



Braun School of Public Health  
and Community Medicine  
Hebrew University of Jerusalem  
Hadassah Medical Organization



# Hebrew University-Hadassah Braun School of Public Health & Community Medicine International MPH Alumni Newsletter

Special 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition

November 2015



## This issue features: IMPH 40<sup>th</sup> Graduation Ceremony

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## Director's Message to the Graduating class of 2014-15:

Today we are celebrating today the 40<sup>th</sup> graduation of the IMPH!!!

Forty is very symbolic- Besides being the highest number ever counted to on *Sesame Street*, the number of spaces in a standard *Monopoly* game board and the number of weeks for an average pregnancy..... The number 40 is also sacred to Jews, Christians, and Muslims and is significant in Hinduism. The number comes up many times in the bible and in the Koran. Rain fell for "forty days and forty nights" during the Flood and also during this academic year (as well as SNOW) .The Spies explored the land of Israel for "forty days." That's about how long it took you to settle into the IMPH program and get to know your peers. In fact, an Arabic proverb states that to understand a people, you must live among them for 40 days. The Hebrew people lived in the Sinai desert for "forty years". This is the time it takes for a new generation to arise. (Numbers 32:13)- just think, a generation of people, changed by the IMPH experience, spread all over the world.

One of the prerequisites for a man to study Kabbalah is that he must be forty years old. Some of our students also decided that you need to be at least 40 years old, or more, to study public health! After all, they say. "Life begins at forty"

Lent takes place in the 40 days preceding Easter and consists of giving something up. Many of you have given up the most precious of all – your families, spouses, partners, children, newborns, and other loved ones for a lot longer than 40 days, in order to pursue this MPH- we admire you for this and know how hard it's been. We know how happily they will welcome you back- with at least 40 hugs and kisses.

So that's it. You have spent 8X40 days in the desert to this day. Just as Moses spent 40 days on Mount Sinai where he received the 10 commandments, and before his temptation, Jesus fasted "forty days and forty nights" in the Judean desert, Muhammad also prayed and fasted in a cave for 40 days. Muhammad then had 40 followers to spread the religion of Islam- we ask you each to collect 40 followers and spread the public health message- as broad as the definition of health itself, and including not just preventing and combatting disease but taking the example of our keynote



speaker, Alex Brown, fighting for health and appropriate care for all, the haves and the have-nots. We know your local circumstances may not make this easy but we hope this degree has given you not only the tools but also the courage to try!

I would like to leave you with a poem which represents my wishes for you:

*Reach your goals, be undeterred  
Be honest, keep your word,  
Don't reward the undeserved  
Try harder for the underserved  
Make sure their voice is heard  
Stats, and epi may be blurred  
But clear is the message of this MPH, now conferred.*

We expect you to keep in touch with us for at least the next 40 years – don't forget us – we won't forget you.

Ora Paltiel, MDCM, MSc, FRCPC  
IMPH Director



**Prof. Paltiel with Majd Zarifeh (East Jerusalem, 2014/2015)**

## IMPH Alumni Academic Coordinator—Dr. Maureen Malowany

Dear Alumni,

Welcome to the graduating class of 2015! We have enjoyed our year with you and now look forward to staying in touch via our newsletter and social media sites. We are busy planning for the IMPH Alumni West Africa Region meeting in Nigeria, February 2016 and look forward to spending time with our alumni there.

Congratulations to Dr. Elias Yesuf on receiving a Pears Seed Grant Award for his project titled: “Developing and Validating a Multi-Dimensional Instrument for Measuring the Performance of District Health Systems in a National Region in Ethiopia”.

We are very excited about the new Alumni Platform – I have signed in! Hope to see you there.

Regards,

Maureen



## Editor's Note

Dear Alumni,

Here it is, the final special edition celebrating our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!

It was quite an experience to watch the class of 2014/2015 grow as a class, as individual students. They are surely a cohort to make us proud!

I will take this opportunity to wish the class of 2015/2016 success in their studies!

I am very excited about our new social platform and look forward seeing you all there!

Best,

Reut.

## Our 40th Graduation Ceremony

On September 9<sup>th</sup> we had the great privilege of celebrating our IMPH 40<sup>th</sup> Graduation Ceremony. The ceremony took place at the Botnar Auditorium of the Faculty of Medicine. Although the weather was not pleasant, this remarkable occasion made this ceremony especially festive and joyful.

