

# Hillel

Purdue University

Purdue Hillel Foundation | Established 1936  
Fall 2021 Newsletter





## A MESSAGE FROM MELISSA

Seventy-one years ago, six visionaries stood on the plot of land at 912 West State Street, and broke ground for what would become a vibrant center for Jewish life at Purdue and the Greater Lafayette community. Throughout the 2021-2022 academic year, seventy years since the first year our building was opened, we will celebrate and honor the work of those visionaries by realigning our vision with theirs. We'll do this by focusing on three key areas: Alignment, Accessibility, and Affordability.

### ***We are working to align our building and our program with our values.***

Purdue, ranked by U.S. News and World Report as the 5th most innovative university in North America, is a world-class school graduating world-class leaders. Our students deserve a congruent Jewish experience at Hillel. This includes providing dynamic worship experiences, innovative programming, engaging cultural opportunities, paid internships that align with students' field of study, great food, and remarkable camaraderie and companionship, all in an environment that is inclusive.

***Our building needs to be accessible so that we can welcome each student for their whole self.*** This includes recently completed renovations to our existing restrooms, and the conversion of a storage closet into a wheelchair accessible, family-friendly, single-use restroom. We'll continue the physical improvements by creating an accessible entrance to the front of the building. Accessibility also means providing a welcoming space where people feel comfortable and cared for. We've refreshed physical spaces within the building by creating clean areas for study, worship, socialization, and play.

***Affordability will allow us to remove all barriers to entry.*** Beginning this semester, Purdue Hillel is no longer charging students for meals or programs provided in the building. This means that now, more than ever, we are depending on alumni, parents, grandparents, and supporters to ensure that every student who wants to attend an event at Purdue Hillel can do so at no charge. This also means that we need to develop an integrated approach to ensure the future of Purdue Hillel through a major building renovation campaign, a legacy giving campaign, and by securing endowments to ensure a financially vibrant future.

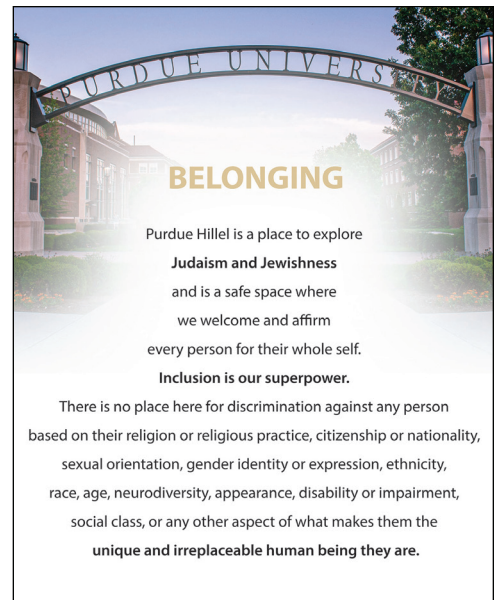
## PURDUE HILLEL ON CAMPUS

Purdue Hillel continues to educate and advocate on behalf of our Jewish Boilermakers. In the past six weeks, these are a few of the ways that we've worked to ensure that our students don't have to choose between their religious identity and other important aspects of their college experience:

- Worked with the Panhellenic leadership to ensure that sorority rush no longer conflicts with Rosh Hashanah, including speaking to all sorority presidents, inclusion officers, and rush captains about how to support their Jewish sisters on Rosh Hashanah, which was also Bid Day on campus
- Met with the Purdue Engineering Student Council leadership, as Industrial Roundtable, the largest student-organized career fair in the country, overlapped into Yom Kippur
- Delivered a keynote address to the senior leadership of University Residences on how to best support Jewish students on campus, including a delineation of anti-semitism, anti-Zionism, anti-Israel bias, and BDS rhetoric
- Developed and delivered resource materials to two fraternities on campus about healthy relationships, respect, and consent

It's been a real joy being back at Purdue Hillel, and I look forward to many more opportunities to help grow this remarkable community!

