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NISHMA
What's up?

The Alumni Journal of The Hebrew University
Hadassah School of Dental Medicine Founded by
the Alpha Omega Fraternity



Dental students in the IDF's "Bina" Program

Dear Reader,

We open this edition with the news we have an ongoing partnership with the IDF (Israel Defense Forces).

This means the Army sends us students to study Dentistry, who will complete their studies and then go back to the IDF to serve as dentists for a certain number of years.

We also mark the presentation of a very special award to Adam Stabholz, our former Dean, by the Penn Dental School Alumni Association.

This year, a number of senior Faculty members have hung up their white coats. You can read about a special farewell party for one of them, Prof. Jonathan Mann.

We also feature an interesting piece by Dr. Peter Rosenfeld, a veteran teacher in our Oral Rehabilitation Department, who flew back to Moscow to visit the dental school he studied in 42 years ago. He met some old friends and shared stories about our school in Jerusalem.

You can read two pieces by foreign students currently studying in our International Graduate Biomedical Research Program.

And of course we offer you our regular columns, brightened with a little light in honor of Hanukah!

Enjoy!

Noah Stern, Editor

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The Dean's Column Prof. Aaron Palmon

Four years ago, I became Dean of the Dental Faculty in Jerusalem. It was the realization of a dream for me, to try and have an impact on the future development of our school.

But dreams are one thing. Reality is another.

On October 7, 2013, the reality – under the orders of the Labor Court and in cooperation with the Hadassah Medical Center Dentists' Committee – was to announce a cutback in the number of faculty, and to come to terms with a huge cut in the number of dental assistants.

On October 30, 2013, I had to submit a financial program to Dr. Kaplan, CEO of Hadassah. Without this, the sanctions against the Faculty would have been even worse. That same year, I was forced to cope with a students' instructor strike and with the Hadassah management stopping payments to our service suppliers, including the dental labs that have served us loyally for so many years.

Everything was about to fall apart and my dream had become a rather more complex affair.

But it was then I learned that economic balance was the key to the Faculty's development and that it was incumbent upon us all – and quickly – to make all the changes necessary to achieve this goal. At the same time, these changes would have to be made in a way that wouldn't affect the Faculty's academic progress, which made the task even more complicated.

Four years have passed. The Faculty's balance shows significant, positive changes and we are very close to operational economic balance in the clinical section. This change was mainly due to our devoted team of department heads and our excellent group of dedicated doctors and assistants who managed to cope with the many challenges and raise productivity despite the restrictions. These cuts weren't only in faculty and staff size, but also in direct and indirect employment conditions.

Parallel to the economic activities, I thought we should continue with our academic and infrastructural

development as if there was no crisis at all. Yes, it sounds completely illogical but without academic progress we were liable to fall; from being a leading academic institution to becoming mediocre with no hope for the future.

So in these last years we have invested widely in our teaching infrastructure, increasing the number of Phantom units to more than 80, the number of students' clinics' treatment units to 65, building a modern sterilization facility system, with two washing/ disinfection machines, a large autoclave, 1,200 new cassettes and a barcoding system. The rotatory equipment has also been renewed and instead of one set for each student in each treatment unit there are two personal sets (six times more than before). We have also introduced new digital units and replaced the entire dental unit computer system. Dental studies are not only infrastructure though, and we have invested and are still investing much time to modernizing the curriculum. And that is happening – I will tell you more in a future column.



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The specialist clinics found in the different departments also need expansion and modernization, with the guiding light being to coordinate the activities of each department in one place and then replace all the infrastructures with new ones. These clinics all have old treatment units and the time has certainly come to replace them, just as we have done with the student units in recent years. There has been expansion and centralization in some of the departments and we are about

to start work in others. All the old units will be replaced with new ones in the coming years.

The Dental Faculty in Jerusalem is very proud of its Institute for Dental Sciences, which coordinates the bulk of Israel's dental research and obtains a wealth of important research grants. Over the last four years, three new researchers have been recruited and new labs have been built for them. Here too, to continue to move forward we must continue to nurture young

talents and to refurbish labs so our researchers can work in up-to-date, state-of-the-art conditions.

