

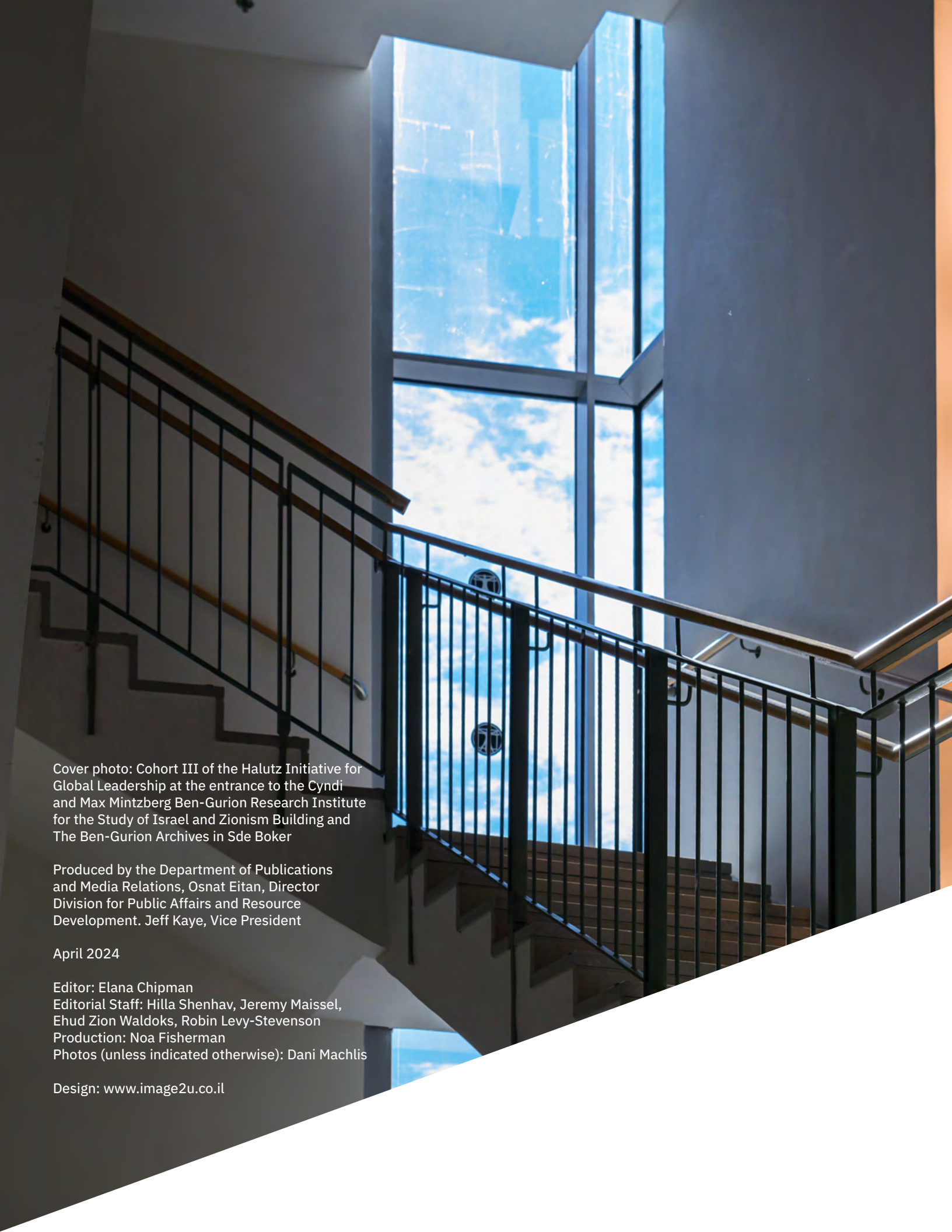
Spring 2024

RGU & YOU



אוניברסיטת בן-גוריון בנגב
Ben-Gurion University of the Negev





Cover photo: Cohort III of the Halutz Initiative for Global Leadership at the entrance to the Cyndi and Max Mintzberg Ben-Gurion Research Institute for the Study of Israel and Zionism Building and The Ben-Gurion Archives in Sde Boker

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Dear friends,

Now is our time to be together.

The past year has posed unprecedented challenges, starting with Israel's political upheaval, and then the hideous massacres of October 7, the ensuing war, and the resurgence of antisemitism worldwide.

As President of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, it has been both my duty and privilege to lead the University through one of the most challenging periods in Israel's history. While the experiences have been difficult, they highlighted the extraordinary spirit and resilience of our BGU family – a source of endless gratitude for me.

I continue to be incredibly heartened by how we, here in the Negev, in Beer-Sheva, felt the solidarity and support of our worldwide family. My communications with you over the past half year have given me strength and comfort. Despite facing your own challenges, you continued to bolster our partnership, in words and deeds. Your commitment has been instrumental in the success of our emergency campaign, while remaining focused on our ongoing global development campaign. Your overwhelmingly generous response to the emergency campaign enabled us to take care of our students and employees, those who served bravely in the reserves, and those traumatized by the events of October 7, and take proactive measures to support the broader community and contribute to the national effort in these testing times.

I am proud of our BGU community here in the Negev, which rallied and sprang into almost instantaneous action to provide comfort and support to those around us. Through numerous volunteer and entrepreneurship activities, we took care of so many, filling a void left by the collective paralysis following the attacks. By establishing and hosting aid distribution centers, opening our dormitories to refugees, providing facilities for schools for the displaced, providing day care for our employees' children, and even laundry services to reservists, BGU was felt throughout the Negev.

This magazine, BGU & You, is a tribute to you, our global Ben-Gurion University community; This year, more than ever, it is a poignant reminder of the strength and resilience that our community fosters in the Negev.

When we gather for our annual Board of Governors meeting in May, let us take time to mourn those we have lost, and at the same time be thankful for all that we have. Let us engage in meaningful reflection and discussion, while taking simple joy in our friendship. Above all, let us pledge anew to look forward, to dream big, and to consider how each of us can play a part in securing a prosperous future for BGU, for a revitalized Negev, and for our beloved State of Israel.

Together, we are capable of remarkable achievements.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Daniel Chamovitz'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large 'D' and 'C' at the end.

Prof. Daniel Chamovitz
President



Dear friends,

Since we met in May 2023, our world has changed dramatically.

It's safe to say that we are not the same people we were last May. Israel is not the same country it was last year. Life in Jewish communities throughout the world has changed.

Yet, in the face of tremendous adversity, BGU's global community is expanding and meeting important milestones. I give heartfelt thanks to all of you who are actively involved in our global work. In this time of suffering and uncertainty, I want to emphasize how much we admire our Israeli colleagues and friends for their courage, stamina, and focus on the future.

Together, we face immense challenges: to bring the hostages home, to help Israelis return to some semblance of regular life, to rebuild the Negev, to deal with increased antisemitism throughout the world, and to return to our commitment to "Tikkun Olam" – repairing the world – which teaches us that our task is to leave the world a better place than when we entered it.

Improving the world means focusing on the future. Four years ago, as BGU celebrated its 50th anniversary, the University formed the Global Development Committee to engage people from all over the world in BGU's future. We wanted to learn from each other, and to incorporate ideas from every country. Since

then, the founding members of the global development group have formed life-long friendships. We believe that the more we work with people from all over the world, the better we understand what faces Israel, and the more likely we are to discover universal values and new ways forward.

Ben-Gurion University is dedicated to educating students who will have the perspectives and tools to change our world for the better. Our diverse student body – women and men, Jews and Arabs, non-Jews and Jews – live in a community that encourages people to understand the differences between them. They study in outstanding academic classes, participate in groundbreaking research, hold internships with world-class companies, and do volunteer work in Beer-Sheva and throughout the Negev.

Two years ago, BGU began the quiet phase of a ten year Global Development Campaign to raise one billion dollars that would ensure we have the financial resources to continue and expand our excellence in teaching and research, as well as our unique role in developing the Negev.

We're on the way to success. In spring 2024, as I write this letter, we have raised close to 400 million dollars. If you are reading about us for the first time and would like to play a constructive role in moving BGU, the Negev and Israel from a dark present to a bright future, we welcome you to join us. Together, from the Negev, we can change the world, just as David Ben-Gurion predicted.

With thanks,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Toni Young".

Toni Young
Chair, Global Development Committee



Dear friends,

Recent years have tested our resolve like never before. From the onset of the global Covid-19 pandemic, through an unprecedented period of political and civil unrest in Israel, and now the horrific Hamas terrorist attack, war in Gaza, and alarming rise in global antisemitism, we have faced adversity with unity and determination. Our global family has been our pillar of strength, embodying the true spirit of family and enabling us to persevere through these crises.

What makes the BGU family unique is our relevance to the world around us. In every situation, we find a role to play, guided by a sense of responsibility instilled by David Ben-Gurion's vision for the University. We navigate uncertainty with initiative and proactivity, embodying the University's enduring commitment to excellence in all circumstances.

Our global family spans continents, yet regardless of our geographic diversity, we are bound by a common purpose and shared values. This interconnectedness enriches our perspectives and strengthens our collective resolve.

During this time of crisis, we have made communication a priority, ensuring that our global family remains informed and connected. President Chamovitz's updates providing news and insights were a testament to this commitment, especially in the first few days after the attack. This open dialogue fosters a sense of togetherness and solidarity, distinguishing our university community.

This sense of unity empowers us to achieve remarkable feats, such as the Emergency Response Campaign which allowed us to rapidly regroup and provide support to the people of BGU, and the wider Negev community. Despite challenges, we persevered, rescheduling the Global Campaign summit to January and continuing with the Halutz program amidst uncertainty. The dedication and enthusiasm of our community, both old and new, underscore our unwavering commitment to our mission.

Looking ahead, we can be optimistic about the future, buoyed by the sense of duty and dedication of an oft-maligned younger generation. Their ideological commitment and sense of obligation spurred them to shoulder much of the responsibility for the current war effort. This spirit of initiative and selflessness is evident in the actions of our students and volunteers, reflecting the ethos of our University.

At BGU, we are more than just a place of education and research; we are a movement. Our University embodies a spirit of activism and engagement, inspiring all who are part of our global family to make a difference in the world.

As we navigate the challenges ahead, let us remember that we are stronger together. Our global family is a source of strength, resilience, and inspiration. Together, we will continue to thrive, making a meaningful impact on our community and the world.