**Melissa Frey, Executive Director**  
College of Liberal Arts, '91  
[melissa@purduehillel.org](mailto:melissa@purduehillel.org)



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**Ethan Hirsh, President - Hillel Student Board**  
*Mechanical Engineering Technology; minor in Construction Management and Certificate of Entrepreneurship and Innovation; Purdue Polytechnic Institute - School of Engineering Technology, May 2023*

This year we are celebrating 70 years of Purdue Hillel being the center of Jewish campus life, what an exciting time! From building improvements to exciting new programming, to the High Holidays; Purdue Hillel has seen a lot of inspiring change this semester! The Hillel Student Board (HSB) and the Hillel staff have been working very hard to create programming that best suits the needs of our diverse Jewish community. We look forward to getting back to leading birthright Israel, free trips to Israel starting this Summer! We are continuing to follow the Protect Purdue Plan while providing a space for students to study, schmooze and engage!

With inclusion and accessibility being our superpower, our Hillel staff has been working very hard to make our physical space a welcoming space for all aligned with our values. We have renovated both the male and female bathrooms as well as built a new single use and accessible family bathroom! We have reconfigured our conference room and rec-room to provide a quiet place for student to study on campus. We have received amazing feedback from our students, and it can be seen with the number of students who come and study throughout the day.

High Holidays this year at Hillel were unlike any other, working with our Rabbinical Intern Adam, we planned a calendar of events aimed at engaging students at different levels and availability throughout Holidays. Creating the opportunity to allow every student to celebrate the way they wanted to. Besides having our traditional Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services and programming. Purdue Hillel co-sponsored a community Tashlich event with Chabad, AEPi and our local synagogues, this event connected students and community members from all different practices of Judaism, it was such a wholesome and beautiful event. Being able to build our Sukkah once again in our front yard, right on State Street was amazing, we had many students stop by inquiring and wanting to learn more, providing a safe environment for our non-Jewish community to be able to learn and ask questions about Judaism is our goal. We have revitalized our Shabbat services and dinners and have planned new Shabbat experiences partnering with the Latino Cultural Center and LGBTQ+ Cultural Center to provide education and delicious food to our communities!

Being the President during this transition at Hillel has been a challenge at times, and with the Hillel staff aligned, we needed to get the Student Board aligned as well. During freshman orientation week, the week before classes, the Student Board went through a leadership retreat, where we solidified our current board, and onboarded our new members. This meeting was a success, which can be seen by increased engagement this semester. Additionally, the HSB is excited to announce our new advisor, Lowell Kane, who is the Director of Student Engagement & Belonging, Division of Diversity and Inclusion and Director of the LGBTQ+ Center. Lowell will serve as a library of resources and information to move Hillel even more forward. There is always more work to be done, and the future is bright. I am proud of the work that we have accomplished, the student leadership opportunities that we have built, and the depth and breadth of students we have engaged!

#### **Isabel Reynolds, Web Development Intern**

*History; minors in Critical Disability Studies & Russian, CLA, May 2022*

Being one of the few students that was on campus this past summer, I had a firsthand look at all that needed to be done both physically and virtually at Purdue Hillel. I was elated to be offered the internship to rebuild the website, as I was looking for a paid experience with web development. I love a challenge, especially when I have creative freedom to develop my ideas. My goal for this internship is to develop a living history archive available to all current, past, and future Purdue Hillel students so that institutional knowledge is not limited to a few. As someone who did not grow up Jewish, I am incredibly grateful that I have Purdue Hillel as a community to explore and cultivate my Jewish identity.