At the beginning of the ceremony, graduates marched into the auditorium in their national costumes to take their seats. This year we had 21 graduates from 15 different countries. Professor David Lichtstein, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine; Professor Asher Cohen, Vice-Rector, Hebrew University of Jerusalem; Professor Yoram Weiss, Director, Hadassah Ein Kerem Hospital, and Ambassador Mattanya Cohen, Head of Training at MASHAV in Israel's Foreign Ministry honored us with their presence and greeted our graduates. Ms. Marci Natan, President, Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America sent a pre-recorded message for our graduates, which was a wonderful surprise. Following the greetings the graduates sang a song "Heart to Heart".

The keynote speaker in the ceremony was Professor Alex Brown, an IMPH Alumnus from 1998/1999, presently the Deputy Director, South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAMHRI) and Program Leader, Aboriginal Research, based in Adelaide, Australia.

His keynote lecture was entitled: "Bringing the Fringes to the Centre – Public Health at the Margins of Society".





After the fascinating speech, class representatives, Dr. Charles Okidi (Uganda) and Ms. Majd Zarifeh (East Jerusalem) greeted their class mates and thanked The Braun School Faculty and IMPH administrative staff for their dedicated work during the year. The graduates followed with the traditional Graduation Dance which combines all the traditional dances from their countries. After the graduates' exciting performance, the audience was treated to a delightful farewell movie produced by Dr. Linh Dinh (Vietnam). Professor Yehuda Neumark, Director of the Braun School, then presented his closing remarks. After the ceremony everybody enjoyed a reception in honor of the graduates.

Congratulations, Class of 2014/2015! We hope that you have made the best of your year here with us, and that you will always have fond memories of Israel at heart. We wish you good luck and success in your post-IMPH careers! ***Keep in touch!***



## Highlighting a Graduate- Prof. Alex Brown

Professor Alex Brown (Australia, 1998/1999, alex.brown@sahmri.com) is the Program Leader, Aboriginal Research, South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAMHRI) based in Adelaide, Australia. Professor Brown is an Aboriginal doctor and researcher with extensive skills in Indigenous health research in rural and remote communities. He received his PhD in 2010, and in addition to his medical training has an MPH, FCSANZ

and is an honorary fellow of the RACP. He has established an extensive and unique research program focused on chronic disease in vulnerable communities, with a particular focus on outlining and overcoming health disparities. He leads projects encompassing epidemiology, psychosocial determinants of chronic disease, mixed methods health services research in Aboriginal primary care and hospital settings, and randomized controlled trials of pharmacological and non-pharmacological chronic disease interventions. He has significant connections across the health system, policy environment and key government and NGO sector, particularly in relation to chronic disease burden and prevention. Prof. Brown sits on a range of national committees, including the Heart Foundation, chairs the Cardiac Society Indigenous Cardiovascular Council and was a member of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Equality Council (2009-2012). Over the past five years he has been principal investigator on over \$5 million of research projects and has extensive research collaborations with university, academic, primary care, Aboriginal community control services, international partners and Indigenous community partners. Prof. Alex Brown visited Israel 7-10 September 2015 to attend the Braun School of Public Health and Community Medicine International MPH 40th Graduation Ceremony as Keynote Speaker. His keynote lecture was entitled: "Bringing the Fringes to the Centre – Public Health at the Margins of Society".

During his visit to the Braun School, Prof. Brown delivered a formal lecture to the School's Faculty and students titled: "Overcoming Cardiovascular Inequalities in Aboriginal Australians". His research presentation modeled best practice for the integration of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies, combining CVD population level data and interviews with aboriginal men. We thank the Australian Friends of the Hebrew University for supporting this visit.



*Prof. Alex Brown at the 2014/2015 Graduation Ceremony.*

## Prof. Leon (Levi) Gordis

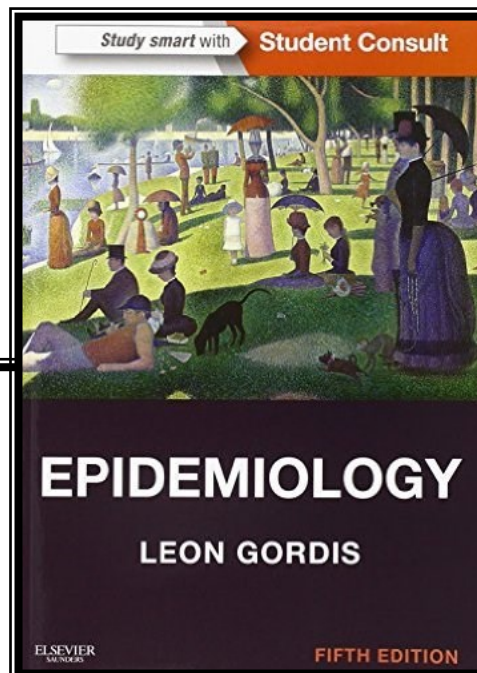
It is with deep sadness that I share with you the news of the passing of our dear friend and teacher Professor Leon (Levi) Gordis. Many of you learned epidemiology from his book (along with “*Making Sense*” of course). Prof. Gordis chaired the Epi Dept. at Johns Hopkins for many years. Leon and Hadassah, his wife and love of his life of some 65 years, moved to Israel a few years ago and Braun



