and the Gold Family Foundation, as well as ACUM the Israeli rights non-profit. Save the Date for the launch on February 19th 2017!



6

The University's Vilna Gaon Campus Synagogue has just launched a new website (in Hebrew). The synagogue is sponsored by longtime University Friend, Mr. Elie Horn from Brazil, and is directed by Rabbi Dr. Yossef Stamler in a wide range of outreach activities. The website is a 'one stop shop' for information which ranges from details of the Judaism related academic courses, and religious study sessions to information on registering a marriage and conversion to Judaism.



7

The first of a short series of clips focusing on the wonderful variety of students that study at the International School has been released. In this first film we hear from [Timothee Weiss](#) from France who talks about his experiences at the University's Hebrew ulpan at the International School, and how he has adjusted to life as a student in Israel. In the coming months you will be able to see more films for yourself on [The Internationals](#) site on the University film channel.



8

The Younes and Soraya Nazarian Library has made available a fascinating resource to the University community: [Slavery in America and the World](#). The online resource contains legal and non-legal materials on the subject of slavery in the USA and elsewhere in the English speaking world. There are hundreds of pamphlets, books condemning and analyzing slavery in all its aspects. Much of the archive is based on the impressive collection of rare books at the Buffalo Public Library in New York, which includes a large number of rare 19th century books and pamphlets.

 Slavery in America and the World: History, Culture & Law



9

Public confidence in the press in Israel is at a 15 year low, according to the 2016 *Public Sector Performance Index* produced by Prof. Eran Vigoda-Gadot, Dean of The Herta and Paul Amir Faculty of Social Sciences, Dr. Nissim Cohen of the School of Political Sciences and Prof. Shlomo Mizrahi of Ben Gurion University. However, the study found that public faith in Israeli public broadcasting is still higher than in “media in general” in Israel. This comes at a time when Israel’s Public Broadcasting is being reviewed by Government. The [Jerusalem Post](#) covered the issue.



10

Scares about the Zika and Ebola viruses in recent months make the subject of Dr. Anat Gesser-Edelsburg’s latest book, [Risk Communication and Infectious Diseases in an age of Digital Media](#) very timely. Dr. Gesser-Edelsberg, of the School of Public Health, published the book in the UK (Routledge) with her post-doctoral researcher Ms. Yaffa Shir-Raz. The book looks at how health experts can best exert influence to contain the global spread of infectious diseases. While online sites do provide information, they also lead to growing civil skepticism towards health issues, including emerging epidemics. The publication provides thought-provoking analysis of implications for future health communication policy.

