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WEIZMANN INSTITUTE WOMEN IN SCIENCE PROGRAM WINS AWARD IN BARCELONA

REHOVOT, ISRAEL—March 3, 2013—In honor of International Women’s Day, the city of Barcelona will present the 27th Maria Aurèlia Capmany award on March 4 to the Weizmann Institute of Science for its commitment to advancing young women in science. A representative of the Institute will accept the prize at the Barcelona city hall from members of the city council section for Women and Civil Rights.

The Weizmann Institute was chosen for its national program for advancing women in science, founded at the Institute in 2007 to address the need to increase the numbers of women who choose science as a career and the percentages of women in top academic faculty positions. The program is meant to help young women through the main bottleneck that prevents many of them from continuing on to academic science positions in Israel: the need to conduct postdoctoral research abroad in the world’s leading labs. By the time they have completed their PhDs, many women have spouses and young children, and the expense of moving the entire family abroad for several years can be prohibitive. To combat this problem, each year the Weizmann Institute gives special awards to 10 outstanding young women who have completed their doctorates in the natural or exact sciences in one of Israel’s academic institutions, and who have been accepted to postdoctoral positions abroad. These grants – \$20,000 a year for two years – are given on top of the fellowships awarded by the host institutes or other sources, and are specifically intended to help the women bring their families along.

The program is headed by the Weizmann Institute’s Adviser to the President for Advancing Women in Science, Prof. Varda Rotter. The program does not end with the handing out of awards: Prof. Rotter stays in contact with the women throughout their stay

abroad, encouraging them to return to Israel afterward and helping to ease their return. The program is supported by the Charles H. Revson Foundation in New York, the Clore Israel Foundation, and additional philanthropic sources that come through the Weizmann Institute.

To date, 64 young women have received these awards. Of these, 17 are now on the faculty of Israeli research institutes, two are in information-based industries, another two have accepted positions abroad, two have left the program, and the rest are still pursuing their postdoctoral training. In addition, since 2006, the Weizmann Institute has given biennial awards of \$25,000 to women scientists of international stature. While this prize is given in recognition of groundbreaking achievements, its goal is also to encourage positive role models and provide inspiration for female students and young researchers.

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The Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot, Israel, is one of the world's top-ranking multidisciplinary research institutions. The Institute's 2,700-strong scientific community engages in research addressing crucial problems in medicine and health, energy, technology, agriculture, and the environment. Outstanding young scientists from around the world pursue advanced degrees at the Weizmann Institute's Feinberg Graduate School. The discoveries and theories of Weizmann Institute scientists have had a major impact on the wider scientific community, as well as on the quality of life of millions of people worldwide.