School students were privileged to interact with him and benefit from his vast knowledge and intellect. Just a few weeks ago Prof. Gordis called me from the US where he was undergoing medical treatment to inform us that he was planning to be back in Israel in time for the New Year and that he was looking forward to being at the IMPH Graduation Ceremony and then to meeting the 2015-16 class at the start of the semester in October.

May his family be comforted knowing the deep and lasting effect he has had on so many epidemiology students and professionals the world over.

*Written by Prof. Yehuda Neumark, Braun School Director.*





## Alumni Announcements



It was our great pleasure to learn that our Alumna Sola Oresanya (Nigeria, 2006/2007, [solaores@gmail.com](mailto:solaores@gmail.com)) recently gave birth to her son Daniel Oluwadamilola Oresanya.

Congratulations, Sola! We wish you and your family a lifetime of good health and joy!



### **Obituary**

We were recently informed that Prof. **Antonio De Moya** (Dominican Republic, 1979-1980), had passed away a few months ago.

His classmate, **Norma Victoria Noe-Moccetti** (Peru, 1979/1980, [nvnoemocetti@gmail.com](mailto:nvnoemocetti@gmail.com)), delivered the sad news. She wrote: "He passed away 29 December 2014. He was from my IMPH Class of 1979/1980. He was a University Professor working in SIDA Research. He came to Lima, Peru around 1997 and we met in the SwissHotel where he was taking an important part in a conference about HIV/AIDS. He was very popular among his classmates, the teachers and everybody who knew him." Norma has also attached a photo of the 1979/1980 class, visiting Beer Sheva on June 8<sup>th</sup>, 1980. Prof. De Moya is in the center of the picture.



## Visits to the School

### **The Minister of Health of Ivory Coast Visit to the School**

The Minister of Health of Ivory Coast visited the School on August 18<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Frank Kouadio (Ivory Coast, 2013/2014, [drfranckelie@yahoo.fr](mailto:drfranckelie@yahoo.fr)), who took a part in organizing this visit, writes:

“The Minister of Health of Ivory Coast, Mrs. Goudou Coffi, visited Israel from August 12th to 20th, aiming to develop the medical partnership between both countries. She actually followed in the way made by the First Lady of Ivory Coast who visited the Schneider Children Hospital in Petah Tikva, Israel, a couple of years ago.

During her visit (the Minister), she met with medical key figures such as the Israeli Deputy Minister of Health and heads of medical and institutions. Being part of the organizing staff for that visit, I naturally asked her to visit the Braun School of Public Health, which we did on August 19th. We had the opportunity to meet with the students and the staff of the School. It was a memorable and historical time. It was good for me to be back to the School.”

*Thank you Frank, for organizing this historical and unforgettable visit!*

***The Ivory Coast  
Minister of Health  
with the IMPH  
Class of  
2014/2015***



***Dr. Frank Kouadio (left), The Ivory Coast Minister of Health (middle) and Dr. Arthur Koume (Ivory Coast, 2014/2015)***

## A Graduate visit to the School

On August 31<sup>st</sup> we had the great pleasure of welcoming **Saranchuluun Otgon** (2007/2008, Mongolia), who is visiting Israel at that time.

Thank you for visiting us, Saranchuluun! It was wonderful to see you!



## Alumni Social Platform Announcement

We are very excited to announce that the IMPH Alumni now have a new social platform. This platform is free for use and password-protected. In this Platform you will be able to re-connect with former classmates, meet other Alumni from your country, expand your professional network, post jobs and seek professional opportunities. You will also be updated with the latest news from the Braun School and your fellow Alumni from around the world.

This platform will be available from November 1<sup>st</sup>, for IMPH Alumni only, at <https://hujiconnectimph.com/>

If you have any difficulties, contact Reut directly.

Looking forward to see you there!

