



PERSONALITY OF THE MONTH

Imad Younis

Born and raised in Nazareth, Imad Younis obtained a BS degree in electrical engineering from Haifa's Technion, the Israel Institute of Technology. During the 1980s most of the high-tech industry in Israel was dominated by the military, so Imad, as a Palestinian, had limited options for finding employment. He started out with research-and-development positions at the Technion School of Medicine and Fidelity Medical Ltd. before he decided to move on to become an entrepreneur in the field of medical devices and technology. In 1993, Imad established Alpha Omega (AO) in Nazareth, working initially as a research-and-development subcontractor. Together with his wife Reem, a civil engineer and Technion graduate, Imad strengthened the core competencies of AO in the fields of neural recording and stimulation, engaging with both companies and scientists. Over time, the company began to penetrate markets with innovative products, making

profits and showing steady growth. As AO prospered, Imad gradually built up its infrastructure, converting the company into a worldwide leader of technology in the fields of neuroscience and functional neurosurgery. Under his management, company employees and researchers grew to manage and solve most difficult challenges. Today, the company produces state-of-the-art, reliable products that respond to market needs and trends. AO employs 75 people, including Christians, Muslims, and Jews, at headquarters in Nazareth and two branches in Germany and the United States.

Working closely with scientists, physicians, and partners, Imad strives to be a significant player in the field by offering new solutions and therapies for the treatment of neurological and psychiatric diseases. AO's recording and stimulation devices are used in the localization of surgical targets for the

implantation of Deep Brain Stimulators (DBS) or the ablation of target in the treatment of neurological and psychiatric disorders such as Parkinson's disease and dystonia (a muscular disease that causes neurologically induced uncontrolled muscular spasms and affects about one percent of a population). In simple language, AO provides electrode-bearing devices that are able to safely drive inside the brain and record neural activity, stimulate neural tissue, and process and analyze recorded data. In a manner that is similar to the functioning of a GPS, they guide

time when there was no entrepreneurial eco-system in place (the first startup weekend in Nazareth was held in 2012) have made the company stronger. In 2012, Alpha Omega was honored as the Israeli Company of the Year by the Atlanta-based American-Israeli Chamber of Commerce (known today as Conexx – America Israel Business Connector).

Imad's personal image as an honest, capable, and trusted businessman among medical-device companies, physicians, and scientists has been adopted as a guiding principle by AO managerial staff. These qualities have



a neurosurgeon to the required location where a permanent electrode is implanted to eliminate disease symptoms and allow a patient to return to normal life. The tools have FDA (US), CE (Europe), and CFDA (China) approvals. In Europe this method is used also for treating people with [clinical] depression.

With little financial support, AO was largely bootstrapped (self-supported – in its earliest stages by the sale of the couple's car) with the exception of a grant from the Israeli Office of the Chief Scientist. To finance further growth, Imad is considering initial public offering (IPO), venture capital and private (angel) investment, or partnership with major industrial players. He has helped other startups develop and prosper, some of them working as competitors, and is happy to serve as a role model, offering support and advice. The initial difficulties that AO faced and had to overcome at a

helped the company progress as it introduces various applications and new products – a significant feat in the conservative and hard-to-enter field of neurosurgery. Company customers and clients are spread across Europe and the Americas, as well as throughout Asia and Australia.

Imad is making it part of his mission to grow new leaders from his community so that they can take the lead in shaping the society's future. Thus, he invests in creating a better Nazareth for all through community activity and serving on multiple boards of directors. He initiates and promotes numerous programs that involve young adults and college students, and that reflect the principles of his mission and beliefs.

Imad and Reem live in Nazareth and have three children. In his free time, Imad enjoys reading, sports, and preparing breakfast on Sunday mornings.