This summer, two of our professors retired. Both of them contributed so much to our Faculty. Prof Jonathan Mann was Head of the Community Dentistry Department and Dean of the Faculty and Prof. Harold Segen-Cohen was Head of the Community Dentistry Department. We wish them many more years of good health and fruitful academic activity.



Adam with his wife and two of his children

University of Pennsylvania presents Award of Excellence to Prof. Adam Stabholz

This year, the Penn Alumni Association decided to award the Thomas Evans Prize to Prof. Adam Stabholz.

The award was presented in May at a ceremony at the University of Pennsylvania, in the presence of the President of the University, the Dean of the Faculty and many other honored guests.

This is the most prestigious award given to alumni who completed their DMD or specialization studies at the Dental Faculty at Penn.

The prize is given in recognition of the recipient's personal excellence and leadership in the dental field, both locally and globally, and the recipient must serve as an example to young people entering the profession.

Prof. Adam Stabholz completed his specialization (cum laude) at Penn in 1978 and returned to Israel to set up the Endodontics Department at the Dental Faculty in Jerusalem. Years later he also served for 14 years – over four different terms – as Dean of the Faculty and as President and Chairperson of other national and international professional organizations.

This prestigious prize, which to date has only been awarded to seven people (including Prof. D. Walter Cohen and Prof. Morton Amsterdam), is yet another addition to the other significant accolades Prof. Stabholz has received over the years, including the Achievement Award Medal, International Alpha Omega Fraternity's most respected prize.

Prof. Stabholz is also an Honorary Member of the Dental Federation and the Israeli Endodontics Association, as well as having Honorary Doctorates from three international dental schools.

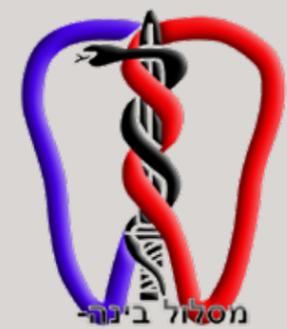
Today, he volunteers in training specialists in the Endodontics Department in Jerusalem and is also involved in research into laser technology applications in Dentistry.



Adam with Prof. D. Walter Cohen and Prof. Kim, Director of the Endodontics Department



Adam is presented with the Alumni Association Award



מסלול בינה - המסלול הצבאי לרפואת שיניים

Cooperation between the Faculty of Dentistry and the IDF

In the middle of November, the new 2018 academic year began at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. In all six years of the Dental Faculty, 413 students will be studying in the DMD track – residents, those in continuing education programs, dental assistant and dental hygiene students and many more. The corridors of the 5-story dental building are teeming with students old and new. And the lecture halls, clinics and labs are full at all hours of the day.

82 students were accepted into the freshman year at the Dental School, 13 of whom began their studies within the framework of the "Bina" program for the Atuda (lit. reserve) in Dentistry. In this program – which has already been running for six years in our school – students commit to serving for five years in the IDF after finishing their studies and receiving their degree.

They will serve as Dental Officers in various units as the army needs them. In October this year, the IDF hosted a special event in the presence of the Chief of the Medical Corps, Brigadier-General Tarif Bader, Chief of the Dental Corps, Lieutenant-Colonel Dr. Ronit Turgeman, and the Dean of the Dental Faculty, Prof. Aharon Palmon, in honor of the graduates of the "Bina" program's officers' course (from the second and third years), who received a special insignia for the occasion.

Our "Bina" students also have a special logo, designed by NADAV GREENBERG, a dental student in his fifth year of studies

Prof. Jonathan Mann Retires

Noah Stern

I only heard that Jonathan was retiring from a chance conversation in the corridors of the Dental School in Jerusalem. I carried on walking, thinking of the days when Jonathan had been a student of mine in the Rehab Clinic. So if he's retiring, how old does that make me?!

His farewell party would be at the Neve Ilan Hotel over breakfast. We received an invitation, with a special request to stay to the end of the event, because there would be a long list of speakers. My eyebrows rose automatically...

I thought it would be a small affair but when we arrived there were no parking places left! And when we walked into the hall we were amazed to see a huge crowd and a majestic spread. We did not go hungry!

