10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

REDUCE INEQUALITY WITHIN AND AMONG COUNTRIES

RESEARCH

Beyond Language: Hebrew Learning in the Metaverse

The Commission for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiated a large-scale study of barriers to Hebrew acquisition among Arab students in Israel, leading to an innovative Hebrew course in the metaverse. Based on the CEFR framework, it uses immersive simulations, avatars and real-life campus scenarios to strengthen academic writing, oral communication and cultural integration.

Between Status and Survival: Healthcare Access among Migrants in Israel

Prof. Rebeca Raijman (Sociology) examines how legal status shapes healthcare access among Sudanese forced migrants in Israel. The study found major disparities between refugees with temporary residency and asylum seekers dependent on employer-based insurance; bureaucratic barriers, discrimination, language difficulties and mistrust lead many asylum seekers to avoid treatment.



PhD Students from the School of Public Health wearing Aging Suits
(Credit: University of Haifa)

Aging on the Move: Transportation Justice in the Periphery

An Impact project led by Prof. Tova Band-Winterstein (Gerontology) with Drs. Mika Moran and Yifat Rom (School of Public Health) received 50,000 NIS through the university's "Impactful Research" call. Their project, *Transportation Justice in Older Age in Peripheral Regions: The Beit HaKerem Cluster as a Case Study for Developing Age-Friendly Transportation Policy and Practice.*

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The "Northern Lights" initiative

Dr. Sawsan Khair (Multidisciplinary Studies) presented the "Northern Lights" initiative at the General Assembly of the Jewish Federations of North America in Washington. Developed with the Jewish United Fund of Chicago and the IDF, the five-month residential pre-academic program for recently discharged Druze soldiers combines academic preparation, leadership training, technology and AI skills and mentorship to increase Druze men's participation in higher education.

AI, Faith, and Coexistence: UofH Rector Meets Pope Leo XIV

Rector Prof. Mouna Maroun met this week with Pope Leo XIV, speaking about artificial intelligence, the challenges facing Israel's Christian population, her life in Isfiya and shared life on campus, topics on which Leo XIV offered his blessing.

Institutional Pathways to Equity

Dr. Rahma Makhamid (Minerva Center for the Study of Marginalized Populations in Ageing) was selected from among 70 candidates to represent Arab academics at a meeting at the Israeli President's Residence on 23 February 2026, where she presented her journey and her leadership in advancing Arab women in academia, stressing access to higher education and institutional support that reduces structural inequalities.

LEARNING AND STUDENTS

Launching an Advisory Forum for Older Adults at the University of Haifa

An advisory forum for older adults was launched in November as part of the Age-Friendly University Haifa (AFU-Haifa) initiative, bringing older residents of Haifa and the region together to help shape the university's age-friendly vision. The inaugural meeting was led by Prof. Anna Zisberg, Head of AFU-Haifa, and Dr. Michal Elboim-Gavison (Physiotherapy); the forum aims to integrate older adults' perspectives into research-informed policy and practice.

Understanding the Other in Israeli Society

A new program by the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Commission and Givat Haviva - Center for a Shared Society brings Jewish staff to learn about Arab society, and Arab staff and PhD students to learn about Jewish society, through dialogue, field visits, personal narratives and collaborative activities fostering mutual understanding.

Continuity of Learning: Supporting Students on the Autism Spectrum

The Dean of Students Office established a support program for students on the autism spectrum to facilitate their full academic and social inclusion, with an individualized plan for each student. The program includes counseling, academic and social mentoring, exam accommodations, mediation with departments, workshops, tutoring and training in assistive technologies.

OPERATIONS

Accessible Websites at the University

A new policy by the Computing and Information Division defines the workflow and professional standards for developing accessible websites, ensuring compliance with the Equal Rights for Persons with Disabilities Law and Israeli Standard IS 5568. Under Israeli law, accessibility requirements are legally binding.

Aging from Within: An Experiential Learning Session with Simulation Suits

At the first session of a doctoral forum hosted by the School of Public Health, PhD students participated in an experiential exercise with aging simulation suits, led by Dr. Mika Moran, offering a slow-paced, thought-provoking experience of what it feels like to be old.

Building 21st-Century Skills Through Hands-On Learning

The High-Tech Class program, a joint initiative of the Ministry of Innovation, Science and Technology and the Ministry of Education, introduces students in grades 7-9 to the high-tech world over three years. Taught by undergraduate Computer Science and Information Systems students, it builds independent learning, teamwork and problem-solving through hands-on experience in software, data, AI, design and entrepreneurship.