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

1) AEPI has an annual fundraiser for Gift of Life bone marrow registry. Rabbi Fisher was happy to do her part to support a great cause, and show her affection for the Jewish fraternity and its brothers.

2) First year students Avital Weinberg, Judy Fusman, Brittany Sacks learn how to make Hummus at our annual Hummus 101 event.

3) Friends of Israel president Allie Shepard ‘19 tables during Israel’s Independence Day. The poster displays course number/major-based facts about Israel’s accomplishments over 70 years. The blue and white cake pops drew passers-by who then learned about Israel in science and engineering.

MIT Hillel Update

Happy 70th birthday, Israel! At MIT, we celebrate Israel’s Independence Day on May 15 and 7 Iyar (this year April 19). We use both calendars for programming, so both April and May are busy “Israel months.”

During the week of Israel’s Independence Day (on the Hebrew calendar), our Friends of Israel Board engaged quite a few students in Lobby 10 and Stata by distributing blue-and-white cake pops along with facts about Israel related to each MIT course of study; students of all backgrounds walked away understanding much more about Israel’s accomplishments. On Yom HaZikaron, Israel’s Memorial Day, there was a program entitled “Israel: Points of You.” And on Yom HaAtzmaut, Israel’s Independence Day, Hillel held a program entitled “Israel: It’s Kind of Uncomfortably,” for those who define themselves as liberal and Zionist.

This week, as for the past three years, we decorated Kresge Oval in blue and white for the annual MIT Israel Independence Day Carnival. (All the pictures in my article here are from the Carnival.) Unfortunately, the camels who were past highlights have ‘retired.” (What exactly does that mean for a camel? Is every day a Wednesday or “hump day?”) “Artists4Israel” helped us create a massive graffiti art mural. There was tabling teaching about Israel’s accomplishments, including a booth on Israel’s scientific advances. And, of course, falafel food truck enjoyment filled the afternoon. I loved seeing hundreds from the community attend. Please enjoy this drone footage that Tyler Lerner ‘19 captured of the carnival grounds and the Artists4Israel mural.

A number of course 16 (aero/astro) students also helped to arrange an engineering presentation by Israeli Air Force General Zvika Hainovich’s. Scheduled for April 12, it was unfortunately canceled, as he was called away for last minute work. (Check the date: I’ve formed my own conclusions…). The last time an IDF general – the head of Israeli cybersecurity – came to MIT, the audience filled 10-250, one of our largest auditoriums on campus.

As we all are aware, our celebrations of regaining Jewish sovereignty in our homeland after 2,000 years are seen much differently by many Palestinians. We experienced last month, for the first time, an “Apartheid Week” as part of Palestine Awareness Week. As expected, there was a range of student reactions to the Palestine/MIT publicity and events. We deliberately followed best practices and did not directly engage or cause any confrontations. Some Jewish students used it as an opportunity for further Israel education with fliers, an editorial in The Tech, and a Friends of Israel event: “Reservists on Duty.” Taken together, these events reflect an unfiltered picture of our society and of the wider world. I am proud that MIT Hillel is continuing to do its part to educate, inspire, and create connections Jewishly and Israel-related on our campus. And I am excited and encouraged that MIT will actively work to encourage open dialogue about these differences through a Division of Student Life sponsored series of conversations in the fall aimed at fostering constructive, respectful communication.

Lior Hirschfeld ’21
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I was born in Northern Israel, to an Israeli father and a Jewish-American mother, but when I was seven months old my parents and I moved to Massachusetts. I’ve moved around a lot but for the last decade I’ve lived in Brockton. Before MIT I attended Phillips Academy, a boarding school in Andover, MA. When it came time to apply to colleges, MIT was a pretty obvious choice. It is in a fantastic location and has incredibly strong programs in Math and Computer Science, the subjects I am most interested in. I could not be happier with my choice. This winter, I had the opportunity to travel to San Francisco for an externship at Twitch, and will be heading back there this summer for an internship at a startup called The Markov Corporation. I hadn’t even dreamt that either experience would be a possibility for my freshman year. I also joined Code for Good, where I was able to use CS to help a nonprofit. I’m currently planning on majoring in course 18 (math) and 6-3, (computer science) along with completing a minor in 21L (literature). As luck would have it, my freshman and UR0P advisor, Dr. Asaf Ferber, is an Israeli with whom I’m working to publish a paper on graph theory.