#### **Alaina Bartfeld, Data Management Intern** *Supply Chain, Information, and Analytics; minor in Statistics, Krannert School of Management, December 2021*

Being a Purdue Hillel Student Intern is an opportunity to support an organization that plays such a prominent role in my college career and community involvement. I also wanted to be a part of the influential change in leadership that is happening at Purdue Hillel this fall, and there is no better way than to jump in feet first as an intern! My internship is focused on one main project that I started in January 2021. The objective is to implement a newly designed database that accurately tracks donation information. My highest hope for this project is that it completely services Purdue Hillel, allowing for its success as a non-profit organization, and ultimately to better serve the Jewish community on campus and in the Greater Lafayette area. As a senior in my last semester, I am so grateful to have been a part of this organization. I served the Hillel Student Board for 2 years, and now I hold an intern position to support Hillel's future success. In the time I have dedicated to Hillel, I made close friends with whom I share incredibly fond memories that will always mark an enjoyable component of my college experience. Beyond the social aspects that come with being involved, I had the privilege of also adding to my professional experience through this internship. Above all else, I am thankful for knowing I will never be hungry walking out of the Hillel building! I am incredibly appreciative to have had the opportunity to make friendships, build my resume, and eat a lot of delicious food during my time at Purdue Hillel.



#### **Max Hess, Reflections on the High Holidays** *Civil Engineering; minor in Political Science Purdue College of Engineering, May 2024*

When I went to the Rosh Hashanah service, I didn't know what to expect. I came from a large synagogue with a top-tier cantor, professional guitarist, pianist, and volunteer choir, and I was accustomed to relying on them to curate my emotions for me. So I didn't think I could have a real High Holiday experience elsewhere. I was wrong. As soon as we started praying, I realized there was something in the words and the community that delivered the same powerful sense of focus. It reminded me that Hillel is where I belong, and it made me want to participate in a service. So I got on the piano and played an accompaniment for Kol Nidrei. I'm not a trained pianist, but I knew that every new voice adds to the prayer. The following week, I was honored to share these thoughts during Yom Kippur services:

*Why do we fast? That was never really explained to me as a kid. And I don't think it's a form of penance or self-punishment; I think it's a mindfulness practice. Mishkan Hanefesh cites the Midrash in commenting that when we strike our hearts, we're not doing some kind of underpowered self-flagellation. Instead, we're reminding ourselves that the sins listed in Vidui exist not in the pages of the Machzor but in our hearts. We have to feel it in our body to realize that. Like Vidui, fasting is a mindfulness practice. We deprive ourselves of food, sex, entertainment, and other luxuries because hunger and boredom are really hard to ignore. They continually draw our attention back in and remind us that it's time to look inside ourselves. On any other day, we can easily go the entire day, and usually do, without ever really interrogating the contents of our own minds. But on Yom Kippur, we escape the shackles of rationalization and self-righteousness that routinely constrain the way we think about our own actions, and we stand in God's shoes and look down on ourselves, and imagine what an objective God would see in us. As a new year begins, we should all take a moment to think about what kind of person we want to become. Let's try to think about this every day. Perhaps we can all meditate for a few minutes each morning, admit one thing we're used to doing wrong, and find the courage to do it right. That's my resolution for this year.*

**VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE!**  
[www.purduehillel.org](http://www.purduehillel.org)



## HAPPENINGS IN AND AROUND PURDUE HILLEL

Purdue Hillel is serving more Jewish Boilermakers more often and more intentionally than ever before. Between July and September, we've hosted the following events:

- Convened a Greater Lafayette Community Summer Learning Series Shabbat Lunch and Learn
- Provided Summer Start Shabbat Dinners for more than a dozen students
- Hosted Drop-In Shabbat, Havdalah, and Sunday Dinner during move-in weekend for first-year students and families
- Boiler Gold Rush (BGR) First-Year Student Orientation, the Hillel building was open for events and drop-ins from 9-9 the entire week
- BGR Shabbat Services, attended by more than 100 first-year students
- Participated in the B-Involved Student Activities Fair, Express Fest Cultural Fair, and the LGBTQ+ Center's Rainbow Callout
- Hosted an AEPi Rush event featuring a traditional Israeli Dinner
- Sundae Funday Dinner Hour provides weekly kosher dairy dinner along with games, a movie, or karaoke, followed with a sundae bar to add a sweet treat to preparing for the week ahead
- Weekly Bagel Break on Tuesdays from 11-2, Hillel is the place to be for lunch and great company between classes
- Nosh & Nourish, on Thursday evenings, invites students to the Hillel kosher kitchen to prepare challah, chicken soup, and other culturally Jewish recipes from scratch in preparation for Shabbat, and always includes great conversation about school and life
- Joyful weekly Shabbat worship with brand new prayer books in Hebrew, English, and Hebrew Transliteration, making worship accessible to everyone who chooses to participate, followed by Shabbat Dinner and an Oneg Shabbat
- Selichot, and a beautiful changing of the Torah covers for the High Holidays
- Hosted the Sigma Delta Tau Sorority Sisterhood Leadership Event
- Became a twice-monthly blood-drive host site for the Indiana Blood Center

We offered a complement of High Holiday opportunities including:

- Worship beautifully led by New York-based Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion Rabbinical Student Adam Graubart
- Erev Rosh Hashanah Dinner sponsored by Michelle and David Levine in honor of Tova and Barry Effron

### Rosh Hashanah I

- Morning Worship Service, Bagel Break, Afternoon Worship Service, Community Tashlich Event (convened by Purdue Hillel and co-hosted by AEPi, Chabad at Purdue, Lafayette Community Religious School, Sons of Abraham Synagogue, and Temple Israel), followed by a community dinner

### Rosh Hashanah II

- Morning Worship Service, 'Creation Stories' Lunch and Learn, Quiet Hours & Mezuzah Making with Purdue Labs serology tubes, Afternoon Worship Service, and dinner

### Kol Nidre

- Dinner, Kol Nidre Services, with musical accompaniment by student leader Max Hess

### Yom Kippur

- Morning Service, Quiet Hours for Study or Worship, Afternoon Service, Yizkor, Neilah, and Havdallah, Break the Fast Meal

### Sukkot

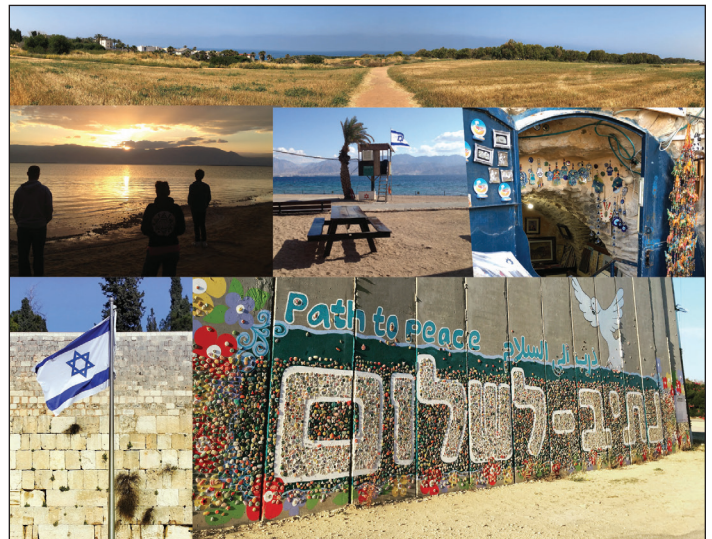
- Sukkah building with Alpha Epsilon Pi and Hillel members
- Daily opportunities to fulfil the commandment of shaking the lulav and etrog in the Sukkah

### Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah

- A joyful celebration led by student leader Max Hess, who chanted the last verses of Deuteronomy from one Torah, and the first verses of Genesis from a second Torah, followed by a beautiful changing of the Torah covers

And we're looking forward to an exciting rest of the semester, including these highlights:

- Family Weekend October 22-24, where we'll host Shabbat services and dinner, have the building open for visitors on Saturday, and will host a brunch on Sunday
- PRIDE Shabbat in honor of LGBTQ History Month and the vital role of allies to the safety and success of all marginalized communities
- Shabbat with the Latino Cultural Center at the end of October, with a dialogue about the similarities between Jewish mourning customs and Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead)
- Winter 21 and Summer 22 Birthright Israel trips!