I encourage you to be in touch and to visit the University. I can be reached at jeffkaye@bgu.ac.il or +972-50-226-1206.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jeff Kaye'. The signature is fluid and stylized, with a prominent 'J' and 'K'.

Jeff Kaye
Vice President for Public Affairs and Resource Development





Why BGU?

Why Now?

Many leaders of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev's worldwide associates have long-standing, even multi-generational, relationships with the University. Others have joined the BGU global family more recently. Yet, as we all know, the situation in Israel is forever dynamic, and supporting an Israeli university presents unique challenges regardless. We asked the heads of BGU's associates organizations to consider a fundamental question: "Why BGU?" followed by another pertinent question, given the current volatile and dramatic times for Israel and the Negev: "Why now?" Here are their inspiring responses.

Marc Lubner

President, South African Associates of BGU

As President of the South African Associates of Ben-Gurion University, along with our local partners and colleagues, we acknowledge the transformative power of shared knowledge and innovation originating from BGU. Our collaboration with BGU not only holds the promise to enrich South Africa's academic landscape but also has immense potential to advance socio-economic development in our communities. Through pioneering research and educational initiatives, BGU offers solutions to our economic challenges, fostering growth and prosperity, particularly at a time of such socio-economic need. Let us embrace this partnership and harness the collective wisdom to create a brighter future for all. Together, we can drive positive change and build thriving societies.

This was the Mandela's dream over 30 years ago!

Gary DeBode

Board President, Americans for Ben-Gurion University

I first became involved with the organization several years ago, through our ZIN Fellows Leadership Program. I was immediately drawn to the cutting-edge research and the opportunities for the diverse student body at the University.

Following the tragic events of October 7, BGU's research, education and community building have taken on even greater significance. During our recent Solidarity Mission visit, I had the privilege of witnessing firsthand how BGU students, faculty, and staff are developing innovative solutions to challenges that have arisen from this conflict. From AI-enabled technologies to help manage mental health needs throughout the country, to 3D-printed gear engineered to help protect life-saving medicines required in combat, BGU ingenuity is making a real-time impact.

I am incredibly proud of BGU and its remarkable efforts to ensure that Israel emerges from these challenges stronger and more resilient than before.

Andrea Jarach

President, BGU Italia

The Italian Jewish community is one of the oldest in the world. Today, unfortunately, the Jewish population amounts to only 25-30,000. The events of October 7 signaled the removal of restraints against antisemitism. Obviously, this was mostly concealed under the cloak of anti-Zionism. There were weekly public marches flying Palestinian flags. In schools, "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free" became the national anthem. Luckily the center-right government of Giorgia Meloni resisted, maintaining a strong official position of alliance with Israel and friendship with the Jewish communities. But calls for the boycott of Israel are becoming stronger and louder across all aspects of life. What is more frightening is the fact that anti-Zionism and calls for boycott are repeated daily in the media, TV, and radio, and obviously the social networks. The universities single Israel out with petitions to boycott all Israeli universities and research.

As proud Zionists and Jews we look to Ben-Gurion University as a light in darkness, but we feel hostility everywhere. We still have friends all over the country, as we try to resist the wave.

Why BGU? Why Now?

Nava Rubenzadeh

President, Association of
Argentinian Friends of BGU

Despite Argentina's difficult economic situation, we consider our recent contributions to the Emergency Response Campaign to have been highly successful. Additionally, my home is always open for meetings, with a special focus on "Hasbara". We have an agenda that not only prioritizes our university-related tasks but also focuses on clarifying and defending Israel's right to exist in peace, a fundamental requisite for both Ben-Gurion University and the State of Israel.

Antisemitism, usually disguised as anti-Israeli sentiment, is not that prevalent in Argentina's mainstream national, political, or social spheres. However, it can be observed in certain left-wing circles and minority groups, who use it in various protests or mobilizations. This trend is exacerbated by the country's ongoing economic challenges.

Mitchell Oelbaum

Interim National President,
BGU Canada

My personal involvement with Ben-Gurion University began in 1976 when my parents encouraged me to donate my Bar Mitzvah money to the University. While initially non-consensual, it didn't take long for me to embrace this decision wholeheartedly.

My grandparents were early founders of the University and my late father, Ronald, also played significant roles over the years. Philanthropy and the University have always been constants in our family. For over 45 years, BGU has been an integral part of my life. Watching its growth and evolution into a world-class institution has been truly remarkable, and I take great pride in my affiliation with BGU.

Ann Berger

President, Ben-Gurion
University Foundation, UK

My late father, a Holocaust survivor, had a profound connection to David Ben-Gurion and Sde Boker. The desert held a special significance for him after the hardships he endured, and he believed in BGU's ability to make the desert bloom.

BGU is more than just a university; it embodies the best of Israel. What sets it apart is not only its academic excellence, but also the enthusiasm of people who live and work there for everything happening on campus. The energy at BGU is palpable, creating a unique sense of excitement. Visiting BGU always feels like coming home.



Valentine and Philippe Mauchard Dumont

Co-Presidents, Belgians for BGU

In the aftermath of the horrors of October 7, we feel more than ever that it is NOW that matters the most. Now more than ever, we feel a close bond to Israel and the Zionist project. Now more than ever, we feel that every Jew should embody the spirit of Israel, and vice versa. We prevail when we are together. And that is probably ultimately what those who dislike Israelis and Jews find objectionable: we stay strong no matter what, especially when we are together, and we keep looking forward. No matter what.

Despite the incomprehensible nature of the ongoing conflict, the resilience of those most affected is an immense source of inspiration. During our visit

to Israel in January, we were struck by the sense of resilience and hope among our friends, both in Belgium and in Israel. It was a confusingly good feeling, a reminder that even in the face of tragedy, there is strength in unity.

The one-sided and naive reactions of many in the Western world have only served to strengthen our resolve. As one of our non-Jewish friends in Brussels remarked, those who care for us will continue to support us, no matter what. Now more than ever, we must support and promote the work of Ben-Gurion University. Now more than ever, supporting BGU is a way to do good for ourselves and for the world. In the words of the scholar Hillel, "If not now, when?"

Jacobo Mekler

Waisburd

President, Mexican Association of Friends of BGU

Ben-Gurion University serves as my anchor, offering me an authentic connection to Israel and the Israeli experience. Despite being thousands of kilometers away, I feel my connection to the Jewish people most strongly through my involvement with Ben-Gurion University. Unfortunately, this connection has recently brought me much pain and sadness, as I share in the loss and suffering of all Israelis, and particularly poignantly through what has happened to the BGU community.

My family has been committed to supporting Israel for generations, both in words and deeds. I have taken upon myself to lead the Mexican Friends of BGU because I believe that I can make a difference by introducing the groundbreaking research at the University and its central role in advancing, and now, rebuilding the Negev, to both the Jewish and non-Jewish communities in Mexico.

Lionel Halpérin

President, Swiss Friends of BGU

I often describe Ben-Gurion University as a family legacy. My grandfather, Vladimir Halpérin, played a role in the University's formative years in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Following in his footsteps, my father established the Swiss Friends of Ben-Gurion University and chaired it for 25 years, achieving remarkable success. For decades, the Swiss Friends have been among the most effective supporters of BGU, particularly considering the size of the region's population.

My decision to become involved with BGU was not only to uphold our family tradition but also because of my personal experience at the University, when I was still a student and my father sent me to attend the Board of Governors meetings, where I gained firsthand insight into the University's impact and potential. Anyone who has visited BGU can attest that the campus's atmosphere, and the University's unique role in the region are compelling reasons to get involved.

Danièle Bidermann

President, BGU France

We are gathered around a lighthouse in the desert. The desert is the Negev. The lighthouse is Ben-Gurion University, named after the man who decided to build an Oxford in the sand. Every day, one could fill a newspaper solely with the scientific discoveries coming out of university laboratories, particularly those of Ben-Gurion University. And the solutions arise from the desert, just like the plants grown among the rocks by the pioneers.

As the poet Edmond Jabès, who wrote extensively about the desert, said: *"I came from the desert as one comes from beyond memory."*

Since October 7, when the war between Hamas and Israel began, BGU has become an exemplar of a new Zionism.

It took the University only a few hours to understand that in the face of chaos, knowledge, intelligence, and turning sadness into strength were necessary. BGU embodies the values of the new Zionism of resilience.



BGU Now!

Pulling Together for the Emergency Response Campaign



In the wake of the October 7 attack, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev faced a severe test of its resilience. Despite initial shock, the University has persevered, buoyed by the overwhelming support and genuine concern from our friends worldwide. Hundreds of donors, large and small, from over a dozen countries, moved from concern to action, contributing generously to our Emergency Response Campaign.

Thanks to this generosity, the campaign raised over \$12 million, enabling BGU to take immediate action and provide crucial and timely assistance.

Almost immediately following the attack, the University mobilized to address the diverse needs of its community and the wider Negev region. The University reached out

to support those students most in need through special grants: those serving in the reserves and students living near Gaza. At one point, there were 6,500 BGU students and staff doing reserve duty, and the Reservists Support Office was expanded to help them transition back to civilian life and return to campus. The Psychological Services Unit was bolstered significantly.

