

Innovation in the Negev



TECH TALK
By ARIEL SHAPIRA

Ben-Gurion University of the Negev is holding its sixth annual engineering and technology symposium this Wednesday, focusing on innovation in the Negev. The symposium will include speeches from various guests, including Joey Low, the director of a venture-capital fund that invests in Israeli start-ups.

Every year, thousands of people come to hear hundreds of engineering students from 16 different faculties present their final projects. Among the topics are unique software applications, autonomous vehicles, renewable-energy solutions, medical technology and transportation solutions.

Robotic vehicles

A robotics competition will take place in which 14 groups of students will present autonomous robotic vehicles they have developed over the past year at the BGU Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering. More than 550 students will present technological innovations they have created, including an electric race car, a personnel-management app for the agriculture industry, a sociological audio system, a mobile app for home dialysis, a travel-sharing app, a smart consumerism app, a clothes-sharing app for teens, a parking app and a self-monitoring juvenile onset diabetes app.

AVG finds a new home

AVG, a successful antivirus and Internet-security software company, has announced the opening of its new Tel Aviv Mobile Center of Excellence.

AVG's mobile development and product teams offer security solutions to 100 million mobile users. They are moving to the top floors of the brand new Adgar Tower, under the management of AVG Israel CEO Harel Tayeb, the former director of mobile operations at Conduit.

Senior AVG managers arrived in Israel last week to secure investments or acquisitions of 15 innovative Israeli start-ups.

AVG hopes the new center will be the perfect breeding ground for innovation and growth. It intends to recruit an additional 60 programmers in the near future. AVG Israel currently employs 120



AVG ISRAEL CEO Harel Tayeb: 'We will be meeting with dozens of new Israeli mobile start-ups in the next few months and hope to find companies that are developing advanced products in the field of information security that could create synergy with us.' (Amir Yaakobi)

people, and AVG International employs more than 1,000 people.

Young entrepreneurs think outside the box

Ten groups of young entrepreneurs took part in **Bank Leumi's** 17th annual competition last week. This program is part of Junior Achievement Worldwide, a nonprofit youth organization that works with local businesses and organizations.

The Israeli program is called **Young Entrepreneurs Doing Business** and is open to teenagers throughout the country between the ages of 15 and 17 who are willing to think out of the box. Young Entrepreneurs is currently running 200 groups with a total of 3,500 participants.

Thousands of teenagers are exposed to production processes and get to experience a real-life cycle of a company. The participants conduct market research, develop products, raise capital, prepare business plans and market their products to the public. At the end of the program, they dissolve their company, split the profits (if there are any) or decide to donate the funds to a nonprofit of their choice.

Bank Leumi funds the program and also makes volunteer business advisers from within the bank available to guide the young entrepreneurs as they create new start-ups.

A group of teens from the Gvanim School in Kadi-

ma-Tzoren came in first place with a product called **Sit Up**. Second place went to Hakfar Hayarok School with a game called **Break the Bank**, which teaches smart consumerism through the use of trivia cards that teach strategic thinking. Third place went to students from De Shalit School in Rehovot who developed a **smart wristband** that alerts people when they have had too much sun exposure.

Sit Up is a harness that lets you safely carry your toddler or young child on your shoulders. It has two straps that wrap around the child's legs under the knees and can be easily adjusted to accommodate different-sized children. Sit Up is made from durable material, can be stored easily and can be used for children up to age 11.

The Sit Up will be produced in Netiv, which is a sheltered sewing workshop for people with special needs. The entrepreneurs say that within a very short time, sales of the product will grow exponentially. Prison Service workers will also join the work force in an effort to keep up with demand.

The Sit Up team will represent Israel at the Junior Achievement Worldwide competition in Berlin next month, along with representatives from the other 125 member countries.

If you run a young start-up, have developed an interesting app or have a question, please feel free to contact info@social-wisdom.com.

Translated by Hannah Hochmer.