

2023-2024 IMPACT REPORT



vuhillel.org

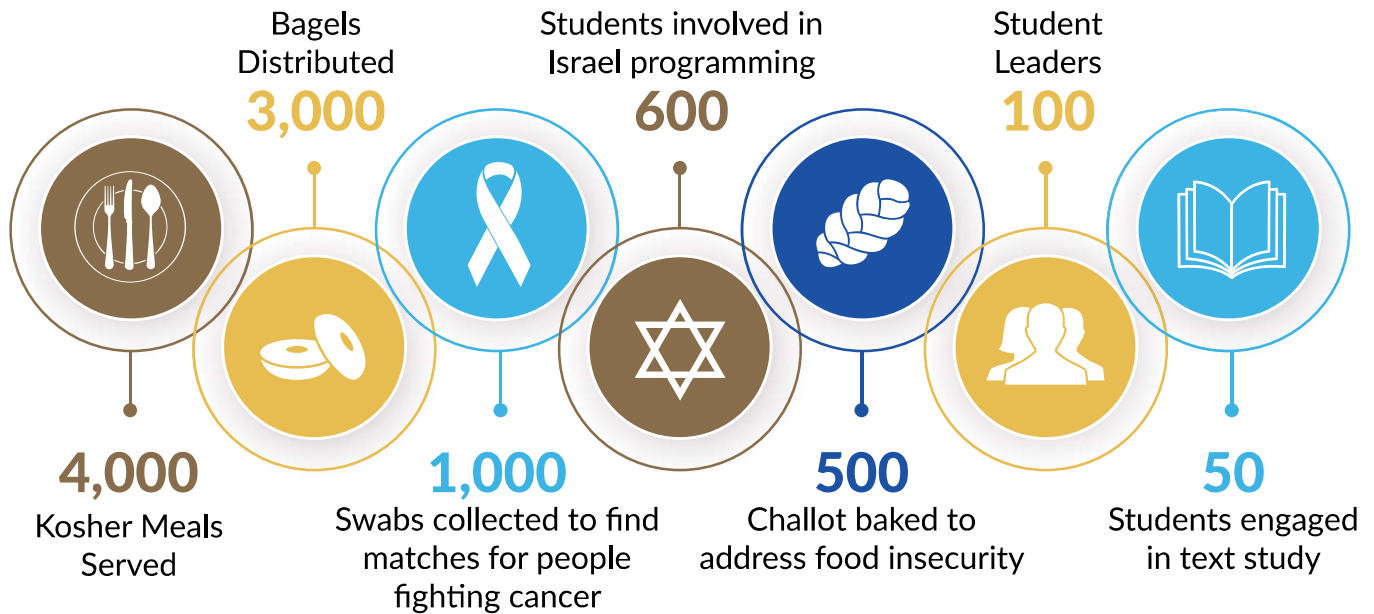


[Vanderbilt.Hillel](https://www.facebook.com/Vanderbilt.Hillel)



[@vandyhillel](https://www.instagram.com/vandyhillel)

By the Numbers



Your Investment MAKES AN IMPACT

- \$18** Two coffee dates to get a student engaged with Hillel
- \$36** Feeds one student for Break the Fast
- \$100** One Miznon (Israeli culture and cooking program) for 20 students
- \$360** One Passover seder table sponsorship
- \$500** Two programs with Hillel Out 'Dores (ice skating, farmer's market, hiking)
- \$1,000** Three Challah for Hunger bakes to raise money to address food insecurity
- \$1,800** One speaker program that explores the topics of diverse Jewish identities
- \$3,600** Shabbat dinner for 200 students

MAKE AN IMPACT
WITH YOUR GIFT AT



<https://tinyurl.com/vanderbilthilleldonate>

MISSION STATEMENT

Vanderbilt Hillel serves the religious, social, & educational needs of the undergraduate & graduate Jewish student communities.

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ARI DUBIN



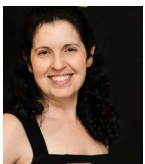
Vanderbilt Hillel is a home away from home for our students on campus. We are more than a building. We are a community, one that plays a pivotal and vital role for our students. Throughout these unsettled times, our Hillel has remained the center of Jewish life and we will continue to be in the future. We will be present and vibrant for our students as we continue to do what we do best: build and strengthen the Vanderbilt Jewish community and provide a family network to support our students' religious, social, and cultural needs.



ARI DUBIN
Executive Director



VERONICA GRADY
Assistant Director



SHANNON SMALL
Development Director



VALERIE LANDA
Finance Director



BAR SEGEV
*Jewish Agency
and Escoll Family
Israel Fellow*



MALKA DESALE
*Jewish Agency
Israel Fellow*



CARLY PAYNE
*Entrepreneur
Springboard Fellow*



DALILAH BERNIER
Rabbinic Intern

BOARD OF DIRECTORS OFFICERS

Russell Smith (AS'68), *President*
Scott Newman, *Vice President*
Alyssa (Jaffe) Hassenfeld,
Secretary (EN '15)
Adam Meyer, *Treasurer* (PB'12)
Bob Nemer, *Past President*