All the speakers complimented Jonathan and wished him well. He certainly deserves it.

The first speaker was the Dean, Prof. Aharon Palmon, and then Prof. Segen-Cohen, Jonathan's department deputy and friend. I was particularly moved when Prof. Segen-Cohen gave Jonathan the traditional Priestly Blessing.

Former Hadassah Director-General, Prof. Shlomo Mor-Yosef, spoke with great appreciation for Jonathan and his work. He mentioned Jonathan's dedicated preparations for every meeting and his "lists in green ink".

CEO and Founder of Yad Sarah, Rabbi Uri Lopolianski, nostalgically recalled Jonathan's father, the unforgettable Prof. Kalman Mann, who was Director-General of Hadassah for 30 years, retiring to partner Lopolianski at Yad Sarah. He showered praises on Jonathan's work at Hadassah and for his volunteer work at Yad Sarah today, announcing that Jonathan was about to be appointed Yad Sarah's Medical Director.

Jonathan's wife then gave us some wonderful insight into her husband's escapades at home and at work, before leaving the stage for Jonathan himself, who in his own inimitable, very organized fashion, summarized his career and his hopes for the future.

It was a long morning but very enjoyable and tasty, and full of justified praise and affection. Let us all wish Jonathan much success and happiness as he continues on the next stage of his journey.



From Moscow to Jerusalem... And Back



Peter in Red Square

Dr. Peter Rosenfeld

In 1977, two years after completing my dental studies at the Moscow State University of Medicine and Dentistry – the best school in the Soviet Union at the time – I made Aliyah with my late father and other family members.

Thankfully, my professional absorption into the Israeli system was smooth and fast. At first I worked in Dr. Moshe Kaplan's clinic in Jerusalem, a job I got largely through my brother-in-law, Dr. Ruby Vag, a Hadassah alumnus who sadly passed away soon after.

I opened my own private practice in 1982. I got to know Prof. David Kochavi and even worked with him for a while. He encouraged me to enroll in the Implant Rehabilitation course he was coordinating at the Dental School in Jerusalem. That was in 1991. By the end of the course I had joined the training staff in the Oral Rehabilitation Department.

Now I was dividing my professional time with three days a week in my private practice and two days at the Dental School, where I was given a very special opportunity to develop my skills and experience.

For many years, I had thought of returning to my alma mater in Moscow. Unfortunately, I hadn't maintained contact with my former classmates but thanks to my friend, Prof. Adam Stabholz, I was able to renew my relationship with the school.

It began when I was asked to accompany two Russian delegations on a professional trip to Israel. On one of those trips I met a professor from my old school.

At some stage though I decided to fly to Moscow with my wife and return to my dental school. I

arranged the visit with the help of the professor I had hosted in Israel, and he had even gone to the school archives to discover what had happened to my classmates. It turned out that one of them, Sergei – who had been one of my closest friends in our student days (we even shared a room together) – was now Director of the Oral Rehabilitation Department at the school! I was very excited to meet him again!

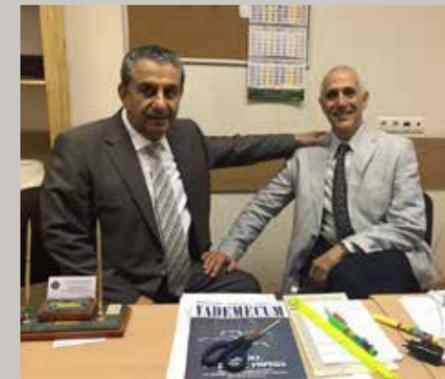
The day after we landed, I arrived at the school with my professor friend, a friendly Jew who devotes his time to studying Hebrew. Indeed, he insisted on speaking Hebrew to me throughout the trip!

This time I entered the school gates as an experienced doctor and as a representative of my institution – the Hadassah School of Dentistry in Jerusalem. The first person to welcome me was the President of the University, with whom I discussed dental studies in Israel. After that, he asked me to give an interview for the school journal.

Interview over, I was finally reunited with my old friend Sergei, whom I easily identified despite the 42-year gap. He took me around the clinics and the halls and we recalled fond memories of days gone by. Thanks to Sergei, I also met another friend from the past and we were all very moved and excited.

