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**Beer-Sheva High-Tech Park Inaugurated by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu with Ben-Gurion University of the Negev as Anchor in Public-Private Partnership**

***American and International Companies, Business Incubators and Technology Startups Will Occupy the 16-Building, 23-Acre Facility***

**BEER-SHEVA, Israel...September 10, 2013** – The development of the Negev took a significant leap last week with the inauguration of Beer-Sheva’s Advanced Technologies Park (ATP) in which Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (BGU) is the academic research partner. Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu presided over the ribbon-cutting ceremony on September 3.

A joint public-private partnership of BGU, the Beer-Sheva Municipality, KUD International LLC, and Gav-Yam Negev, the first building of the ATP was completed and occupied this summer by international companies that include Oracle, Deutsche Telekom, EMC<sup>2</sup>, RSA, and ECI Telecom. New incubators such as Elbit Incubator and Jerusalem Venture Partner’s CyberLabs, as well as BGN Technologies, BGU’s technology transfer company, have also taken space.

Adjacent to BGU’s Marcus Family Campus, when finished the ATP will encompass 16 buildings on 23 acres, with 2 million square feet of office and lab space, a conference center and hotel. The site was designed by KUD International LLC, based in Los Angeles, and a subsidiary of the Japan-based Kajima Corporation, one of the world’s largest development and construction firms. A similar amount of space next to the commercial park will be used by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), whose elite technology units are relocating to the Negev to take advantage of the resources at BGU and in the ATP.

Prime Minister Netanyahu declared the park a national cyber center that will maximize the resources of the University, the IDF and the new high-tech tenants. In order to advance the issue, NIS 40 million (\$11 million) in government support has been allocated over the next three years for companies that establish cyber innovation centers in Beer-Sheva.

Speaking at the ceremony last week, he stated that “we are launching the economic anchor that will turn Beer-Sheva into a national and international center for cyber security. We are changing the future of Israel and we are doing it in Beer-Sheva.”

Cyber security is a major focus and strength at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. The University’s emphasis on applied research in information systems is unparalleled in Israel.

“The goal is to create a ‘Silicon Wadi,’ harnessing the research and brainpower emerging from BGU and the IDF, as well as to provide high paying jobs to keep Israel’s best and brightest in the area,” says Doron Krakow, executive vice president of American Associates, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (AABGU), whose headquarters are in New York.

“This academic-business-government partnership is the ultimate fulfillment of David Ben-Gurion’s dream to develop the Negev through science and technology,” says Krakow. “BGU will play a prominent role in major technology innovations that will secure Israel’s future.”

The project was originally the vision of MK Prof. Avishay Braverman, conceived when he was president of BGU. However, it was not until 2007 that it moved to the national agenda when Marvin J. Suomi, the Los Angeles-based president and chief executive officer of KUD International became involved, bringing the parties together to develop the project.

“This is a project that took courage and vision to implement,” says Suomi. “Without the unwavering support of [Beer-Sheva’s] Mayor Ruvik Danilovich, BGU President Rivka Carmi and their leadership teams, I doubt we could have been successful. It is one of the best examples in the world of the public and private sectors successfully partnering.”

Prof. Rivka Carmi concluded in her remarks that, “The opening of the Advanced Technologies Park in Beer-Sheva will be remembered as the turning point in the development of the Negev. We have always been at the geographical heart of Israel. Now we are on our way to becoming the true center for innovation and growth.”

**American Associates, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (AABGU)** plays a vital role in sustaining David Ben-Gurion's vision, creating a world-class institution of education and research in the Israeli desert, nurturing the Negev community and sharing the University's expertise locally and around the globe. With some 20,000 students on campuses in Beer-Sheva, Sede Boqer and Eilat in Israel’s southern desert, BGU is a university with a conscience, where the highest academic standards are integrated with community involvement, committed to sustainable development of the Negev. AABGU is headquartered in Manhattan and has nine regional offices throughout the U.S. For more information, please visit [www.aabgu.org](http://www.aabgu.org).

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