

## Hi-Tech Park Approved

A plan for the development of a 150-acre Hi-tech Research & Development Park next to the University's main campus has been approved by Israel's Finance Ministry. Construction is to begin within one year.

The Park will be built in cooperation with the Municipality of Beer Sheva and will initially employ up to 1,000 people in hi-tech and biotech industries. By 2007 employment figures should exceed 10,000. The first stage of the Park is scheduled for completion by 2003.

This is the first hi-tech park in Israel developed in cooperation with a university. BGU will supply skilled personnel and engage in applied research for companies in the park.

Substantial investment is expected from major US hi-tech corporations brought to Beer-Sheva through the efforts of Zvi Alon, Vice Chairman of the BGU Board of Governors and CEO of NetManage, a leading developer of PC networking software.

## Goldstein-Goren Center for Jewish Thought

Thanks to the generosity of the Cukier Goldstein-Goren Foundation, lead by Italian philanthropist Mr. Avraham Goldstein-Goren, an International Center for Jewish Thought was established at BGU. In order to further the appreciation of the Jewish heritage and its legacy, a broad range of programs were initiated. These include the adoption and expansion of research and teaching at the Goldstein-Goren Department of Jewish Thought, a triennial Conference in this field at which a prize for an appropriate new book will be awarded, fellowships for graduate students, and the encouragement of Department members to lecture and teach Jewish values in communities abroad.

### 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Calendar of Events February - March 2000

#### January

- Seminar on "International Marketing" - Prof. Sangy Ghosh, University of Wisconsin
- 8-9 65th Conference of the Israeli Chemistry Society
- 13-15 International Workshop on "European Identity: Welfare State & Religions"
- 16-18 Second Annual Physics Festival
- 17 Visit of Federal President of Germany, Johannes Rau, Sde Boker Campus
- 22-29 Distinguished Visitors Program. Guest: Prof. Hortensia Amaro, Boston University
- 23-26 International Political Science Association - Executive Meeting
- 24-25 Workshop on "Basic and Clinical Aspects of Development Neurosciences"
- 29 Lecture Series on "Biographical and Fictional Elements in My Writing" - A. B. Yehoshua

#### February

- 13-14 Seminar - "The Government and the Business Sector: Relationships and Decision-Making" - Yoram Gabay
- 13 Conference - Women's Health Through the Life Cycle
- 13-15 16th European Workshop on Computational Geometry
- 14 Lecture Series on "Biographical and Fictional Elements in My Writing" - Meir Shalev.
- 15 Conference on Risk Factors and Prevention in Women's Health - Keynote speaker, Prof. Eileen Hoffman, Professor of Medicine Mt. Sinai Women's Health Program
- 16 Inauguration of new M.A. Program in Gerontology - Guest speaker: Prof. Fernando Torres-Gil, UCLA
- 23 A Night at the Opera - "Der Rosenkavalier," British Associates, London
- 22 Distinguished Visitors Program. Guest: Prof. Peter Walsh, Notre Dame University
- 26-28 International Conference - The Changing World Political Map: Geopolitics At the End of the Twentieth Century. Keynote speakers: former U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara and Prof. Edward Luttwak
- 27-28 Conference on "Mystic Knowledge and Powers: Magic, Demons and Occultism in Jewish Thought and Life"
- 28-30 National Family Medicine Conference
- 29-30 International Conference on "The Non-Profit Sector: Between the Private and Public Domains." Keynote speaker: Prof. Avner Ben-Ner, Carlson School of Management, University of Minnesota.

## **BGU Researchers to Aid Endeavor Shuttle Mission**

A mapping project of Planet Earth to be carried out this month by astronauts on the Space Shuttle Endeavor will be aided by BGU's Dr. Dan Blumberg of the Department of Geography and Environmental Development. The project utilizes "radar interferometry," a revolutionary method enabling the creation of 3D surface maps. Blumberg's team will operate calibration targets and radar-retrieving systems in the Negev desert. Endeavor, flying 202 km. above the Negev, will send results back to earth. Blumberg's team will receive these transmissions at the University and begin analyzing the results.

