



MIT Hillel Update



Greetings to Alumni, Parents, and Friends in Cambridge and Beyond...

Pictured Above:

1. Middle Eastern Drumming by the sukkah: Micha Ben-Naim '16, Ariella Yosafat '16, Abby Bauer '17, Drum-master George Kirby SM'78, Alana Lidawer '16
2. Birthright Guide Elaun Rave shows shakshuka cooking technique to Zev Bimstein '15, Dalia Leibowitz '16, and Haley Hurowitz '16
3. Freshmen decorate the sukkah using blacklight paint (L-R): Ari Green, Emily Tang, Abby Bauer, Jason Fischman, Suri Bandler

Executive Director's Update



If there was a theme to the beginning of the term and the fall holidays it was amazing, beautiful weather. MIT Hillel took full advantage of the warmth and sun: from an outdoor shofar blowing in the Next House courtyard to Simchat Torah dancing on the streets of Cambridge, positive feelings, volume, and celebration were high. Each day and night in the sukkah featured a different event. Graduate Students organized "Klezmer in the Sukkah." Rabbi Gavriel Goldfeder led lively discussions on Jewish topics, enticing even those just passing by or through forlunch to join in. At least a handful of students braved

sleeping in the sukkah in the middle of Kresge Oval...

Throughout this September's packed holiday season, Hillel staff began meeting our new class of almost 100 freshmen. Coffee dates to individually get to know each student lead to an appreciation for decaf coffee, or herbal tea. It has long been a first-year student tradition to take charge of decorating the Hillel sukkah. This year's twist included blacklight paint, with

ultraviolet bulbs shining on the posters all week. The cool lighting effects on everyone's clothing was also noteworthy.



My favorite image from the month was pairs of AEPi brothers and their freshman recruits sitting in the sukkah interviewing each other during fraternity Rush Week. Jews making use of the Hillel sukkah to build personal relationships and ultimately create community. It doesn't get better.

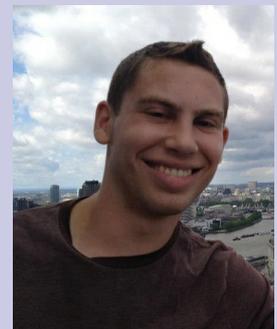


Or maybe it does get even better... to great student excitement, September also saw the return of "\$4 Shabbat Dinners". With deep appreciation for a generous donation from Lisa Rosenbaum '77 and Ron Fisher, Hillel is now able to subsidize Shabbat dinner for students without a meal plan. (For those on the meal plan, Shabbat meals are a regular "swipe".) Spread the word! Nowhere else on campus can you get soup, salad, challah, vegetarian and meat entrees (always with a gluten-free option), sides, and dessert for this price. The added relaxation and break from problem sets in a casual, communal atmosphere:

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Mentshn of Mention



Josh Zeidman '14
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My name is Josh Zeidman, and I am a senior studying chemical-biological engineering. Growing up in the suburbs just outside of Chicago, I had never really thought much about MIT until the summer before my senior year. I was with my family in the Boston area, and we decided to stop by. I felt an instant, intangible connection with the place and was fortunate enough to be back for real a year later in what has definitely been the luckiest and best decision I have made in my life.

At MIT, I have tried to pursue a number of different interests and passions outside of the classroom. This has led me to various activities. I ran cross country and track my freshman year -- a continuation of a high school passion -- but decided to refocus in my sophomore year on another interest of mine: community service. I became heavily involved in MIT's Habitat for Humanity club and also created a philanthropy event at my fraternity. These interests vaulted me into the role of President of both organizations my junior year, and both have been an

priceless.

We're looking forward to carrying the energy of the term's start into the year.

L'shalom,
Rabbi Michelle Fisher SM'97
rabbif@mit.edu

Torah from Tech



Our Torah this month is taught by Morrisa Brenner '13 (Course 16-2). She is now living and working in Southern California. She can be reached at morrisab@alum.mit.edu.

This week's Parsha, Noah, tells two stories - the story of Noah and the story of the Tower of Babel. In the first, God sends down a flood to eliminate the rampant wickedness and corruption in the world by wiping out all living creatures. God warns Noah about the impending storm and gives him directions for building an Ark to house his family and representatives from all of the species on Earth for the duration of the storm. In this story, the Ark is created as a partnership between God and Noah - God tells Noah how to make an Ark that can survive the flood and Noah builds the Ark based on these instructions.

After the flood, the world gradually fills with living beings again and people begin to seek out and acquire new knowledge on their own. They discover how to bake bricks and make mortar, and they put these skills to use in constructing a city. In addition, they decide to include a tower to the sky. God sees what the people are doing and fears that if they are left unchecked then "nothing [people] may propose to do will be out of their reach" (Genesis 11.6). In order to change the balance and reimpose limits on humanity, God creates barriers to divide the people by making them all speak different languages and scattering them over the Earth. In only a few generations, humanity amasses sufficient skills and knowledge to elicit direct intervention from God.

This transformation serves as a testament to humanity's ability to make new discoveries and conquer new frontiers, yet the story also serves as a warning against blind progress and ambition. In the Tower of Babel, God provides a check on this blind creation by introducing new roadblocks through language and geographic barriers. In today's increasingly global world, these cultural, linguistic, and geographic barriers that defined society for millennia still exist, but are disappearing rapidly; as these barriers drop away the speed of progress grows faster and faster. This has had substantial benefits for society - modern electronics and healthcare are only a few - but it has also raised substantial moral and ethical questions. It is essential to ask these questions early and often and try to mitigate potential consequences *before* they become reality in order to avoid being forced to deal with forces we are not prepared to face.