Although I grew up in a secular household, Judaism has always been an important part of my identity, so I knew I wanted to cultivate my Jewishness at MIT. My first foray into Jewish life came when I pledged and
As our students sprint to the finish line for academic year 2018, we wish them well on exams, we wish Israel many more years of growth, and speaking personally, I wish the entire Middle East the ability to see and produce paths to security, freedom, and self-fulfillment for all.

Rabbi Michelle Fisher SM ’97
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Torah from Tech

Our Torah this month is taught by Mark Gottlieb SM’78 (Nuclear Engineering). Mark was a candidate for valedictorian at City College of New York and a Visiting Scholar at Columbia University before attending MIT, where he received his Masters degree in Nuclear Engineering. He had a career in Health Physics with the State of California. In his retirement, he is self-taught and published in Mathematical Neuroscience, in which he is doing on-going research. He can be reached at mgottlie@alum.mit.edu.

“The Secret Things…”

One of the most compelling verses I have found in Torah from the standpoint of scientific inquiry is Devarim (Deuteronomy) 29:28, which reads, “The secret things are for HaShem, our God, but the things revealed are for us and our children forever, that we may carry out all the words of this Torah.” This verse distills the essential nature of scientific investigation: the continuing revelation of scientific truth with much unknown, its revelation perhaps coming later. The purpose of scientific revelation is for humanity, that the words of this Torah may be carried out in our life’s journey.

The journal “B’Or HaTorah, Science, Art and Life in the Light of Torah” is a publication by the Jerusalem College of Technology dedicated to examining the interplay of Science and Torah, covering numerous scientific topics. In the current issue, volume 25, the article, “A ‘Still Small Voice’ from the Beginning of Time, A Jewish View on the Discovery of Gravitational Waves”, describes the LIGO experiment, in which an extremely small displacement of space-time was detected from the collision of two black holes a billion years ago. The author, Dr. Shimon Lerner discusses the sensitivity of the measurement, noting the precision required to detect a 10 E-18 meter disturbance of the order of 1/100 the size of a proton, the smallest particle known. This required the collaboration of over 1,000 multinational researchers, and the achievement of a marvel of engineering to make this experiment possible.

Dr. Lerner compares this engineering acumen to the sensitivity and precision in building the Tabernacle. “The Tabernacle is the ‘sacred observatory’ that shows us in a palpable form the reality of the Sh’khinah (God’s presence) in the world. The instructions for its construction are extremely precise.” Dr. Lerner notes that Albert Einstein formulated the Theory of General Relativity 100 years ago, becoming convinced of the existence of gravitational waves without any means of detecting them. To quote Dr. Lerner, “Thus, it is so with holiness. The Torah is our ‘book of theory’. We believe that there is holiness in the world even when there is no Tabernacle or any experimental system capable of showing us holiness.”

Dr. Lerner also describes the scientific venues the technology for the LIGO experiment creates: using gravitational waves to detect black holes, the interaction of gravitational waves and dark matter, and deciphering the Big Bang back in time beyond the 300-year past Big Bang limit we have today.

It is said of the Talmud, that more than answering questions, the Talmud questions answers. A collection of 15 issues of B’Or HaTorah are in the MIT-Hillel library to answer questions and inspire readers to question answers about Torah and Science.

MIT Hillel’s 2018 Annual Fund
Add to Jewish life @ MIT!

To our Current and Future Supporters:

Recently Michelle and I spent a week in California, visiting our alumni there. We had a dozen meetings, spanning Classes 1956 – 2017. Five of those seven decades were represented on this trip.

