

October 1st, 2024

Dear Friends,

Today, as I commence my tenure as the [President of the University of Haifa](#), I am honored to address you—our family of supporters and partners.

It was 22 years ago that I arrived at the University of Haifa as a young historian. I began my journey in the Department of Land of Israel Studies and have served the University ever since in a variety of roles: Department Chair, Head of the School of History, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, and most recently, Rector. Between 2009 and 2011 I took a sabbatical at NYU, Columbia, and Rutgers. After returning to Israel, I established the Ruderman Program for American Jewish Studies. The University of Haifa is my second home, and often, my first.

We are a University that embraces the remarkable resources that surround us – the Mountains, the City, and the Sea. These are our natural laboratories, and this is what sets us apart from other universities in Israel. I am proud to share that The University of Haifa was ranked in the top 100 universities in the world in the *Times Higher Education 2024 IMPACT Rankings*. Following our lead, the Council of Higher Education in Israel placed sustainability as a priority and allocated a great deal of competitive funds for sustainability research. The University of Haifa's sustainability vision will continue to be part of our strategic goals in the coming years.

Alongside our vision, the University faces two remarkable opportunities. The first is the integration of the School of Design into the University. The School's faculty members and students are located in the German Colony neighborhood of Haifa and they will become full members of our University community. For the first time in Israel, a School of Design will operate as an integral part of a university, thus allowing a plethora of collaborations and combinations not found elsewhere in Israel.

The second opportunity is a groundbreaking one – the establishment of the **Herta and Paul Amir School of Medicine**. On October 1st 2025, after many years of anticipation, the University of Haifa will welcome its inaugural cohort of 60 pioneering medical students. Together, we will usher in a new era of medicine in the North and across Israel.

Lastly, I have compiled a top-notch leadership team that will propel our University to new heights. My leadership team includes **Prof. Mouna Maroun**, our Rector, and **Mr. Sharon Zaid**, our Vice President and CEO. And I am truly delighted to introduce you to two additional members of our team. Please welcome **Mr. Gideon Herscher**, the University's new Vice President of Transformational Philanthropy and Global Resource Development. Gideon previously served as a senior development executive at the JDC, one of the premier Jewish philanthropic organizations in the world. We wish him great success in his new and important role.

We have recently established a Global Engagement Division, headed by **Prof. Tally Katz-Gerro**. This division's mandate is to promote international collaborations on all levels of the University: departments, faculty and students, including our University's growing international school.



We are waiting for your safe return home.

The following remarkable individuals may be familiar to you, as they have fulfilled several leadership positions in recent years:

Prof. Oren Gazal-Ayal, Vice President and Dean of Research & Development

Prof. Arin Salamah-Qudsi, Head of the Division for Diversity, Inclusion, and Community

Prof. Ofer Arazi, Head of the Division of Innovation and Sustainability

Roni (Fantanesh) Malkai, Head of the Division of Communications and Media Relations

Aviva Peer, Director of the Division of the Presidency

Together, we are cultivating a campus we can all be proud of, one that is open to all and is distinguished in its academic and scientific contributions.

*

The past school year has been one of the most challenging our country has ever experienced. It literally began with the massacres of October 7th which resulted in countless deaths, including University students and graduates as well as family and friends of faculty members. Students and faculty were called into military service immediately and served for months on end.

This past year was also marked by destruction across northern Israel. Over 70,000 residents of the North were evacuated and became refugees in their own country. When this war comes to an end, the rehabilitation process will begin and we will assist in reintegrating residents into their homes and communities. As President of the University of Haifa, I believe that it is incumbent upon us to play a pivotal role in this process.

We hope that this new year brings with it the release of the 101 hostages. May they be reunited with their loving families, and may those who have been killed, be returned home for burial.

*

*On this very special day for me, I take the opportunity to wish you all a **Shana Tova!***

May this year be a year filled with security and health;

May we all enjoy a year filled with curiosity, exploration and excellent and plentiful research;

May this year be filled with extraordinary teaching as we invest in Israel's emerging generation of scientists and researchers at the University of Haifa!

I wish to extend my gratitude to **Mr. Brad Bloom**, the Chairman of our Board of Governors, for his friendship and support. His leadership continues to be exemplary.

Thank you for your ongoing support and partnership. Together we will go from strength to strength.

Sincerely and with great hope,



Prof. Gur Alroey
President



We are waiting for your safe return home.