



MIT Hillel Update



Greetings from Cambridge to MIT's alumni, parents, and friends on campus and around the globe!

Pictured above, left to right:

1. **Campus Preview Weekend:** Pre-frosh explore Hillel over a pizza lunch.
2. **Early April JP Licks Outing:** (L-R): William Shore G, Aviva Siegel '13, Neta Batscha '12, Jessie Mueller '11, Sara Dahan '12, Robert Brik '12, Rebecca Heywood '12
3. **Jews on Ice "flashback" from February:** Abby Klein '14, Eliana Schleifer '12, Jason Strauss '12 take a break from the skating rink.

In This Issue

[MIT Menschen of Mention](#)

[Director's Update](#)

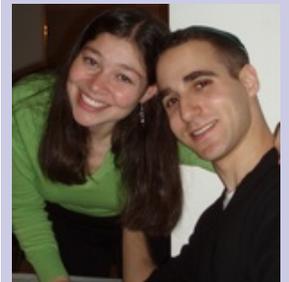
[Torah from Tech](#)

[MIT News](#)

[Donor Thanks](#)

[On the Calendar](#)

Menschen of Mention



*Brett Shapiro G, Course 2;
Jamie Spangler G, Course 20.*

Hi, we are Brett Shapiro and Jamie Spangler. Brett is from Hatfield, PA and came to MIT for his Masters and PhD in Mechanical Engineering (Course 2) in 2005. He does control theory work for a national astrophysics lab called LIGO (Laser Interferometer Gravitational-wave Observatory). LIGO studies relativistic gravitational waves produced from deep space by massive objects such as black holes, neutron stars, and supernovae. Jamie is from Northbrook, IL and is a PhD student in Biological Engineering (Course 20). She studied Biomedical Engineering as an undergraduate at Johns Hopkins and had a particular

Executive Director's Update



I hope everyone had a meaningful and sweet Passover! Posters all around campus this past Tuesday announced: "MIT Annual Bread Bash! Celebrate the end of Passover!" While fully deserving of the *hametz* (leavened bread), our students in fact ate very well all

MIT's Annual Bread Bash



holiday. Multiple seders were held at MIT during Passover: some catered by a local chef, some prepared by student chefs; some held on West Campus, some on East Campus; some for graduate students, some at AEPi. Many different traditions and customs were followed. All were extremely successful. Even with the beginning of Passover overlapping a four-day Patriot's Day weekend holiday (meaning many students went home or were traveling), over 120 seder meals were enjoyed. Kudos to our student leaders and organizers: Jessie Agatstein '12, Mauro Braunstein G, Rebecca Colby '13, Jacob Hurwitz '14, Paul Lazarescu '13, Max Plaut '13, Beth Schaffer '11, Liz Simon '13, Ethan Sokol G, Ariel Sommer G, and Donny Winston G. Catered meals throughout the holiday brought students together in further shared community. In addition, the student board sponsored two lunches of "Matzah for Change" in Lobby 10 of the Infinite Corridor – matzah and a choice of kosher for Passover spreads in return



the minute counter. Malabar and a choice of hummus for a variety of spreads in return for spare change, which was donated to the Japan earthquake relief efforts.

The other large event of note this month was Campus Preview Weekend (CPW), April 7-10. Pictured here: Dina Betser '11, re-frosh Rachel Gomes-Casseres, and Brian Ross '11 enjoy a hummus break at Hillel. Students welcomed dozens of Jewish pre-frosh at a pizza party on Friday afternoon. For dinner on Friday night, over 116 students, pre-frosh, and parents enjoyed celebrating Shabbat together. Word-of-mouth returns suggest that a very large percentage of the admitted Jewish pre-frosh are choosing MIT. The class of 2015 will include Jews from as far-spread locations as Frankfurt am Main, Germany and Anchorage, Alaska (and many points in-between). Even before classes end this semester, our student leadership is already planning Orientation events for them for next Fall. As we all are aware, the holiday and academic cycles continuously turn.



L'shalom,

Rabbi Michelle Fisher SM '97

Torah from Tech



Our Torah this month is taught by Adam Miller '07, Course 14. Adam is the CEO and Co-Founder of Abroad101 (www.studyabroad101.com), the web's first, largest, and fastest-growing study abroad review website. On its way to generating MIT-worthy profits (read: social impact), the company is

currently seeking a Software Engineer (PHP etc) and \$1M in funding. Please email Adam@Abroad101.com if you might be able to help or would like to consider taking part in the Abroad101 story!

The holiday of Pesach that we just finished celebrating reminds us that we were once slaves in the land of Egypt and that many people all over the world are still enslaved today. Some people are enslaved by poverty; some have no right to the freedom of religion or speech, and so are enslaved by the beliefs of a powerful few; and some are enslaved because their very lives are threatened by evil states or organizations.

