

from the Center

2011–2012





Engaging the Next Generation

Rabbi Jeffrey A. Summit,
Neubauer Executive Director

At Tufts Hillel, our mission is to enrich the lives of Jewish students so that they may enrich the Jewish people and the world. Ultimately, we want our students to make an enduring commitment to Jewish life.

While we know it is ambitious, we are working to double the number of Jewish students who are involved in Jewish life and who have meaningful Jewish experiences during their time on campus. Several years ago we tracked the engagement of 35% of the approximately 1500 undergraduate Jewish students on campus. We are currently involving approximately 50% of our Jewish student population with the ambitious goal of reaching 70%. We are committed to developing a programmatic approach that addresses both the breadth and depth of our student involvement.

We are actively exploring how each person’s Jewish journey includes Jewish learning, spiritual and community experience, and social justice. We want our students to develop a committed relationship with and understanding of Israel. To achieve these ambitious goals, we have organized our program in four areas:

- 1) Our elected Student Leadership Board, representing 17 groups and committees, from Shabbat and Holidays to our Jewish Women’s Collective and Freshman Committee (only to name a few).
- 2) Tufts Hillel Special Initiatives, including *The Merrin Moral Voices Program* (raising a moral voice on campus), *Read by the River* (children’s literacy), *Vitality* (Jewish perspectives on health and wellness), *BRight IACT Israel program* (pre and post Taglit-Birthright), partnership with *Repair the World* (our initiative to make social justice a signature aspect of our programming), *Israel Education and Advocacy* and Hillel’s group TAG (Tufts Against Genocide).
- 3) Immersion Trips and Experiences (including pre-trip and post-trip programming). Experiences include: Taglit-Birthright; Service trips co-sponsored with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, such as trips to India, Argentina and Kazakhstan; Trips to Rwanda with the Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village; Service trips to the Gulf Coast and this year to Los Angeles; Trip to Berlin to examine the legacy of the Holocaust.
- 4) Our Senior Jewish Educator and Campus Entrepreneurs Initiative, partnering with International Hillel and the Jim Joseph Foundation, engages hundreds of students in innovative projects using the methodology of relationship based engagement and social networking.

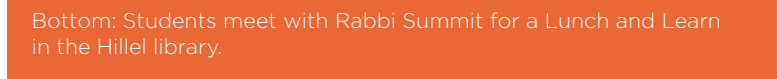
Just as our beautiful Granoff Family Hillel Center has many doors, we provide many ways into Jewish community to ensure that every student can enter and explore the richness of our culture, traditions and people.

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Cover: Sarah Schuback, A13, Daniel Bleiberg, A13, Sharonne Holtzman, A13, Charlee Corra, A13, enjoying falafel and Israeli salad during campus wide IFest (see page 4).



Top: Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg, Senior Jewish Educator, and Lauren Godles, A12, prepare for High Holidays and Rosh Hashanah services.



Bottom: Students meet with Rabbi Summit for a Lunch and Learn in the Hillel library.



REPAIR THE WORLD

Kira Mikityanskaya, A11

Whether it's volunteering at the Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village, engaging in text study about the values of *tikkun olam*, organizing an advocacy campaign about the plight of women worldwide, or sorting through donated goods at a local shelter, Tufts Hillel students take action.

This year, Tufts Hillel announced an exciting partnership with Repair the World, a national organization committed to engaging Jews in meaningful, long term service as an entry point into Jewish life. As a *Tzedek* Hillel, we have always been dedicated to social justice issues and to exploring these issues within a Jewish context. Now, our partnership with Repair the World has challenged us to take our philosophy to a new level and intensify our commitment to service.

By defining 'service' to include volunteering, Jewish learning, advocacy and awareness, we're immersing students in the many aspects of service, creating profound and impactful experiences.

For example, the Moral Voices Committee, an initiative raising awareness this year about women and equity worldwide, has continued its educational programming while also engaging in advocacy and awareness by organizing a microfinance fundraising series; in direct service by volunteering on a regular basis at a halfway home for homeless women; in Jewish learning sessions with the Senior Jewish Educator, Rabbi Ruttenberg. By incorporating all aspects of service into its work, the committee is truly repairing the world by making a difference not only on campus, but in our local community and worldwide.