I'll admit the truth though. In the short time we had together, we mainly talked about ourselves and our lives over the past four decades. Sadly, we didn't manage to discuss professional matters very much. I didn't learn about their course curriculum and how it compares to ours in Israel.

Perhaps I'll do that on my next trip...



Peter with another classmate, Prof. Arutunov



Peter and two of his old classmates



Peter with his host, Prof. Likov

Obituaries



Prof. Badri Azaz (1931-2017)



- ▲ Badri as a child with his parents
- ◀ Badri with his wife and Prof. Shteyer
- ▶ Badri with his sister and his sons



Prof. Arie Shteyer

On the morning of Thursday, February 9th, my phone rang.

I answered to hear the sobbing voice of Tania, Prof. Badri Azaz's wife. I was aware of my friend Badri's situation so I understood he had just passed away. I cried together with Tania.

Prof. Badri Azaz was born in Baghdad in October, 1931. He made Aliyah in 1951, served in the IDF, and began his studies at the Hadassah Dental School in Jerusalem in 1953.

Upon graduating, he specialized in the Maxillofacial Surgery Department at our school and in 1960 was sent by Prof. Levin-Epstein to study at the Queen Victoria Hospital in East

Greenstead, England. He came back from there full of ideas for new surgical procedures.

Badri was very involved in the professional life at the Faculty and in the Israeli Dental Federation. He was President of Alpha Omega in Jerusalem, a consultant in Maxillofacial Surgery at the Clalit Health Agency, and served in many other positions as well.

He served as Chairperson or as a member of many committees, having risen up the academic ladder, from lecturer to tenured Professor in 1981. Upon Prof. Levin-Epstein's retirement, Prof. Azaz was appointed Director of the department, a role he filled until his own retirement in 1996. From 1983-1986 he even served as Dean of the Faculty.

I first met Badri when I was a student in my clinical years, and later during my specialization and as part of the faculty. Badri was like a brother to me. I remember that I was offered the chance to go to America for a year at the end of my first year of specialization. I was very unsure about it and didn't know what to do. Badri was at a conference in Tel Aviv at the time so I went there and asked his advice. His immediate reply was, "Arie, go!" and thankfully I took his advice.

Badri was well loved and respected among faculty and students and we all fondly remember his stories and jokes.

A sad loss for us all.

May his memory be a blessing.

Prof. Nardi Caspi

Beloved Tania, dear family, friends and colleagues, I stand here before you as a student who has lost his teacher.

For me – as for many of my teachers, colleagues and students – Prof. Azaz was the pillar of fire marching in front of the camp.

With his professionalism, insight and above all his special personality, Prof. Azaz transformed our profession into art.

His unfailing talent and unlimited devotion set the gold standard to which we all aspired and still do. Personally, I always regarded Badri as the personification of all the good a socialist has to offer.

From his perspective, every person was equal. And alongside honorable, high-class patients, we were astounded to see how Badri gave each and every patient the same regal attention.

I once visited him at home and noticed that his dog – who he cared for so lovingly – had only one eye. I asked jokingly why someone of his stature couldn't have bought a dog with two eyes, to which he replied, smiling, "That's who we are. Socialists. We like street dogs."

Over the years, Prof. Azaz's students took over key positions in the department he helped to build and later direct, and in the Faculty he taught in and where he served as Dean.

Personally, I always made sure there was a bit of Badri in everything I did. I'm sure we will continue to pass on Prof. Azaz's legacy from generation to generation forever, and carry forward his contribution of excellence, dedication and love of humanity.

Badri, on behalf of the Maxillofacial Surgery Department at Hadassah, I salute you.

Prof. Dorit Nitzan

It is a delightful gift to be able to cling on to the memories of a wonderful, loved and loving teacher, who will continue to escort us throughout our lives.

Prof. Azaz gave us this gift in his own special way, mainly through personal example. A jewel of a man – wise, original, truly generous and never short for words. It was fascinating to listen to him

reminiscing about his home and family in Iraq – his parents, siblings, his Aliyah, friends, politics and really anything he found of interest.

