

Hillel Foundation for Jewish Life
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON



2014-2015
ANNUAL REPORT

CENTER FOR
JEWISH LIFE

EXPLORE!

from the PRESIDENT

SHALOM!



I am pleased to share this brief playback of the past year at Hillel UW with you, our wonderful friends and supporters.

This past fiscal year (July 1, 2014-June 30, 2015) has been defined both by innovation and transition.

Innovation in Programming

In partnership with the local Hadassah chapter, Hillel created **Mentor Connect**, a program that matched students and Jconnectors with mentors from the community. During this year-long program, 20 pairs of mentors and mentees met one-on-one and as a larger group for a guest speaker series.

Hillel UW's 40-year Passover lunch tradition got a refresh as we introduced the community's first **holiday-specific food truck**. In collaboration with *Napkin Friends*, Hillel delivered kosher-for-Passover lunches around the city, with stops at the *Amazon* and *Starbucks* headquarters in Seattle, downtown Bellevue, and the *Microsoft* campus in Redmond. In total, over 1,000 meals were served throughout the week. More importantly, we were able to reach many young Jewish adults who

otherwise would not have participated in our Hillel and Jconnect programming for the holiday.

Over spring break, around 10 students participated in a Hillel UW-developed **service learning trip to Detroit, Michigan**. It was a very meaningful trip that helped students view policy decisions and their impact, the power of community, and barriers to opportunity that exist in our society through a new set of lenses. Activities on the ground included partnering with a local organization, *Neighbors Building Brightmoor*, to help clean up abandoned homes and buildings in order to start community gardens and parks, playing with and helping young students at an afterschool program with homework, and accessing local leaders to understand the challenges facing a community that is struggling to emerge from bankruptcy. The students found the trip transformative.

Transitions in Staffing

That said, the only constant in life is change. We got a healthy dose of that this past year as we learned that **Rabbi Oren Hayon**, Greenstein Family Executive Director, would be leaving us to accept a new position as the senior rabbi at a congregation in Houston, Texas. **Talia Stein**, Director of Jewish Student Life, was accepted to rabbinical school at Hebrew College in Boston. **Silver Lace Greitz**, our Development and

Operations Associate, decided to take a new position as the executive assistant to the CEO at Jewish Family Service. **Elise Peizner** announced her intention to step down at the end of the summer from her role as Jconnect Seattle Director to pursue other interests. With all of these simultaneous changes, we realized we had a unique opportunity to take stock of Hillel's current structure along with its organizational goals.

After an intense Executive Director search, we were unable to find the right candidate to continue the incredible programming, engagement, and innovation that define Hillel UW. Accordingly, the Board instead opted to pursue an interim director, **Amee Huppín Sherer**, for the coming year and relaunch the search in fall 2015. This level of patience and discipline demonstrates our commitment to finding the right person to continue the amazing work of our Hillel.

I am deeply grateful to the Board of Directors and staff for guiding us through this period of transition. I also appreciate the continued generosity and support of the community, and look forward to introducing our next Executive Director in the near future.

B'shalom,

Jonathan Schwartz
President

CONNECT!

measuring IMPACT

Hillel is all about helping Jewish students and young adults build community, further develop their Jewish identities, and explore the world through the lens and values of Judaism. With this in mind, we strive to create long-term, meaningful relationships with our constituents. One of the ways we can evaluate our success is by noting the number of repeat attendees we have to Hillel and Jconnect programming; as with every touch, connections grow stronger.

JULY 1, 2014 - JUNE 30, 2015

UNDERGRADS

216 Events

784 Participants

340 Repeat
attendees


JCONNECTORS

156 Events

1871 Participants


705 Repeat
attendees

LEARNING

A photograph showing a man in a light blue shirt, Ari Shavit, sitting on a couch and gesturing while speaking to a group of young adults. One person in the foreground is holding a notebook and pen.


