

# MEET ISRAELI ACADEMIA

## SELECTED HIGHLIGHTS OF COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS WITH PALESTINIANS AND OTHERS

**Hebrew University's Arab Youth Representation Clinic (Faculty of Law) Project** is based on community lawyering in the Arab neighborhoods of eastern Jerusalem at Issawiya. It serves as a link between disadvantaged sectors in East Jerusalem and the state's courts and legal system.

Diagnostic tests for learning disabilities in Israeli Arab schoolchildren have always been translated from Hebrew, producing inaccurate results because of cultural differences. But now a \$1.5 million US government grant has financed a project that has produced the test in three versions: for Jewish Israelis, Arabic-speaking Israelis and Palestinians. The cooperative project is being conducted by **the University of Haifa and Al-Quds University**.

**Joint Israeli-Jordanian-Palestinian-American Project May Improve Motor Skills of Children with Cerebral Palsy.** Headed by Prof. Kaplanski of Ben-Gurion University, the research team will carry out the work simultaneously at three children's rehabilitation centers -- the Al-Hussein Society Rehabilitation Center, Amman, Jordan; the Basma Rehabilitation Center in Jerusalem; and the Child Development and Rehabilitation Center at Assaf Harofeh Medical Centre in Israel.

**"Crossing Borders"** is a joint program of **Tel Aviv University's** Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Studies and the **Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research** in Ramallah. The program, which receives assistance from the Ford Foundation, promotes understanding of the other side of the conflict among Israeli and Palestinian professionals. The center also runs a Palestinian studies program and maintains a database of Israeli-Palestinian cooperation.

**The Abraham Fund Initiatives** works to advance coexistence, equality and cooperation among Israel's Jewish and Arab citizens by creating and operating large-scale initiatives, cultivating strategic grassroots projects and conducting public education and advocacy that promote its vision of shared citizenship and opportunities for all Israel's citizens."

The **Center for Multiculturalism and Educational Research** at the University of Haifa examines theoretical and practical models of multiculturalism from local, regional and international perspectives. Professor Majid Al Haj, the founding director of the Center, was appointed Dean of Research in 2005 and recently became the University's Vice President for Research.

In 1997, **The Hand in Hand Centre for Jewish-Arab education** in Israel was founded to build peace between Jews and Arabs in Israel through development of bilingual and multicultural schools. Elementary schools were founded in Jerusalem, the Galilee and Wadi Ara. Each school is co-directed by Arab and Jewish co-Principals; each classroom is co-taught by Arab and Jewish teachers. Students at each level are balanced between Jewish and Arab children. All classes are taught in both Hebrew and Arabic.

The **Hebrew University's D. Walter Cohen Middle East Center for Dental Education** includes training courses for dentists from the PA and Middle East countries, local seminars in oral health, joint scientific research projects, on-going dialogue and lectures. The first international symposium was jointly organized by the dental schools of the Hebrew University and Al-Quds University.

**The Jewish Arab Center (JAC)**, established in 1972, is an interdisciplinary research institute within the **University of Haifa**, internationally renowned for its work in promoting Jewish-Arab cooperation. JAC works towards establishing cooperation between Jews and Arabs as equal partners in all their activities concerning research, student activities and social responsibility.

The **Hebrew University's Braun School of Public Health and Community Medicine** has 35 Arab graduates from the Palestinian Authority (Gaza, West Bank), East Jerusalem and Israel, 2 from Jordan, 7 from Turkey, 1 from Iran and some 15 from Central Asian Moslem countries. Some of HU graduates were among the founders of the School of Public Health at Al Quds University, and continue to teach there.

**"Bridges"** is an **Israeli-Palestinian public health magazine** that is produced jointly by Israeli and Palestinian academics and health professionals under the sponsorship of the World Health Organization.

**Tel Aviv University's Minerva Dead Sea Research Center**, a framework dedicated to the research and preservation of the area along the Dead Sea Fault, conducts collaborative projects with Palestinian and Jordanian institutions and scientists.

On February, 2007, **First Jordanian Masters Student Completes Masters Degree at Ben-Gurion University** of the Negev in the Albert Katz International School for Desert Studies (AKIS) at the Jacob Blaustein Institutes for Desert Research at the University's Sede Boqer campus. She is the first of a group of seven Jordanian students studying at the AKIS to complete their degree requirements.

**The UNESCO - La Sapienza University Collaboration Joint Palestinian-Israeli MA project** brings together 20 Israeli and 20 Palestinian students to study in areas that will prepare them for future work in public policy development and implementation with an emphasis on bilateral cooperation.

**The Cooperative Project on Leishmaniasis in Israel and the West Bank** is a multi-disciplinary, long-term, comprehensive collaborative study of leishmaniasis linking Hebrew University and Al-Quds Researchers with colleagues from Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia. Among the projects being jointly conducted by Israeli and Palestinian scientists is the establishment of a leishmaniasis databank for the West bank. The overall project has to date resulted in fifty four peer-reviewed publications, of which twenty-one were jointly authored.

**Bar-Ilan University's Multicultural Dialogue Center** holds a program of coexistence and understanding between Arab and Jewish students. The program offers a unique framework in terms of identity and world view to directly, seriously and intensively confront basic issues involving society, self-identity, religion and state. As in the previous program, this track also seeks to bridge gaps via dialogue, encouraging leadership and social responsibility, and most of all, by fostering tolerance and understanding of each group's pains, needs and outlooks.

At the Stephen and Nancy Grand Water Research Institute at the **Technion-Israel Institute of Technology**, Israeli's are working with Palestinian and Jordanian experts on researching one of the Middle East's most precious natural resources: water. Since the Water Research Institute was established in 1993, Technion researchers have been meeting in Haifa, Israel; Amman, Jordan, and locations in the Palestinian territories - sometimes visiting each other's homes - where they outline goals and divide work according to each group's expertise. Their map is defined by water, not by political boundaries.

**The Bridge – Jewish and Arab Women for Peace in the Middle East** was founded in 1975. It is a women's organization whose members originate from Israel's various ethnic and religious communities, and who work together for the promotion of the status of women, and the attainment of peace in the Middle East.

**Tel Aviv University's S. Daniel Abraham Center for International and Regional Studies** is cosponsoring a series of activities with both Israeli and Palestinian psychologists, and with Israeli and Palestinian archaeologists.

Arab and Jewish residents of the Negev founded **the Negev Coexistence Forum** in 1997. "Its aim is to provide a framework for Jewish-Arab collaborative efforts, in the struggle for civic equality and the advancement of mutual tolerance and coexistence." The forum is made up of a core of 30 volunteers, Jewish and Arab, with an additional two hundred people regularly joining activities.

**Bar Ilan University's Community Interpreting (Department of Translation Studies) Project** includes 18 Arabic-speaking students (mostly Israeli Arabs) who provide much-needed assistance to Palestinians seeking medical care at Israel's leading hospitals (Sourasky and Shneider Medical Centers as well as several well-baby clinics) and at mixed (Arab-Jewish) day-care centers for children with special needs.

**The Weizmann Institute** currently shares two grants with a partner from the Palestinian Authority - one of which is a direct collaboration, sponsored by the Israeli-Palestinian Science Organization, and the other being an EU FP6 grant with over 50 partners, one of which is at WIS and another one of which is from the Palestinian Authority. In the past, The Weizmann Institute had 3 other grants with direct collaboration with partners in the Palestinian Authority - ending 1998, 1999, and 2003.

If you are in favour of deepening Israeli-Palestinian academic co-operation  
**Vote Against the Academic Boycott!**