



Meet Prof. Eran Halperin: New Dean of the School of Psychology

At just 39, Prof. **Eran Halperin**, the new dean of the School of Psychology, may be the youngest of IDC Herzliya's deans – but he comes into his position with an impressive list of accomplishments. Prof. Halperin has published more than 80 papers in peer-reviewed journals, including in the acclaimed journals *Science* and *PNAS* (Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences in the U.S.), and has received a European Research Council grant of 1.5 million euros. He is a member of the International Society of Political Psychology and has served as associate editor of *Political Psychology*,

the society's journal. He is also a member of both the American and the Israeli Political Science Associations. Always up for new challenges, Halperin also heads several research teams in conflict resolution at IDC Herzliya and elsewhere, and in 2009 and again in 2012 was presented with the IDC Herzliya award for the highest achievements in research. In 2012, he was also awarded the ISPP's Erik Erikson early career award.



Halperin received his B.A. in Political Science and Psychology in 2002, his M.A. from the School of Political Science at Haifa University in 2003, and his Ph.D. from Haifa University in 2007. His doctoral dissertation, "The Psychology of Group-Based Hatred in Political Systems," won the outstanding dissertation award from the Israel Political Science Association.

In 2008, Halperin conducted post-doctoral research at Stanford University in the U.S. His main area of research focuses on psychological and political theories and methods to investigate different aspects of inter-group conflicts. He is particularly motivated by the Israel-Palestinian conflict. Reflecting upon his time at Stanford University, Halperin says, "That time was a fundamental point in my career, both in terms of my academic accomplishments but also in my personal development. I believe it has given me an opportunity foundation for my new position as dean."

Halperin joined IDC Herzliya in 2008, after his time at Stanford. He says he is inspired by the "unique and amazing atmosphere between students, staff and researchers." After serving as a lecturer and then senior lecturer in the Lauder School of Government, Diplomacy & Strategy,

he became a senior lecturer and then associate professor in the School of Psychology.

Halperin aspires to show his students how principles learned in the classroom can be used to contribute to Israeli society. "I am a real believer in 'bottom-up' processes, as well as in the power of people to create social change," he says. This is demonstrated by the new state-of-the-art clinic that recently opened in the School of Psychology, where students and the wider public can receive psychotherapy at a relatively low cost, and students can gain first-hand experience in the field. Prof. Halperin is also excited to promote the new M.A. programs in Clinical and Social Psychology, which he believes "represents the DNA of the school."

Halperin says the School of Psychology has, in a relatively short time, become one of the finest in Israel, and that he intends to continue the vision of Prof. **Mario Mikulincer**, who founded the school in 2007 as a center of innovation and excellence. He is also excited to develop the school further and ensure that it continues to be a source of pride for IDC Herzliya as a whole. Halperin is married with three children.

- Sophie Vardi

IDC Herzliya School of Psychology Partners with the SHALEM Movement

It has long been known that when retirees are given the opportunity to take part in volunteer activities, both sides benefit – the volunteer, who continues to lead a meaningful and productive life, and the community being assisted. This awareness led to the launching of the SHALEM movement (the National Service for Adult Volunteering), which offers seniors the opportunity to channel their talents, skills and experience into a wide range of volunteer programs. SHALEM and IDC Herzliya's School of Psychology jointly held an academic conference in collaboration with the Communication Aging and Neuropsychology Lab headed by Dr.

Boaz Ben-David and with Dr. **Roni Tibon** from the Cognitive Neuroscience Lab headed by Dr. **Daniel Levy**. Sessions at the conference were held on subjects such as brain, emotion and cognition among seniors, and provided insights into the innovative ideas being studied in the labs such as communication, cognitive and sensory integration in aging, and the creation of novel applications to aid attention and memory. The conference also examined how variations to cognitions, motivations and emotions in the golden years might benefit from volunteer activities, and facilitate the elderly citizen's ability to successfully contribute to their community.



The collaborators from IDC Herzliya and the SHALEM movement launch the academic conference.

Discussing "Psychology, Research of the Brain, and Social Change"

To mark the 20th anniversary of the establishment of IDC Herzliya, the School of Psychology organized a conference titled "Psychology, Research of the Brain, and Social Change." During the event, five main topics were discussed: reason and emotion in decision making; integrating the senior

citizen population into Israeli society; the psychology of political change in Israel; emotional, social and cognitive challenges for children in the 21st century and the role of the education system, and accessibility of mental health care as a means to social change. IDC faculty as well

as other Israeli experts in their fields presented up-to-date research and held discussions on how these issues affect society in general, and Israeli society in particular. The conference underlined the relevance of psychology to social reality and the field's ability to influence social change.