Travel to Israel with Purdue Hillel  
Free Winter and Summer Trips  
Register Online  
[freeisraeltrip.org/purdue](https://freeisraeltrip.org/purdue)

**Hillel**  
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**B-Involved Student Fair**



**Hillel hosts Blood Drives**



**Sukkah Building**



**Simchat Torah Celebration**



**Mezuzah making on Rosh Hashanah afternoon**



**High Holiday Worship**



**Sigma Delta Tau Sorority Leadership Event**



**Inclusion is our Superpower**



**Alumni visitors to Hillel**



**Community Tashlich**



**Bagel Break**



**Prepping for Breakfast Club**



**Community Tashlich**



**Hillel Student Board Retreat**



**Selichot and Changing the Torah Covers**



## WITH PROFOUND GRATITUDE TO OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS

We thank all those who have made generous gifts to Purdue Hillel from November 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021. As we continue to grow our donation platform and tracking systems, we look forward to being able to share gifts made 'in honor of' and 'in memory of' loved ones. Please accept our apologies that we did not have access to that information for this newsletter edition. During this time of transition, it's also possible we have inadvertently left a valued supporter off of our list. Please accept our apologies, and let us know of any errors or omissions so we can correct them in our next newsletter.

We extend our appreciation of support to the Ohio Valley Hillel Consortium, the Jewish Federation Lafayette, the Jewish Federation of Greater Indianapolis, the Fort Wayne Jewish Federation, Evansville Jewish Community, and Hillel International.

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Celebrating 70 Years  
at 912 West State Street in 2021-2022!  
Watch for details about a celebration in Spring 2022  
[www.purduehillel.org](http://www.purduehillel.org)



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## MISSION AND VISION

### Hillel International

#### MISSION

Enriching the lives of Jewish students so that they may enrich the Jewish people and the world.

#### VISION

We envision a world where every student is inspired to make an enduring commitment to Jewish life, learning, and Israel.

**Purdue Hillel** enriches Purdue University and the greater Lafayette community by welcoming, inspiring, and empowering each person to be proud of their connection to meaningful Jewish life and by actively creating, connecting, leading, serving, and celebrating ongoing experiences to help foster a kinder and more empathetic world.

**Hillel**  
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The Center of Jewish Campus Life



Return Service Requested

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www.purduehillel.org  
765-743-1293

**Hillel**  
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## CORE VALUES

### Jewish Peoplehood

Sharing experiences, aspirations, values, and purpose while nurturing the balance in being distinctively Jewish and universally human.

*All Jews are responsible for one and other. (Babylonian Talmud, Shevuot 39a)*

### Inclusion

Radically intentional about accessibility and belonging, treating every person with the utmost care and respect.

*Do not disparage anyone, and do not shun anything. (Pirkei Avot 4:3)*

### Education

Fostering a passion for curiosity and learning and ensuring that the Next Giant Leaps offered at Purdue are mirrored in our Jewish experiences.

*These and those are both the way of God. (Babylonian Talmud, Erubin 13b)*

### Integrity

Open, honest, authentic, and ongoing transparency in how we communicate and gather while empowering one another to always do what is just and right.

*In a place where there is no humanity, strive to be human. (Pirkei Avot 2:5)*

### Joyful Judaism

Vibrant and energetic celebration in worship, ritual, culture, history, and marking Jewish milestones together.

*There is no commandment to be joyous, but joy can bring on the greatest mitzvot. (Rabbi Aharon of Karlin)*



**Hillel**  
Purdue University  
The Center of Jewish Campus Life