

# Leading doctoral students win Adams fellowships

*Out of 72 alumni, 23 already in senior faculty positions*

• By JUDY SIEGEL

Seven outstanding Israeli doctoral students received on Sunday a total of \$1 million in prestigious Adams Fellowships of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities from Canadian philanthropist Marcel Adams. A 95-year-old Holocaust survivor who fought in the War of Independence and made his fortune in Canadian real estate, Adams established the fellowships in 2005. To date, 102 young and promising Israeli researchers received fellowships.

All of the recipients were men, even though until now, the academy's professional committee chose 25 women among the previous 95 recipients. "It just turned out that way this time," an academy spokesman said.

Each of the seven will receive over \$100,000 for up to four years of doctoral studies (\$30,000 a year), as well as exemption from tuition. Academy president Prof. Ruth Arnon said at the ceremony in Jerusalem that the meticulous screening process of the universities and of the academy's professional committee of the fellowship program, ensure the winners' high quality," she said. "We are proud and happy that out of 72 alumni till today, 23 have already been given senior faculty positions in universities, nine are in hi-tech companies and two work in hospitals. The foundation's investment in these young and talented scientists bears fruit and ensures the future of science in Israel."

The recipients are:

- Izchak Goldshtein, a 29-year-old doctoral student of computer science who served over six years as a cyber-security specialist, a team leader and a projects officer in an elite IDF technology unit in the *Atuda* (academic reserve) of the IDF. He is the



ADAMS FELLOWSHIP winners pose with their accolades, alongside Marcel Adam's children, Linda and Silvan. (Courtesy)

second child of his family to win this fellowship. His older brother Moshe won a fellowship in 2007 and is now teaching physics at Tel Aviv University.

- Barak Hirshberg was born and bred in Jerusalem where he was educated at Boyer High School and became interested in the sciences, particularly chemistry. He joined the IDF for six years as a theoretical chemist in RAFAEL Ltd., and left to study for his doctorate at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem despite an offer for a position by RAFAEL.

- Eran Sagi completed his high school studies externally at the age of 16 because he was "bored." He went on to study physics at TAU. He is now specializing in condensed-matter physics at the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot, focusing on electronic systems. He has several publications in prominent scientific journals. His plan is to return to an academic position in Israel following a post-doc abroad, so he can help educate a new generation of scientists and engineers.

- Omri Azencot's research at the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology is considered unique to Israel since he specializes in physics-based simulations in computerized graphics. He collaborates with a lab at the University of Stanford in Cali-

fornia, Ecole Polytechnique in Paris and the Institute for Numerological Simulation in Bonn. He plans on developing this field in Israel, which can attract companies and lead to cooperation between the academy and industry and establishing research centers within Israeli hi-tech companies.

- Ido Sagi, a student of the top one percent of HU, is doing his doctorate in the use of stem cells and his research focuses on their potential for replacing human tissue destroyed by disease.

- Michael Kalyuzhnyson, the son, grandson and nephew of scientists, came from Russia when he was five and was brought up on the Carmel in Haifa. From a young age, he was interested in science and even participated in science camps. He decided to study biology at HU, where today he is a doctoral student of ecology.

- Yinon Spinka, a doctoral student of mathematics at TAU participated in Bar-Ilan University's mathematics program since high school, completing his matriculation exam in 10th grade. Following his army service, he returned to continue his degrees with honors and now concentrates on models from statistical mechanics, collaborating with researchers both in Israel and abroad.