Student leaders meet
with Ari Shavit, author
of *My Promised Land*.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

A photograph of two young women standing outdoors in front of two large wheelbarrows filled with mulch. The woman on the left is wearing a green sweatshirt with a tree graphic and the word 'Region' below it. The woman on the right is wearing a blue puffer jacket. Both are giving thumbs up.

Julie Siegfried and
Ruth Ferguson help
cultivate community
gardens during their
service learning trip
to Detroit, Michigan.

HOLIDAYS

A photograph of three young adults sitting at a table. They are working on colorful, square-shaped Seder plates. There are various supplies like glue, paint, and brushes on the table.

Rachel Perelman,
Dylan Siegel and
Rachel Brown create
their own fused glass
Seder plates during a
Passover preparation
event.

CELEBRATE!

UNDERGRADS

Interviews by LB Lipney-Burger



Robbie Ellenhorn was born and raised in Bellevue, Washington, and grew up attending Hillel UW's annual Passover lunches with his family. During his first week as an undergraduate, Robbie bumped into Hillel staff who were tabling in UW's Red Square. As an avid conversationalist, Robbie made an instant connection with Rayna, the Director of Jewish Student Life at that time, and thus began his journey as an undergrad at Hillel.

Throughout his time at Hillel, Robbie has worked on planning events like Ask Big Questions, served as the president for Washington Students for Israel (which hosts its weekly meetings in Café LeVine), attended Tacos and Torah regularly, and this year, is serving as an Undergraduate Representative to the Hillel UW Board of Directors. In addition to his work with programming and Jewish learning, Robbie describes himself as "one of the all-time greats [of Friday night Shabbat dinners at Hillel] featuring great food and even better company."

As a die-hard Husky fan since birth, Robbie's admission to UW

and immediate connection with Hillel felt like a rite of passage. Robbie admits that he has grown tremendously in the past four years. As he approaches graduation, he fondly remembers his time here: "Hillel has provided me with both the knowledge and opportunity to do good. My engagement with Hillel has not only shaped my four years in college, but provided me with friends, skills, and wisdom that will be carried with me wherever the future takes me."

Our door is always open to you, Robbie, and Go Dawgs!



Hailing from sunny Los Angeles, California, **Justine Liebenson** moved to Seattle to attend the University of Washington. As a first year student, Justine's connection with Hillel began when the Director of Jewish Student Life reached out and invited her to freshmen events and Friday night Shabbat dinners.

Justine nervously accepted an invitation that would ultimately lead her on a path of discovering her Jewish identity, and becoming a leader within the Jewish community.

Initially, Justine's connection with Hillel was cultural and social, but quickly and easily transformed into nuanced conversations about Israel and her personal connection to Judaism. When speaking about how Hillel has affected her Jewish identity, Justine remarked, "Before, if someone asked me to describe myself, being Jewish wouldn't come to mind. But now, being Jewish is one of the strongest identities I feel."

She described her favorite memories at Hillel as hanging out with the staff and engaging in conversations with her fellow students and friends. When asked why she keeps coming back to Hillel, she smiled and responded, "Because this is the only place at UW that feels like home."

Justine had some important advice for incoming freshmen and new students – get to know the staff and let them take you out for a (free!) cup of coffee. And as a regular Shabbat attendee, she explained, "Don't just come to Shabbat! There are so many great opportunities and resources to take advantage of." ***Thanks for your contributions to Hillel at the University of Washington, Justine!***

YOUNG.JEWISH.FRESH.



**JCONNECT
SEATTLE**
A PROGRAM OF HILLEL UW

JCONNECT

Interview by Clare Rosenkranz



Moving from Rochester, Minnesota to Seattle three years ago, **Ryan Rosensweig** first joined Jconnect as a way to meet other Jewish individuals in the Seattle area. Shortly after moving here, his friend invited him to Jconnect's "Jews and Brews" event in Ballard, and since then, he has been very involved with

Jconnect. This year, Ryan joined the Hillel Board of Directors as a Jconnect Representative. He has enjoyed his position and hopes to "help Jconnect blend in more with the Hillel community." In addition, he feels a sense of responsibility to give back to new Jconnect members in order to "make sure they are welcomed and have a positive first experience like I had."

