

HillelUW

University of Washington



2020-2021

IMPACT REPORT

FRIENDS

Dear Friends,

Despite unprecedented challenges and Zoom fatigue over the past year, we are proud to share that Hillel UW is as strong as ever. We minimized pandemic-related disruptions, strengthened our core community, and maintained essential connections to Jewish knowledge and traditions for students and young adults in the Seattle community.

As a highly adaptive organization, Hillel was safely able to engage hundreds of Jewish undergraduate students, young adult Jconnectors, and the extended community. High Holiday services successfully took place online (Torah readers included!); “Shabbag Shalom” kits, including challah, grape juice, candles, and a comforting meal, went out to 40-50 students a week; and our Passover lunches, a beloved institution, became to-go meals that fed 480 people. In addition, our Senior Jewish Educator facilitated Jewish learning programs, and outdoor events like weekly Wellness Walks brought people together — with one another and with nature. These are just a few examples of how we nourished body and spirit throughout a year that threatened to undermine our mission to inspire students and young adults to explore, embrace, and celebrate Jewish life and identity.

As we optimistically prepare to reopen in the fall, we reflect on the past with gratitude and look to the future with hope. However the challenges won’t disappear when the doors open. We essentially will be welcoming two new classes — the incoming class and the sophomore class, whose first year was disrupted by Covid. We expect to be working overtime to get to know a large crop of new faces, which is all the more reason why we need to double down on programming and systems of support.

Your continued commitment keeps our ship afloat and helps steer it on a steady course. Thank you for all your support — past, present, and future. Know that it tangibly impacts the lives of today’s Jewish young adults and tomorrow’s Jewish community leaders. We could not do this without you!

We look forward to seeing you again soon at High Holiday Services, HillelFest 2022, and Passover lunches.

B’Shalom,



Alan Waldbaum
Board President
2019-2021



Amee Sherer
Greenstein Family
Executive Director



Elizabeth Siegel
Board President
2021-2023

IMPACT

900

Jewish young adults participated in undergraduate and Jconnect programs.*

200

of them participated in six or more programs.

30

students participated in two Jewish Learning Fellowship cohorts.

250

“Shabbag Shalom” Shabbat tote bags were distributed, used, and reused every Friday.

100

Jconnectors participated in the Friend Matching Program.

47

Jconnectors participated in our Zoom High Holiday programs (including two Torah readers).

15

hours of live-streamed, interactive High Holiday services.

135

trees planted through a partnership with several other Seattle non-profit organizations and the Big Bold Jewish Climate Fest.

60

screens were active at our “Zeder” (Zoom seder).

480

people enjoyed Kosher for Passover Lunches to Go.

\$365,000

raised at our virtual fundraising event.

UNDERGRADS

SHABBAT TO GO



Jewish Huskies turn to Hillel for community, connection, and soul-warming food every Friday night. So when the pandemic put a stop to this weekly occasion, what did we do? Shabbat dinners to go!

Starting in fall quarter 2020, every Friday 40-50 students stopped by Hillel to pick up a homemade kosher dinner. The meals came with a reusable canvas “Shabbag” with Shabbat candles, matches, individual bottles of grape juice, mini challahs, and a Shabbat thought. These weekly interactions gave our staff the rare opportunity for an in-person catch-up.

We can't wait until our first in-person, IN-Hillel Shabbat in October!

*Being able to put together and hand out Shabbags has been a really great way for me to meet new and returning students in person and help make those initial bonds with and between students. Shabbat dinners are so key and representative of Hillel UW; I'm happy that we are able to provide a weekly Shabbat experience in a safe and responsible way, and the students are so grateful that we have **kept it up!***

-Hunter Duryee, Director of Student Life

CLIMATE FEST

Over 50 undergrads participated this past year in events surrounding the Big Bold Jewish Climate Fest, a Seattle-based festival that reached 5,500 people through 165 events across the country. Under the leadership of our 2020-21 Senior Jewish Educator, Rabbi Josh Weisman, who convened a learning session around Jewish models for climate crisis leadership last fall, students were energized to plant trees at a public park and host an online program focused on the Puyallup Tribe's efforts to stop a fracked gas plant. The team completed its final project, a beach clean up at Golden Gardens, in the spring. By combining Torah, social action, support for student leadership, and outreach, we successfully provided an outlet for dozens of students to experience Jewish life, action, and learning in a difficult year.



PHYSICAL & EMOTIONAL WELLNESS



With the Hillel building closed last year, we worked hard to provide students with resources to support their mental and physical well-being.

