

Israeli university to enter Concordia MBA competition

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

For the first time, Israel will participate in Concordia University's international contest for master of business administration students.

Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (BGU) will send a team to the John Molson MBA International Case Competition, Jan. 3 to 8 at the Fairmont Queen Elizabeth Hotel.

The BGU team, which will consist of at least five students (one an alternate) and a coach, will be among 36 teams from four continents vying in this 30th edition of the event.

Israel is the first Middle Eastern country ever to take part in the competition, said Alan Hochstein, associate dean of Concordia's John Molson School of Business.

This not-for-profit competition has been held annually since 1982, and has been international since 1992. It describes itself as the oldest and largest MBA case competition in the world.

Working as a team, students solve problems that businesses today might experience.

Founded and run by students, with the support of major corporations, the 2011 edition will have teams from universities across Canada and the United States, as well as Finland, Germany, Singapore, Sweden, Hungary, Portugal, France, Mexico and Pakistan – about 180 students in all.

More than 200 business executives or consultants will act as judges. Another 250 people serve as volunteers. The public can attend all sessions.

The champions will be awarded \$10,000 for their school, with smaller amounts going to runners-up.

As far as Hochstein can recall, no Israeli university

in the past ever applied to enter the competition. Teams are selected upon an evaluation of their business school. Forty-six schools applied this year.

The reason may be cost. Students or their schools are responsible for their travel and other expenses.

The Canadian Associates of BGU hopes to raise the funds to cover all of the Israeli team's costs, said Amy Leitner, the Montreal chapter executive director.

Lack of knowledge of the competition may have been another factor. Leitner said the idea of inviting BGU to apply came from one of the associates' supporters, Arnold Echenberg, who was a judge in last year's competition.

Leitner subsequently met last summer with BGU's vice-president for international affairs, Amos Drory, and Molson dean Sanjay Sharma, and several members of the board of directors of the case competition. "They were all very excited about having BGU participate," Leitner said.

Drory is a former dean of BGU's school of management. BGU's MBA program was developed in co-operation with Columbia University and offers a regular two-year MBA course of study, as well as a 13-month honours program taught in English.

Its team may be one to reckon with. In 2007, BGU came first in the European Business Plan Competition in its division, and second globally, Leitner noted.

The competition is a round-robin tournament with five business cases being put to the students. Four of the cases are selected from among the top entries in an annual case-writing competition.

The fifth case is a real-life challenge a major company is currently facing. The 2010 case concerned the Montreal Canadiens' situation at the conclusion of the hockey club's centennial anniversary.

While here, the students will also be treated to social events and outings in Montreal.

Enjoy a variety of foods and help combat local hunger

Compiled by CJN Staff

The Mazon Kosher Food Fest, which annually raises funds to provide nourishment for the needy in Quebec, is changing its format for its 16th edition.

On Nov. 23, Mazon will...

best they have to offer," said event spokesperson Jayne Schneider Lisak.

"Have a yen for steak? Go to Meat Mountain. Feel like Chinese? Go visit Asia Land, and then turn left at Sweet Street."