Ryan recently got married, and through Jconnect formed a bond with Rabbi Oren, who conducted marriage classes for interfaith couples. Ryan says these valuable classes have been his favorite Jconnect activity, along with cooking classes and Shabbat. Every Jconnect activity that he has participated in

"has been a tremendous amount of fun," Ryan shares. He credits Jconnect for giving him "a great group of close friends and a network of Jewish people involved in the community." According to Ryan, Jconnect has evolved over the past three years with the biggest change being "Jconnect's improved communication through its new website."

When asked if he has any advice for individuals looking to get more involved with Jconnect, Ryan said, "Get to know Brooke, our Jconnect Director. Jconnect has a wide range of events going on, so there is bound to be something for everyone." ***We agree Ryan, and thank you for your continued involvement with Jconnect!***

Jconnectors enjoy
Shabbat on the
water.



GENEROUS SUPPORT

Hillel UW 2014-2015 FINANCIALS

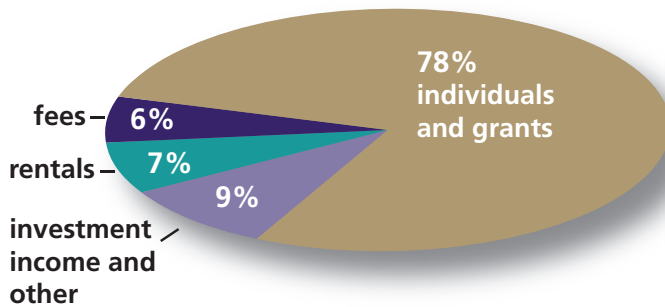
Hillel at the University of Washington depends primarily on the generous annual support of alumni, parents, funders and friends. Your tremendous support enables Hillel to achieve its mission of helping 18-35 year olds live meaningful Jewish lives. Hillel is grateful for our community's continued investment in our program and the future of the Jewish community.

Total Fiscal Year 2015

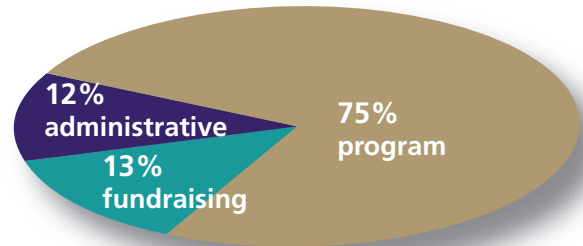
Operating Budget: \$1,164,949

The numbers presented in this report are from Hillel UW's statements of financial position at the conclusion of FY15 and are currently being audited by an outside party. The audited financials will be available in January 2016.

INCOME



EXPENSES



According to a United States Department of the Treasury Update issued on July 23, 2001, Hillel at the University of Washington is exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions are deductible under section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code. Hillel UW qualifies to receive tax-deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under section 2055, 2106 or 2522 of the Internal Revenue Code.



IDENTITY.COMMUNITY.

MISSION STATEMENT

Hillel UW is a catalyst toward a meaningful Jewish life for 18-35 year olds through vibrant communities and innovative experiences.

HILLEL UW'S EDUCATIONAL VISION

Empower Jewish students and young adults to create vibrant communities that cultivate ownership of identity, sense of Jewish relevance and appreciation of the diverse and complex Jewish experience. To that end our organization strives to foster identity, knowledge, community and purpose.

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Director of Programs and Strategy

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Jconnect Director

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Director of Jewish Student Life

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Please help us update our records. If you are UW alumni and we did not note it in this report, please contact us at 206.527.1997 or jennifer@hilleluw.org.

Please accept our apologies for any errors or discrepancies in this listing. We strive for completeness and accuracy and would appreciate notification of any oversights.