Briefly, I'll focus on what you could learn, absorb and receive from him just by observing. Just by looking at him you could learn how he listened to the patient's complaints, checked findings about the problem and beyond, gave a detailed diagnosis knowing when to separate the wheat from the chaff, and documented everything in his precise, minute handwriting that did not disclose his immigrant origins in the slightest.

And when it was time to actually treat the patient, it was here Prof. Azaz's uniqueness really came to the fore. There was no more powerful lesson than listening to him when he was not going by the book. With artistry on the one hand, and original, courageous and responsible profound thinking on the other, he aspired to solve every challenge.

With rare intuition he would laud unusual surgical treatments as needed, from the most simple and beneficial to the most complex and enthralling. In the operating field, focused on the goal, Prof. Azaz worked cleanly, clearly and with great attention to detail.

So with all these traits, he became a pioneer in extensive surgery in the department, eventually spearheading it to become the best department in the country.

I particularly remember how he behaved at the end of the heroic part of the surgery. Through his example, he taught us to pay attention to every suture and dressing and to leave everything clean and tidy.

The day after surgery, the patient came down to the clinic all confused and apprehensive, and Prof. Azaz would lay him or her down gently, calm them down, explain and not even leave the cleaning of the affected area to a nurse or intern. He himself, with his characteristic movements, would clean every inch with wondrous thoroughness, even washing the patient's mouth with "mint water" to make the experience more pleasant.

He taught us that the treatment 'behind the scenes' on the day after surgery is an integral part of the surgery itself. Only then does the patient feel safe, relaxed and knows he or she is in the best possible hands.

Badri, we love you and miss you.



Dr. Shmuelik Kariv

Dr. Shmuelik Kariv passed away in the middle of November, after suffering from a debilitating disease for about a year. He was a graduate of the Dental Faculty in 1962 (Year 4).

Even while he was still in high school he would help Dr. Bloch, the renowned Jerusalem orthodontist, pour plaster models and put them into articulators.

In Shmuelik's interview for the Dental School, with the legendary doctors Ino Sciaky and Ya'akov Levin-Epstein, the conversation tuned to painting and art. Dr. Levin-Epstein gave Shmuelik a pencil and paper and asked him to draw Dr. Sciaky, who was sitting opposite him.

After he had finished the drawing, they asked him why he had chosen Dentistry rather than Bezalel (the famous Jerusalem art school). He gave an answer fitting for an interview committee and was accepted.

Parallel to his dental studies, he

continued devoting time to art, and indeed completed a drawing course at Bezalel and a degree in the History of Art from the Hebrew University.

Dr. Kariv worked for about 10 years in the Tel Aviv Municipality's Dental Service and continued to develop his art, displaying his works in both group and solo exhibitions.

His life was made up of three great loves: Dentistry, Art, and his family – his wife, children and grandchildren. "I'm only missing one more hour a day and one more day a week," he would say.



Prof. Yael Hour-Haddad

Prof. Yael Hour-Haddad, Head of the Oral Rehabilitation Department at the Dental Faculty in Jerusalem, completed her studies in Jerusalem in 1994. Over the years 1995-2002, she participated in and completed a special program combining Oral Rehabilitation specialization with her doctoral thesis on Gum Disease Pathogenesis.

Since then she has had full tenure in the Oral Rehabilitation Department and in 2011 she was appointed Chairperson of the D. Walter Cohen Middle East Center for Dental Education. In 2014-2015 she served as President of the Israeli Association for Dental Research.

Prof. Hour-Haddad has published over 50 research papers and presented dozens of studies and lectures in Israel and overseas. Some of these studies have earned her prestigious awards. Her work deals with topics connected to the inflammation mechanism in gum disease and understanding the genetic background to the disease.



Class of '72 Marks 45 Years since Graduation

Prof. Eliezer Kaufman

In October this year – and in keeping with our tradition of a class reunion once every five years – the Class of '72 (year 14) of the Dental School marked 45 years since our graduation. In the first year we were only 19 students and by the end of the course 24. Eleven of us attended this year's event in Jerusalem, some accompanied by their partners.