Many of us went through MIT with a desire to be at the forefront of this progress, be it through scientific discovery, building new devices, saving lives, or something else entirely. As such, I hope each of us are able to take responsibility for our contributions and to tackle the difficult issues surrounding them, to continue to be a positive force for change in the world.

MIT Hillel's 2014 Annual Fund Add to Jewish life @ MIT!

The generosity and annual support of alumni, parents, faculty, and friends contributes to a depth of Jewish life, experiences, and growth for MIT's Jewish community. Thank you to our [2013 Annual Fund donors!](#)

Do you like what you read and hear about Jewish life at MIT? Please help us create vibrant Jewish life at MIT, and lasting commitments to Judaism. [Add your name](#) to MIT Hillel's 2014 Donor Roll!

Tamid Initiative - Planned Giving @ MIT Hillel

Endowment and planned gifts truly sustain and build an organization. MIT Hillel is excited to help you create your personal Jewish legacy at MIT.

We invite alumni and friends who care deeply about Jewish life at MIT to consider joining the Institute's **Katharine Dexter McCormick (1904) Society (KDMS)** and be part of the **Tamid Initiative** by making a bequest to MIT, for the benefit of MIT Hillel. Your generosity will help MIT Hillel engage today's students, securing our Jewish future with confidence.

incredibly impactful part of my MIT experience.

These interests also paralleled my Hillel involvement. I testrfd the waters as a freshman and went on Birthright over that summer. My sophomore year, I joined the Hillel Board as the Tzedek Chair, in order to spend a year working on Jewish community service events and programming.

This initial Hillel involvement has led me to help plan a number of Greek Shabbat dinners on campus and currently function as one of three on-campus Peer Network Engagement Interns.

All these activities have taught me that MIT is both an amazing and unique place -- because of the people as well as the opportunities.

MIT Hillel is no exception. Never before coming to MIT had I been surrounded by so many impressive, interesting and diverse colleagues; the experience is both humbling, motivating and highly rewarding. I had also never been in an environment where not only was the sky the limit, but the support and encouragement to push the envelope and reach for the sky ever present. Similarly, MIT Hillel has a unique blend of personalities and perspectives that I have enjoyed integrating myself into over my 3+ years at MIT. There are a plethora of avenues for involvement, outreach, and activity planning, something I appreciate and have been able to take advantage of in my time here. At the end of the day, we are all at MIT for the textbook, classroom, educational experience and value, but I feel like my experience at MIT through activities such as Hillel has been so much more enriching.

As a Senior, my time remaining at MIT is short. The barriers left to graduation are significantly less daunting, and I already have a job tucked under my belt. I look forward to enjoying this final year at MIT and exploring even more unique and special parts of this school outside of the classroom. MIT Hillel has been one of those parts, and I am quite thankful for it having been an integral part of MIT experience. I look forward to cultivating my relationship with Hillel and my fellow campus Jews even more over this final year.

To inform us that you plan such a gift, download and send us a [pledge form](#).

MIT and MIT Hillel are eager to help you meet your objectives. For more information, please contact Rabbi Fisher, rabbif@mit.edu.

On the Calendar

Now open: Birthright Registration

Birthright is a free 10-day Israel experience for Jewish students aged 18-26 who have not traveled on a peer-group Israel program. Tell your eligible students to register: www.israelwithisraelis.com. Email MIT Hillel's Birthright Coordinator, [Shoshana Gibbor](#), for more information.

Fall Leading Jewish Minds @ MIT line-up:

- **October 4: Larry Bacow '72**, Visiting Professor of Education, Harvard Graduate School of Education; President Emeritus, Tufts University
- **November 8: Sanjay Sarma**, Fred Fort Flowers '41 & Daniel Fort Flowers '41 Professor of Mechanical Engineering
- **December 6: Peter Temin PhD '64**, Elisha Gray II Professor Emeritus of Economics



Leading Jewish Minds on the Road... in NYC!

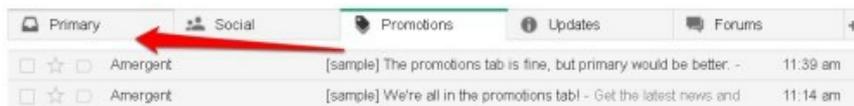
November 22: Bob Langer ScD '74, David H. Koch Institute Professor
Mark your calendars, more info to follow!

Don't miss an e-newsletter!

If you are a Gmail user, you may have noticed their new "tabs" format. Almost all nonprofit emails are being automatically filed in the promotions tab. Don't miss out on an MIT Hillel update: move MIT Hillel emails to your primary tab for better visibility.



Simply drag an email to a new tab (your "Primary" tab).



Once the email has been placed there, a box pops up at the top of the screen and asks if you want future messages to go there too. The answer is, of course, "Yes".

See more at: <http://ejewishphilanthropy.com/what-are-gmail-and-yahoo-doing/#more-62572>

Thank you for supporting MIT Hillel!

Your generous support allows us to help keep Jewish life vibrant on the MIT campus!



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