In partnership with Jewish Family Service, our in-house licensed mental health professional, Sheri Davis, started full time in September 2020 and provided virtual individual counseling. This service was offered with no limit on the number of sessions. The counselor played a critical role in supporting students' mental health by providing a safe, confidential space to address issues around anxiety or depression, navigating interpersonal and family relationships, identity issues, academic and career concerns, as well as grief and loss.

Hillel staff and student leaders also offered various wellness programs to students, including weekly Wellness Walks, Matzah Ball Soup for the Soul—during which Sheri shared stress-reduction techniques—and a four-week Winterfest cohort, “Being Back at Home,” on coping strategies during the pandemic. With the reopening of the building, we are looking forward to hosting yoga classes, At-the-Well Rosh Hodesh women's groups, and additional in-person programs to support our community's overall well-being.

For more information about our wellness programs or if you know a student in need of counseling, please reach out to Sheri at counselor@hilleluw.org.

jconnectseattle

A Program of Hillel UW for Jewish 20-30 Somethings

SHABBAT MUST GO ON



Since forming 21 years ago as a way to connect post-college young adults to Judaism and each other, Jconnect has provided Shabbat services and dinner the second Friday of every month. The pandemic was not going to break the streak.

In order to continue this tradition, Jconnect moved Shabbat to Zoom and infused it with song from acclaimed local musician Chava Mirel. Chava joined Rabbi Josh Weisman, Hillel's Senior Jewish Educator, to lead selections from Kabbalat Shabbat. Jconnectors had the option to pick up dinner to go from Hillel or just join us online. Three times this year, we co-hosted our monthly Shabbat with OneTable, a national organization that empowers people to host Friday night Shabbat dinners in their own homes.

By the time summer rolled around, we were thankfully able to think about hosting Shabbat services and dinners in person again. On July 9th, Amee hosted an outdoor Shabbat at her home, and more than 40 Jconnectors attended. We are so looking forward to kicking off our new musical Friday night gatherings in person with Chava Mirel on October 8th. Jconnect Second Friday Shabbat will be the place to be for young adults on the second Friday of every month!

Check out our website, and let your young adult friends know about Jconnect's awesome Second Friday Shabbats at Hillel UW as well as an expanded partnership with OneTable.

TO MARKET, TO MARKET!

When Hanukkah came around, we offered Jconnectors an outdoor market stocked with holiday goodies so that they could "shop for free" for all their celebratory needs. At the Hanukkah Market, Jconnectors built goodie boxes with a menorah, candles, a dreidel, gelt, Hanukkah coloring pages, a spa face mask, tea, hot apple cider packets, Emergen-C packets, Hanukkah cupcakes from Trophy, and a Hillel UW mug. They could also purchase Hanukkah-themed masks. For Passover, more than 40 Jconnectors stopped by to get everything they needed, including matzah, wine, haggadot, seder plates, plastic frogs, Passover-themed socks (Pes-socks!), macaroons, matzah ball soup mixes, and recipes.



JUST FRIENDS



With young adults isolated from each other and their Jewish social networks during the pandemic, Jconnect created the Friend Matching Program with a simple goal: to match friends!

Jconnect Friend Matching went through three successful rounds and connected nearly 100 friends based on their responses to questions about what they like to do, where they work, and personal interests.

The idea came about when Hillel grad professionals were brainstorming ways to bring people together during the pandemic. "The idea of doing some sort of friend matching system kept coming up in the conversations," said interim Jconnect manager Nomi Mitchell. "I figured, why not?! If it doesn't work, no harm done. And it worked! Just based on the first round, there was clearly a desire and a need within the community."

The program played an important role in developing connections for Jconnectors who are new as well as those who have been around for a few years. "I just wanted to thank you for connecting me with my match," said Dean, who moved here this year. "I'm so thankful that you were able to make the introduction. It has, of course, been a rather peculiar time to move to Seattle, but having Jconnect has really been a great way to stay engaged and continue to build friendships despite the distanced, digital gatherings."

JEWISH LEARNING

INVESTING IN MEANINGFUL JEWISH EDUCATION

Three years ago, we joined Hillels across the US and the world by bringing on a Senior Jewish Educator (SJE). The SJE is a teacher, relationship builder, and community organizer who creates measurable differences in the lives of students. This invaluable addition supports both programming and administrative staff and creates an interlocking web of Jewish learning, Shabbat and holiday programming, social action, one-to-one outreach, engagement, mentorship, and pastoral care.

