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Greetings from MIT to our Alumni, Faculty, Staff, Parents and Friends!

- 1) Jenifer McDermott '19 and Allison Kaslow '18 showing off their art from the 3rd annual Hillel Paint Bar
- 2) Members of the MIT Hillel community participating in CTRL-ALT-DEL (Taschlich) a Rosh Hashanah program to reflect and renew as we enter the new year, followed by the ritual of tossing our "sins" into the Charles
- 3) Nick Schwartz '14, Diego Lazares '18, and Andrew Hall '18 blowing Shofar in their living group

Mentshn of Mention



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Around this time two years ago, I was immersed in the panic of applying to college. My interest in MIT had been sparked suddenly, and pretty last minute. It wasn't until I attended an information session in September of my senior fall that I realized it could be a good fit. I immediately got to work scheduling a day to come for a tour. Being from Providence, RI, it was no big deal to drive an hour out of my way, but I wanted to make the most of my visit.

In high school, I was avidly involved with BBYO, an international Jewish youth movement. In four years of being involved with that organization, I had finally had grown into the Jewish identity that I had never been proud of as a child. At this point in my life, I knew that Jewish life on campus would be a huge factor in my college decision. When I visited MIT, I stopped by Hillel and met some of the people involved. I loved how diverse and close-knit MIT Hillel seemed; it was very unique compared to other schools I had visited. So of course, a year later when I was a student at MIT, I was eager to get involved with the Hillel community.

Currently, I'm a Programming VP on Hillel Student Board. HSB has great time together, and I have really loved being a part of it! When we're not hysterically laughing or stuffing our mouths with snacks (we take our food very seriously), we sometimes plan events. A priority of mine as a Programming VP has been to bring more different communities to Hillel, because I think intersectional Jewish experiences are really important (and fun!). Last spring, I planned a special Shabbat dinner called "Shabbat Shalom Amigos," which was a mixer with the Latino Cultural Center (LCC). That was a blast, and we are planning to make it an annual tradition! Coming up later this fall, I am working with a fellow PLEASURE Educator to plan "Shabbang" (a sex-positive Shabbat). We plan to use this time as a community to reflect upon Judaism's values when it comes to sex, and to just get the conversation going, in order to create healthier attitudes around sex and relationships.

Additionally, last winter, I had the amazing opportunity to experience Israel through MIT's Birthright Israel trip! The trip was incredible -- I think a highlight was making it to the top of Masada! Other than exploring the beautiful country, one of the best things about MIT Hillel's Birthright trip was getting to meet so many other Jewish students from MIT!

Besides my Jewish involvement, I like to keep busy on campus! As I mentioned before, I am a PLEASURE Educator (PLEASURE stands for Peers Leading Education Around Sexuality and Speaking Up for Relationship Empowerment). I am involved with the Undergraduate Association (UA), on the Campus Planning Committee. I am also an Associate Advisor, and I love acting as a peer mentor for the freshmen! My major is Course 1 (Civil and Environmental Engineering), and I am such a nerd when it comes to transportation (I am hoping to double major in Urban Planning).

I am so grateful to MIT Hillel for providing me with such a warm, inviting, supportive community. My freshman fall, it was the first place on campus where I felt at home, and where I knew I would be understood. Getting involved with the Jewish community on campus was definitely one of the best decisions I've made at MIT. I am really looking forward to my sophomore year; now that I have my footing, I

MIT Hillel Update



I love Sukkot!! After 10 days (or, reality for a rabbi, at least 5 weeks) of living in a cerebral world of introspection, atonement, and attempted renewal to best self, a 180 degree change takes place over 5 days. Coming just moments after Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, Sukkot is so physical: building and decorating a sukkah, shaking the *lulav*/four species, cooking and preparing for and inviting guests to eat outdoors (so far the weather looks unseasonably great for the greater Cambridge area). If any Jewish month most represents MIT's motto of *mans et manus*, mind and hand, this month of Tishrei wins the prize.

