



**DATE:** July 6, 2009  
**CONTACT:** Yivsam Azgad, Tel: 972-8-934-3856/2  
**EMAIL:** [Yivsam.azgad@weizmann.ac.il](mailto:Yivsam.azgad@weizmann.ac.il) / [news@weizmann.ac.il](mailto:news@weizmann.ac.il)

## **Baroness Ariane de Rothschild Visits the Weizmann Institute of Science**

There she met with science teachers participating in a unique science education program.

Baroness Ariane de Rothschild was at the Weizmann Institute, yesterday, to get a first-hand report on a one-of-a-kind program for promoting excellence in science and math education, which is supported by the Rothschild-Caesarea Foundation. She first met with Institute President Prof. Daniel Zajfman, who filled her in on the history of the Weizmann Institute and the vision of its founder, Dr. Chaim Weizmann, the first President of the State of Israel and of the Weizmann Institute, as well as on the Israel's present-day place on the forefront of global science. Vice President for Resource Development and Dean for Educational Activities Prof. Israel Bar-Joseph then spoke to her on the Rothschild-Weizmann Program for Excellence in Science Teaching and its goal of creating an elite corps of science teachers to lead the way in transforming the field. The Baroness de Rothschild expressed particular interest in the criteria for acceptance to the program and the quality of the teachers participating, pointing out that the educational ills the program was designed to address are worldwide problems. She then met with the scientific directors of the program, Head of the Weizmann Institute's Science Teaching Department Prof. Bat-Sheva Eylon and Prof. Shimon Levit, as well as five of the program's participants.

Born in San Salvador and raised in Latin America and Africa, Baroness Ariane de Rothschild, a French and German citizen, has over twenty years of finance and banking experience. She now holds various board positions in Geneva and in Paris with the LCF Rothschild Group, as well as serving as chairwoman of BeCitizen, an advisory company in structured finance and fund management for the environment sector. In addition, she devotes much of her time to the Edmond and Benjamin de Rothschild Foundations, in which her personal interests mesh with the family's commitment to education and philanthropic innovation in the arts and culture, medical research, environment, women's empowerment, intercultural dialogue and social entrepreneurship.

The Rothschild-Weizmann Program for Excellence in Science Teaching, which began operating at the Weizmann Institute last year, grants master's degrees to outstanding science and math teachers in middle and high schools. For those who already have advanced science degrees, the program also offers a track in developing educational initiatives, which combines practical experience with scientific research. The prestigious Rothschild-Weizmann Program deepens and broadens the teachers' scientific knowledge, familiarizes them with the newest approaches to science education, introduces them to research in the field of science teaching and provides them with experience in leading original educational initiatives. Participants in the program receive study grants and an exemption from tuition, and they continue to teach in parallel to their studies. The first 50 teachers to join the program are now finishing their first year of studies.