

Public Relations

Friends of the Open University in Israel

The Friends of the Open University Association acts to promote the goals of the Open University by mobilizing supporters, resources and donations. The number of members increased this year, donation activities were expanded and new donors joined.

Open Door (*Shaar Patuach*) Program: The annual activities of the Association are conducted through *Shaar Patuach*, which offers a broad range of activities including educational programs in various knowledge fields, tours throughout the country, seminars abroad, cultural events and plays. The number of participants in the program increased this year, as did income. All income (after deducting expenses) was transferred to the University and designated for scholarships, which totaled 150 this year.

"Now, and What Next?": The program, a series of discussions on current affairs as well as political and social issues, was offered for the second time. More than 800 people participated and some have already joined the Friends.

"Opening the Door to the Future" Project: Through this project, which takes place twice a year during the holiday seasons, the University recruits donations earmarked for scholarships for students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds who have difficulty financing their studies, as well as for soldiers studying at the University during and after their compulsory military service.

"Adopt a Student": Through this project, industries adopt OUI students and finance their studies, for a full year and up to an entire degree, based on geographic and financial criteria. This year, several businesses joined the project.

Friends of the Open University Abroad

Brazil: A new OUI Friends Association was established in Sao Paulo Brazil this year, founded by Mrs. Evelyn Nitzan, Mrs. Goldetti Glass and Mrs. Sandra Stad. Relations were also expanded between the OUI and organizations that deal with Jewish education in Brazil.

Canada: Not all problems posed by Canadian law pertaining to fundraising have been solved and donations are still received through the UIA in Canada.

Marketing

Production of a promotional film in Hebrew with information about the OUI mainly targeted at prospective students was completed this year. Marketing efforts were expanded among IDF soldiers and promotional material was prepared for Arabic-speakers and for presenting new programs of study. Public relations and informational material about the OUI was also prepared in English, German and Portuguese to support fundraising activities and a booklet aimed at potential donors was produced that described all donation options to the OUI.

Open Day for prospective students: Based on conclusions from prior events, a new format was developed for the Open Day for prospective undergraduate and graduate students, which was held simultaneously at four OUI campuses: Ramat Aviv, Jerusalem, Haifa and Beer Sheva. The number of participants increased this year and as a result, Open Days will continue in this format.

Open Days for speakers of Arabic: We held an Open Day for prospective Arabic-speaking students at the Wadi Ara study center and, for the first time, also at the Nazareth study center.

Arabic-language website: The Open University's Arabic-language website was created and currently serves as a promotional tool aimed at prospective Arabic-speaking students.

Donations

Substantial donations were received this year that enabled us to establish standing funds for scholarships to high school students studying at the OUI and for research grants to new faculty members. Donations directed at scholarships increased this year: targeted donations from the United States fund the majority of scholarships to soldiers, students with financial problems, ultra-orthodox students and Arabic-speaking students. There was also an increase in donations from Canada for ultra-orthodox students. With the establishment of the Friends Association in Brazil, we also received donations mainly targeted at soldiers and ultra-orthodox students.



Speakers at the symposium launching the Pe'er Project on May 22, 2008 (left to right): Lord Harry Woolf, Chancellor of the Open University; Dr. Yossi Vardi, Technologies venture investor; Author Ronit Matalon; Prof. Brenda Gourley, Vice Chancellor of the Open University UK; Prof. Gershon Ben Shakhar, President of the Open University; Prof. Shigeru Miyagawa, Founding member of the OCW Team, MIT; Prof. Ora Limor, Vice President of the Open University; Prof. Yoav Yair, Head of the Pe'er Project.

In addition, donations were received for special projects: *Pe'er*, translating courses into Arabic, the establishment of the Center for Teacher Professional Development, and Project Russia.

Fund "Russian World" in Moscow (an organization similar to the British Council) signed an agreement with the OUI to establish a Russian language and cultural center at the OUI. The aim of the center is to utilize the means available to the university to spread Russian culture and the Russian language. The center will function in the library building.

Publicity

Ongoing advertising about registration for OUI academic studies appeared in various media channels: print media, Internet, radio, billboards, etc.

Targeted advertising campaigns specifically addressed the ultra-orthodox and Arabic-speaking sectors. For the first time, the OUI placed a sponsorship slide on television during broadcasts of the Olympic Games. The share of the electronic media in the OUI's advertising budget increased at the expense of print media. The ads underscored four questions – What can you study at the OUI? (Tens of undergraduate and graduate programs of study); Where can you study? (At 50 study centers throughout the country); How are the studies conducted? (At tutorials, using textbooks, through online technologies); and When can you study? (Whenever convenient). Through answers to these questions, the ads described study programs and study centers, and urged prospective students to register at the OUI.

Guests

This year the OUI hosted groups from Israel, Russia, Germany and China as well as experts on the integration of technology in teaching from the Open University in Britain and from MIT. As in recent years, we also hosted heads of foreign universities, most of them from Asia and Africa, who came to learn how the Open University operates and its activities in the field of integrating technologies in teaching.