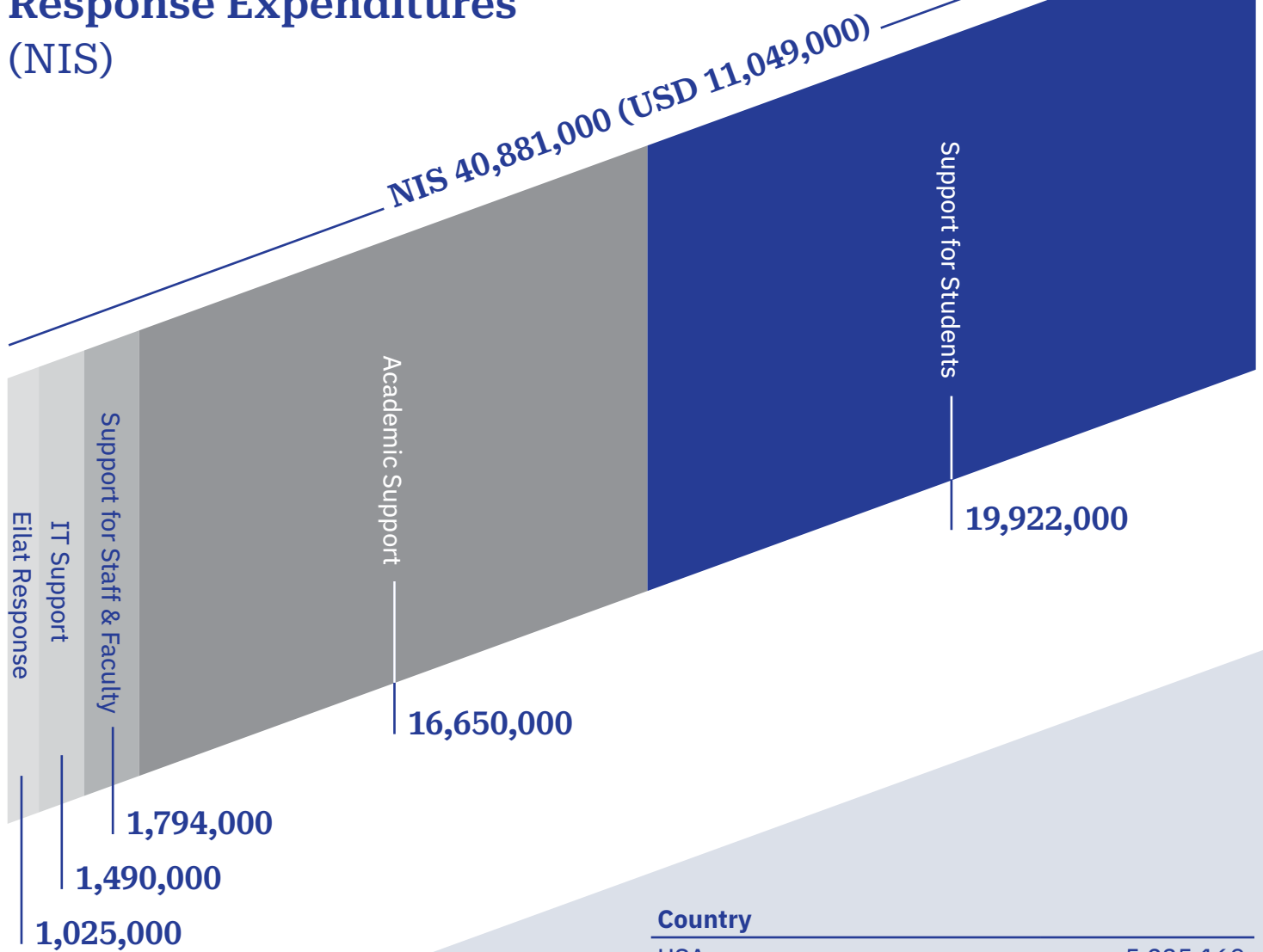
BGU was also able to make the transition back to the classroom as smooth as possible for reservist students: the University recorded and made courses accessible remotely, established an online learning support center, and increased the number of second semester and summer courses, essentially running a full cycle of courses twice. Returning reservists were offered mentoring,

tutoring, study skills workshops, test preparation, the ability to defer exams and assignment deadlines, and more – all to ensure that they can keep up with their classmates and complete their degrees on time.

BGU also assisted employees by establishing a daycare facility for their children, a resilience center to provide immediate initial psychological assistance to the entire BGU community, and implemented a range of additional supportive initiatives, including providing grants to those evacuated from their homes.

BGU's spirit and commitment to the wider community remain strong, thanks to our supporters worldwide and the initiative and drive of student and staff volunteers here at home.

Overall Emergency Response Expenditures* (NIS)

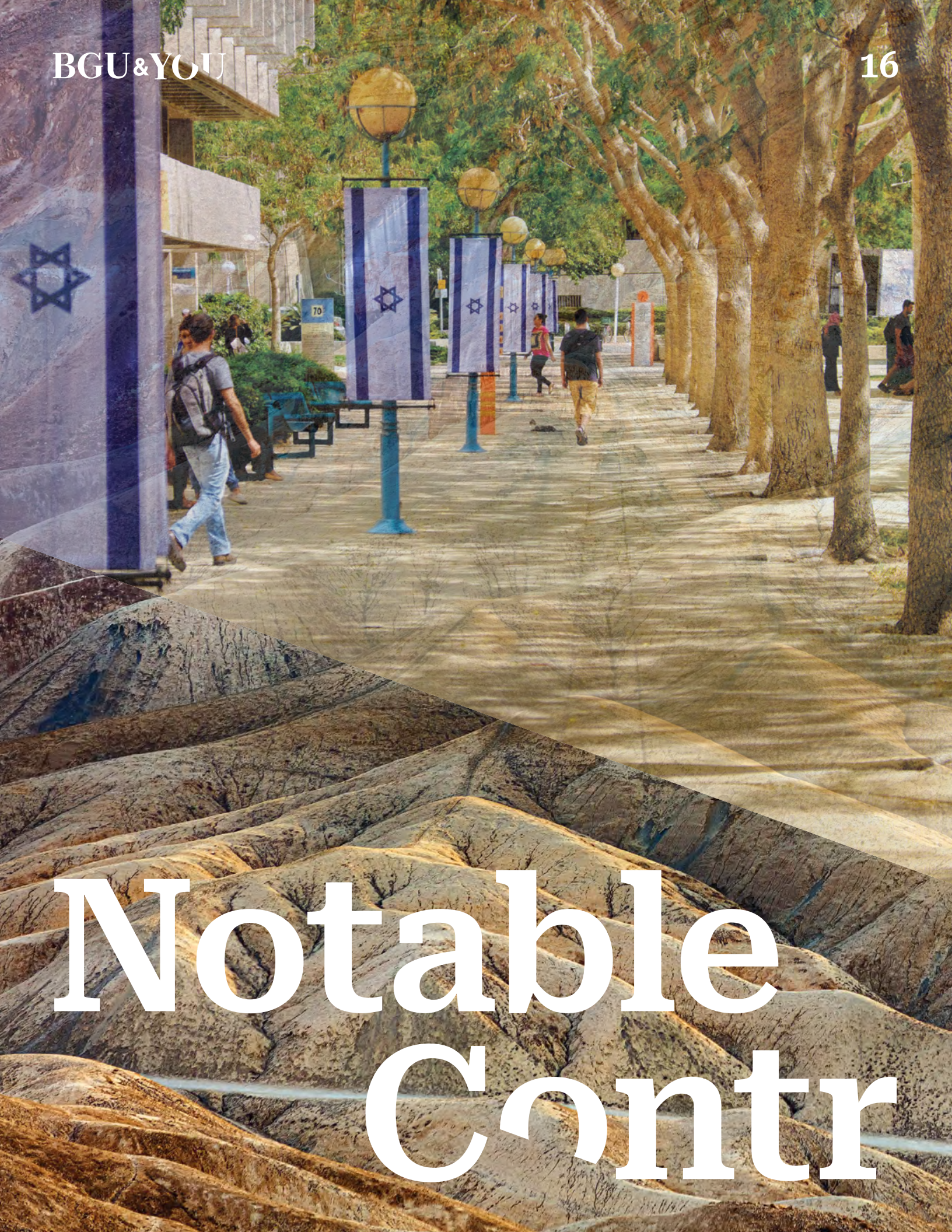


Emergency Response Contributions by Country* (USD)

*Figures include donations/expenditures up until January 2024

Country	Amount (USD)
USA	5,235,169
Canada	2,225,524
Israel	1,788,309
UK	268,161
Latin America	247,340
France	184,346
Liechtenstein	150,000
Switzerland	103,150
Russian Speakers	27,100
Belgium	18,856
Germany	6,290
Italy	2,741
A4BGU – reserve funds	2,000,000
Total (USD)	12,257,285

USD 12,257,285



Notable Contr

The past year has been one of uncertainty and upheaval, which significantly impacted the BGU community. But thanks to the heartfelt generosity of our friends and supporters – both old and new – it has also been a deeply inspiring period. With the help of our friends around the world, we were able to respond quickly and decisively to meet the diverse needs of our community.

This heartwarming demonstration of solidarity is most noteworthy. Your support continues to galvanize us. We know that together, we will emerge from these challenging times stronger than ever.

In addition to generously contributing to our emergency response efforts, our committed supporters also advanced BGU's long-term goals with donations to myriad projects at the University, profoundly influencing BGU's trajectory and shaping its future along with the future of the State of Israel.

With a truly transformative gift to BGU as part of the Way Forward Campaign, **Sylvan and Margaret Adams** are instrumental in the University's efforts to strengthen the Negev. Enabling BGU's leadership role in revitalizing the region at this critical time, they are making David Ben-Gurion's vision for the Negev a reality. The funds are earmarked to execute an extensive plan aimed at advancing education and campus life at BGU, while rebuilding and strengthening the South. Just as their support of the Sylvan Adams Sports Center set a new standard for sports and recreation at the University, this gift will be a gamechanger, enhancing life at BGU and in the Negev for generations to come. In 2022, Sylvan Adams was awarded an honorary doctorate from BGU in recognition of his outstanding Israel advocacy and achievements.

Contributions

The state-of-the-art Guzik Center for Advanced Microscopy was established with a generous donation from **the Guzik Foundation**. The Center's specialized equipment will take BGU's research in numerous domains to new heights. The Foundation also made a generous gift to the President's Discretionary Fund, enabling President Chamovitz to allocate funds where they were needed most after the October 7 attacks. Through the Guzik Foundation, Dr. Nahum Guzik has enabled BGU's growth over the years and contributed to its impact in diverse educational and scientific fields. Dr. Guzik was awarded an honorary doctorate from BGU in 2014 in recognition of his outstanding philanthropy and revolutionary technological innovations in the disk drive industry.

Toni Young has committed to a generous lead gift for the Way Forward Campaign, as she serves as Global Development Chair for the campaign. Her leadership and support have advanced the University in countless ways over the years, and she has always been a source of inspiration and positivity. Toni was awarded an honorary doctorate from BGU in 2019 in recognition of her support of Israel and the American Jewish community and the many leadership roles she has held to advance the causes she holds dear.

The Fonds Social Juif Unifié, through **FSJU Israel**, provided funding for the Aliyah to Academia Program, increasing access to higher education among new immigrants, along with vital support for reservists enrolled in BGU's pre-academic programs, enabling them to perform their national duties without sacrificing their dream of pursuing an academic degree.

The Jewish United Fund of Chicago's generous grant to support BGU's emergency psychological response efforts has greatly enhanced the University's ability to provide psychological services and emotional support to students in need. Their partnership is enabling the recruitment of additional psychologists and interns and the provision of therapeutic services vital to our students' recovery, resilience, and success in academia.

