



Vice President for External Relations
and Resource Development
Division of Marketing & Media

At a Glance

LATEST NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF HAIFA



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1

Over 100 leading Israeli business men and women attended the annual gala of the University of Haifa Forum of Business Leaders organized by the Israeli Friends of the University of Haifa. The prestigious event was held at the beautiful home of the Italian Ambassador to Israel. One of the highlights of the evening was the awarding of the Forum of Business Leaders' Award to Mr. Leon Koffler, the owner of Super Pharm. Mr. Koffler received the award from University of Haifa President Amos Shapira and the President of the Israeli Friends of the University of Haifa Mr. Yonel Cohen. Some of the participants of the evening included: the Defense Minister Moshe Ya'alon, Chairman of the University of Haifa Board of Governors Prof. Alfred Tauber, Dr. Younes and Mrs. Soraya Nazarian, Dr. Sami and Mrs. Tova Sagol, and many more.



2

Last week, the University of Haifa held a two-day conference in honor of the Board of Governors Chairman Emeritus Prof. Manfred Lahnstein. The conference was organized by the Bucerius Institute for Research of Contemporary German History and Society and the Center for German and European Studies. The conference centered on Israeli-German relations and American Jewry after the Holocaust. It included a festive reception, lectures and a personal dialogue between Prof. Manfred Lahnstein and Prof. Fania Oz-Salzberger from the Faculty of Law where they discussed the relations between Israel and Germany, each from their respective point of view.



3

What is social justice? This question was the central theme of a US-Israeli seminar held at the University of Haifa with the participation of 30 researchers and students. The conclusion was that the term social justice is so subjective that it may cause a rift between the various groups advocating it for their purposes. Dr. Roni Strier from the University School of Social Work and the organizer of the seminar said: "In order to lead a mass social protest under the slogan of social justice there is a need to hold a profound dialogue between the various groups of protesters. If there is no dialogue or managing of expectations a situation may develop where inequality between the various factions of protesters will result in a rift".



4

Congratulations to Prof. Daphna Erdinast Vulcan from the Department of English Language and Literature who received the Joseph Conrad Society of America's Ian Watt Prize for Lifetime Achievement in Conrad Studies.



5

Hadas Dickman, from the "The Haifa Partnership for Breaking the Cycle of Poverty" project, at the School of Social Work and Dassi Poston-Eyzik from the Flagship Program to Prevent Social Exclusion, were invited to the Technion by their Architecture Faculty's Social Hub for Community and Housing, to share experiences accumulated from their projects. In their lectures the two spoke of the importance of recognizing the cultural and class related aspects of working with excluded populations, and gave practical tips on dealing with communities that live in poverty and social exclusion.



6

The *Younes and Soraya Nazarian Library* has just completed the first stage of the IJSTOR Project to scan in Hebrew Journals to increase their accessibility. Under the auspices of the project, partnered with JSTOR (the digital library platform) and the Israeli National Library, readers can now access the full text of 27 major Hebrew language journals from anywhere, from first issues to current editions. The next stage includes introducing further journals into the library.



7

The University has just signed a new agreement with the Association of Secondary School Teachers in Israel. Dr. Yvonne Kozlovsky Golan, Head of the Department of MA Culture and Film studies, signed the agreement to give members of the Association a 3000 NIS study grant encouraging teachers to take time out to study for a graduate degree. A donor for the grants has come forward and applicants have already signed up for the next academic year.



8

The "Breaking the Ice" exhibition, documenting the journey of 14 Arab and Jewish students to the summit of Monte Rosa in the Swiss Alps has just opened on floor 600 in the University lobby. The exhibition, using photos, notes and doodles, depicts the mountain ascent of those involved in the "Breaking the Ice Project", where Jewish and Arab young people take part in climbing challenges to build trust and solidarity between them, contributing to the community afterwards. The program has been run for the past few years in partnership with the Jewish Arab Center, the Dean of Students and Students' Association.



