

The 2021-2022 school year brought the resumption of a more typical college routine. While life was not completely back to 'normal,' this year we were able to offer Jewish students what they truly crave: in person opportunities to make friends, to grow as individuals, and to feel at home on campus.

LEARNING:

- **Jewish Learning Fellowship (JLF):** In JLF, students meet weekly to discuss big life questions through the lens of Jewish text. JLF participants build a community of learning as they discuss how Jewish wisdom can guide them through the challenges of college life.
- **Kol Yisrael:** In this weekly learning program, students are exposed to the diverse cultural and religious tapestry of Israeli society.
- **Cooking Classes:** As the Jewish teaching in Pirkei Avot says, "If there's no sustenance, there's no Torah!" Our weekly cooking classes teach students to make healthy, simple meals. Each week the students learn to make the recipe at Hillel, and then take home a bag of ingredients and the recipe to cook it at home and share with friends.
- **Buffalo Day of Jewish Learning:** In partnership with UB's College of Arts and Sciences, February's Buffalo Day of Jewish Learning brought together students, faculty, and community members to enjoy learning sessions on topics such as Jewish song, Meditation and Mindfulness, Israeli politics, the Future of Jewish Buffalo, and much more.
- **Additional Learning Opportunities:** This year we hosted Israel expert David Makovsky of the Washington Institute, a presentation by Holocaust survivor Grigory Shershnevsky, and a facilitated group conversation about anti-Semitism on college campuses.



Students learn how to prepare healthy, kosher, and easy meals in small kitchens.



Students join alumni and community members at UB's Center for the Arts on May 12th to celebrate Hillel's 75th Anniversary.



David Makovsky, who has been intimately involved with the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, meet with students to discuss his career and answer questions on Israel, Arab-Israeli relations, and the Middle East.



Students keep clothing out of landfills at the Pop-Up Thrift Store.



Students grab free pumpkins at Hillel's on-campus pumpkin patch and donate food for the campus food pantry.



Hillel leaders integrate their passion for sustainability and the Jewish value of bal taschit, avoiding wastefulness.



Hillel's Director of Engagement, Logan Woodard (left) mentor Liza Friedland '22 (right) to create a joint sorority leadership council.

LEADERSHIP:

Students come to campus with so many different interests. We make it our mission to give students the resources and mentorship they need to turn their ideas into programs for all students to enjoy. Examples of this student-driven approach include:

- **Open Mic Night:** First year student Aaron Davis is a gifted singer and songwriter. This year he planned several Open Mic Night events that gave students the chance to share their singing, instruments, comedy and poetry.
- **Hiking:** Transfer student Chimes Nahmias organized a group hike on Grand Island. His fellow students were refreshed by the opportunity to leave campus and spend time in nature.
- **Clothing Drive:** Junior Miriam Lipson partnered with the UB Sustainability club to organize a pop-up thrift shop. Students donated old clothing, which Miriam and her friends arranged as a free store in the Student Union. Students were proud to sport their new threads and to save the clothes from the landfill.

HILLEL BY THE NUMBERS:

300+ students participated in Hillel programming

200+ people celebrated Hillel's 75th anniversary

26 students served in leadership roles

21 students participated in ongoing Jewish learning opportunities

CELEBRATING DIVERSITY:

Hillel is a place where students can bring their whole selves, and the unique facets of their identity are celebrated. Examples include:

- **Russian-Speaking Jewish Students:** UB junior Anastasia Nosova's internship with Hillel empowered her to reach out to students of Russian-speaking backgrounds. Anastasia organized a Tea and Cookies gathering and a Slavic paint night, and gave students the chance to share their culture on campus.
- **Pride Shabbat:** To celebrate pride, LGBTQ+ students enjoyed a festive Shabbat gathering, complete with rainbow challah. They studied Talmudic texts about identity and shared their own stories of both challenge and acceptance in their families and the Jewish community.

CREATING COMMUNITY:

- **Monday Bagel Brunches** are a time when any student can pop into Hillel and instantly find good food and great friends.
- **Wellness Partnership with Jewish Family Services of WNY** brought regular therapy dog visits, DIY stress ball making, and games like Wellness Bingo that helped students unwind together.
- **Shabbat and Holiday** gatherings bring the steadying rhythm of the Jewish calendar into students' hectic lives. Shabbat services and meals take place weekly at Hillel. Over 100 students joined Hillel this year for Rosh HaShanah dinner, High Holiday services, Yom Kippur Break the fast, a Hanukkah party, and Passover seders.

All are welcome at Hillel and we are proud to open our doors to every student.



Students connect with one another over bagel brunches on Monday mornings.



Senior Chloe Komorowski snuggles up with one of our visiting therapy dogs.



Jewish holiday celebrations at Hillel help students feel at home when they can't celebrate with their families.

SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM:

Hillel's Summer Internship Program offers students the chance to gain hands-on skills and connections in their desired fields. This year, Hillel connected nine students with internships in local businesses and non-profit organizations, where they worked throughout the week. Each Friday, the cohort gathered with Hillel staff for guest speakers and educational site visits around Buffalo.

Highlights Include:

- Touring the 8th District Court System with Executive Andrew Isenberg
- Visiting the Tops Memorial on Jefferson Avenue with local activist Samantha White
- Meeting with Eric Feldstein, M&T Bank's WNY Regional President

The internship program is a life-changing stepping stone that prepares students for the working world. As one intern reflected, *"My internship showed me how the workplace is not a scary place and is made to help you become the best version of yourself. I gained great confidence in my abilities and now feel like I can really develop myself into the person that I want to be."*



Hillel's Summer Internship Program participants gain valuable professional work experience and discover the rich, diverse opportunities available to them in WNY.

HAPPY 75TH ANNIVERSARY HILLEL!

This year, Hillel of Buffalo celebrated 75 years of serving Jewish students at UB and Buffalo State. Throughout the year we collected photos, articles, and stories from alumni who represent the decades of Hillel history.

Our celebration culminated on May 12 at the Center for the Arts where we gathered to recall Hillel's past and share our vision for today. We also had the opportunity to honor Steven and Ellen Weiss with the Distinguished Alumni Award, Dr. Jeffrey Lackner with the Exceptional Leadership Award, and student Abby Feldman with the Feuerstein Family Tzedakah Award in honor of her community engagement.

We learned that while times have changed, and college looks different than it did in 1946, Hillel's values have remained constant. **We are committed to continuing to support students for the next 75 years, and beyond.**



Abby Feldman receives the Feuerstein Family Tzedakah Award for community service.

SUPPORT HILLEL:

Did you know? **Each year Hillel of Buffalo must raise close to \$200,000** to support Jewish students. This amount is in addition to the generous funding we receive from the Buffalo Jewish Federation and Hillel International.

It is only through your partnership that we can offer students such a rich menu of programs. With your generous support we can add new opportunities to each even more students. To make a gift to Hillel, please visit www.hillelofbuffalo.org/donate.

If you care about students now, and want to sustain your impact in the future, we have a **legacy giving program** that we would love to discuss with you. Please be in touch with Rabbi Sara Rich, rabbisara@hillelofbuffalo.org or 716.616.0083 for more information.