Funds provided by **the Estate of Friedrich Turtel** of Israel are being used to award scholarships to students in need, a group which has grown in number in these challenging times.

The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust's support of BGU's emergency and security needs has significantly boosted the University's rapid emergency response capabilities. With this grant, the Trust will help ensure the safety and resilience of the entire University community for years to come.

A gift from **Teodoro (Teddy) Goldberg** of Mexico provides support for Prof. Nadav Shashar's research on coral reef restoration. Although integral to marine life in Israel's southernmost region and prized bastions of biodiversity, Israel's coral reefs are in a state of decline. With Teddy Goldberg's help, Prof. Shashar's team is exploring enhanced coral restoration methods on a laboratory scale and at sea, aiming to reverse the trend of decline and enable marine habitats around the world to thrive.

Keren Kayemeth Le'Israel's support of the Aliyah to Academia Program is contributing to the academic achievement and absorption of new immigrants. With this gift, KKL is partnering with BGU to ensure that Israel's newest immigrants have a strong educational foundation upon which to build their lives in Israel.

The Kennedy Leigh Charitable Trust has strengthened BGU with its support of the Community Resilience Project, which addresses students' need for psychological services and housing assistance. Given the scope of this emergency, our students' need for this type of aid is greater than ever, and support from the Trust will help facilitate their recovery and ability to move forward.



Notable Contributions

Delta Galil Industries Ltd.

has pledged its support of an innovative long-term program for students from the Ethiopian community, increasing access to higher education among a population underrepresented in Israel's institutions of higher learning. This gift will open the door to opportunity, contributing to students' personal growth, professional development, improved socio-economic status, and more.

Carol and Harry Saal pledged a meaningful five-year gift to the Ben-Gurion Annual Fund, providing support where it is needed most at BGU. The Saals are dedicated supporters of BGU, advancing areas ranging from cybersecurity to faculty recruitment and the American Associates Village at Sde Boker.

Federation CJA is building resilience at BGU and beyond, with emergency grants supporting the mental health interventions of the Duet Center, the innovative applied research of the AI for Social Welfare Lab, and a project initiated by the School of Public Health aimed at enhancing Israeli coexistence through simulation-based learning. Federation CJA's support has also advanced the study of placemaking at BGU, enhancing the Negev and the lives of its residents.

The Joseph S. & Caroline Gross Life Monument Fund established the 'First Generation to the Academy' scholarship program, a new initiative that opens the door to higher education at BGU to students from the periphery whose parents do not have an academic degree. Such students are underrepresented at Israeli universities where they constitute just 30% of the student population. The program provides three-year scholarships and guidance to ensure that students receive the assistance and support needed to succeed in academia. By increasing access to higher education, the Fund is enabling these students to fulfill their potential, while fueling the country's advancement.

The Inge Weinberg Guttman, RN Chair in Pediatric Nursing was established with a bequest from **Prof. Egon Guttman, z"l**. This gift, which will advance pediatric nursing research at BGU and the practice of pediatric nursing more widely, will both recognize the expertise of the chair's incumbent and honor Inge Weinberg Guttman in perpetuity.



Notable Contributions

The American Friends of the Russian Jewish Congress and **the World Jewish Congress** have provided critical support to the Aliyah to Academia Program. This program enables Russian speaking immigrants to pursue their academic aspirations and build their lives in Israel following the conflict in Ukraine. The Congresses' assistance provides a pathway for successful aliyah for the program's participants.

A significant gift from the **Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel Foundation-Israel** in support of the new Windows Program is rekindling the intellectual and creative powers of those who were traumatized on October 7. This novel project initiated by the

Heksherim Research Institute for Jewish and Israeli Literature and Culture provides a space for contemplation, processing trauma, creative expression, narration, documentation, and steps toward recovery in the aftermath of the devastating events. The Foundation's continued support of the Mandel Social Leadership MBA Program is cultivating the leadership Israel needs to flourish in the years ahead.

With the leadership and support of **Miriam Roland**, a partnership was forged between BGU and Montreal's Concordia University. This gift, which fosters collaboration between researchers at the two institutions, will contribute to the solutions needed to address climate change and sustainability in general and urban sustainability in particular.

A generous gift from **Dr. Saul Unter**, including a portion as a charitable bequest, will name the Saul Unter Gate. The gate, located on BGU's Marcus Family Campus, was previously known as the Ilanot Gate. Dr. Unter's support of the University has spanned decades, and the naming of the gate in his honor pays tribute to his ongoing commitment to BGU.

A significant bequest from **Gisella Modiano, z"l** was designated for the President's Discretionary Fund, allowing Prof. Chamovitz to advance important projects at the University.

With leadership and support from **Dovi Frances**, BGU has established the new Institute for Excellence in Cyber and Artificial Intelligence, a comprehensive framework for extra-academic studies in AI and cybersecurity. Committed to advancing the INSTITUTE, Dovi Frances is seeking philanthropic partners to ensure its success in leveraging and expanding BGU's expertise and positioning the University as a world leader in these critical domains.

Hilda Namm, z"l included a generous bequest to BGU in her will, which is supporting homeland security research at the University. Hilda and Manfred were longtime BGU supporters, contributing funds for diabetes and robotics research, scholarships, and more.

Melinda Goldrich is providing funding for the renovation of Studio Positive, a student-run fitness studio on BGU's Marcus Family Campus. She is also supporting Prof. Amit Gross' water research in Sde Boker and Prof. Nadav Shashar's coral reef research in Eilat with generous gifts allocated toward research funding. These gifts reflect her dedication to our students' well-being and commitment to advancing the University's research in diverse domains.

The Kirsh Foundation's commitment to diversity, inclusion, and empowerment through education is reflected in their generous support of the Bedouin Managerial Leadership Training Program at the Guilford Glazer Faculty of Business and Management. This program addresses the underrepresentation of Bedouin men and women in management positions and MBA degree programs, with the aim of creating a large cohort of capable and well-educated managerial leaders. In maximizing their potential, the program will also enable social mobility, bridge social gaps, and promote tolerance and coexistence.

The Klarman Family Foundation's support for the Bridge to Academia Program at the Jusidman Science Center for Youth strengthens participants' STEM and Hebrew skills and equips them with the skillset, mindset, and tools needed to succeed. This support helps create a brighter future for Bedouin youth by leveraging STEM as a pathway to higher education and a vehicle for excellence and social mobility.

Israel Chemicals (ICL Group Ltd.) is paving the way for groundbreaking research and innovation by supporting fellowships for students performing research at the Moshe Nitzan Center for Energy and Sustainability. With this gift, the company is advancing energy and sustainability solutions on the national and international level.

Gary DeBode and **Archie Gottesman** have made a generous gift to support Yazamut 360°, BGU's entrepreneurship center, which will nurture the entrepreneurial spirit of BGU students, researchers, and faculty members. Yazamut 360° in particular and the University as a whole are strengthened by their commitment, leadership, and support.

Rochelle Etingin, z"l provided meaningful funding for Prof. Alon Monsonego's Alzheimer's research and supported many areas at BGU as a benefactor and leader over the years, alongside her husband, **Maks Etingin, z"l**. Rochelle was a devoted friend of BGU, serving as a member of our Board of Governors until her death.

Joel Reinstein has committed to a generous gift, which will enable BGU to create a fund that will support study abroad, short-term experiences, degree programs, and additional programs focused on American Jewish students studying at the University. This gift, which will fuel BGU's internationalization efforts, will have great impact, giving participants the experience of a lifetime, infusing the University with their diverse perspectives and energy, and building a much-needed pool of informal Israel ambassadors abroad.

Chana Stern, z"l left a very generous bequest to BGU to support student scholarships, reflecting her dedication to our students and the value she placed on education. These funds will provide scholarships to numerous BGU students for years to come.

Craig Granowitz made a generous contribution to establish a fund for fellowships for students who have made aliyah, served in the Israel Defense Forces, and are attending medical school at BGU. With this gift, he is paying tribute to these heroic immigrants who will further serve their country as much-needed physicians.

Uniting in Solidarity to Rebuild the Negev

Way Forward Campaign
Launched at Monte Carlo
Global Summit Meeting

Photos: Ekaterina Popova



Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, together with its associates organizations around the world, began work on the global campaign over three years ago, in October 2020, with the aim of raising the considerable funds needed for expanding into the North Campus in Beer-Sheva and ensuring the University's ability to thrive in the future. Conceived to facilitate President Chamovitz's strategic plan for the University over 10 years, and led by Toni Young, the Global Development Committee last met during the Annual Board of Governors Meeting in May 2023 and was scheduled to meet again in Monte Carlo, Monaco in October.

The meeting in Monte Carlo was in many ways an experiment. The idea was for the Committee to meet in a place that would have added value beyond being somewhere convenient for people coming from all around the globe. The Prince of Monaco is famously very involved in sustainability and climate change. We believed we could find a common goal with the greater Monaco community over issues of sustainability and that BGU researchers could offer novel solutions for our shared Mediterranean Sea. We also

wanted to learn more about Monaco's Jewish community.

Obviously, the October meeting was postponed because of the Hamas attack on October 7, but we were able to reschedule for late January 2024, with a revised agenda. Instead of being about sustainability and climate change, the event focused on where the war in Gaza meets both the BGU global community and the Monaco Jewish community.

The revised program ultimately turned out to be valuable beyond our expectations. First, we found a Jewish community that was eager to engage with us: to listen and to be heard after October 7. The Hamas attack precipitated crisis and trauma beyond Israel; it affected Jews all over the world. The Global Summit was probably the first event with an Israeli organization to be held post-October 7, and was therefore

Toni Young, Chair of the Global Development Committee

Prof. Daniel Chamovitz, President



The event focused on where the war in Gaza meets both the BGU global community and the Monaco Jewish community.



Uniting in Solidarity to Rebuild the Negev

especially meaningful. Our friends – both old and new, and especially the Monaco Friends of Israel, were incredibly touched by this dialogue, and there was a sense of solidarity which we didn't entirely anticipate.

We toured the Monaco Jewish community and visited the

Synagogue Edmond J. Safra where the rabbi led prayers for those who died, the hostages, and the wellbeing of the soldiers. Our initial feeling of dissonance at being away from home at a luxury hotel thus eventually gave way to feelings of familiarity and sharing, and perhaps even some respite, especially for the University

leadership who had been immersed in BGU's war efforts for the past four months.