One of the most successful programs the SJE offers is the Jewish Learning Fellowship, an eight-week learning series that allows undergrad cohorts to explore various topics in an informal, open-ended format. "Especially amid the pandemic and everything else going on in the world, JLF was essential in making me feel like I have a supportive community around me," said one participant. "I was always looking forward to the meeting every time, because I knew that meant I got to talk to like-minded individuals about some really interesting concepts. I highly recommend JLF to anyone, regardless of how religious you are, because it allows you to connect to a larger Jewish community and enhances your individual connection to Judaism."

Moreover, the SJE is a rabbinic presence who plays an integral part in the lives of undergrads and Jconnectors alike by being a role model for Jewish life in a pluralistic context. The SJE leads Shabbat and holiday experiences by working with students to craft meaningful and accessible offerings informed by Jewish wisdom and tradition. For our students and Jconnectors, the SJE is their rabbi.

We are pleased to welcome Rabbi Lauren Kurland as our incoming SJE. Rabbi Kurland most recently served as director of student engagement at the Stroum Center for Jewish Studies at the UW. She is "excited to teach, mentor, partner with, and learn from students as we explore the lessons Jewish wisdom continues to offer us today."



THANK YOU!

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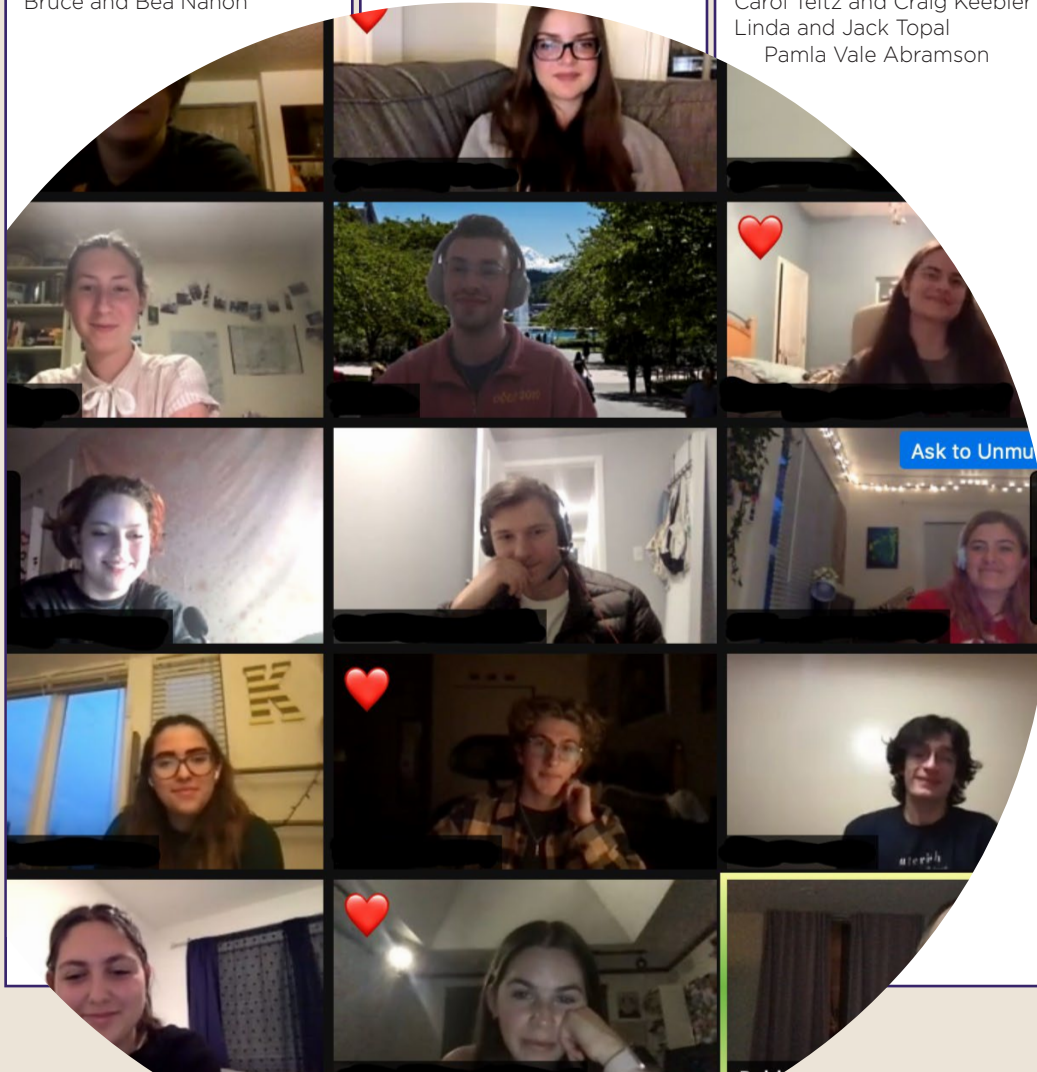
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Barrie and Ronnie Rosenberg
Rachel Rosenfeld
Rachel Rosenman
Alan and Suzanne Rubens
Katie Ruf
Mark and Sharon Sandler
Jeffrey Sayers and
Marjorie Grace-Sayers
Michael Schechter
Betsy and Dr. Jason Schneier
Rachel Schwab
Norman and Tandra
Schwamberg