After the moving reunion and celebratory meal, we recalled our student memories and the memories of those friends no longer with us (Dr. Yitzchak Kunitz,

Dr. Kate Kopolowitz and Dr. Chaim Nayot.) As a finale, we watched a presentation – prepared by Prof. Noah Stern – about the veteran teachers we were fortunate to learn from. We also invited Prof. Stern himself because he too is one of the Faculty's veteran teachers. We extend our special thanks to Noah for the tremendous added value he brought to this meeting.

After the event, friends renewed old ties and expressed excitement for the next class reunion, the jubilee, in five years' time.



An Interview with Stu Fischman

in appreciation of his enduring contribution to the Dental Faculty

How did you come to be involved with our Dental School in Jerusalem?

Well, my wife Jane and I came on our first trip to Israel in 1977. Four years later, I spent my first sabbatical at the school, followed by two more in 1989 and 1996. And of course we made numerous personal trips over the years as well, including during the more dangerous times too.

Let's rewind a little. Give me the rundown on your career please.

Ok. I went to Cornell and then the Harvard University School of Dental Medicine, graduating "cum laude" in 1960. I then began practicing General Dentistry and started specialty training in Oral Pathology in Buffalo, where I later became a full-time faculty member. I eventually became Board certified in Oral Pathology and Oral Medicine. By 1972 I was a tenured full Professor and in 1974 I became Director of Dentistry at the Erie County Medical Center. I retired from "active" teaching – and from the Medical Center – in 1998, and became Professor Emeritus of Oral Diagnostic Sciences.

Wow! 40 years in 4 sentences! And what would you say are your primary scientific achievements?

Over 200 publications in professional journals and over 250 presentations in the US and elsewhere. I've been awarded the Distinguished Scientist Award from Harvard, the New York State AIDS Institute Clinical Excellence Award, the Alumni Honor Award from the School of Dental Medicine, State University, NY, Distinguished Scientist Award from the International Association for Dental Research and of course I'm an Honorary Member of the Israeli Society of Oral Medicine.

You must have had quite a varied and interesting career. What would you say were the highlights?

Way too many to mention! Soon after my graduation, The US Public Health service recruited me to participate in a nutritional survey and I ended up spending four months in Paraguay with a bi-national team examining people for various oral diseases.

Then there was the large clinical trial I helped design and conduct – from 2003-2011 – which evaluated the anti-cariogenic effect of sugar-free gum containing CPP-ACP on dental caries. That was based in Melbourne so I had the chance to spend some wonderful times in Australia.

I also enjoyed my consultancy positions, including the Pan American Health Organization, the American Dental Association, the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, the Special Emphasis Panel on AIDS and the AIDS Clinical Trial Group Network. I've consulted for some leading commercial firms in the dental industry and I was a founding member of the Task Force on Advanced Dental Education.

So after a successful and a rewarding career, you decided to move to Israel. How did that happen?

We've always loved the country and it got to a stage where our friends were urging us to stop paying rent every time we went. So we finally purchased our apartment in Mevaseret in 2006, originally with the intent of dividing our time between Buffalo and Jerusalem. That didn't last long and we officially made Aliyah in 2008.

We were able to enjoy life to the full until 2012, when – as my father used to say, "Man plans and God laughs" – Jane fell and sustained a subdural hematoma. Now she's at home with a 24/7 carer and we are 'full time' in our ancestral homeland!

And what's your connection to the Dental School in Jerusalem now?

Well, I've been teaching for a few years in the Oral Pathology Course for third year students. It's a pleasure to teach the Israeli students – they're very mature and motivated. They also understand my English and are courteous enough to laugh at my jokes!

As well as 'formal' teaching, I spend time discussing current and planned research, look over manuscripts and poster presentations and collaborate wherever I can help. It's a perfect way to keep active.

What's the Stuart Fischman Student Research Award?

A few of my friends decided to raise money for my 80th birthday and dedicate the sum to outstanding students in the graduate research program.

Any final thoughts?

Yes. I greatly appreciate that many of our closest friends and families here in Israel – and even abroad – are from the Hadassah faculty. They have been with us in the good times and the bad, and I want to thank them all for their friendship and support. We have been made to feel very much at home in our homeland! Toda Rabba!