As a result of the partnership, we've been able to reach new audiences and form new relationships on campus and in local

communities. Read by the River (RBTR), Tufts Hillel's children's literacy initiative, took an interest in children's issues beyond the annual literacy carnival. The entire RBTR board volunteered at Cradles to Crayons, an organization that provides children with basic necessities for healthy development. So inspired by their experience, the RBTR board invited Cradles to Crayons to become involved with the literacy carnival, creating a new partnership with Hillel (See page 12).

More recently, Hillel welcomed young adults from Gateways, an organization offering Jewish experiences to young adults with special needs, to Tufts Hillel for Shabbat. Student volunteers were paired with our invited guests throughout the evening, bringing them into our Jewish community on campus and providing them with a warm, engaging Shabbat experience.

This year's successes are part of a continuous commitment to service. Plans for next year include a Tufts-wide Community Service Day with hundreds of volunteers and tens of community partners, as well as a course in the Fall of 2011 through the Tufts Experimental College which will focus on interfaith social justice and long term volunteering.

We envision this year as a commitment to a movement that will spread beyond OUR campus — a movement that reaffirms, with greater dedication, our commitment to justice, to service, and to *tikkun olam*.

Our partnership with Repair the World has challenged us to take our philosophy to a new level and intensify our commitment to service.



Kira Mikityanskaya, A11, and Julie Kalt, A12

Moral Voices 2011: What's Your Story, Little Girl?

Kristin Livingston, Tufts Communications

In the wake of 9/11, former co-host of *The View*, Lisa Ling, asked her country a very uncomfortable question: “What happened to the United States was a catastrophic event and the worst terrorist attack in human history. Yet maybe before we seek revenge, we should ask the question: Why should anyone want to make such an attack on the U.S.?”

The rejoinders flooded her inbox. Able to counter closed-minded messages (“Go back to China”) with rational answers (“I’m from Sacramento”), Ling recounted one of the boldest moments of her career to a rapt Tufts audience of hundreds on February 2 as guest speaker for Hillel’s Merrin Distinguished Lecture Series. Generously supported by Hillel’s leadership donors, Anne Heyman and Trustee Seth Merrin, A82, the series is the pinnacle of the annual Moral Voices initiative that has focused on topics from genocide to justice on educational, economic, and environmental fronts, and created opportunities for awareness and change on campus for more than five years.

“This year’s theme,” said Moral Voices chair, Heather Blonsky, A11, “is raising a voice for women worldwide.” Programs have included a volunteer effort at On The Rise, a halfway home for women; a microfinance campaign to make small loans to women on a global

scale; and a film screening of *Where the Water Meets the Sky*, a documentary that Blonsky described as creating a collective voice among women learning to use film equipment. Students have also cooked meals for families on Thanksgiving; worked with children at local synagogues; and sponsored Lunch and Learn sessions to discuss connecting spirituality to political activism.

“We had a very exciting fall semester,” said Moral Voices member Ariel Bronstein, A14, “and we still have much to look forward to. Events already planned for the spring semester include a Lunch and Learn about human trafficking, a Moral Voices Shabbat, a clothing drive, more volunteer opportunities at On The Rise and programming for homeless women at Rosie’s Place.”

Bronstein added, “Moral Voices has provided me with resources for volunteering and advocating for women’s empowerment, while inspiring me to remain an active citizen. One of my favorite moments as a member was listening to Lisa Ling’s lecture. It was the first time in my life that I had been so motivated to work harder to raise awareness and advocate for important issues.”

“I was honored to introduce Lisa Ling to Tufts and be part of the audience as she spoke about her experiences and how she acts upon her social consciousness,” said Blonsky, who, along with more than

Lisa Ling inspires students, including Simmone Seymour, A14, and Sofia Shield, A14, during study session led by Rabbi Summit before the Merrin Moral Voices Distinguished Lecture.



Tufts Hillel presents:

LISA LING



As the field correspondent for The Oprah Winfrey Show and contributor to ABC News' Nightline and National Geographic's Explorer, Lisa Ling has reported from dozens of countries, covering stories about gang rape in the Congo, bride burning in India and the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda, among other issues that are too often ignored.

