Rabbi Fisher is on Sabbatical for the Spring, 2017 semester. In her stead the MIT Hillel Staff will be providing updates and insights focused on their roles and activities.

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be Your will, Lord, our God and the God of our ancestors, that You lead us toward peace, guide our footsteps toward peace, and make us reach our desired destination for life, gladness, and peace.

L'Shalom
Marissa Feinman Freed
Acting Director
mfeinman@mit.edu

Our Torah this month is taught by Joel Moses PhD '87 (XVIII). He is an Institute Professor as well as Professor of Computer Science and Engineering and Professor of Engineering Systems. He has been provost, dean of engineering, head of the EECS Department, and associate head of the department in the past 25 years. He can be reached at moses@mit.edu.

"Without bread there is no Torah"
Pirke Avot (Ethics of the Fathers) 3:21

Over the past thirty years I have helped create several lunches and dinners at MIT. These begin with food (the flour or bread in the quote from Pirke Avot) and end with a lecture and related discussion (the Torah in the quote). Most of the lunches and dinners are intended for a subset of the MIT faculty. The goal is to increase collegiality and thus make it easier to have interdisciplinary teaching and research at MIT. The lunch seminar that has potentially the broadest audience is the one sponsored by MIT Hillel. It is called "Leading Jewish Minds @ MIT." LJM is intended for faculty, staff, alumni and friends. It takes place in various sites on campus. Speakers need not be Jewish since there are many Jewish minds in the audience ready and willing to be led by the speaker. Rabbi Fisher has taken LJM on the road to various homes of alumni in the Boston area as well as homes in New York City, Florida and California. An LJM lunch discussion begins with a Dvar Torah by Rabbi Fisher. Although there is insufficient room to have Hillel students at an LJM lunch, Rabbi Fisher invites a student to discuss his or her MIT experience, especially as it relates to MIT Hillel. This is then followed by the featured speaker.

The Random Faculty Dinner has been in existence the longest of these lunches and dinners. Randomly chosen groups of faculty sit around tables, six per table, and eat and talk for an hour or so. After that point Professor Jay Keyser would get up and ask "What is on your mind?" Often the discussion that follows deals with teaching issues across the Institute. Jay would take notes regarding the discussion without including the names of the faculty members making the comments. He would later send a report to the senior administration of MIT. In recent years the role of Jay Keyser has been taken by the Chair of the MIT Faculty. The senior administration appreciates being informed about issues that are on the minds of the MIT faculty.

This week's Parasha has the Jews in the desert complaining about the lack of food. They are then presented with manna from heaven. Jewish families throughout the world act as if they have read the quote from Pirke Avot. The variety, quantity and quality of the food is arguably better than in the desert. After thousands of years the discussion is arguably better too.

MIT Hillel's 2017 Annual Fund
Add to Jewish life @ MIT!

To our current and future supporters,

I recently saw the documentary movie "Citizen Jane: Battle for the City", about Jane Jacobs, the writer and urban activist who successfully fought city hall to prevent a highway through Manhattan. Specific to her vision was that top-down urban planning doesn’t work well, that the best starting place is with the people on the ground.

In community organizing, one voice may not make a difference... but united with others it is extremely powerful. Decades later, citizens were proud to have been a part of Jane's vision, and felt they had played an important role in preserving neighborhoods. Their participation made a huge difference, sent a message, and strengthened their community. To me, that sounds a lot like philanthropy.

As we head into the final weeks of our fiscal year, I ask you to participate in MIT Hillel’s annual campaign. If you are a past supporter, renewing your gift each year provides stability for our programming. If you are contemplating a first gift, your gift helps us grow.

Thank you for all you do for MIT Hillel, for MIT, for your local Jewish community, and for your other causes in the world. Together we make a huge difference.

L'Shalom,
Marla Choslovsky SM '88,
MIT Hillel Director of Development
marla360@mit.edu

Add your name to MIT Hillel's 2017 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 (KDS) 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

- Our Leading Jewish Minds speaker series will return in the fall. Stay tuned for on-campus, Boston-area, and NYC topics, dates, and locations.

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

- Mazel Tov to reunion alumni, especially from Classes of 1967 (50th), 1977 (40th), 1992 (25th), and 2007 (10th).
- Mazel Tov to Professor Daniel N. Jackson, Immediate Past President of MIT Hillel, for receiving the Arthur C. Smith Award. This prize is presented annually to a member of the MIT faculty for meaningful contributions and devotion to undergraduate student life and learning at MIT. Daniel received the award for his teaching, for his community involvement, and for his recent photography work which has added significantly to the ongoing conversation at MIT about mental illness. MIT Press will be publishing a volume of his “Portraits of Resilience”.
- Mazel Tov to Professor Jeff Hoffman on being inducted into Jewish-American Hall of Fame. Jeff took various Jewish ritual objects on board, and enjoyed the juxtaposition of one of humanity’s oldest traditions with manned space flight. To paraphrase his remarks at the ceremony, “You can’t make the Torah more special by taking it into space, as it’s already holy; rather, bringing the Torah on the journey made space more special.”

As I move on to graduate school, I’m excited to see how Judaism continues to shape and facilitate old and new relationships and the experiences that await.

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