Blumberg, an expert in remote sensing, explains: "Standard measuring methods would take much longer to produce results. With this novel radar system, topographical mapping of the entire planet can be completed in only 11 days. This is one of the most important missions ever to be performed by NASA."

Data recorded will be used to produce topographic maps of areas that have never been mapped before. "Deserts account for 40 percent of the earth's surface, but most of them are still unmapped," explains Blumberg. "As radar can penetrate clouds and doesn't depend on sunlight, it can be used in all weather conditions."

Blumberg is the director of BGU's Earth and Planetary Image Facility, the only official NASA regional planetary image facility in the Middle East.

The Facility can be visited on the Internet at: <http://www.bgu.ac.il/geog/epif>.

## **New Academic Programs for 2000**

The 1999/2000 academic year commenced with 15,100 enrolled students. In tune with its mandate to offer increasingly diverse programs, the University introduced newly accredited undergraduate programs in the areas of Biotechnological Engineering;

Innovative Communications; Art History and Jewish Thought. The Departments of Mathematics and Computer Sciences were reorganized into separate departments to cater to increased specialization in these fields.

New programs offered for graduate students include: Gerontology Studies; Electro-optic Engineering; Energy Engineering and Electro-optics Sciences. A master's degree in Desert studies from the Albert Katz International School for Desert Research at Sede Boqer will also be available.

## **Dr. Israel German Appointed BGU Vice-President**

The University's Director-General, Dr. Israel German has been appointed Vice-President by a unanimous decision of the Executive Committee. In addition to overseeing the entire administration of the University, in his 5 years of office as Director-General, Dr. German has overseen the construction of 13 buildings covering nearly 45,000 m<sup>2</sup> at a combined cost of \$100 million. All this has been achieved while maintaining a balanced budget and reducing to zero the University's debt.

## **The Dalai Lama Receives Ladislus Laszt Ecumenical Prize**

At a standing-room only ceremony held at the University in November, the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama was awarded the Ladislus Laszt Ecumenical Prize for his efforts to cultivate true understanding, trust and cooperation amongst all nations, religions, beliefs and cultures.

The Prize is awarded by the University to a person or agency considered to have made an outstanding contribution to understanding among religions or have helped to promote tolerance, patience and the hope for a better society.

A moving highlight during the Dalai Lama's time in Beer-Sheva was the visit of several dozen Tibetan workers in Israel who came to his hotel to pay respects to their revered leader.

## **From Addis Ababa Goldman Medical School**

**Israel's first Ethiopian Medical Graduate**

Avraham Yitzhak, a 27 year old immigrant formerly from Addis Ababa has graduated from BGU's Joyce and Irving Goldman Medical School and is the first Ethiopian to earn an M.D. degree in Israel.

At a ceremony held on Campus in November, Yitzhak was one of 56 graduates to receive their degrees.

Avraham arrived in Israel alone three weeks before the famous Operation Solomon that brought 15,000 Ethiopian Jews in a mass airlift. He was forced to leave Addis Ababa when his father was suspected of involvement in the pending Israeli operation.

Currently doing his internship at Soroka Medical Center, he will thereafter begin his delayed military service as an IDF physician. He wants to specialize either in internal medicine or surgery.

While pleased with his own advancement, Avraham is distressed about poor integration of many Ethiopian immigrants. "There is goodwill among the authorities, but there are better ways to absorb them," he says. "I want to help my Ethiopian immigrant brethren, but I want to be a doctor to everyone."

## **BGU to Host 32<sup>nd</sup> International Academic Sports Association Games**

More than 1700 participants from Israel and abroad

BGU will play host to the 32<sup>nd</sup> International Academic Sports Association Games that will take place on Campus from May 18 to 25, 2000.

More than 1,700 participants from Israel and abroad are expected to take part in the second-largest sporting event in Israel after the Maccabia. More than 25 sporting events will

be held, and some 200 athletes are expected to attend from abroad.