On the second day of the meeting, the lay and professional leadership of our associates organizations from ten different countries around the world returned to the Global Campaign and the future of BGU and the Negev. We heard about the resilience and responsiveness of the University in reacting to the October 7 attack and the developing war, as well as the wider implications across the BGU community and throughout Israel. The swift proactive measures taken at the University were accompanied by the equally decisive efforts of BGU supporters worldwide, whose

The Monte Carlo meeting was also the official launch of the “Way Forward” campaign, conceived as the means of carrying out the strategic plan to transform BGU into a leading institution both at home and abroad.

generous contributions to the Emergency Response Campaign made that response possible.

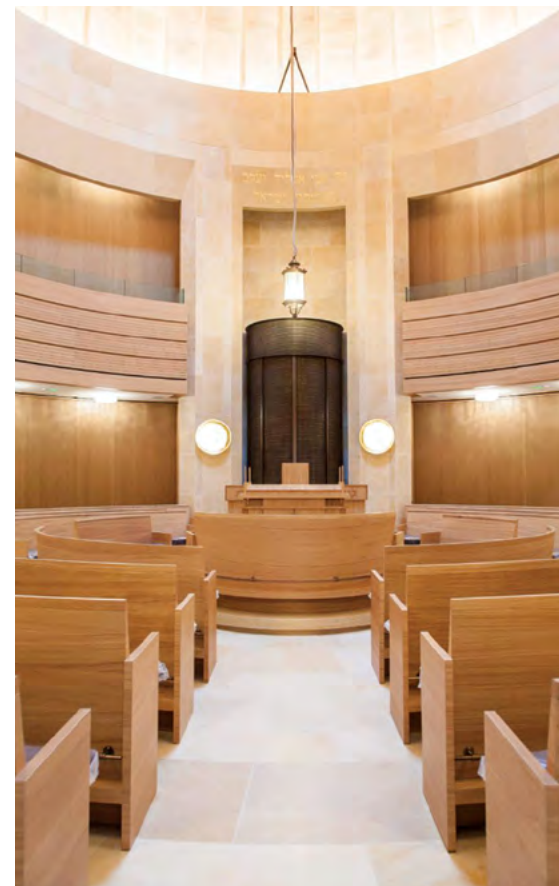
The Monte Carlo meeting was also the official launch of the Way Forward Campaign, conceived as the means of carrying out the strategic plan to transform BGU into a leading institution at home and abroad. The events following October 7 have made it clear that BGU, as always, has an important responsibility that extends beyond the boundaries of academia.

In his address, “BGU: Leading the Rebuilding of the Negev,” President Chamovitz made clear the need for a strong University to drive the Negev’s recovery and reconstruction. Israeli-Canadian supporter Sylvan Adams' recent transformative donation to the Way Forward Campaign indicated that this was a shared vision.

The future – the rebuilding of a thriving, flourishing community in the Negev – depends on a strong Ben-Gurion University.

Sylvan Adams speaking at the Global Summit

Synagogue Edmond J. Safra in Monaco. Photo: Association culturelle israélite de Monaco





For the Negev, From the World

News from
our Friends
Worldwide



MAR 2023: Academic Collaboration in Milan

Thanks to the initiative of Andrea Jarach, President of BGU Italia, BGU is developing a partnership with Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca. Pictured are Prof. Gabriella Pasi (L) and Prof. Limor Aharonson-Daniel, BGU's former VP for Global Engagement (R), on a visit to Milan in July 2023. Photo: Andrea Jarach

BGU ITALIA

US

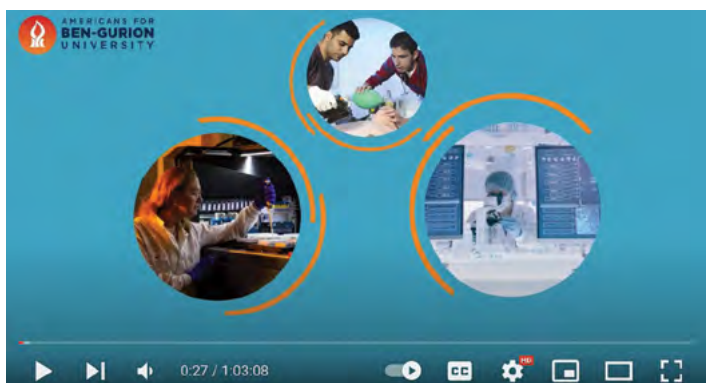
MAR 2023

Zin VI Gathering in Israel

The sixth cohort of Zin Fellows convened for a week-long experience in Israel, marking the culmination of their journey. They explored all three of BGU's campuses, engaging with faculty and administrators to gain insights into the University's innovative research and entrepreneurial spirit, as well as David Ben-Gurion's vision for the University, the Negev, and the country.



Zin Fellows Leadership Program Cohort VI and staff (L - R): Dallas Dishman, Carol Milewich, Peter Yolles, Susan Szafr, Luciano Kolodny, David Schuman, Noah Tratt, Jordan Sarick, Seth Harlem, Shane Stein, Benjamin Diament, Cippy Klionsky, Jason Williamson, Lisa Douglass, Lenore LaVine, Dana Ben Benyamin, Jilli Spear, Efrat Borenstein, Doug Seserman. Seated: Julie Gothard.



US

APR 2023

Celebrating the Remarkable 3: Pioneering Medical Science

A4BGU's third annual virtual event was hosted by physician and internet personality Doctor Mike (Dr. Mike Varshavski). The emphasis this time was BGU's groundbreaking medical research and the new Rachel and Max Javit Medical Simulation and Classroom Building.

CA

APR 2023: Interim President for BGU Canada

Mitchell Oelbaum graciously agreed to return and serve as Interim National President of BGU Canada. L-R: Naomi and Mitchell Oelbaum with BGU Rector Prof. Chaim Hames at the 2022 BOG Meeting



UK

APR 2023

Yom Hazikaron/Yom Ha'atzmaut in London

Prof. Oren Shriki of BGU's Dept. of Cognitive and Brain Sciences delivered a captivating presentation titled "Mind Over Matter: A Swift Introduction to Neurotechnology and its Applications" at a poignant Yom Hazikaron ceremony at South Hampstead Synagogue in London, followed by a lively Yom Ha'atzmaut party.



Prof. Oren Shriki presenting at South Hampstead Synagogue. Photo: Hannah Allen

SAAABG



SA

MAY 2023: Meeting in Johannesburg

L-R: Eli Belotserkovsky, Israel's Ambassador to South Africa, Tilson Manyoni, SA government official, Marc Lubner, President of the South African Associates of BGU, and Liv Sperber, BGU's Director of Global Development, English Speakers, met to discuss potential academic cooperation in Johannesburg. Photo: Jonathan Shapiro



FR

MAY 2023: New French Organization and President
 BGU announced the the establishment of BGU France and the appointment of Danièle Bidermann as President of BGU France at the 53rd Board of Governors meeting in May 2023. L-R: Sandrine Ohana-Adda, former BGU Director of Development for Western Europe, Maggy Camp and Danièle Bidermann at the Sde Boker Campus

FR

MAY 2023

Gérard Worms Prize Ceremony

Anne Lise Worms attended the presentation of the Gérard Worms Prize at the 53rd Board of Governors meeting. The award supports PhD students in research focusing on agriculture in arid lands or solar energy. The 2023 recipients of the prize are Paul Vandôme from L’Institut Agro Montpellier - CIRAD and Klil Noythe from BGU.

BGU



JUN 2023: Israel’s 75th Independence Day celebrations in London

L-R: Or Alon and Tzipi Hotovely, Israel’s Ambassador to the UK, with Liv Sperber, BGU Director of Global Development, English Speakers, and Geoffrey Berger of BGUF. Photo: Hannah Allen



L-R: Marie Hélène Bérard, Frédéric Worms, Prof. Noam Weisbrod, Director of the Jacob Blaustein Institutes for Desert Research, Klil Noythe, Paul Vandôme. Photo: BGU staff

AMIS SUISSE

CH

JUN 2023

Gala Dinner in Geneva

The Swiss friends of BGU held a highly successful gala dinner attended by 200 participants from the Geneva Jewish community. The event featured six BGU researchers who showcased their work on topics ranging from chemistry and environmental studies, to entrepreneurship and cyber security. The keynote address was delivered by BGU alumnus Avi Issacharoff, creator of the acclaimed Israeli TV show *Fauda*.



Swiss Gala. L-R: BGU VP Jeff Kaye, Dr. Uri Roll, Dr. Nina Kamennaya, Arielle Herzog Hadida, Avi Issacharoff, BGU President Prof. Daniel Chamovitz, Michaël Darmon, Lionel Halpérin, President of the Swiss Friends, Prof. Yuval Elovici, and students Avital Wagner, Sarah Winkler, and Shir Levy. Photo: Jeremy Philippe

UK

JUN 2023

Safeguarding Our Digital Age: Homeland Security in the 21st Century

Prof. Dan Blumberg was interviewed by British journalist Jonathan Sacerdoti at an event co-hosted by the Ben-Gurion University Foundation and Rosenblatt, a law firm in London. Jonathan Sacerdoti is a member of the inaugural cohort of the Halutz Initiative for Global Leadership and Simon Walton, our co-host from Rosenblatt, is from the second Halutz cohort.



L-R: Hannah Allen, Louis James Zlotowski-Merran, a trustee of BGUF, Simon Walton, Prof. Dan Blumberg, Liv Sperber, Dr. Natalie Lancer, and Jonathan Sacerdoti. Photo: BGUF

CA

JUN 2023

Gala Main Event in Montreal

BGU Canada's Montreal Chapter held its annual fundraising Gala Main Event, also serving as a tribute to BGU Canada's CEO, Mark Mendelson z"l, who passed away suddenly in November 2022. Three hundred friends of the University gathered to honor Mark's memory and raise funds to dedicate the "Beit Mark" student residence in the Student Village on BGU's North Campus. Attendees also enjoyed a "fire-side chat" with i24News US correspondent Mike Wagenheim.



Peggi Cohen-Rabinovitch, Montreal Regional President, addresses the Montreal Gala. Photo: Howard Kay

Olivier Abécassis (L) describes his Halutz experiences, interviewed by Michaël Darmon at a BGU France gathering. Photo: Sandrine Ohana Adda



FR

JUL 2023

New Members for BGU France

A BGU France gathering to recruit new members featured President Danièle Bidermann, who spoke about the association's history and Michaël Darmon, who talked about the crucial role of Ben-Gurion University in the future development of the Negev and Israel. Olivier Abécassis shared his experiences of the Halutz program and Sandrine Ohana Adda, then BGU Director of Development for Western Europe, shared her family's aliyah story and explained why BGU's values resonated with her personal commitment.