FEBRUARY 1, 2011

8PM IN COHEN AUDITORIUM

Tickets available at the Cohen Box Office on January 24th. Tickets are free but Tufts ID is required for pick up. Up to 2 IDs per person.

For questions, call 617-627-3242 or visit www.tuftshillel.org.



20 other students, was also able to interact with Ling at a text study discussion, led by Rabbi Summit and held in the Hillel Chapel before dinner and the lecture. “The feeling of awe and inspiration in the room was tangible,” Blonsky added of Ling’s words. “Tufts students are socially conscious, globally aware, and driven to make a difference—everything she said really spoke to the spirit of our student body.”

Host of National Geographic Explorer, Ling not only showed clips from and described rare firsthand accounts of some of the world’s most dangerous and isolated areas, but also illustrated the need to provide news coverage that says something, that asks provocative questions, and that forces the most influential nation in the world to look twice—and take action.

“Moral Voices has provided me with resources for volunteering and advocating for women’s empowerment, while inspiring me to remain an active citizen. One of my favorite moments as a member was listening to Lisa Ling’s lecture. It was the first time in my life that I had been so motivated to work harder to raise awareness and advocate for important issues.”

— Ariel Bronstein, A14

Ling spoke of her dedication to the education of young women. “What I’ve found, all over the world, is that if you give a girl an opportunity to get an education,” said Ling, “she will fight to retain that education.”

Ling has witnessed many highs and lows of young women: lucky starts for abandoned babies and childless Westerners in Chinese adoption centers, young prostitutes also abandoned—this time, by pimps—in American courthouses, North Korean refugees looking for salvation, but often finding slavery of a different name. Her mission is clear: empowerment through education—not only educating the little girls who need the

basics in life, but also educating the Tufts community and anyone who will look, listen, and spark a dialogue.

“What I do isn’t a reality show,” she said. “It’s simply real.” That sense of realness was pressed upon the audience as Ling closed the evening. She applauded Tufts for its active citizenship, thanked Hillel for inviting her to share messages from her own moral voice, and concluded, “I’ve been given this opportunity to come and encounter so many different kinds of stories, and I just can’t turn my back on them and pretend they don’t exist.”

Repeating the words her mentor and friend, Oprah Winfrey, had once said to her, Ling then called on the audience to follow their own moral voices. “Now that you know,” she said, “you can’t pretend that you don’t.”

Right: Heather Blonsky, A11, the Moral Voices Chair, introducing Lisa Ling to the Tufts community.



IFest: Celebrating Israel

Students and faculty enjoyed falafel, hummus and Israeli desserts at Tufts Friends of Israel's annual festival celebrating Israel's independence. The Campus Center was transformed to represent four regions of Israel: Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, the Negev, and the North.



Left: Noam Yaffe, A13, enjoying a game of *Kadimah* during IFest.

Right: Students make Hebrew name bracelets at one of the many IFest booths.



“Wherever they find themselves in the world, in India, Israel, or on the Hill, Tufts students always make time to play after a long day of hard work.”

—Paris Adler, A12, and Hillary Sieber, A12



Tufts Hillel Friends of Israel Wins the Most Influential Israel Campus Group of the Year Award

Tufts Save a Child's Heart Campaign: Tufts Friends of Israel (FOI) also won an award for Best Israel Campaign for its Save a Child's Heart Campaign (SACH). FOI raised \$1400 for SACH, an Israeli nonprofit organization that provides pediatric care for children from developing countries suffering from heart disease. The campaign included a candy delivery service, a cookie decorating table in the Mayer Campus Center, information tables in the Dewick-MacPhie Dining Center and a ticketed party held by the Zeta Psi fraternity.

Matt Haimowitz, A14, Shira Shamir, A14, Daniel Bleiberg, A13, May Igawa, A13, Erica Feldman, A14

Friends Across the Globe in India



“It’s really cool to have friends all the way across the world. One of the many things that I will take away from Hillel’s trip to India is that sense of wherever you go, there’s always someone Jewish. It felt incredible to walk into a synagogue and understand exactly what was going on. I will never forget singing David Melech Yisrael and breaking into Israeli dance with the Jewish Youth Pioneers of the Bene Israel community in the social hall at our retreat together in Karjat, just as I have done countless times at my own synagogue in California.”