Please accept our apologies for any errors or discrepancies in this list. We strive for completeness and accuracy. Contact Terri Green at terri@hilleluw.org to notify us of any oversights so we can correct them in future publications.

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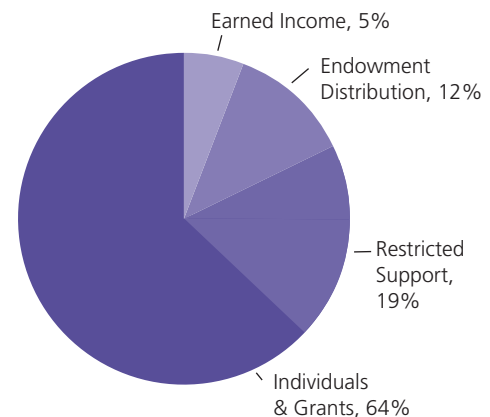
AUDREY SCHREIBER

ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR

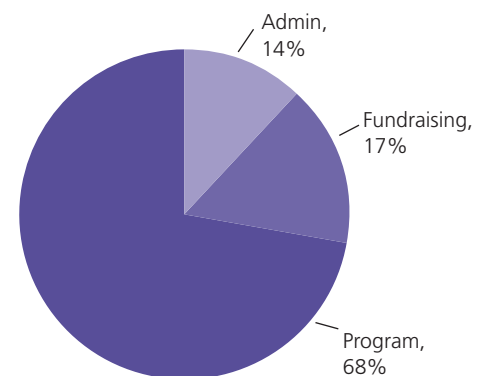
FINANCIALS

To support our programs and to achieve our mission, Hillel UW depends on generous donations from community members like you, as well as support through Hillel International, local family foundations, donor-advised funds, and qualified charitable distributions from IRAs. Our audited Fiscal Year 2019-2020 operating budget was \$1,185,847.

SUPPORT AND REVENUE



EXPENSES



Our 2020-2021 Fiscal Year audit will be conducted during fall 2021. Gifts to Hillel UW are tax-deductible as provided by law. Our Federal Tax ID number is 91-6067231.

For a complete copy of our audited financial report, please contact Jonathan Greene at Jonathan@hilleluw.org.

LIFE AND LEGACY



"During our college years, Hillel UW welcomed us on Friday nights for a delicious free Shabbat dinner and was a comfortable place to hang out with our Jewish friends. Our daughter, Tammy, found the same community away from home at the University of Michigan Hillel. Our son, Robbie, was a fixture at Hillel UW in Israel advocacy and held a student leadership position on the Hillel

board. When away at school, it's natural to feel a range of emotions like pressure to assimilate and uncertainty how to handle anti-Semitism. Hillel reinforced the Jewish values instilled in us from a young age and helped us become confident leaders. As individuals and as a family, we embrace leadership roles partly because of the skills we developed at Hillel. Naturally, we want to ensure that Hillel UW is there for future generations of student leaders. That's why we included a LIFE & LEGACY™ gift to Hillel UW in our estate plans, and we encourage others to do the same."

-Julie & David Ellenhorn

To learn more about the Hillel UW LIFE & LEGACY™ program or to join our 53 Legacy Circle members, please contact Terri Green at Terri@hilleluw.org or visit our Planned Giving page using this QR code.





HOLD THE DATE
THURSDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 10, 2022

HiLLeLfeST22

Join us at HillelFest 22, a fundraiser to make a difference in the lives of Seattle's Jewish undergraduates and young adults.

Virtual and in person details TBD.

HILLEL AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
Karen Mayers Gamoran Family Center
4745 17th Ave. NE
Seattle, WA 98105

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hours. For details go to
www.jconnectseattle.org

**Know a Jewish
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Shabbat dinners are
FREE! RSVP at
www.hilleluw.org