9

Congratulations to Sigal Chen, from the Department of Art History, who has won the *Teva* prize for poetry for her book *Unrefined*. The judges commented on the choice "In her book *Unrefined*, Sigal explores the refined world around us, and does not allow her poetry to stray into the sterile and clean, out of roughness and difficulty in the world around us. She delves this 'unrefinement' to produce the subtle, the erotic and the moving."



10

A new sculpture by the artist Yosel Bergner, University of Haifa Honorary Doctorate recipient, has been erected in the new square in Haifa at the intersection between Hassan Shukri and Beerwald streets. The sculpture depicts mutual trust between human beings: the extent of support, giving and strength that one person can give another. "The statue is both visually beautiful and also in what it symbolizes" said the Mayor of Haifa, Yona Yahav.



11

University alumna, Chief Superintendent Eyal Garmay, has been appointed the commander of the *Yasam* (the Police Special Patrol Unit responsible for riot control and public order). Garmay is the *Yasam's* first commander of Ethiopian origin, with a first degree in social work from the University of Haifa, specializing in youth work. He completed his degree under the framework of a special program at the University for security forces.



12

New research at the University could stimulate much interest among negotiators in the current talks between Israel and the Palestinians. The 'love hormone' oxytocin increases the level of empathy towards the opposing side. "The findings of this study show that, as far as can be seen, exposure to oxytocin causes people to feel as if the other side are human beings with complex feelings," says Prof. Simone Shamay-Tsoory of the Department of Psychology that led the research.



13

Some good and bad news for the *Knesset* (Israel's parliament) on the occasion of its birthday. There is a significant rise in the level of trust the public has in the *Knesset* although it is still the last-placed institution from the point of view of public confidence, according to the 2013 index for public sector performance, edited by Prof. Eran Vigoda-Gadot of the School of Political Sciences. The index was published as the *Knesset* approached its 65th birthday. The index was well reported on the Israeli media, including the [Jerusalem Post](#).



14

A particularly interesting anecdote arose relating to the 2013 index for public sector performance with regard to the Israeli Parliament, the *Knesset*. One of the most surprising sites which reported on the index was the Republic of Iran's official radio website in the Hebrew language!



15

Dr. Dan Tchernov from the Leon Charney School of Marine Sciences is a member of the team of international researchers that discovered fish which have a natural ability to light up – Biofluorescence. This is the ability to absorb light, process it and 'spit it out' later in a different color. Until now this has been known in creatures like jellyfish and coral, and even in land based creatures like butterflies. However it is extremely rare among fish. The researchers identified more than 180 types of fish which have this ability to glow in a wide variety of colours and patterns, something which aroused the great curiosity of the international media, such as the [National Science Foundation](#) (US), [Yahoo!Canada](#) , [live science](#) and [science 2.0](#).



16

Prof. Emanuel Gross of the Faculty of Law was cited by many media outlets both within Israel and abroad in relation to the territorial exchange program of Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman. "You cannot set a border that harms your citizens and you cannot do it unilaterally", he explained. He was quoted, amongst others, in [Fox News](#) , [TIME](#) ,[News 2](#) ,The Daily Star and [The Tribune](#) .



17

Prof. Rivka Yahav, Head of the Interdisciplinary Clinical Center was a guest on Israeli TV *Channel 10*, on the distress signals sent out by people with depression, and she reviewed the methods of treating them: "There are endless difficulties. Our lives are accompanied by many traumas. I think that the treatment of this condition is very personal and needs to be tailored to the individual and their circumstances. We have made to measure treatment for every sufferer - each therapy is intended for a specific person. So at this Center there are 15 patients and we also fit each patient to the most suitable therapist for him/her"



18

TV *Channel 10* asked Dr. Arie Kizel, from the Department of Learning, Instruction and Teaching about the problematic nature of the process of choosing a curriculum by the Ministry of Education. He commented "it would have been good if the present Education Minister could have concentrated on changing the questions of the matriculation exams, while developing the curriculum and testing in parallel to the development of textbooks. Through these educational devices it can be seen how narrow the world we are building for our children is, in terms of content".



