

2021 Summer ACE Award Winner

(Acknowledging Commitment & Excellence)



Nitsan Garfinkel
Lab Manager
Department of Molecular Metabolism



Here a summary as to why Nitsan was selected as the winner for the 2021 Summer ACE Award:

Nitsan joined the Hotamisligil lab during a critical period: her role had not been occupied for 1.5 years and the lab was growing and in dire need of support. As difficult as these hurdles would have been on their own, just a few months after her hire, the COVID pandemic struck and impacted all our lives on a global scale. Nitsan's steadfast attitude to achieve success and meet her goals did not waver. She worked diligently to reorganize lab inventory and samples, making critical space for new researchers. Her colleagues were particularly grateful to her because she managed to secure crucial reagents and supplies during the pandemic, a task many researchers found impossible. They point out that she was directly responsible for enabling critical experiments to be completed. She coordinated the unprecedented immediate shut down of lab operations at the start of the pandemic, an incredibly complex endeavor given the number and variety of projects in the lab. Then, almost as quickly as operations were shut down, she enabled the ramp-up of lab operations as researchers in dire need of continuing their work were allowed to return. With school guidance, she designed COVID-Lab-Safety protocols throughout the various phases of reopening to ensure lab personnel were safe while entering the space so that project timelines continued to progress. Above and beyond all this, she is thought of as the "glue" that held her lab together, brought positive energy to her colleagues, and uplifted her community throughout a time when everyone needed a little extra support. Despite her own challenges, she made herself available to support others in navigating the pandemic. Her empathy and kindness made this difficult time much better for many.

Nitsan worked tirelessly during the lockdown, so that lab equipment, supplies, and operations were maintained and running smoothly. Her loyalty and dedication to Harvard and her lab are cardinal qualities that create the foundation to any successful organization. Nitsan is seen as a hero among her colleagues, and essential to their success. Congratulations, Nitsan!