

YOUR LINK TO THE MOST INNOVATIVE INITIATIVES AT BEN-GURION UNIVERSITY

# THE NEGEV CONNECTION



INAUGURAL ISSUE • DECEMBER 2019



AMERICAN ASSOCIATES  
Ben-Gurion University  
*of the Negev*

# FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES



The Faculty of Health Sciences (FOHS) at BGU, led by Prof. Amos Katz (left) represents one of BGU's greatest successes as well as ongoing focus areas. The Faculty has significantly contributed to the Negev region by spearheading innovative research, raising the standards of community health clinics, designing new disease preventive measures, and improving the accessibility of medical services for all residents.

With more than 3,000 students enrolled in its two distinguished medical schools, as well as a number of research departments, programs and clinical divisions, the Faculty aims to educate medical professionals who consider patients holistically, within their familial, social and cultural contexts.

## RESEARCH HUBS

The FOHS recently established cross-disciplinary teams focused on significant medical challenges. The "Research Hubs" were designed to provide a platform for synergy and collaboration between researchers and clinicians.



A total of nine hubs was selected to receive initial funding and infrastructure support. The hubs will serve as centers of research excellence, where leadership and cutting-edge work will thrive.



## A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

As Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (BGU) approaches its 50th anniversary, I am amazed and humbled by what we've been able to accomplish in such a short period of time, in large part thanks to you and all supporters of American Associates, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (AABGU).

The University, which bears the namesake of Israel's founding father, David Ben-Gurion, has become the primary catalyst for developing Israel's southern region while improving the lives of its diverse resident population. In just 50 years, it has also become a world-renowned institution of research and innovation in critical areas like cybersecurity, environmental sustainability and breakthrough medical technologies.

We are proud to serve as partners in raising awareness and critical resources for the University throughout the United States, and are extremely grateful to you for joining us in ensuring the continued success of BGU.

That's why we're pleased to launch our new "Negev Connection" newsletter with the goal to showcase the University's most pressing priorities and needs. This inaugural issue focuses on the groundbreaking work taking place in the Faculty of Health Sciences.

As we come to the end of the calendar year, please make a tax-deductible donation to AABGU's Ben-Gurion Annual Fund, enabling us to provide funds where they're needed most.

On behalf of all of us at AABGU and BGU, I wish you a very happy holiday season and thank you for your partnership and support.

Cover photo: Dr. Oren Shriki and Dr. Lior Shmuelof, co-director of the Active Aging Hub, are members of the Inter-Faculty Brain Sciences School.

# RESEARCH HUBS SPOTLIGHT

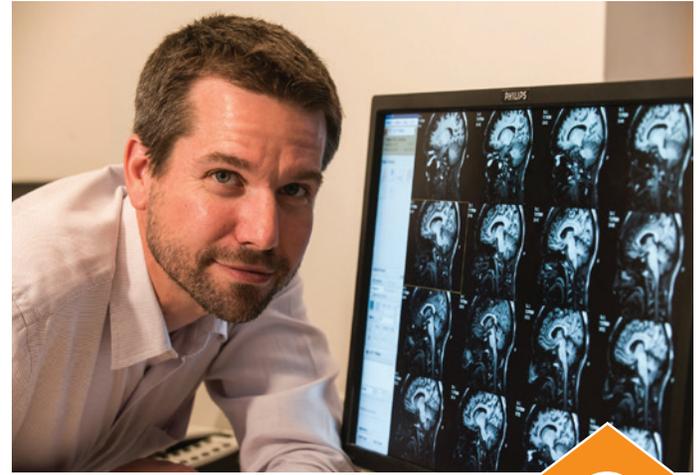


**PROF. ELI LEWIS**  
**WOUND HEALING HUB**



Prof. Lewis, the Ilse Katz Career Development Chair in Health Sciences Research, chairs the Department of Clinical Biochemistry and Pharmacology. His research focuses on improving the transplantation therapy of insulin producing cells in diabetic patients. He is breaking new ground by focusing on unwanted inflammatory and immune responses, particularly as they relate to a molecule known as antitrypsin (alpha-1), which is naturally produced by the body during illness. This research has applications for treatment of a broad spectrum of diseases including multiple sclerosis, leukemia and stroke.

As a result of his work on inflammation in the body, clinicians came to him for help and he established the Wound Healing Hub. The hub is comprised of more than 60 doctors, paramedics, nurses, and surgeons, as well as chemists, engineers and computer scientists. They address hard to heal wounds such as those suffered by soldiers, as well as infected wounds, chronic wounds, burns, scars, lesions, and pulmonary fibrosis.



**PROF. ILAN DINSTEIN**  
**AUTISM RESEARCH HUB**



Prof. Dinstein is the founder and director of Israel's National Autism Research Center, which collects vital information from children with autism and their families to improve autism diagnosis and treatment. He uses neuro-imaging techniques to study brain structure and function in autism. Most recently, he developed a technique that involves tracking the eye movements of children as they watch movies. This diagnostic could be applicable from about 18 months of age, leading to an earlier diagnosis and treatment plan. Recognizing that autism is not homogeneous, the goal of this research is to determine individualized treatment plans.

Prof. Dinstein and other researchers in the Autism Research Hub are working to further advance autism research by connecting the factors that contribute to the development of the disorder, from risk factors to biological mechanisms to the observable characteristic manifestations of autism.

**LIVE FROM ISRAEL**  
**BEN-GURION BRIEFINGS**

Join us on Thursday, December 12 at 12:00 p.m. EST for **Live From Israel, Ben-Gurion Briefings: Treating and Curing Type 1 Diabetes** with Prof. Eli Lewis.  
Webinar Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/357301990>

## END OF YEAR DONATION

To support this and other important work at Ben-Gurion University, please make a tax-deductible gift to the Ben-Gurion Annual Fund in the attached envelope or donate online at

[www.aabgu.org/donate-now](http://www.aabgu.org/donate-now)



1001 Avenue of the Americas, 19th Floor  
New York, NY 10018

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

*Please remember AABGU in your will.*



Ben-Gurion University  
of the Negev

May 12 to May 14, 2020  
OXFORD, ENGLAND

May 17 to 21, 2020  
BEER-SHEVA, ISRAEL

[www.aabgu.org/BGU-50](http://www.aabgu.org/BGU-50)