We remind ourselves at Passover that it is our responsibility to Tikun Ha'Olam: Repair the World

So how do we help? And how do we make sure we're helping as much as possible within the constraints of the amount of time we have to give back?

I hear people say things that really irk the inner economist in me. "Donating money is not as meaningful as community service." "There's nothing as impactful as volunteering one's time." "Do what you love; don't let money influence your career decisions."

The study of economics tells a more nuanced story. Consider the numbers.

Let's say you have H hours to contribute in some way. Let X represent the number of people per hour you can help feed by volunteering. Let W represent your hourly

inclination toward the application of biomolecular engineering to cancer research. Finding her research interests to be well-aligned with those of several faculty in the Department of Biological Engineering, she chose to pursue graduate work at MIT in 2006.

For much of our time here, we have been involved with a number of Hillel's groups including Addir Fellows (an interfaith discussion organization), Grad Hillel, Techiya (MIT's Jewish a cappella group) and the Conservative Minyan. Our involvement with Hillel has satisfied our religious, spiritual, and cultural needs, from High Holiday services to Torah study sessions to karaoke in the sukkah!

Upon arriving at MIT, we immediately took on leadership roles within the graduate Hillel community with the objective of continuing to expand and enhance Jewish life for grad students. Serving as co-presidents of Graduate Hillel from 2006-2010, we helped to organize a wide variety of events such as Shabbat dinners, game nights, and even ice skating parties. The most rewarding part of our involvement in Hillel has been the opportunity it has afforded us to meet brilliant students from all over the world and to help enrich their Jewish experiences here. Our participation in the Jewish community has built lasting memories and friendships that have shaped our graduate school experiences. And most importantly, it introduced us to each other.

After five years of dating, we

wages at work or the approximate value you can create per hour by participating in the capitalist marketplace. Let F represent the cost of giving someone the cash they need to feed themselves for one meal.

Your goal is to feed the greatest number of people possible.

TotalPeopleFed(H) giving your time = $H * X$

TotalPeopleFed(H) making money then giving it away = $H * (W/F)$

Compare the two, and see whether you can Tikun Ha'Olam more by working more hours or a little harder (or sleeping in on Sunday so you're more focused Monday at work, for example), or whether volunteering is really the best use of your time. And utilize similar formulas for supporting politicians and political organizations, for educating the uneducated, for healing the sick, and for anything you do to make the world a better place.

And, just to push the envelope a little further, for those people for whom $X > W/F$, I say, at least think about the implications of getting a higher paying job! Work harder and get promoted! Make some money! Whoever said you should do what you love - it's a truly beautiful and wonderful idea - but consider how to maximize your impact on the world, especially at a time of year when we remind ourselves not to be selfish, but to make the world a better place for those less fortunate than we are. There are enslaved lives at stake, and we have the responsibility to help bring those people freedom.

[Click here](#) to read or post comments on Adam's article.

MIT Hillel in the MIT News

Maseeh Hall and Kosher Dining continue to move ahead. [Bon Appetit](#) was just chosen as the vendor for all dorm dining on campus!

Also from the MIT News Office on March 11: "New meal plan to offer more dietary options and flexibility" -- From athletes to vegetarians, kosher to vegan, revitalized House Dining program will broaden offerings for students... [Read more...](#)



Check out and subscribe to all the [News at MIT!](#)

Todah Rabbah/Thanks again to our Donors!

...and please support MIT Hillel this year! *Even with your IRA!*

Thank you to all of our 2010 Annual Donors! Your leadership and support contributes to a depth of Jewish life, experiences, and growth for the Jews and Jewish community of MIT.

[Add your name](#) to Hillel's 2011 donor roll, and watch for it to appear in a future issue. Our Fiscal Year ends June 30 -- make your 2011 gift today!

Please consider taking advantage of the recent tax bill that extends through 2011 the opportunity to make tax-free rollover gifts from IRAs to MIT Hillel. To make a gift

After five years of dating, we will be married this June in Skokie, IL with Rabbi Fisher officiating the ceremony!

[Thank you for supporting MIT Hillel!](#)

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



from an IRA, contact your IRA custodian as soon as possible. [Judy Sager, MIT Director of Gift Planning](#), can also assist you.

On the Hillel Calendar

June 3: Tech Reunions / Commencement

- **Alumni Reception:** 1-4 pm, Building W11
Have a nosh, visit and celebrate with fellow Jewish alumni and say mazal tov to our newest alumni, the class of 2011
- **Shabbat @ Hillel:** 7 pm, Services; 8 pm, Dinner, both at W11



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