

ISEF ALUMNI IN ACADEMIA: BEN GURION UNIVERSITY OF THE NEGEV



DR. ASLAN MIRIYEV

Assistant Professor, Department of Engineering
Director and Principal Investigator, The PAI Lab

“ISEF supported me during my postdoc at Columbia University, very stressful period for me and my family. A new country, new institution, and the pressure to excel, produce results and publish. ISEF trusted in my abilities and aim helped unleash my potential. Most fellowships are about excellence in science. ISEF is about real life. Those days in New York were challenging for my family and me, but I always knew that there was someone who cared. I am deeply thankful to everyone at ISEF, especially Nina, for the financial and emotional support they gave me and my family, helping to make my postdoc a success story.”

ISEF International Fellow, Postdoc in Materials Engineering, Columbia University 2015-2018

Born and raised in Azerbaijan, Aslan made *Aliyah* on his own at 15 years old, joined by his parents two years later. Settling in Beer Sheva, like many immigrant families from the former USSR, Aslan watched his father, who had worked as a Senior Engineer in a plant back home, take a job as a janitor in order to support his family. After completing his **B.Sc. in Materials Engineering at Ben Gurion University**, Aslan joined the IDF as an engineer in a technology unit, where he served for 10 years while pursuing his M.Sc. and Ph.D. studies. In 2015, Aslan arrived in NYC with his wife, Iryina, to pursue his **postdoctoral research in soft robotics at Columbia University**. As an ISEF International Fellow for 3 years, Aslan made major contributions to the field of 3D printing and robotics through his breakthrough research. He continued his work as a visiting researcher at the Imperial College London and a scientist at Empa in Switzerland, before returning to Ben Gurion University. Today, Aslan is a Senior Lecturer on the faculty of Engineering, where he has also established Ben Gurion University's **Physical Artificial Intelligence Lab**, where he continues his innovative research to develop bio-hybrid soft intelligent systems with characteristics typically belonging to living organisms.



DR. FANY YUVAL

Senior Lecturer, Department of Public Policy and Administration
Guilford Glazer Faculty of Business and Management

“ISEF influenced the entire course of my career. It provided me with significant social and emotional support and a wide range of tools and training that helped me develop into the educator and leader that I am today. ISEF instilled in me a sense of service and commitment to all segments of Israeli society, especially the most vulnerable and disadvantaged.”

Fany is one of six children born to Moroccan immigrant parents. She, along with two of her siblings received ISEF scholarship support that helped elevate them in their careers. Fany attained her **B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Haifa**. As an **ISEF International Fellow-Fulbright Scholar**, she pursued her postdoctoral studies at Fairleigh Dickinson University and continued her research as a **Visiting Scholar at New York University**.

Fany lives in the Galilee with her husband and son. Her research focuses on the management of public systems, specifically in municipalities, and how to improve and adapt residential services in diverse communities with populations of varying needs and backgrounds.



Dr. Schwartz-Tayri with Nina Weiner
at ISEF's 2019 Gala

DR. TALIA MEITAL SCHWARTZ-TAYRI

Ph.D. faculty member at Spitzer Department of Social Work
Head of SWB Lab- the first Israeli AI lab in Social Welfare

"For me, ISEF is a springboard. While working on my Ph.D., I quickly realized that having the "brain" is not enough if you do not have the academic socialization and ties to enable you to reach your goals and potential. If not for ISEF, so many talented researchers, Knesset members, leaders in the Israeli financial and hi-tech fields may have never realized their fullest potential and dreams. What is amazing about ISEF is that it empowers the disadvantaged, increases their chances to get a higher education and succeed, and enhances their sense of belonging in Israeli society and their commitment to help others."

ISEF International Fellow, Postdoc in Social Work, University of California-Berkeley 2018-2020
ISEF Ph.D. Scholar, Social Work, Tel Aviv University 2011-2015

Born to parents of Yemenite and Tunisian descent, both having never completed a high school education, Talia grew up as one of four children in Herzliya's toughest neighborhood. While pursuing her **B.S.W., M.S.W. and Ph.D. in Social Work from Tel Aviv University**, Talia worked on behalf of Israel's Ministry of Health and the municipality of Tel Aviv-Yaffo as a social worker and social work researcher. Talia was motivated by her own experience in the field of social work and social work education to study the impact of social workers as agents of change in social policy and advocacy.

At BGU's acclaimed school of social work, Talia is working alongside top data scientists to **establish Artificial Intelligence in social work research for the first time in Israeli academia**. Her two main studies utilize advanced machine learning (ML) technologies to help children who suffer from adversities during their development. One study sets out to identify protective factors that enable child victims of adverse circumstances to succeed in life. The second study collaborates with Soroka Hospital's pediatrics and forensic doctors as well as innovative image analysis and NLP procedures to identify child abuse injuries in patients.



DR. MOSHE ELKABETS

Associate Professor, Department of Microbiology and Immunology

"ISEF enabled my journey of self-realization, as a university student at Ben Gurion University and all the way through my professional training as a postdoctoral candidate at Harvard University. Today, I am "paying it forward" and leading the ISEF PhD program at Ben Gurion, helping the next generation of students to succeed by providing them with the support that ISEF gave me."

ISEF International Fellow, Postdoc in Medical Oncology, Harvard Medical School 2010-2013
ISEF Ph.D. Scholar, Immunology and Microbiology, Ben Gurion University 2006-2009

Raised in Ofakim, a development town in southern Israel, Moshe is one of six children born to Moroccan and Egyptian parents. As an ISEF PhD candidate at Ben Gurion University, Moshe was awarded the prestigious **Chateaubriand Pre-Doctoral Fellowship**, by the **Embassy of France**. After completing his **postdoctoral research in tumor biology at Harvard University**, Moshe joined **Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center** in NYC, as an Associate Scientist at one of the world's top cancer research institutions.

In 2015, Moshe returned to the Negev with his wife Karen and their three children, to continue his groundbreaking cancer research at Ben Gurion University, where his academic career began. He has received many competitive grants and awards, including the Alon fellowship, TEVA and the Toronto Prizes. **In 2019 he was promoted to Associate Professor and today he heads the ISEF Ph.D. program at Ben Gurion**. His research focuses primarily on ovarian and head and neck cancers, and he has already published over 50 peer-reviewed articles and patents.