"Remember What Amalek did to You"



On Monday, April 25th, 2017, when the State of Israel was commemorating the memories of those who perished in the Holocaust, Prof. Kobi Stern began a normal work day at the Dental School at the University of Augusta, Georgia, where he directs a Periodontics Specialization program.

Before class, he explained to his students that he wanted to devote a few minutes to talk about Holocaust Memorial Day in Israel, and remember the victims of the Nazis in WWII Europe.

He told them how the Germans had even taken the Jews' names away and labeled them with numbers. In the context of anonymous victims, he also mentioned the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in the Military Cemetery at Arlington, Washington, where there is a 24/7 guard of honor and all dignitaries are brought there to pay their respects to an anonymous soldier.

Prof. Stern also told his students about his visit to Auschwitz with a class of Israeli students. These trips have become the norm in the Israeli high school curriculum. He also told them his own father's story, as a 9-year-old child fleeing with his parents into the Slovakian hills to hide from the Nazis.

When he finished speaking about the Holocaust and was about to start his class, the students stopped him and asked to hear more about this dark time for the Jews in Europe.



Shira Nouriel

"You are part of something bigger"

Shira Nouriel

"I was so excited to learn I had been accepted to the International Graduate Biomedical Research Program at the Dental Faculty at Hebrew University!"

Shira's mentor, Dr. Michael Klutstein, is the principal scientist studying heterochromatin and ageing in the Dental School's laboratory. She herself is studying how DNA compaction plays a key role in cell cycle entry after a period of dormancy.

Shira is very enthusiastic about the program: "One of the benefits of this program is that you feel

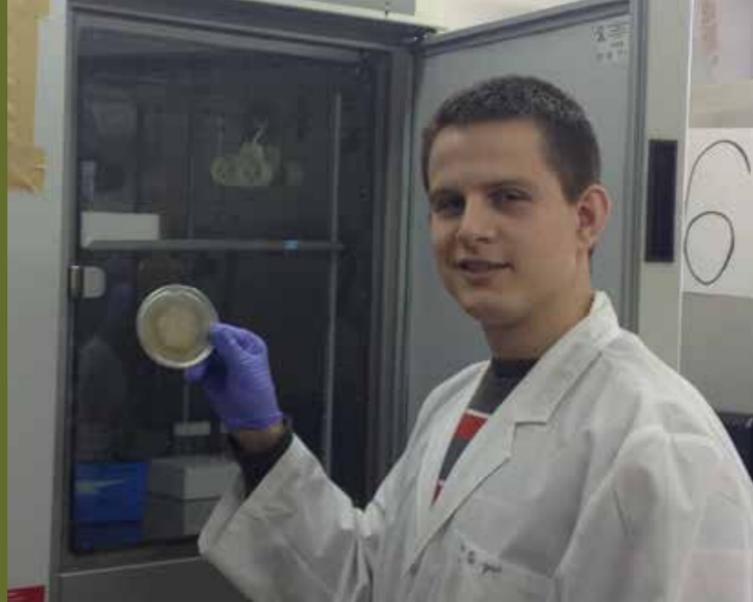
you're part of something bigger. It's very much integrated into the general graduate program. All of the biomed courses are offered in English, so that all graduates – in both the domestic and international programs – can take the classes together. That creates an energy and a synergy between us all – we can conduct research together, study and review material to really leverage our time here."

The international program also offers a social and leisure package, including field trips and fun activities such as the archeological dig they went on last year at Beit Guvrin. Shira

and her friend were actually very pregnant at the time but they still managed to enjoy the spelunking!

Nevertheless, it is the potential meaning and purpose of her research that drives Shira: "Our new research facility houses cutting-edge live cell imaging equipment. This gives us the opportunity to conduct innovative experiments and hopefully produce results that will help solve biomedical problems in the future."

Shira is married to Bezalel, a biomedical engineer, and they have a baby daughter, Moriya Elana.



Dr. Bernhard Funk- Student in the International Graduate Bio-Medical Research Program

Dr. Bernhard Funk, a dentist from Paraguay, completed his studies at the Autonomous University. He is married to Marcella, who is here with him in Jerusalem.

