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# Project Spotlight: Lauder Employment Center

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## IN AN EFFORT TO INVEST IN THE NEXT

generation of the Negev, this past March Jewish National Fund brought together 25 mayors from the Negev to inaugurate the Lauder Employment Center in Be'er Sheva, the first of its kind in Israel. Operated in partnership with JNF and Ben Gurion University (BGU), the center will offer comprehensive career services and provide guidance and resources to students and alumni of BGU and other area college graduates. JNF's *Blueprint Negev* initiative has changed the face of Be'er Sheva and the Lauder Employment Center will help offer employment opportunities to current and future residents, fulfilling the vision of a prosperous southern Israel.

"No one will move to the Negev or stay here if they can't find work," said Ronald S. Lauder, JNF Chairman of the Board and President of the Lauder Employment Center. "For me, this project is the realization of a dream. For the Ben Gurion University alumni to stay in the Negev, and for other Israelis and immigrants to be attracted to this region, there is a need for housing, infrastructure, and employment."

The Lauder Employment Center will serve as a vital resource to students and alumni, as well as assist businesses and potential employers throughout the Negev to find qualified employees. Each year, the center expects to provide guidance

and services to upwards of 4,500 students. These services will foster confidence and offer potential employees a competitive edge in the job market by providing all of the necessary tools for career development. Current services and activities include:

- A series of employment consultations to evaluate skills and abilities, define interests, and provide career direction
- Workshops on resume writing, the interview process, labor laws, and integration into the workforce
- Developing personalized career plans to identify and reach short- and long-term career goals
- Professional conferences for potential employers throughout the Negev
- Job listings, career fairs, on-site interviewing, and employer "Spotlight Meetings" that will give students insight on businesses directly from the source

JNF is committed to raising \$500,000 annually to support the ongoing operations of the Lauder Employment Center. This center is an essential piece of the puzzle in the development of Be'er Sheva and the entire Negev region. ■

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