The first meeting of the A.S.A. Games was held in 1969 at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. In 1986, it was decided to rotate the venue amongst Israel's universities. BGU last hosted the games in 1987.

## **Lectures on the Internet**

**A Technological First in Israel**

BGU's Computer Center has launched a new service, the first of its kind in Israel.

In August, the Center initiated a project that may revolutionize the way universities operate: recorded lectures are now available for viewing through the Internet.

"We are creating a library of lectures," says Naftali Elkin, Director of the Center. "At the moment it will serve students and faculty linked to the University computers through a fast communications line, but eventually, anyone, anywhere will be able to take a course at BGU. In effect, this new development makes distance irrelevant."

The new setup also benefits students who are called to compulsory army service during the academic year. Until now these students have had to rely on video tapes to catch up with missed lectures. Now they can do it from any computer connected to a fast Internet line.

Lectures can be viewed using Microsoft Explorer 5 at the following Internet address:

[http://dvir.bgu.ac.il:8800/right\\_vl/get?iitem\\_id=2](http://dvir.bgu.ac.il:8800/right_vl/get?iitem_id=2)

## **First National Hi-Tech Laboratory**

BGU has taken another major step forward in its efforts to establish itself as a leading Israeli hi-tech R&D center. The VLSI Laboratory, headed by Dr. Orly Yadid-Pecht, has been approved by the National Committee for Electro-optics and Microelectronics as an Israeli National Center for CMOS research.

Today's computers consist of "chips" with millions of transistors and other components deposited on a thin slice of silicon, just a few centimeters wide. The design of such "chips," known as VLSI, or Very Large Scale Integration, is one of the most technical, expensive, and specialized areas of chip development. And the most common approach for producing VLSI chips is with CMOS, or Complementary Metal Oxide Semiconductor technology.

Yadid-Pecht's research specializes in the use of CMOS technology to produce chips for digital imaging. Her laboratory is the first hi-tech facility at BGU to be recognized as a National Center, and future government funding and support is expected as the Center develops.

"This is a major boost to the University's plans to become a leading hi-tech Institution in Israel," explains Prof. Zamik Rosenwaks, Vice President and Dean for R&D. "It will draw a great deal of money and prestige to the University, and we hope this will be one of many more national centers to be established in the coming years."



## The British Parliamentary Papers

"A 1000-volume set of the British Parliamentary Papers was donated to BGU's Zalman Aranne Library by the Kohn Foundation of London. The Papers span the period from 1800-1900 and are a fundamental reference source for scholars of history and economics. Published by the Irish University Press, the Papers contain a record of British Parliamentary proceedings during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, sorted by subject matter. Volumes cover such areas as; agriculture, animal health, Canada, education, factories, general health, industrial relations, the Poor Law, slave trade, the United States, and many more.

"This is effectively a record of the development of modern Western civilization",

says Prof. Jimmy Weinblatt, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. "It is a unique record and we are very privileged to have benefited from such a useful donation. I am sure that our students will put this magnificent resource to good use."

Nobel Laureate and President of the Royal Society, Prof. Sir Aaron Klug was instrumental in obtaining the donation for the BGU through his connections with the Kohn Foundation.

## Beetle Larvae Prevent Spread of Vital Desert Tree

Keren Or, a master's student at the Jacob Blaustein Institute for Desert Research, is studying the influence of the Bruchid beetle on the acacia tree. The acacia, the most common tree in the Negev, literally holds the desert sands together, helping to prevent desertification. In the absence of the tree, and other vegetation, desert sands would drift, eventually encroaching upon arable land.

Keren's studies are helping us understand why the Negev's acacia trees have been dying gradually over the last 30 years. She has already discovered that it is not the bug itself that damages the tree. It is their larvae, which eat the interior of the seeds, prevent the trees' further propagation.

## First Ever Snow On Campus



For the first time ever, in January a 3-inch layer of snow covered the campus of BGU. Wide-eyed students took off from studies and flocked in full force to enjoy the historic Beer-Sheva event. Local families roamed BGU with children who had never before played in real snow. Above is a sample of student snow art.