Bernhard is a graduate student in the International Bio-Medical Program. He is conducting research – developing chemical preparations for delayed release to prevent root canal infections – in the lab run by Prof. Doron Steinberg and Dr. Sharonit Helft.

He says that one of the reasons he chose to come to Israel was his interest in the Holy Land. He saw the mythological figure of Albert Einstein on the Hebrew University website and noted the high level of study and research here.

“My choice to apply for the International Program at the Hebrew University is now giving me first-rate research experience and opening the gates to more advanced studies, because a degree from the Hebrew University is very well respected around the world.”

He adds: “The scientific knowledge and equipment they have here are superb and very difficult to find in

Paraguay. Therefore the more I can learn about different research methods, the more I will be able to contribute in my own country.”

“... From my very first day in the lab I met some very friendly people who are always ready to help each other. We even went downtown for a beer together. It’s a very warm atmosphere in the department and it really makes my life easier that I have accessibility to such advanced technology. I like it that students from all over the world have come together here to work in harmony. The academic standard is very high and the teachers generate a very positive learning environment. They also welcomed me warmly in Orthodontics, but I do not have a work permit so I prefer to concentrate on research, which I’ve discovered is a lot of fun!”

“... Jerusalem is such a special city. When we drove here from the airport first thing in the morning, seeing the holy city and the surrounding hills enveloped in fog, it was an almost mystical feeling. My wife and I were particularly impressed when we saw so many people from so many different cultures and religions all dressed in their traditional garb. The Old City, with its holy places sacred to Judaism, Christianity and Islam, is a really unique experience. Even though it is not the most modern of cities and the residents complain about the transport, I love it!”

“... Israel is full of historical and cultural treasures – we’ve only seen a small part of what there is here but I really appreciate how beautiful this place is!”

“...I am hopeful of completing my studies here and going back to Paraguay with a wealth of useful scientific experience that will help me become a faculty member.”

Words of the Wise

Rabbi Mordechai Dimentman

Rabbi Mordechai Dimentman, MA, is Director of the Institute for Teacher Training at Yeshivat Kerem B'Yavneh and trains rabbis and teachers at the Mevasseret Zion Seminary for Teaching and Education.

“My Candle, My Candle, My Very Thin Candle” (children’s Hanukah song)

Rabbi Avraham Isaac HaKohen Kook (the first Chief Rabbi of Israel, 1921), taught us the following:

“Every person should know and understand that deep inside them is a burning candle, and no person’s candle is like any other’s. And there is no person who does not have a candle. And every person should know and understand that they have to work hard to reveal that light in public, and to stoke it into a huge torch to illuminate the entire world!”

In a slightly different style and with a different perspective, Benjamin Zev Herzl wrote in Die Welt in 1897: “At first, there is one light, and then another and another, and others, until the darkness will completely disappear. The light will first burst forth from the young people, and then others will join them – those who love justice and truth, freedom, progress, humanity and beauty. And with all the candles alight, they will be amazed and overjoyed at the work achieved. There is no more fulfilling activity than the role of the Shamash (auxiliary candle) who serves the other lights.”

And it is quite possible these words inspired Hebrew poetess Sara Levy Tannai to write this Hanukah song:

“We have come to dispel the darkness,

In our hands are light and fire.

Each one of us is a small light, and together we are a strong fire.

Go away darkness, move on black!

Go away, because of the light!”

Between You and Me...

Dear Alpha Omega USA member

Did you know the English edition of our Faculty magazine was created just for you?

The Hebrew version is called “Ma Nishma?” (How are you doing? Or What’s Up?), and appears quarterly. We send it by email to our alumni all over the world to keep them informed and updated about what’s happening in Jerusalem, and the people – teachers, students, researchers, hygienists, nurses, administrative staff et al – who are making it happen.

Since the Faculty also bears the name of the Alpha Omega Fraternity, and since American AO members were among the pioneers in setting up the first dental school in Jerusalem all those years ago, we thought it only right to share with you (at least once a year at the annual AO convention) the annual highlights of our school – your school – in Jerusalem.

Wishing you all a happy holiday season!