19

Prof. Yechiam Weitz, of the Department of General History, penned an opinion article for Ynet describing the milestones in the life of the late Arik Sharon. "In the eyes of the people of my generation, and my colleagues who demonstrated against Begin's government, Ariel Sharon was identified mainly with the two terrible injustices of those years - even more than Menachem Begin. The first injustice was the establishment of dozens of settlements in the heart of the West Bank, and the second was the first Lebanon war... There we saw Sharon as the ruthlessly effective bulldozer. This quality, which had seemed so predatory, was perceived differently during his time as Head of State: his mental ability to operate contrary to the position of his followers and supporters when he was convinced of the justice of his actions".



20

Media interest in the Education Minister's proposed changes to university admissions was brought to University of Haifa when researcher and Dean of the Education Faculty, Prof. Lily Orland-Barak was interviewed by Israel Radio. "Many times we find ourselves in a difficult dilemma with students who have unique abilities but who don't exactly fit the criteria for psychometric tests". Dr. Arie Kizel, from the Department of Learning, Instruction and Teaching was also interviewed on the subject by *Haaretz* "At this stage there is a feeling that there is still a wide gap between the slogans used, which are positive in themselves, and the level of implementation in the field. If this gap remains, there will be a lack of faith by teachers in the Education Minister". Prof. Gavriel Salomon, of the Education Department was also interviewed by Israel Radio, where he stated that "It's very important in this country, where differences are so great, to allow everyone to be tested with the same exam and to understand what grades in that exam really mean."



21

Following Google's acquisition of the intellectual property of the 'Waze' Company, Prof. Yoseph Edrey, from the Faculty of Law, claimed in an opinion piece in the Globes newspaper, that there is a distortion in the Israeli tax system which creates an incentive for entrepreneurs to export their creativity outside the country. "Assuming that the State of Israel is interested in local creative activity, there are two possibilities available. One is to create further distortions in the form of a law encouraging investment: to lower accumulated taxes on "preferred company" profits and shareholders. The second is to remove the original distortion, by raising the tax rate on capital and lowering the tax rate on labour and creative profits" he explained in the article, published by the NRG website.



22

In the weekend edition of the *Haaretz* newspaper Prof. Emanuel Berman, from the Psychology, Education, Counseling and Human Development Departments reviewed Ian McEwan's new book *Sweet Tooth*. "*Sweet Tooth* is a very intelligent book, sweet and meandering, which lingers in the mind until we understand its hypnotic mysteries."



23

In his two articles, Dr. Ilan Saban mentioned Israel Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman's territorial exchange proposal for the West Bank. In the *Haaretz* newspaper he said that "the settlements of Wadi Ara and the Triangle Area were annexed under the framework of the armistice agreement signed with Jordan after the Israeli War of Independence. From then on the land became an integral part of Israel. Therefore, it is insufferable raising the idea of exchanging territory occupied by the Arabs and treating it like toys which can be passed from hand to hand." He added, in the *Haaretz* website, that "The most well known consequence for these people is their lack of employment due to an unsettled border. This means a closed border between them and their places of employment in Nazareth, Haifa, Afula, Kfar Saba, Hadera, Tel Aviv and so on."



24

Prof. Avraham Ben Zvi from the School of Political Sciences was interviewed by Israel Radio about former US Defense Secretary Robert Gates' new book, "It is surprising that Robert Gates, the ultimate professional, such a discrete man, should launch an attack on Obama and his worldview – i.e. to get out of his commitments, to withdraw from Iraq and Afghanistan" explained Prof. Ben Zvi.



25

The new weekly "Flower Corner" by Prof. Dafni Amotz from the Department of Evolutionary and Environmental Biology has been focusing on small hyacinths. The deep blue flowers of the hyacinth are tilted down to protect them from the rain. The top flowers are atrophied and thus are infertile and are useful only for attracting attention to the flower. The flowers have a surprisingly sweet nectar and fragrance, but visitors to the flower are rare. It produces seeds only rarely.

