

MIT Hillel Update







L'shana tova!

New Year's greetings to Alumni, Parents, and Friends in Cambridge and Beyond...

Pictured Above:

- 1. New and returning students meet and reunite during Orientation Week make-your-own pizza.
- 2. Isaac Oderberg G, Caroline Morganti '16, Noa Ghersin '13, Nate Zuk G, and Ruth Abrams '13 "bridge" their way to a sweet new year.
 - 3. Hillel graduate students Yasha Berchenko-Kogan and Alan Deckelbaum kick off the year with a Welcome Back barbecue.

Executive Director's Update



Welcome/welcome back to campus! L'shana tova! A new Jewish year and a new academic year coincide this year, literally: tomorrow is the first day of classes and also the first night of Rosh Hashana. The energy of both these new beginnings is palpable within the MIT Jewish community. Our free Rosh Hashana dinner will be a jam-packed event, and an opportunity for both new students and returning students to relax, celebrate, and begin to get to know each other, of course, over food... The week of the High Holy Days has multiple service and nonservice options for students to pray, eat, reflect, and connect.

Leading up to Registration Day, as freshmen were "oriented" and upperclassmen returned last week, meal plans (including kosher dining) had not yet officially begun. Hillel provided numerous opportunities for Jewish students to eat and meet each other. From lox and bagel brunch to make your own pizza, the buzz of "who are you?", "where are you from?", "were you at Google or Dropbox this past summer?", "what are you doing for Rosh Hashana?" and "have you seen the 4-level fort at East Campus yet?" filled the air.

Looking back before Orientation Week, even with many students off-campus, scattered across the US and the globe, the summer was busy at

Hillel. Graduate students, in particular, remain in labs during the summer months... except when they play. Multiple Grad Hillel events, including a bike ride and bbq on the Cape, gave needed breaks from

research. Almost 50 MIT lewish students visited, worked, and competed in Israel this summer. Many experienced Israel for the first time on an MIT-Wellesley-Olin Birthright bus, and stayed longer for MIT's unique Birthright Extension of five days in Israel exploring the hi-tech industry. Others connected deeply peer-to-peer in Haifa with Technion Hillel students as part of ConnecTech, MIT Hillel's year-long initiative involving learning science-ethics, doing



community service and providing science education for young kids, and meeting the parallel American/Israeli cohort. Others were working in labs and companies as part of MIT's MISTI-Israel program. Six were representing their home countries (3 different nations!) in the Maccabi Games and made the MIT press! Mazal tov to Mitchell Kates '13 and Will Tashman '13 (basketball), Matt Monheit '14 (soccer) (team pictured to left), David Wyrobnik '15 (fencing, Germany), Luis Voloch '13 (handball, Brazil), and Nathan Colgan '15 (crew).

Rabbi Gavriel Goldfeder (see Torah from Tech below) joined the MIT Hillel staff

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Mentshn of Mention



Megan Mansfield '16 megania@mit.edu

My name is Megan Mansfield, and I'm a sophomore at MIT. I'm currently majoring in Course 12 (Earth, Atmospheric, and Planetary Science) and am planning on pursuing a second major in Course 8 (Physics). Outside of class, I sing in the MIT Muses, MIT's only all-female a cappella group; play viola in the MIT Symphony Orchestra; and am occasionally involved in the production of plays by the MIT Shakespeare Ensemble.

am originally from Des Moines, lowa, which has a small but wonderful Jewish community. I began looking at MIT as a college option because I knew it was a great place to pursue science, but ended up basing a lot of my decision to come on the community I discovered here. MIT not only offered a good curriculum, but a chance for me to discover a new place and become friends with new and amazing people. I have been introduced to many of the great people I have met at MIT through Hillel. Through Hillel I learned about and participated in a Birthright trip last winter. A free trip to Israel would be fun no matter whom you traveled with, but the great group of people traveling with me made it a truly memorable experience. As I have discovered in many different places at MIT, the



as Senior Jewish Educator in July. Ordained in Israel, Rabbi Goldfeder has led an Orthodox congregation in Boulder for the past decade. He brings a depth of educational knowledge, an inherent sense of pluralism, and a profound curiosity and thoughtfulness to our student engagement.