—Eric Siegel, A13

Right to Left: Sophie Schwartz, A12, Zach Schwartz, A13, and Ariel Spierer, A12, with members of the Mumbai community at the Gate of India.



“It’s been a very transformative experience for all of us. This trip has had a very meaningful impact on my connection to and responsibility to the global Jewish community.”

—Gabe Lewenstein, A12



The Granoff Family Hillel Center

Prominently located on campus, Tufts Hillel provides a welcoming environment to all students.



Tufts Students REACH for Rwanda

Gabriel Saltzman, A12

As participants in Tufts Hillel's service-learning trips, my peers and I know that we need to strike a balance between awareness, raising money, and truly serving the people in need—on the ground and side by side with them in their own communities. We not only talk about social justice, we take action.

Two years ago, Tufts students made their first Hillel trip to the Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village (ASYV) in rural Rwanda. Founded by Anne Heyman and Tufts Trustee Seth Merrin, A82, ASYV is home to more than 250 teenagers orphaned by the Rwandan genocide. By living in this safe and nurturing community, these young Rwandans are encouraged to be self-sufficient and engaged in the rebuilding of their nation. Hillel students felt privileged to visit them. And by the time they returned to the Hill, they, too, shared their vision. Impassioned by their experiences, students organized the 5K Race for Rwanda in the fall of 2010, which raised funds for the ASYV.

Supported in part by Tufts Trustee Emeritus Bill Cummings, A58, H06, J97P, M97P; his wife Joyce, J97P, M97P; and members of the Merrin Family, Hillel students traveled once more to Rwanda, this past summer.

I was lucky enough to go on that trip. My time with this hard-working and compassionate community taught me and my peers a

great deal. We not only realized how fortunate we are at Tufts, but knew that we had to do something more when we returned to campus.

In the fall, we launched REACH for Rwanda (Rwanda Extravaganza for Art, Change, and Hope). The entire Tufts community was invited to join us in song and dance, media slideshows, and a photo exhibit/auction in the Aidekman Art Gallery. Designed to raise awareness of contemporary genocides and portray the history and culture of a country on the mend, REACH for Rwanda not only raised funds for the ASYV, but also inspired a new understanding about these issues among those who joined us for this special event.

When asked about my trip, I tell people about the hope, faith, and universal brotherhood that are part of daily life at ASYV. I witnessed teenagers working together to repair their local community and rebuild their lives. Now, I and my fellow travelers, back on campus and far from the village, are committed to following the fine example set by the friends we made in Rwanda.

Through programs like REACH for Rwanda, we were able to take part in social justice action — a fundamental element espoused by Tufts Hillel and fostered by unwavering empathy, support and mutual helpfulness.



Left (left to right): Kevin Luo, A13, Rob Truglia, A12, Matt Parsons, A13, participate in Tufts' 5K Race for Rwanda, raising funds to assist young Rwandans at the Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village.

Top and Bottom: Tufts students with students from the Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village





Meeting the Challenge for Holocaust and Genocide Education

Lauren Levine, A11

For the past year we have been working with students and staff to bring Holocaust and Genocide education front and center on campus. After Holocaust survivor Eliezer Ayalon inspired us with his personal account of surviving several death camps, we put together a panel of five survivors of 20th century genocides. Cabot Auditorium was standing room only as students witnessed personal stories and were sadly reminded that genocide does not only live in the past.

We decided that as students we, too, should help raise the funds needed to meet the \$1M Challenge presented by Bill and Joyce Cummings to create a Holocaust and Genocide Education Program at Tufts. We invited students to contribute a gift of any size to our Student Campaign to meet the Cummings Challenge. We count donors, not dollars; our main objective is to raise awareness on campus. When James and Stephen Smith, founders of the UK Holocaust Centre and the Kigali Memorial Center for the Rwandan Genocide, met with us to share their compelling stories, we were more inspired than ever to understand the past, face the present and learn how to make a difference in the future.



Survivors Speak: An Evening with Extraordinary Survivors of Genocide

In March 2011, Tufts Against Genocide, a newly formed student organization sponsored by Tufts Hillel, presented a panel discussion led by Rabbi Summit, featuring survivors of the Holocaust and the Armenian, Rwandan, Bosnian, and Cambodian atrocities. Hundreds of students and faculty witnessed firsthand the extraordinary stories of the survivors.





