



ISRAEL MATTERS!

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Technion-Israel and Cornell Win Global Competition: To Create Super Science School in NYC

Netanyahu: "Women sit in cockpits, they can sit anywhere"

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reiterated his opposition to discrimination against Israeli women, citing the five female soldiers graduating from the Israel Air Force pilot's course as an example of women's equality. Speaking at the IAF pilot's course graduation ceremony at the Hatzerim Air Force Base in the Negev, Netanyahu said that "in the State of Israel, in which women sit in the cockpit, women can sit in any place."

The prime minister's comments came amid controversy surrounding the exclusion of women in the public sphere in the haredi (ultra-Orthodox) community. In the most recent incident, a haredi resident of Jerusalem was indicted for sexual harassment after allegedly shouting a sexual slur at a female IDF soldier who refused to heed his request that she move to the back of a bus.

Defense Minister Ehud Barak also addressed the pilot's course graduates, taking pride in the fact that five of the graduates were women. "You strengthen and empower the whole society, well done," Barak said to the course's female graduates. "Women are part of our society, more than half of it, and all of us, religious and secular alike, must not only treat them with respect, but also must understand that equality is a natural-born right."

[JPost]

New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, Cornell University President David J. Skorton, and Technion-Israel Institute of Technology President Peretz Lavie recently announced an historic partnership to build a two-million-square-foot applied science and engineering campus on Roosevelt Island in New York City. "Thanks to this outstanding partnership and groundbreaking proposal from Cornell and the Technion, New York City's goal of becoming the global leader in technological innovation is now within sight," said Mayor Bloomberg.



The campus will be organized around three interdisciplinary hubs: Connective Media, Healthier Life, and the Built Environment. Cornell will immediately offer Master and Doctoral degrees in areas such as

Computer Science, Electrical and Computer Engineering, and Information Science and Engineering. In addition, after receiving the required accreditation, the campus will also offer innovative Technion-Cornell dual Master of Applied Sciences degrees.

The NYCTech Campus will host entrepreneurs-in-residence, organize business competitions, provide legal support for startups, reach out to existing companies to form research partnerships and sponsor research, and establish a pre-seed financing program to support promising research. The NYCTech Campus will also establish a \$150 million revolving financing fund that will be solely devoted to start-up businesses in the City.

Cornell is widely known as a global leader in the fields of applied science, engineering, technology and research, as well as commercialization and entrepreneurship. It is home to the top-rated Ivy League engineering program and is one of only a handful of institutions with top-10 programs in the key disciplines that drive today's tech sector: Computer Science, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Materials Science and Nanotechnology,

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and Information Science.

Like Cornell, the Technion also has a world-class track-record in research, development and entrepreneurship. The Technion's departments of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science are considered to be among the best in the world. The Technion boasts top-ranking faculty members including Nobel laureates – the most recent, Professor Dan Shechtman – who received the 2011 Nobel Prize in Chemistry. Professor Shechtman is also well-known for his course on entrepreneurship, now in its 26th year and boasting 10,000 graduates. The Technion has long been considered a driving force behind Israel's emergence as one of the world's great centers of technology.

Israel has one of the highest concentrations of high-tech start-up companies globally. In partnership with a strong community of incubators, private investors, venture capitalists, angel groups, and entrepreneurs, the Technion's tech transfer arm, Technion Technology Transfer (T3), has filed an average of 300 new patents each year and annually nurtures innovative startups in sectors such as clean-tech, cell therapy, drug delivery, nanotechnology, and others.

Companies, including Intel, Google, Microsoft, IBM, Qualcomm, Broadcom, Yahoo!, and Hewlett-Packard have established major operations near or on the Technion campus, where they can take advantage of the world-class research and the students and faculty members of the Technion. The Technion graduates currently head nearly half of the 121 Israeli companies on the NASDAQ, which have a combined market value of over \$28 billion. More than 70 percent of the Technion graduates are employed in the high technology sectors that drive Israel's economic growth. Presently, Israeli companies headed by the Technion graduates employ 85 percent of Israel's technical workforce. According to a recent article in the Israeli newspaper Haaretz, there are approximately 4,000 start-up companies located around the Technion's home campus.

Beyond the larger goal of making the city more of a tech hub, the focus will be creating a "sustainable landmark" on the 2 mile by .15 mile landmass on the East River. A quarter of the 2 million square foot campus will be green space available to the public, while the sun-oriented layout will include the largest solar panel array in the city. In addition, there will be four acres of geothermal wells, and a 150,000 square foot main academic building with a net-zero energy footprint.

With the selection of Cornell/Technion now complete, the project is scheduled to move into the environmental and land use review process, expected to be completed by the fall of 2013. Groundbreaking on the first phase of the Roosevelt Island campus is expected by the beginning of 2015. A temporary off-site campus will open in 2012.

[isRealli - The New Blog of the State of Israel]

Gilad Shalit Thanks Activists "From the Bottom of My Heart"



Former Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit recently thanked his supporters in his first remarks to the Israeli public since being released as part of a prisoner exchange with the Islamic militant group Hamas in October.

Shalit spoke in a brief recorded video clip that was shown to a gathering of activists and broadcast on Israeli television. He appeared healthy, his hair a little longer and his face less pale than when he was released. In his message Shalit said, "I am pleased to have the chance to speak to you and to thank you for all that you did throughout the years of my captivity." "When I was in captivity I heard a lot about your efforts to secure my release," Shalit added that he was convinced that they were "one of the deciding factors that contributed to my return home." "I will be grateful for the rest of my life," he said.

Shalit was captured by Palestinian militants on the Gaza border in 2006. After five and a half years of failed negotiations, Israel agreed to free more than 1,000 Palestinian prisoners in exchange for Shalit's release. Israel released 477 of those prisoners in October, and the remainder in December. Shalit was interviewed by an Egyptian TV journalist immediately upon his release, appearing overwhelmed and out of breath. He had not made other appearances until his video greeting.

The evening included a statement from Gilad's father, Noam. Noam was the driving force of the movement to free Gilad, and supported the campaign to exchange him for terrorists. While Noam told supporters that Gilad "is finding it difficult to process so much information" about the campaign to free him, Noam said Gilad will be exposed to the story over time. Shimshon Libman, the chief organizer of the campaign, thanked Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for his "brave decision" to approve the convict exchange agreement. [AP]