

## Honors and Milestones

### The Crucial Importance of Education as a National Priority

It is of cardinal importance to place education as a national value and a primary component of a country's national internal fortitude. Japan has set as its goal for the next 50 years to produce 30 Nobel Prize winners, and likewise Korea, Singapore and other countries. As such, Japan regards education as its first priority, while the State of Israel has diminished the place of education on its national agenda. Education is not only funding, but creating specific goals and a national ethos to strive towards, as integral components in the strength of the country. Education is health and the best remedy for poverty, since there is a direct correlation between education and income.

In every parameter in the field of education: the status and salary of the teacher, the final product of the high school system who enlists in the army and then goes to university, the status of universities, the infrastructure of research, absorption of returning Israeli scientists, as well as issues of violence among young people, we are on a long downward spiral, irrespective of which government is in control.

In the 1950s, tough years for the security and economy of Israel, Israeli leaders saw things differently, and together with absorbing immigration and creating an army, they established an admirable education system. Today other values are dominant. If we do not return education to the top of our priorities, not only as a budgetary issue, but as a value, knowledge will no longer be generated in Israel and we will lose our strength as a people and nation.

### “Family Tree” of International Game Theory “Descendents” of Prof. Aumann at National Conference in His Honor



*Presenting the “Family Tree of Academic “Descendents” to Nobel Prize Winner Prof. Israel Aumann: (From left) Organizers of the Game Theory conference at the Open University, Prof. Dov Samet, Tel Aviv University, and Prof. Aviad Heifetz, Open University (From right) Prof. Gershon Ben-Shakhar and Prof. Israel Aumann.*

Prof. Israel Aumann, winner of the Nobel Prize in Economics, received a special token of esteem at the national conference on Game Theory held at the Open University in his honor. He was presented with a “family tree” of five generations of international experts in Game Theory stemming from Prof. Aumann’s teaching, 113 in all, located in 19 countries worldwide, from Canada to Pakistan, to Bulgaria to Thailand, and, of course, in Israel. The “family tree” was presented by the President of the University Prof. Gershon Ben-Shakhar and the Conference organizers, Prof. Aviad Heifetz of the Open University and Prof. Dov Samet of Tel Aviv University. Another surprise was the screening of a film prepared exactly

25 years ago by the Open University. Prof. Aumann then headed a course team which prepared the University’s original course in Game Theory, course textbooks which have been widely used throughout Israel ever since. In the film, Prof. Aumann analyzed the relative power of large and smaller political parties in changing circumstances, applicable to this day. The interviewer, noted Israeli author Meir Shalev; asked about the relevance of the field of Game Theory and if Aumann could expect to find employment any place else but in a university. Aumann said he preferred theoretical aspects of Game Theory, and time and Sweden have proven his professional status to be solid and internationally recognized.