UK

JUN 2023

Eyes in the Sky: Monitoring of Earth and Israel's Space Assets

Prof. Dan Blumberg, Vice President for Regional and Industrial Development, spoke in his capacity as Chairman of the Israel Space Agency at a partnership event between Ben-Gurion University Foundation and South Hampstead Synagogue, London. By popular demand, Prof. Blumberg returned to speak again on "New Borders in our Digital Age: Space, Cyber & Beyond."

AR

AUG 2023

Promenade in Argentina named for David Ben-Gurion

Thanks to an initiative of the Argentinian Friends of BGU, Israeli ambassador to Argentina, Eyal Sela, together with a delegation from the Argentinian Friends led by President Nava Rubinzadeh, and various officials, including the Governor of Entre Ríos, Gustavo Bordet, inaugurated a promenade named after David Ben-Gurion in the town of Villaguay.



Dedication of the David Ben-Gurion Promenade in Entre Ríos, Argentina in August. Photo: Secretaría de Comunicación, Gobierno de Entre Ríos



Aliyah to Academia graduates with representatives from the Ministry of Aliyah and Integration, including Miri Cohen-Adlerstein and Keren Semo, as well as representatives from the Ministry of Education, the Jewish Agency, and KKL, including Yigal Yasinov, CEO of KKL Euro-Asia, and Yitzhak Mofsik, BGU Rector Prof. Chaim Hames, Alona Kushnir, Director of Impact Partnerships for Global Russian Speakers, and the program's director, Prof. Louisa Meshi. Photo: Dani Machlis

IL

AUG 2023

First Cohort Completes Aliyah to Academia Program

BGU celebrated the graduation of the first cohort of the Aliyah to Academia program and the opening of a new cycle, with an even larger cohort of Russian-speaking students. Noteworthy donors to this project include KKL, the World Jewish Congress, the Alumni Association for a Better Future, American Friends of the Russian Jewish Congress, and Dr. Ilya Lifshits.

CA

AUG 2023

Advance Screenings of *Golda* Biopic

BGU Canada held sold out movie pre-screenings of the biopic *Golda*, starring Helen Mirren and Liev Schrieber, in various Canadian cities during the summer of 2023. The pre-screenings took place in Toronto (pictured), Ottawa, Winnipeg, Montreal, and Vancouver. In total, over 1,000 attendees across Canada enjoyed these special events.



L-R: Mitchell and Naomi Oelbaum, David Dulberg, Idit Shamir, Michael Levitt, Fred Waks, Shimmy Wenner & Shani Azulai at the BGU Canada *Golda* pre-screening in Toronto. Photo: Nate Pavlotski

BGU
CANADA

US

SEP 2023

Diversity and Inclusion Series with Prof. Sarab Abu-Rabia Queder

Prof. Abu-Rabia Queder, BGU's Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion, spoke at several fundraising events in the Bay Area (at the Oshman Family JCC, JCRC of Jewish Silicon Valley, Jewish Federation in San Francisco, and a private dinner at the home of A4BGU supporter Fred Hertz), sharing her personal experience as a Bedouin woman, as well as her professional mission at BGU to build a model for diversity, equity, and inclusion in Israel.



Prof. Sarab Abu-Rabia Queder speaking at the home of A4BGU supporter Fred Hertz. Photo: A4BGU



IT

SEP 2023

Webinar on Space Economy

BGU Italia held a webinar on the growing space economy featuring BGU's Dr. Shimrit Maman, Director of the Earth and Planetary Image Facility, and Prof. Simonetta Di Pippo of the SDA Bocconi School of Management, former Director of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs.

CH

OCT 2023: Swiss friends' UN protest

Since October 7, the Swiss Friends of BGU are helping raise awareness about the situation of the Israeli hostages and have participated in weekly demonstrations in front of the headquarters of the United Nations and the ICRC. Photo: Arielle Herzog Hadida

US
NOV 2023

Charting the Future and Changing the World, Tribute Brunch, Philadelphia

The Philadelphia and Delaware chapters of A4BGU held their annual tribute brunch in Penn Valley, PA. Contributors of \$1,800 or more from Delaware and Philadelphia attended a kick-off event in September hosted by Sylvia A. Brodsky and featuring guest speaker Prof. Amit Schejter of the Dept. of Communication Studies at BGU.



A4BGU CEO Doug Seserman with speaker Dr. Daniel Gordis on screen at the Board kick-off. Photo: Preston Rescigno

US
OCT 2023

A4BGU Annual Board Meeting

The Board of Americans for Ben-Gurion University convened in New York City for its annual three-day meeting. This event, which took place shortly after the October 7 terrorist attacks, was profoundly impactful for the A4BGU community. Speakers included Dr. Daniel Gordis, a leading scholar and commentator on Israel, Kenneth Feinberg, Special Master of the US Sept 11 Victim Compensation Fund, and BGU VP Jeff Kaye on behalf of the University.

Charting the Future Tribute Brunch. L-R standing: A4BGU CEO Doug Seserman, Mid-Atlantic Co-Chairs Connie Katz and Sam Katz, A4BGU Director of Development Claire Winick, Rabbi Seth Frisch, Philadelphia Chapter Chair Sherrie Savett, Esq., and Tribute Brunch Co-chairs, Drs. Neil and Carolyn Glazer Hockstein. Seated are June and Peter Olster, and Bret and Elisa Morris. Photo: Christopher Brown

At the main event, the Delaware Chapter honored Elisa and Bret Morris, and the Philadelphia Chapter honored Peter Olster. The keynote address, titled “Jewish Resilience,” was delivered by Sam Katz, Mid-Atlantic Chair, Philadelphia Chapter Chair, Sherrie Savett, Esq., and Delaware Chapter Chair, Dr. Barry Kayne, were also present.



UK
NOV 2023

BGU Dial Direct

In the aftermath of the October 7 Hamas attack, the University offered interested organizations abroad Zoom meetings with BGU’s Prof. Simon Barak, a researcher at the Jacob Blaustein Institutes for Desert Research and founding member of BGU Radio, and Dana Gavish-Fridman, Head of Entrepreneurship at the Yazamut 360° entrepreneurship center. About a dozen such meetings, including one hosted by BGUF together with We Believe In Israel, provided a valuable opportunity to hear directly from people on the ground about the impact of the war on the lives of BGU’s staff and students, as well as efforts to support the community and the country.



Negev Strong Gala in Toronto. L-R, back row: BGU VP Jeff Kaye, BGU Canada Interim President Mitchell Oelbaum, David Ehrlich, Gary Fine, Bradley Goldhar, Michael Spigelman, Eric Beutel, Ralph Shepherd, John Rose, Len Goodman. Front row: Sam Cordes, Margaret Adams, Naomi Oelbaum, David Dulberg, Shimmy Wenner, Tamara Fine, Sylvan Adams, President Prof. Daniel Chamovitz, Joy Shepherd, Susie Rose, Andrea Freedman, and Shani Bahat. Photo: Liora Kogan

US

NOV 2023

Virtual Ben-Gurion Day in the USA

Ben-Gurion Day returned to the USA for a second year as A4BGU joined Israel in honoring its founding father, David Ben-Gurion. Filmed in Ben-Gurion's Sde Boker home, the webinar featured a conversation about the enduring impact of his vision between Prof. Paula Kabalo, Head of the Azrieli Center for Israel Studies at the Ben-Gurion

Research Institute for the Study of Israel and Zionism, and Eitan Donyets, CEO of the Ben-Gurion Heritage Institute.

This year's webinar was accompanied by a robust educational program prepared together with the Ben-Gurion Heritage Institute and shared with over 100 synagogues and schools across the US.



CA

DEC 2023

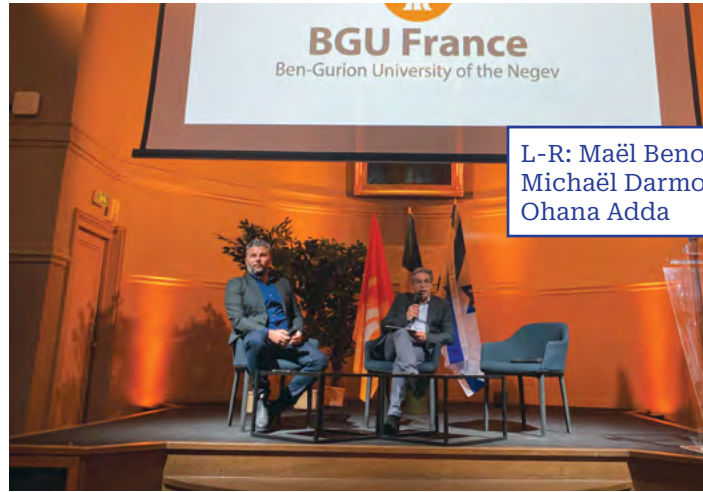
Negev Strong Gala in Toronto

The Toronto Region hosted their highly successful second annual fundraising gala featuring former Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett and author/activist Noa Tishby. BGU President Prof. Daniel Chamovitz also spoke. The event drew over 1,000 attendees and garnered an impressive \$1.3 million in sponsorships. A remarkable last-minute announcement during the gala revealed a \$100 million gift from philanthropist Sylvan Adams, further elevating the evening's impact. Following the event, the subsequent day brought news of two additional generous \$1 million gifts. In total, the gala raised an outstanding \$3.3 million.

FR
DEC 2023

BGU France Gala

Michaël Darmon, a journalist at i24News, interviewed two distinguished speakers: Maël Benoliel, a war reporter, and His Excellency Eric Danon, former French ambassador to Israel, at a BGU France gala dinner bringing together around a hundred participants.



L-R: Maël Benoliel interviewed by Michaël Darmon. Photo: Sandrine Ohana Adda



L-R: Alfredo Leuco with Emilio Perina, a member of the Argentinian Friends of BGU who presided over the fundraising event. Photo: AAABGU

AR
DEC 2023

Fundraiser in Buenos Aires

The Argentinian Friends of BGU held an event in Buenos Aires with around 250 attendees. The main speaker was Alfredo Leuco, a renowned Argentine Jewish journalist who had been in Israel in October. Also present were Nava Rubenzadeh, President of the Argentinian Friends, and Violeta Teubal, who sponsored the event.