At MIT, the development landscape is assigned by both readiness and capacity to give, such that development officers tend to specialize. The Alumni Association works with newest alumni and reunion years; at the highest level the VP for Resource Development, who reports to President Reif, works with the Institute’s greatest benefactors; and the Office of Gift Planning’s activities are skewed toward older alumni. Additionally, each of the five schools has a team so that alumni whose interests are highly targeted will fall under a Dean’s fundraising purview. In contrast, at Hillel my demographic cuts across all class years and the full spectrum of gift levels, and as a result, I work directly with all Jewish alumni and a variety of development colleagues across campus. And, I have to say: I love it!

It is surprising to meet with alumni who are beyond their 25th or even 50th reunion years. You are able to reflect back on those formative years when you were undergrads, and express a deep understanding of how fortunate you were to have access to an MIT education and to bond with amazing peers. Often you tell me that you weren’t involved in Hillel, and that your support is a reflection of what you care about today.

It is equally inspiring to connect with recent alumni, whose nascent adult Jewish lives are often a direct result of their experience at MIT Hillel. You articulate that you are happy to “give back” and that you understand that others “invested in me.” It wasn’t a surprise to me to read jewisphilanthropy.com that the younger generations are stepping up. Hillel’s success over time has been and will continue to be dependent on an alumni base of support that spans the decades.

Back to our trip. In addition to figuratively covering a range of time, we literally covered a lot of ground: we arrived LAX and drove to San Diego, back to LA the next day, then a flight to SFO, and covering Silicon Valley, San

became a brother of Alpha Epsilon Pi, the Jewish fraternity on campus. In the brotherhood I’ve found a supportive community who have helped me adjust to life at MIT and grow as a person. For example, as the philanthropy chair, I have spent the last month managing our annual drive for Gift of Life, a bone marrow registry, which has been an incredibly rewarding, if occasionally stressful, experience.

Outside of the fraternity, I have also been able to engage my love of reading through “Kindle Your Jewish Life,” a book club lead by Rabbi Golfeder. Many of the books we’ve read have been thought provoking, such as John Lennon and the Jews, an argument that Judaism has a place in modern life, and Man’s Search for Meaning, a study of the human condition written by a Holocaust survivor.

I have many more plans here at MIT! In the next few years, I would love to take a course on 20th century history of the Middle East, participate in a SuperUROP, and improve my foreign language skills (in Mandarin and Hebrew).

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.

Hard to read, and still clear that in May 1984 there was a lot going on at Hillel!

Thank you for supporting MIT Hillel!

Your generous support allows us to help keep Jewish life vibrant on the MIT campus!
Francisco, and Berkeley. It's California, so the traffic is heavy everywhere, all the time, and the highways are massive, with lanes constantly being added or subtracted on both the right and the left.

It became our running joke that even if Siri said, “In two miles, exit from the right 3 lanes”, being in the right-most lane when first directed might still leave us too far over by the time we reached the off-ramp, requiring additional lane changes to make the appropriate turn-off. We learned to anticipate and keep moving over just in case.

This is the time of year when I anticipate June 30, the end of our fiscal year. Given the correlation with reunion giving that we receive at the very end of our year, mid-May is when we feel disproportionately far from our goal, and stress about achieving a balanced budget / arriving safely at our destination. I ask you to merge onto our road, and include MIT Hillel in your giving this year.

Marla Choslovsky SM '88,
MIT Hillel Director of Development
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| Add your name to MIT Hillel's 2018 Donor Roll! |

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**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 (KDOMS) 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.

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**On the Calendar**

**Boston:**

- June 8 - Hillel Reception at Commencement / Reunion weekend immediately after Graduation Exercises

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| Norman B. and Muriel Leventhal Center for Jewish Life at MIT 40 Massachusetts Ave, Building W11 Cambridge, MA 02139 |

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