Actually, almost every month at Hillel demonstrates our equal focus on both these aspects of learning: the expanding of mind and the experiential that incorporates action. I am reeling thinking of all we did since school began 5 weeks ago, given all the preparations for the High Holy Days! Shabbat dinners are off to a strong start,

including our "Welcome back Shabbat" with over 100 students attending -- a parallel equally-successful Grad Hillel Shabbat dinner also gathered on campus that evening. Community experiences are anchors of our experiential learning. During Rosh Hashana, two of my staff, Shoshana Gibbor and Marissa Freed (who you "met" in this column last year), organized our annual Ctrl-Alt-Del, reboot for the new year, reflective conversation on our past year's journey, followed by *tashlich*, the symbolic tossing away of our sins, represented by pieces of bread, into the Charles River. Rabbi Goldfeder has begun two on-going classes so far: Halacha/Jewish law and a class on Atheism. A day after Yom Kippur, students learned about the 7 Species for which the Land of Israel is famous, and then painted them under the artistic guidance of the Paint Bar. Welcoming freshmen, the "Midway" student activities fair, and convening the Hillel student board were among the additional activities that rounded out our hectic September.

As I look out at our community with a broad view and perspective, knowing we strive to help our students grow, intellectually, spiritually, religiously, personally, I take pride in knowing we are truly approaching our students holistically, engaging our students' minds and hands in both MIT and Jewish traditions.

May the Sukkot holiday that begins tonight bring joy and happiness, physicality and refreshment, to everyone, along with a healthy, sweet, and meaningful New Year.

L'shana tova v'chag sameach,

Rabbi Michelle Fisher SM '97,
 Executive Director, MIT Hillel
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Torah from Tech



Reb Daniel Schaefer is a fifth-year rabbinical student at Hebrew College. He is passionate about Torah study, experiential learning, nature connection, and innovation. Prior to rabbinical school, he worked as a wilderness educator, ghostwriter, and social entrepreneur. He has a B.A. from Stanford University and is an alum of AVODAH: The Jewish Service Corps and Mechon Hadar. When he's not working or studying, he loves to swim in lakes, wander through the woods, catch up on Netflix, and think about the future of ideas and technology. He can be reached at danielsc@mit.edu

One of the great joys of my first month at MIT Hillel has been encountering the diversity of people that have come to our programs and events. It's been wonderful to meet students from Israel, Mexico, France, India, Canada, and around the United States; students who have deep backgrounds in Jewish learning and students who are encountering Judaism for the first time; students of different ages, races, religious backgrounds, and beliefs. Bringing together this diversity is what makes Hillel great and the Jewish people great.



We are reminded of this in one of the mitzvot of Sukkot, the mitzvah of lulav, which we perform by bringing together the *arba minim* (the four species). In Leviticus 23:40, we are told, "On the first day you shall take the product of hadar trees, branches of palm trees, boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days."

According to Vayikra Rabbah, a homiletical collection of midrash on the book of Leviticus from around 500 CE, the four species - the etrog, the palm branch (*lulav*), the willow (*aravot*), and the myrtle (*hadassim*) - are like the four different types of Jewish people.

"The etrog, which has both taste and smell, is likened to those who study Torah and do mitzvot. The palm branch, which has taste, but no smell, is likened to those who have only Torah study. The myrtle, which has smell but no taste, is likened to those who have only mitzvot. The willow, which has neither taste nor smell, is likened to those who are without Torah study and without mitzvot." And God says, "Bind them all together and let them atone one for the other."

Each is essential to performing the mitzvah of lulav on Sukkot, just as each is a valuable part of the Jewish community. While we might be in one place this year, we may be in a different one next year. The strength of the Jewish community lies in our unity despite our differences. As we celebrate Sukkot by sitting in a sukkah, shaking the lulav, or welcoming in guests, let's find ways to connect with people who are different than us and celebrate the diversity of the Jewish community.

MIT Hillel's 2018 Annual Fund

Add to Jewish life @ MIT!



To Our Current and Future Supporters:

Yom Kippur is behind us, and I couldn't ask forgiveness for one of the wrongs I did last year.