CA

DEC 2023: CEO for BGU Canada
Andrea Freedman was welcomed as Chief Executive Officer of BGU Canada in December. Photo: Peter Waiser

FR

FEB 2024

Eric Danon, former French ambassador to Israel, has agreed to be President of the BGU France Honorary Committee. The appointment was announced during the visit of BGU France's solidarity mission to Israel in February. L-R: Eric Danon, BGU France President Danièle Bidermann, and BGU President Prof. Daniel Chamovitz. Photo: Sandrine Ohana Adda

**US** **AUG 2023 – FEB 2024****Who are the Marcuses? Screenings Across the USA**

A4BGU continued to share the remarkable story of the Marcus family, who changed the University's future with the single largest donation ever made in the State of Israel. Many of the screenings included talkbacks with Ellen Marcus, who shared her parents' story and the importance of the BGU mission. Warren Buffett, who features in the film, attended a screening in Omaha.



L-R: Ellen Marcus, A4BGU CEO
Doug Seserman, and Marc Bennett
at the Manhattan JCC screening of
Who are the Marcuses? February 6,
2024. Photo: A4BGU

US

FEB 2024**Delaware Chapter Installation**

Over 50 people gathered at the home of Drs. Carolyn and Neil Hockstein for their installation as Co-Chairs of A4BGU's Delaware Chapter. Outgoing Chapter Chair Dr. Barry Kayne was thanked for his years of service and Mid-Atlantic Co-Chair Sam Katz acted as the installation officer. The evening's guest speaker was BGU alumna, Dr. Yulia Sapir-Lekhovitser, CSO for Fesarius Therapeutics.



L-R: Guest speaker Dr. Yulia Sapir-Lekhovitser and Delaware Chapter Co-Chairs Drs. Neil and Carolyn Glazer-Hockstein. Photo: A4BGU

US

FEB/MAR 2024

Remarkable Resilience: A4BGU Events with Prof. Ilan Troen

A4BGU brought BGU Prof. Emeritus Ilan Troen to the United States for a series of events entitled *Negev Stories of Resilience and Rebuilding*. Prof. Troen shared his family story and his vision for the Negev at A4BGU’s South Florida Chapter’s annual event in partnership with Northern Trust in Boca Raton, at the Miami Beach JCC, and then at Temple Beth Elohim, Wellesley, MA and the JCC of Greater Boston, and Temple Emanuel, Newton, MA.



Prof. Ilan Troen addresses the audience at *Remarkable Resilience: One Family’s Tragic Fate and a Way Forward*. Photo: A4BGU

IT

FEB 2024

BGU Italia is growing

Jeff Kaye, VP for Public Affairs and Resource Development, visited Milan in February 2024 to meet with an expanding network of BGU ambassadors. After Milan and Rome, BGU Italia now includes Venice, Trieste, Torino, and Reggio Calabria.



L-R: A4BGU CEO Doug Seserman, A4BGU Director of Development Judith Alterman, Aaron Hendelman, Susan and Ariel Szafir and Prof. Dan Blumberg at the Szafir home. Photo: A4BGU

US

FEB 2024

Prof. Dan Blumberg speaks on the West Coast

Prof. Dan Blumberg, VP for Regional and Industrial Development at BGU and Chairman of the Israel Space Agency, was hosted by Lisa Field at a dinner event in Beverly Hills, CA. Zin Cohort VI Fellow Susan Szafir and her husband Ariel later hosted an evening with Prof. Blumberg in their Mercer Island, WA home.

US

MAR 2024

Houston Kosher Extravaganza

The A4BGU Houston chapter's 2024 Kosher Extravaganza event honored Deborah Bergeron, who recently retired as Development Director after 23 years of service to A4BGU. Featured speakers included Prof. Ilan Troen and Jeff Kaye, Vice President for Public Affairs and Resource Development.



Houston Extravaganza honoree Deborah Bergeron receiving gift from BGU VP Jeff Kaye and A4BGU CEO Doug Seserman.
Photo: Hagit Bibi

A4BGU

BGU honors Chelsea Clinton at 53rd BOG

One of the highlights of last year's Board of Governors Meeting, in May 2023, was the ceremony bestowing honorary doctoral degrees upon a group of impressive accomplished individuals: Dr. Chelsea Clinton, Patrick Drahi, Prof. Menachem Elimelech, Esther Halpérin, Dr. Segenet Kelemu, and Justice Prof. Elyakim Rubinstein.





Halutz Program Engages with Negev at a Transformative Moment

Now in its third year, Ben-Gurion University's Halutz Initiative for Global Leadership forges an elite community dedicated to realizing the visionary spirit of Israel's founding father, David Ben-Gurion. Fifteen fellows from nine countries made up this year's cohort of future leaders.

Yet, unlike previous cohorts, this year's participants encountered BGU and Israel at an unprecedented, momentous, and challenging time. In addition to the war's obvious toll on the country, it has also had significant impact on the Jewish world, providing

a pretext for openly antisemitic discourse and attacks worldwide, which makes educating more ambassadors about Ben-Gurion's vision a priority.

Jessica Cogan, a Halutz fellow from Canada, explained: "It is the responsibility of Zionists in the Diaspora to be able to educate others about Israel and its many contributions. Any way that I can help to advocate for Israel and educate others about the tremendous research and advances coming from the country and BGU specifically, is an opportunity that I would love

to embrace. Israel needs strong, knowledgeable, and principled leaders and advocates in the world, especially at this time."

During their week-long seminar in Israel in April, the Halutz fellows met with Israeli policymakers, community leaders and other agents of change. They explored BGU's Marcus Family Campus, engaging with researchers and learning about the university's innovation ecosystem and its commitment to advancing the Negev through synergy, entrepreneurship, and collaboration. This was a



“Ben-Gurion University being a leader in technology and innovation can find ways through technological advancement to spread the light of what the Jewish state has to offer.”

special draw for South African Halutz fellow Daniel Yacobi: “BGU carries a legacy that drives vision and innovation. I would like to promote BGU in the SADC countries community.” His compatriot, Tanya Golan, adds, “Ben-Gurion University being a leader in technology and innovation can find ways through technological advancement to spread the light of what the Jewish state has to offer.”

Through their visit to the Jacob Blaustein Institutes for Desert Research and Ben-Gurion's gravesite at Sde Boker, the fellows gained a deeper understanding of the region's special significance to the country's future and potential contributions to solving global problems such as climate change. This resonated especially with Russian-Israeli Anna Bokshitskaya who highlighted

BGU's strategic role in the Negev, “Ben-Gurion University plays a systemically significant role for the entire region. It supports infrastructure and creates jobs and thus consolidates life in Israel's strategic location, the Negev.”

For more information, or to express interest in joining the Halutz Initiative for Global Leadership, please contact your local BGU association.



Cohort III of the Halutz Initiative with the President of the State of Israel, Isaac Herzog, in Jerusalem



UK Labour Friends of Israel visited BGU's Sde Boker campus in May and met with Prof. Simon Barak.

Seen on Campus

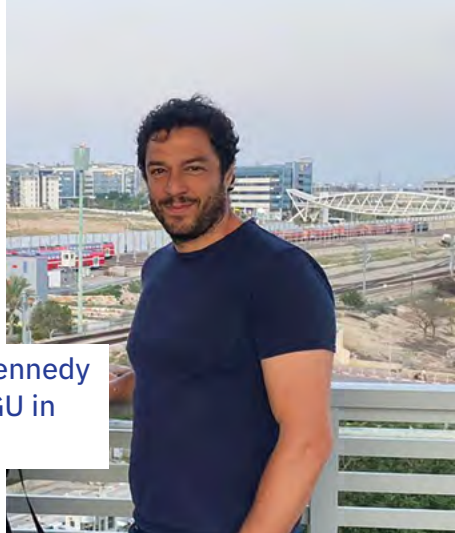
Notable Visitors to BGU this Year

Photos: BGU Donors and VIP Visitors Section staff; Dani Machlis



A large delegation from the Israel and Latin American Network (ILAN), which included former Mexican president Felipe Calderon, visited BGU in June to learn about entrepreneurship.

Benjamin Goldkorn, trustee of the Kennedy Leigh Charitable Trust, UK visited BGU in April 2023.



Uri Guefen, son of long-time supporters Ben z"l and Arline z"l, visited the Marcus Family Campus for the dedication of the Zin Fellows Garden in Memory of Ben Guefen.



Long-time supporter Sharon Shine and her son, Brian Krell, visited BGU in May 2023 in honor of Brian's birthday.

A group from the Harry & Jeanette Weinberg Foundation in the US, led by Program Director Rafi Rone (pictured with BGU's Dana Chokroon), came in May 2023 to learn about the BGU innovation ecosystem and cyber security.





Ilona Peltyn (R, pictured with Liv Sperber, BGU's Director of Global Development, English Speakers) visited BGU for the first time in April 2023.



Anna Maria Bernini, Italian Minister of Universities and Research, was welcomed to the Marcus Family Campus by Prof. Raz Jelinek, VP and Dean for R&D, in July 2023.

Seen on Campus

Notable Visitors to BGU this Year

Margaritis Schinas, Vice-President of the European Commission, led a delegation that visited BGU in June 2023.





Charles Merchin announced the Benjamin Merchin Award for Sustainability and Climate Change during a visit with his family in April 2023.

The Manitoba Metis Foundation, led by BGU supporter Larry Vickar, visited the Sde Boker Campus in May 2023 for the signing of an MOU to support international students at BGU.

