

Help those most in need

Eradicate extreme poverty & hunger Support Concern Worldwide
www.concern.net

Public Service Ads by Google

Subscribe to Print Edition

Fri., April 24, 2009 Nisan 30, 5769

הארץ

Israel Time: 01:44 (EST+7)

HAARETZ.com

[Back to Homepage](#)

web haaretz.com

Search



[Haaretz Toolbar](#) [Diplomacy](#) [Defense](#) [Jewish World Opinion](#) [National](#) [Print Edition](#) [Car Rental](#)
[Books](#) [Haaretz Magazine](#) [Business](#) [Real Estate](#) [Joy of Giving](#) [Travel](#) [Week's End](#) [Anglo File](#) [TLV 100](#)



Talkback

Read Respond

Read & React

[Barak: Gaza probe shows IDF among world's most moral armies](#)
Responses: 125

[Amos Harel: IDF's idea of 'proportionate' is a matter of interpretation](#)
Responses: 58

[Netanyahu's Mideast policy damaging EU ties](#)
Responses: 57

[Yad Vashem fires employee who compared Holocaust to Nakba](#)
Responses: 67

Print

Send to a friend

Send response

More Headlines

22:01 [Clinton: Israel risks losing support on Iran](#)

21:55 [Obama: It is our duty to prevent another Holocaust](#)

17:42 [Mubarak to Hezbollah: Beware of Egypt's wrath](#)

23:37 [Israelis in Europe warned of Hezbollah kidnap threat](#)

22:14 [Iran slams UN for silence on Israel's 'abhorrent crimes'](#)

15:51 [UN kicks Jewish, Iranian groups out of Durban II](#)

17:03 [Gaza's hobbled power plant makes millions despite turmoil](#)

22:31 [WATCH: Daily news round-up from Israel](#)

16:20 [3,000-year-old arms storehouse uncovered in Sinai](#)

19:55 [Livni urges EU: Don't halt EU-Israel relations upgrade](#)

17:44 [Lieberman won't accompany Netanyahu to Egypt, says Mubarak](#)

23:07 [Tel Aviv parties by pedal power on Earth Day](#)

Previous Editions

Select Day

The IDF-induced brain drain

By Yosi Avron

Tags: IDF, Albert Einstein >>

Follow Haaretz.com on [twitter!](#)

Albert Einstein published four papers in 1905. Two of them changed the face of physics.

One, which Einstein himself called revolutionary, is indeed a cornerstone of quantum physics, and earned him the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1926. The other paper, about the theory of relativity, turned Einstein into a 20th century cultural icon and deduced the mass-energy equation $E=mc^2$. The notorious result of this equation was the atom bomb. Einstein was 26 years old that year.

Genius in physics and mathematics, as in chess, music and sports, almost always manifests itself at a young age. Daring, quick thinking, enthusiasm and deduction let the creativity break out. The 20s are a scientific springtime.

The Israel Defense Forces Advertisement has succeeded in getting the most out of people of this age. They are the engine for its technological innovation. Its achievements in computers, teleprocessing, intelligence and information security would not be possible without the talented, 20-year-old problem-solvers.

Israel owes its status as a high-tech power and a start-up leader to the army, which gives the free market entrepreneurs technological ability and practical experience.

The army has an academic program for talented youth - it sends them to complete bachelor's degrees before their service, and in return they serve for six years. One would expect these soldiers to spearhead the country's R&D and become its academic backbone upon their release.

But in reality, this program discourages participants from going into research, and does not inspire advanced doctoral studies. Youngsters with scientific talent fall into the "honey trap" of extended military service, and then reject a career in research and development.

These soldiers complete their military service at age 28, after six years of service, or nine for those in a more prestigious program. If they then choose an R&D career, they can begin only at age 35, after spending three to five years on a doctorate and two to four years in doctoral training. This is not a tempting prospect.

Thus, very few of these soldiers go on to complete a doctorate. This has implications for security, industrial and academic R&D.

Microfinance Empowers

Join us in enabling the poorest of the poor to improve their own lives

www.GrameenFoundation.org

Public Service Ads by Google

Kiva Microfinance

"Loans that Change Lives." Make a Difference and Lend Today!

מודעות שירות לציבור של Google

Special Offers

Advertisement

Spring Specials-Dan Hotels

Jerusalem from 179\$. Tel-Aviv from 223\$. Herzliya from 336\$

The Meier on Rothschild Tower

Masterpiece Residence in the Heart of Tel Aviv

Dead Sea Skin Care

Quality cosmetics from the Dead Sea. Coupon code HAARETZ for 12% off!

Camp Kimama Israel 2009

The best place for your

To find one's place in Israeli academia, one must first prove oneself in the international academic community. The latter sees six years of military service as a black hole during a critical period of potential scientific activity. These demobilized soldiers begin their doctoral studies at an age when most academics are seeking jobs as junior professors.

Under these conditions, Israelis will find it difficult - or even impossible - to take part in scientific research at leading universities.

The crisis caused by the IDF's academic program can be seen in the fact that none of the Technion Physics Department faculty members hired over the last 15 years came from this program. This is not good for the IDF either, because gifted youngsters will not choose a track that closes academic doors.

The IDF academic program must therefore be reorganized in order to provide the IDF with the personnel it needs, while encouraging and enabling participants to complete a doctorate at a reasonable age. This is the only way to ensure strong R&D, advance Israeli academia and create a viable basis of quality personnel for the IDF.

The writer is dean of the Technion's Physics Department.

[Subscribe to Print Edition](#)

 [Bookmark to del.icio.us](#)
 [Digg It!](#)



Disrupting Ahmadinejad

UN expels Jewish and Iranian groups from global racism conference 'Durban II'



Ancient Egypt

3,000-year-old arms storehouse uncovered in the Egyptian peninsula of Sinai

Acumen Fund

Building transformative businesses to solve the problems of poverty

Public Service Ads by Google

Talkback

 [Send your response](#)



[Home](#) | [TV](#) | [Print Edition](#) | [Diplomacy](#) | [Opinion](#) | [Arts & Leisure](#) | [Sports](#) | [Jewish World](#) | [Israel 2009 election results](#)

[Site rules](#) | [Makom: Engaging on Israel](#) | [Search engine marketing](#)

Haaretz.com, the online edition of Haaretz Newspaper in Israel, offers real-time breaking news, opinions and analysis from Israel and the Middle East. Haaretz.com provides extensive and in-depth coverage of Israel, the Jewish World and the Middle East, including defense, diplomacy, the Arab-Israeli conflict, the peace process, Israeli politics, Jerusalem affairs, international relations, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, the Palestinian Authority, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the Israeli business world and Jewish life in Israel and the Diaspora.

© Copyright 2009 Haaretz. All rights reserved

children this summer
Eldan Rent a Car
Israel's leading car rental company offers you a 20% discount on online reservations
Jewish Singles Personal Ads
Find the love of your life on JDate.com
Junkyard
Junk a car - get free towing nationwide and a tax-deductible receipt