You already know that last Pi Day, MIT launched its first-ever Giving Day, and MIT Hillel was invited to be one of the first campus partners, with our own dedicated page on the Giving Day platform. The endeavor was wildly successful for MIT and MIT Hillel alike. From my perspective, the most positive outcome was that new people "found" us and proffered their support of MIT Hillel - we didn't even know that some of these alumni are Jewish!

One gift in particular caught my eye for multiple reasons: the gift was large, especially for online (\$1,000 to Hillel and also \$1,000 to MIT), it was the person's first gift to MIT Hillel, we did not even know this alum was Jewish, previously the alum's largest gift to MIT had been \$50, and he was from the Class of '46!

When I looked him up, I also noted that he was local, and I figured I have to meet him. But rather than picking up the phone immediately, I decided to wait until Michelle returned from her sabbatical, so that she could join me. Of course I sent a thank-you note in the interim. When I did reach out a few months later, I reached his son, who informed me that his dad had died five days earlier. Not only that, but March 14 was the donor's birthday and part of why he made his gifts to MIT and to MIT Hillel that day. I am disappointed that I didn't get to hear this alumnus's story; what I regret is not giving him the opportunity to share it with us.

I cannot ask for this donor's forgiveness. While I will never forget this error on my part, I can only forgive myself by doing better by our donors. So let me start 5778 by thanking you.

Relatedly, my appeal to you: if you have named MIT Hillel in your estate plan (it seems we get a surprise gift every year), please do let us know so that we may express our appreciation while you are alive. MIT also would like to invite you to be a member of the MIT Katharine Dexter McCormick Society, which recognizes those who have made provisions for gifts to come to MIT after their lifetimes; this can be done anonymously if you prefer, so that MIT occasionally invites you to special events but does not include your name publicly on the KDMS membership listing.

L'Shalom,

Marla Choslovsky SM '88,
MIT Hillel Director of Development
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[Add your name](#) to MIT Hillel's 2018 Donor Roll!

Tamid Initiative - Planned Giving @ MIT Hillel

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.

MIT and MIT Hillel are eager to help you meet your objectives. For more information, please contact MIT Hillel Director of Development, Marla Choslovsky, marla360@mit.edu. To inform us that you have already planned such a gift, please contact us directly or [let us know in writing](#).

On the Calendar

Boston:

- **November 3, LJM @ MIT featuring Robert Pindyck, Professor of Economics and Finance at MIT Sloan**
- **December 1, LJM @ MIT featuring Osvaldo Golijov, composer**

New York:

Are you in or near NYC? We are pleased to invite you to our Leading Jewish Minds... On The Road. **Tuesday, November 14, luncheon at The Harmonie Club**. Hosted again by Martin '51 and Madge Miller. Featured speaker will be **Jeff Karp, a top young innovator and a world leader** in the fields of drug delivery and other medical applications, with four companies to bring his ideas to the marketplace. There are lots of ways we could neglect to invite you, mostly various ways we might not know you are in NYC:

- You are a new-ish alum whose home address is still your childhood home in the MIT database
- You work in Manhattan but we only have your home address in another state.
- You have no address information showing in the MIT database.

am ready to keep climbing this mountain!

From the Archives!

MIT Hillel has a rich history of programs and events told through student-made flyers, pamphlets, and great pictures!

The collection of MIT Hillel "artifacts" are now held in the Institute Archive and Special Collections for proper care and preservation!



This photo shows MIT students celebrating Sukkot in the 1950s (denoted by pencil mark on back, specific date uncertain).

[Let us know](#) if you can identify anyone in this picture!

Thank you for supporting MIT Hillel!

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

- You've recently moved.
- Other anomaly in the pull criteria

Bottom line: if you'd like to join us and you receive neither a paper nor email invitation in the next two weeks, please call the MIT Hillel office at 617-253-2982.

Mazal Tov!

- The wedding of Ariel Sommer PhD '13 and Jessica Noss '14, MEng '17!

If you have life-cycle events to share with the MIT Hillel community, please [let us know](#).

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