Taglit-Birthright students at the Tomb of Theodore Herzl, founder of modern Zionism, following a tour of the national cemetery of Israel.

On Other Sides of the World, We're All the Same

Bruce Ratain, A11

Over winter break, I traveled to Israel on Tufts Hillel's Taglit–Birthright trip, living on a bus for 10 days with approximately 40 Tufts students and eight Israeli soldiers. Fighting the increasingly compelling urge to fall asleep on long bus rides, I devoted my time to learning everything I could about those around me.

On one ride through the Galilee, I sat next to Moshe (names of active-duty soldiers have been changed), an Israeli submariner who thus far in the trip had been relatively quiet. We sat silently for a moment when he turned toward me and asked, “So what do you want to do with your life?” When the ensuing conversation ended about an hour later, I had discovered that he and I shared the same professional aspirations of working in environmental policy, and that he was surprisingly knowledgeable—having read many of the same papers that I had.

As I tried to digest my conversation with Moshe, I turned around to the back of the bus to find three other Israelis playing “I Want It That Way” on guitar and a melodica, a hybrid of a harmonica and piano. I watched them play — Areli, short, with a half-Israeli, half-British accent who described his job by asking whether we had seen *The Hurt Locker*; Ori, a bear of a man who somehow fits into a submarine and possesses Buddha-esque wisdom and maturity; and Itai, a serious, stoic naval officer who at that moment was blowing into a winding tube while pushing keys on a small blue plastic piano, releasing a sound much like a squeak toy.

Middle East media coverage in the US makes it easy to forget that the story of Israel is one of life, love and beautiful people. The Israelis I know remind me of my friends here — looking for a good time, listening to American songs and hoping that their children will grow up and eat their shawarma in peace.

Later that day, we left the bus and began a hike past ancient Roman ruins and a small clear stream. I walked with Ori, talking about nature, the military and music. At one point he turned to me and said, “You know, before this trip, Americans were just in the movies. I’ve never really had any American friends or known what you were actually like. ... It means a lot to see that even though we’re on other sides of the world, we’re really all the same.”

True peace and understanding develop when two sides come to realize their common hopes, concerns and dreams. In college, though many of us care about the conflict and work to understand it, it is hard to make time to engage with those most directly involved. As a legacy of my Birthright trip, I’ve made a personal effort to spend more time talking to my Israeli and Arab friends at Tufts, and sharing their stories with others here. And I’ve been encouraging my American friends to do the same.

I’ve seen that the most important learning happens outside of academic coursework. Perhaps the best way to advocate for Israel is to take skeptics to the source—by encouraging engagement with Israelis themselves. If people take the time to engage with those who at first seem so different, perhaps they can come to realize how much we have in common.





Tufts Hillel sends more than 100 students on Taglit-Birthright yearly.

These students return from Israel ready to become more involved with Jewish life on campus, in Israel and across the globe.

Below: Nika Gokhman, A13, (far right) enjoys the sights and sounds of Ben Yehuda Street with Israeli soldiers.



Friday morning at the *shuk* (marketplace) in Jerusalem. The sights, sounds and smells of Shabbat preparations are intoxicating!





Above: Rebecca Hornthal, A11, Heather Blonsky, A11, Lauren Levine, A11, preparing challah for Shabbat.

Right: Kira Mikityanskaya, A11, kneads Challah dough.



Shabbat: Ending a Busy Week and Starting Anew

Laura Corlin, A13, and Sam Kupferberg, A13

Shabbat at Tufts is a time to relax with friends after a busy week. Every Friday evening, 125-180 students gather to light the candles, attend student led Reform or Conservative services and enjoy a family style kosher dinner. After the meal, students hang out chatting and singing over coffee or continue on with their evening plans.

Some weeks we focus on special themes, such as Bring-a-Buddy Shabbat where students invite new friends or Faculty Shabbat when students invite their favorite professors. This year we gained a global perspective at India Shabbat. Students who visited India on Hillel's trip last

summer invited Tufts' Indian students to attend and learn about Judaism while sharing their own experiences with the Jewish community of Mumbai.