Particularly exciting for our staff, MIT Hillel was honored at International Hillel's annual summer Institute with a <u>Vision and Values Award</u> as a "Great Place to Work." Yashar koach/congrats to my entire professional team for a great year!

We're not resting on our laurels, however. After significant time working this summer on strategic planning of our student program, the entire Hillel staff is excited and energized to meet the passions, questions, and needs of our incoming and returning students. What a great way to start a New Year!

L'shalom, Rabbi Michelle Fisher SM'97

Torah from Tech



Our Torah this month is taught by Rabbi Gavriel Goldfeder, MIT Hillel's Senior Jewish Educator. He can be reached at heyrabbi@mit.edu.

An apple with honey has officially won out as the de facto symbol of Rosh Hashanah. Everyone likes sweet. But the far-more-risque head of a fish (or a sheep, for some) is actually a more fitting symbol for the essence of the day. Here's why.

Imagine opening your computer on January 1, and a pop-up welcomes you to download all the programs you will need for the following year. It shows you a list. Some of them are updates – yes, you will need updates to OS X, and you'll be happy to update the Mans program on your iPhone. But some

and you'll be happy to update the Maps program on your iPhone. But some of them you've never heard of, and they seem strange. Why would I need Dart? What is Opa? Open Office? I use Microsoft Office! AOL? I'm a Gmail person! Why would a guy or gal like me need Garage Band? I don't play an instrument!

After running the anti-virus to see how this pop-up got past your firewall, let's say you fall into a more philosophic mood. You ask: what kind of person would I be if I knew how to use Dart? How would I be different in order to appreciate Garage Band? What assumptions would I have to let go of in order to see the value of AOL?

You click 'download all.' But your computer tells you that your current operating system cannot manage these programs and the tasks you will use them for. Not only that, you'll need Thunderbolt ports and USB 3 to replace your USB 2 ports. Really? Your system is just fine for what you needed it for this past year. But what about next year?

None of us knows what 'programs' we will need for next year, what modifications to our current 'operating system' will be needed for the new challenges and opportunities ahead. For that very reason, Rosh Hashanah encourages us to think about how our minds change over time, how we grow in what we think is true, or what we are capable of.

And though we cannot anticipate what will need to change, we can turn our efforts toward emptying our minds a bit to make room for the thoughts and ideas that will guide and motivate us next year; for new vocabularies of experience; for new pursuits; for new aspects of our identity to emerge; for new syntheses of our identity to take form; for new relationships to draw us in. The primary act of Rosh Hashanah, then, is an act of emptying – old assumptions, old patterns, outdated opinions - making space for new ones.

So, as macabre as it is, this process is aptly symbolized by a fish head on a platter. Clearly, an apple and honey has more curb appeal. But in the back of your mind, remember what the fish head is trying to teach us: empty your mind for the new year.

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".

community of people studying and working here makes it a truly special place to go to school.

Another great thing I was involved in through Hillel was the memorial event held last year on Yom HaShoah. I helped organize and played viola for a musical memorial in which we performed 'Peace" from The Sparks Fly Upward. The Sparks Fly Upward is an opera about the Holocaust written by my mom, Cathy Lesser Mansfield. Our performance was part of a memorial that also included hearing from Israelis about how Yom HaShoah is commemorated in Israel and a memorial candle-lighting for the six million. This ceremony was very meaningful, and it was nice to be able to use music to remember victims of the Holocaust.

Thank you for supporting MIT Hille!!

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



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

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 <u>2013 Annual Fund donors!</u>

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. <u>Add your name</u> 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** (<u>KDMS</u>) 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.

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, <u>rabbif@mit.edu</u>.

On the Calendar

Wednesday, September 4-Friday, September 6: Rosh Hashana Friday, September 13-Saturday, September 14: Yom Kippur Wednesday, September 18-Friday, September 27: Sukkot

To learn more about services, meals, and happenings on campus, check out <u>our flier</u>. <u>Free Rosh Hashana dinner</u> for MIT students!

Tuesday, September 10: 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 ofEducation; 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!

Mark your calendars, more info to follow!

November 22: Bob Langer ScD '74, David H. Koch Institute Professor

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