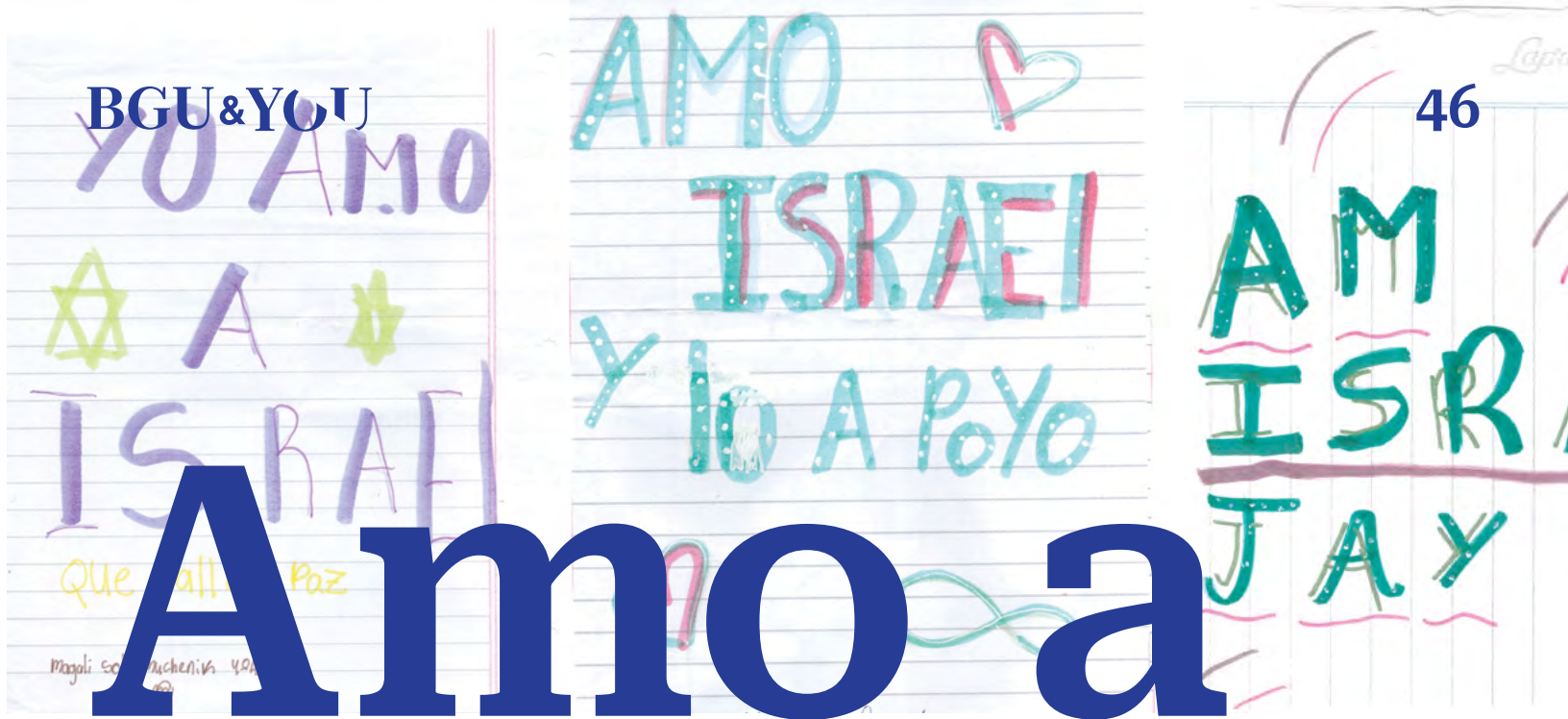


Andrea Jarach, President of BGU Italia (R), visited with his wife Pia (L) in July 2023.

Amo a

Love letters from Argentina

Israel



Children's messages of support from Comunidad Judía (the umbrella organization of Jewish communities in Argentina), forwarded to BGU by Nava Rubenzadeh, President of the Argentinian Association of Friends of BGU.

*We are really touched.
Thank you, Argentina!*



Shilu ilan
♥ ★ ♥ ★



ILENA.MUCHENIK-AZUL.ESCUELA PRIMARIA ORT ALMAGRO FC

SHANI LR Amamos a 47
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NOSOTROS
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QUE
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☆ QUIERO
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para
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Sel thysch. Noe

CON
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iiSRAEL VAMOS!
TENES NUESTRO APOYO

de: ARGENTINA PARA: ISRAEL

LOVE

DE: ARGENTINA PARA: ISRAEL

Seen on Campus

Solidarity

In the wake of the October 7 attack, friends and allies from around the globe came to the Negev to express their support and solidarity with the region's people, the BGU community, and the State of Israel. We are grateful for their heartwarming support.

Photos: Donors and VIP Visitors Section staff; Dani Machlis



An impressive delegation from the University of Pennsylvania visited in January to strengthen academic ties, show solidarity, and discuss potential collaborative initiatives.



A delegation from the Jewish Federation of Greater Houston, led by Robin T. Stein, visited BGU in February.



Michael Singer, grandson of BGU benefactor Harry Singer, stopped at BGU in November to show his support and solidarity.

Missions



Andrew Rehfeld, President of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, visited BGU in November in the first visit by a leader of an American academic institution since the start of the Israel-Hamas war.



A solidarity mission from Belgium and France, headed by BGU friend Claude Kandiyoti, visited the Marcus Family Campus in November.



A solidarity mission of A4BGU and BGU Canada professional staff and supporters visited in January.

Solidarity Missions

Seen on Campus



Long-time supporters Terri and Bruce Alpert visited BGU in January with a group of friends to show solidarity.



Myriam Fedida, CEO of FSJU Israël and a board member of FSJU (United Jewish Social Fund) France, led a delegation that visited in January.

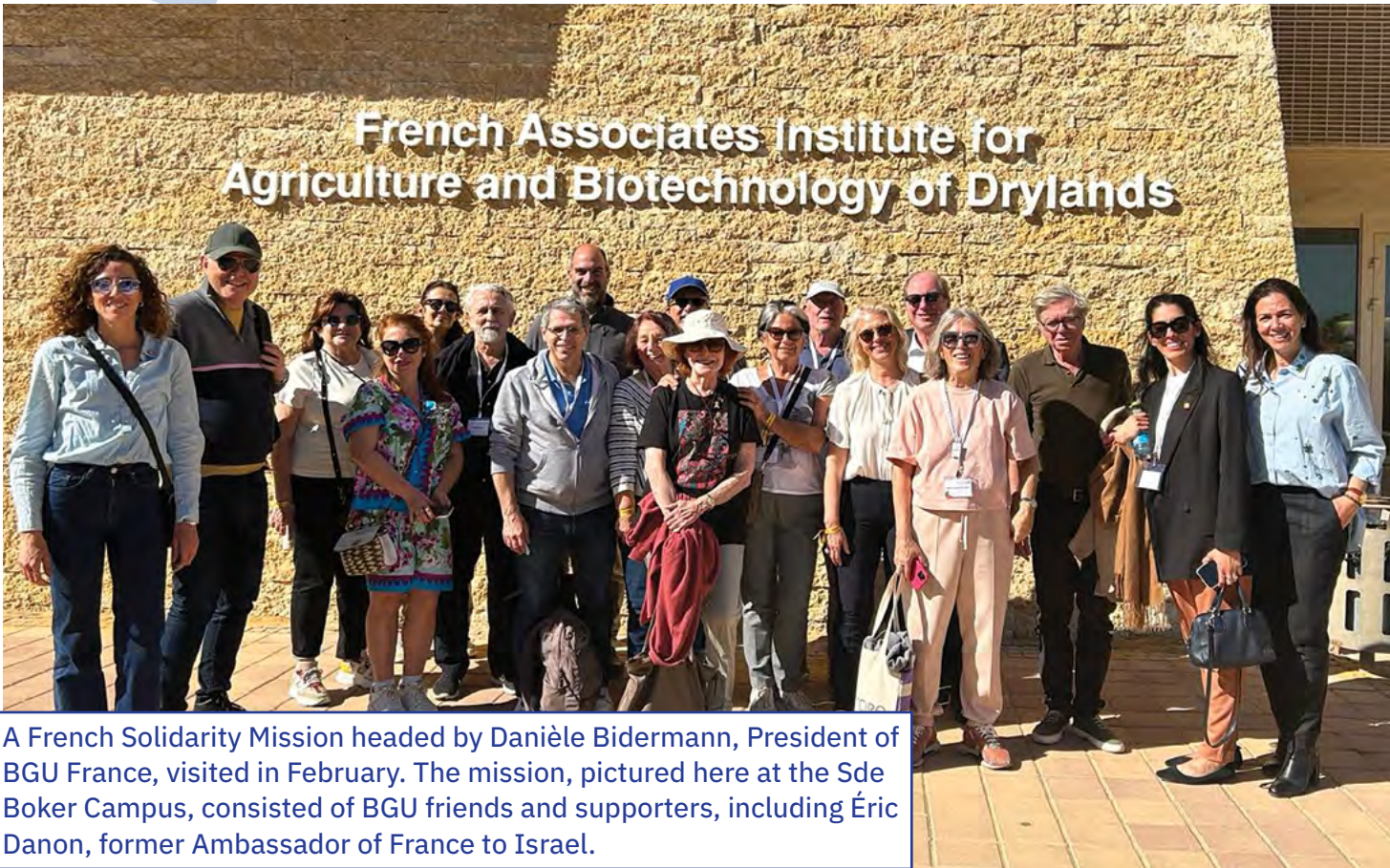
A mission from Arizona State University visited in January to express solidarity and support, and find opportunities for academic collaborations.



A solidarity mission of 20 UK businessmen from the South Hampstead Synagogue community, led by their rabbi, visited in December and heard about the war initiatives and war effort.



The Montreal Federation Solidarity Mission visited in November to see the impact of their philanthropic support for the Duet Center and the AI for Social Welfare Lab.



A French Solidarity Mission headed by Danièle Bidermann, President of BGU France, visited in February. The mission, pictured here at the Sde Boker Campus, consisted of BGU friends and supporters, including Éric Danon, former Ambassador of France to Israel.



A very large joint solidarity mission from Stanford, Harvard, Dartmouth, USC, MIT, and SISSA visited in March.

Solidarity Missions



A solidarity mission from Yale University visited the BGU campus in March.



Seventeen doctors and dentists from the University of Toronto visited Soroka University Medical Center and BGU in March. Here pictured at the Field Family Foundation Medical Simulation Center.

Fanny Cohen of Venezuela, and currently Panama, visited with her daughters-in-law to express solidarity and learn more about recent developments.

In Memoriam

We remember our friends
and supporters who have
passed away this year

Zoe Adams
Robert Badinter
Esther Coopersmith
James Crown
Capt. (ret.) Donald DeBode
Robert (Robby) Elman
Rochelle Etingin
Russell Frank
Prof. Richard D. Freedman
Stanley Ginsburg
Daniel Guggenheim
Prof. Daniel Kahneman
Harvey Meyerhoff
Prof. Philip Needleman
Chana Stern
Mark Zlotnik

May their
memories be
blessed

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A photograph of two women in a vineyard, wearing dark jackets and sunglasses, looking at the grapevines. The background shows a large, open-sided structure, possibly a greenhouse or covered walkway, under a blue sky with light clouds. The text 'Save the Date' is overlaid in large white font, with a circular logo containing a stylized leaf and vine inside the letter 'o'.

Save the Date

The 55th Board of
Governors Meeting
May 11-15, 2025