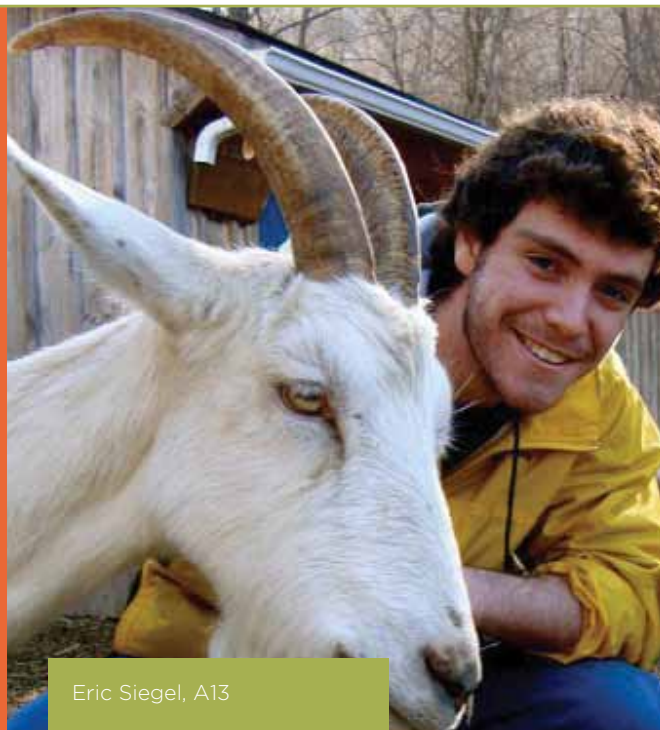
Hillel is also expanding Shabbat all over campus. Students can pick up Shabbat-to-Go kits so they can celebrate Shabbat in dorms, apartments, fraternity or sorority houses, or family-style with Tufts faculty and Hillel staff.

College life can be so hectic that Shabbat at Hillel is like a small island of sanity where we can pause to relax, reflect and just catch our breath.

Judaism, Food, and Justice

Emily Eisenberg, A11

Our weekend retreat on Judaism, food, and justice at the Adamah organic farm at the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center showed me a side of Judaism that I never knew existed. I had no idea that you could actually have fun in synagogue; that you could dance and sing and embody what songs and prayers are all about. I remember, years ago, sitting in synagogue, just waiting for the *oneg* to start, everything just seemed "blah." This weekend was so different. Even though I didn't know all the Hebrew, I could feel the emotion — both the seriousness and the joy. It was so much fun singing and dancing as a community. Before this weekend I didn't feel that a lot of Jewish things mattered to me. During this retreat I experienced a deeper connection with Jewish values and community.



Eric Siegel, A13

Holidays at Hillel

Kira Hessekiel, A13, and Liz McGarry, A13

There is no feeling quite like celebrating Jewish holidays with hundreds of Jewish students. During Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we welcomed more than 800 students for services and meals. We built, and one night even slept in, two *sukkahs* on campus. Before Sukkot we went apple picking, baked pies and brought them to a local homeless shelter.

This year, during Chanukah, Hillel went all out, hosting events nearly every night; including a *sufganiyot* dipping bar, a dramatic reading of “Herschel and the Hannukah Goblins” featuring Rabbi Summit as Herschel, and a Chanukah Casino Night, complete with Dreidel Poker and chocolate gelt “chips.” Though Purim fell during Spring Break this year, we still sold *mishloach manot* bags to raise money for *Tzedakah*.

Passover is a special time when Hillel keeps students thinking, engaged and definitely well fed! After a pre-Passover *Chametz-fest* and Passover services, we had five seders, from Reform to Traditional including a Social Justice seder. We even provide Do-It-Yourself kits and Passover snack bags for students who like to plan their own seders.

Hillel does so many activities and programs, but the Jewish holidays frame our year in ways that both challenge us and keep us connected.



Top: Emma Goldstein, A13, and John Peter Kaytrosh, A12

Bottom (left to right): Stacey Berkowitz, A14, Miriam Ross-Hirsch, A13, Brooke Schreiber, E14, Aaron Penner, A14, Rebecca Herzberg, A14, making dreidel decorations during Chanukah Casino Night.



