



This year, we reimagined weekly Shabbat dinners, celebrated the full calendar of holiday traditions, and directly confronted antisemitism to ensure our students felt safe and proud of their Jewish identity. Student leaders continued creating opportunities for their peers to connect through wellness programming, service projects, and Jewish learning. Whether gathering for a weekly Bagel Brunch or celebrating Shabbat together, we're building a welcoming, vibrant, and engaged Jewish community on campus.

Hillel of Buffalo creates meaningful opportunities for students to engage with **Israel** through education, reflection, and personal connection. In recognition of October 7th, students gathered for a memorial candle lighting and connected with Israeli veterans who shared their firsthand experiences. Students also participated in conversations with Israeli voices, including journalist Lee Yaron and filmmaker and author Eli Zuzovsky. These conversations gave students space to explore Jewish identity, ask questions, learn from diverse perspectives, and deepen their connection to Israel and the broader Jewish community.



We expanded opportunities for students to build meaningful relationships across faith communities through our **Multifaith Relationship Building Initiative**. Our first program brought together **50 Jewish and non-Jewish students** for an evening of learning, discussion, reflection, and community. Planned in partnership with student leaders from multiple faith backgrounds, the experience fostered authentic dialogue, strengthened interfaith connections, and created a welcoming space for students to learn from one another while celebrating their shared values.



By the Numbers

530+ students engaged in Hillel programs across the 6 campuses we serve (**10% increase**)

210 total events hosted

30 students in leadership roles

40 students engaged in learning cohorts

145 students joined us for Welcome Week activities, including a BBQ with the local Jewish community

60 students came together for a creative student-led Passover Seder



"Hillel of Buffalo is truly my home away from home. At Hillel, I can connect with others and open up in ways I never thought possible. It is a vital space where I can be fully myself and grow as a Jewish adult."

- Nathaniel, '27

Cohorts and Fellowships

Ruach Fellowship: Cohort members participated in the Hillel International Shabbaton alongside fellows from Hillels across North America. Through workshops, shared learning, music, and experiential *tefillah* (prayer), they deepened their skills in ritual leadership and spiritual hospitality to enrich Jewish life and Shabbat back in Buffalo.

Shabbat Hosting Lab: Students learned the art of creating meaningful Shabbat experiences, strengthening their personal connection to Jewish practice and expanding community beyond Hillel's walls.

Service Engagement Internship (SEI): Exemplifying *tzedakah* (charity) and *tikkun olam* (repairing the world), interns led over 60 peers in hands-on service with local organizations, including Buddy's Second Chance Rescue, Feed 716, Family Promise of WNY, and Elderwood.



"Hillel of Buffalo has given me a space where I feel totally comfortable and truly myself, and has supported me both as a Jewish student and as a person finding my place on campus."

My SEI internship has become one of my favorite parts of my sophomore year, deepening my commitment to community engagement and making a positive impact on others."

– Violet, '28



"Without Hillel, I wouldn't have had the support, structure, or resources to step into leadership so quickly or make the kind of impact I've been able to."

– Anton '29

Hillel of Buffalo continues to strengthen connections with the **Jewish Greek Council**. Through community-building events, educational opportunities, and service initiatives, students come together to celebrate their Jewish identity while building relationships across sororities and fraternities. Hillel's partnership with **AEPI**, the Jewish fraternity at UB, has created opportunities for connection through pizza nights, Hillel events, and shared community experiences.



Students had the unique opportunity to participate in an intimate roundtable conversation with Jewish actor and singer **Jonah Platt**. Hosted in partnership with the Buffalo Jewish Federation, the discussion explored combating antisemitism, navigating difficult conversations, and using one's voice to strengthen the Jewish community.

Support Hillel

Each year, Hillel of Buffalo must raise close to \$240,000 to support Jewish students. This is in addition to the generous funding we receive from the Buffalo Jewish Federation and Hillel International. Your partnership makes these transformative programs possible and allows us to reach even more students.

- **Donate:** Visit hillelofbuffalo.org/donate
- **Life and Legacy:** To discuss sustaining your impact for future generations, contact Dr. Mike Steklof at mike@hillelofbuffalo.org.