Top: Ian Hainline, A11, and Bruce Ratain, A11, prepare for Pre-Passover *Chametz-fest*.

Bottom: Students learn about Passover dishes and Jewish holiday customs around the world.



Sherry Albert, A14, Laura Corlin, A13, a game of dreidel, anyone?

Read by the River

"The Magical World of Reading" was the theme of Tufts Hillel's 12th annual Read by the River carnival. This past March, nearly 1,000 elementary school children and their families came to campus to celebrate literacy and learning with games, arts and crafts, and prizes. A highlight was a surprise visit from former New England Patriots tight end Jermaine Wiggins.



Welcome Back!

Freshman, sophomores, juniors and seniors look forward to the first weekend in September when students congregate on the Quad for the Welcome Back Barbeque and meet up again Sunday morning for our famous Bagel Brunch.



Left to right: Sam Sittenfield, A13, Howie Levine, A13, and Liz McGarry, A13, set up tables with bagels, lox and cream cheese for everyone!



Left to right: Kayla Glick, A13, Naomi Heisler, and Miriam Hirsh-Ross, A13, enjoy Hillel's Semi-Formal.

Students Refurbish JCC in Argentina

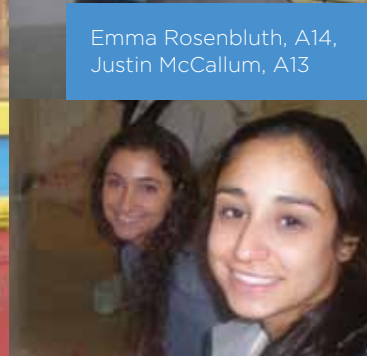
This summer, twenty students, along with Senior Jewish Educator, Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg, traveled to Argentina for study, service, travel, fun, and engagement with the Argentinian Jewish community. They refurbished the Jewish Community Center in the town of Mar Del Plata, worked with those in need in Buenos Aires, and laughed, learned, played, celebrated Shabbat and thought together about what giving means.



Carly Machlis, A13, Emma Goldstein, A13, Rebecca Edelberg, A12, Julia Rodgers, A14, Melanie Rubin, A14



Emma Rosenbluth, A14, Justin McCallum, A13



Ariel Bronstein, A14, Melissa Mandelbaum, A14



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Tufts Hillel Alumni Alliance

Deborah Bamel, A09

On April 3, 2011, the Tufts Hillel Alumni Alliance got together at the home of Pam and Rich Remis, A07P, A10P, for a very special event — Passover cooking with Tufts' first lady, Adele Fleet Bacow. Adele shared her favorite Passover dessert recipes with us, and we all got a chance to try them out while chatting and sharing stories. It was a wonderful afternoon!



From Tufts to the Rabbinate

Rabbi Neil Hirsch, A05

My perspective on the Jewish community stems from the communities I have been involved with all my life. First, my family and hometown synagogue in Houston, and then, and most importantly, my time with Tufts Hillel and my relationship with Rabbi Jeffrey Summit.

As a child, I learned from our family's rabbi that life is not a straight line; there are successes and struggles. Yet, that is what makes it interesting. At Tufts Hillel, I received the message loud and clear as to the necessity of being a global citizen, of being engaged in the activities of a community, and specifically the kind of engagement that leads to a better world. And while I graduated from Tufts with a degree in Art History and Classics, my time there opened my eyes to the world as it should be, while being realistic about the world as it is. This propelled me to rabbinical school. Now, a major part of my rabbinate is about helping to make that shift from the status quo to a more complete, whole and peaceful world.

Moving to Newton to accept a position as one of the rabbis at Temple Shalom, a Reform congregation of 800 families, is a homecoming in some ways. One of the most exciting things about coming back to the Boston area is that I can unabashedly be a Red Sox fan again! We spend a lot of time at my congregation talking about one's Jewish journey. I am certainly on my own journey, heading from my childhood through Tufts, and now into this new stage of life. The experiences I had while at Tufts were formative, and they continue to influence me as I head into this new chapter.

THANK YOU

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Left to right: Alon Slutzky, A13, Zac Schwartz, A13, Eric Siegel, A13, Sally Ehrlich, A12, Ariel Spierer, A12, Sarah Eilenberg, E13, Robin Socol, A11, in Mumbai, India

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