DIRECTORS

Joel Abramson
Tara Lerner Axelroth (PB'07/PB'09)
Didi Biesman
Hannah Bloom-Hirschberg (PB'05)
Ilana Blumenfeld-Gantz (PB'09)
Daniel Cohen
Robert Engel (AS'81)
Breanna Genekov (AS'12)
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John Hassenfeld (OG'86)
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Jake Massar (AS'08)
Greg Maurer-Hollander (AS'07)
Gwen McCallion (AS'81)
Diane Miller (BS'82)
David Pasch (AS'11)
Russ Robinson (AS '79)
Marty Singer (M.A.'75, Ph.D '77)
Sonya Slott
Amy Smith
Avi Spielman (AS'08)
Ruth Suzman
Eric Walk (EN'11)
Alison (Weiner) Winograd
(PB'12)/ (MSN'20)

YOUNG ALUMNI

Alex Grace (PB'22)
Rachel Nevett (PB'20)

STUDENTS

Nathan Appelbaum (AS'24)
Abigail Wollheim (PB'25)

GRADUATE STUDENT

Melissa Goldin (AS'22)

What We Do

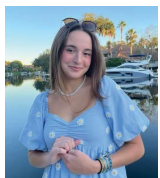
SOCIAL

SENIOR LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE



The Senior Leadership Initiative meets regularly, engaging in social, community service, networking, and educational activities in order to enhance the sense of a “senior class community,” establish connections between seniors

and the Nashville Jewish community, and ensure that the bond between Hillel and our graduating students is an enduring one. This year, our seniors have enjoyed a Senior Seder at Rosh Hashanah, tried new coffee shops around Nashville together, and enjoyed Wine and Wisdom text learning program for Sukkot and Purim.



“Senior Leadership Initiative has been an amazing opportunity to plan events and hang out with my fellow senior students in Hillel. As a second semester senior, I know I will cherish the memories made at the coffee shop hops and trivia nights once I graduate.”

SAM JOSEPHSON, CLASS OF 2024

FIRST YEAR STUDENTS OF HILLEL (FYSH) BOARD



FYSH Board is a student-run initiative that empowers our first-year class to create a Jewish community on the Ingram Commons through social, religious, and academic programming, all while building relationships with those involved

in Hillel and honing important leadership skills. This year, our FYSH participated in several on-and-off campus programs. Off campus programs included the Great Escape Room, the legendary Milk Shake Bar, Putt Shack, and on campus programming included the commons donut shop, picnic at Peabody, and chills, thrills, and cookout grills.



“It was great to show the first-years all of the innovative programming Hillel has to offer as well as welcome the first-years to the Vanderbilt Jewish community.”

CHASE MANDELL, CLASS OF 2024

MEMBERSHIP AND PROGRAMMING (MAP)



MaP Board oversees Vanderbilt Hillel's social programming efforts and major events of Vanderbilt Hillel. MaP works to plan events for

students across campus including Fall Fest, Hillel Date Party, Hillel Formal, and our annual Superbowl party. This year, MaP hosted “Mean Girls” and “Italian” themed Shabbat dinners, a self care night with massage therapists and spa treatments, and Hillel's March Madness Bracket.

HILLEL OUT 'DORES



Hillel Out'Dores is a community passionate about exploring the natural beauty of Middle Tennessee with a Jewish lens. Join friends on monthly hikes, raft trips, and overnights that get students off campus and into the wilderness. This year, our students

hosted hikes at Harpeth Hike and Hidden Lake. This group is ending the year with a kayaking trip down the Harpeth River. Indoor programming during the winter included an indoor climb at Climb Nashville West, a trip to the Nashville Farmer's Market, and ice skating.



“Hillel Out'Dores has allowed me to continue my hobbies and explore nature around Nashville with a like-minded community.”

MAYA MACIEL SEIDMAN,
CLASS OF 2025

ATZMI

Atzmi is Hillel's community for LGBTQ+ Jews and Allies. With programming ranging from Jewish learnings on gender identity to drag race watch parties, Atzmi provides space for all our 'Dores to engage in topics of identity, sexuality, love, and relationships through Jewish texts and perspectives.



“I adore helping out with Atzmi; it's a blast brainstorming ideas that connect with our wide student population.”

LUKE HALPERN, CLASS OF 2025

TIKKUN OLAM

CHALLAH FOR HUNGER



Challah for Hunger is a national organization with individual chapters at college campuses across the country. Students meet

Students meet

bi-weekly to make challah from scratch and sell the loaves on campus. Proceeds from the bake sales go directly to hunger organizations including Mazon. Challah for Hunger is more than just a bake sale - it provides opportunities for leadership, entrepreneurship, and social justice awareness, both locally and globally.

TIKKUN OLAM MAKERS (TOM)



Vanderbilt is proud to support the Vanderbilt University chapter of Tikkun Olam Makers. These students, from a variety of disciplines,

These students, from a variety of disciplines,

unite to create and engineer solutions for individuals with disabilities. This year, students hosted their 6th annual Makeathon with 150 participants and built 14 different projects- the largest number of projects in the Vanderbilt group's history. They hosted their first ever toy adaptation event in the spring, 40 students came together and successfully adapted 30 toys to make them accessible to all children.

GIFT OF LIFE



Vanderbilt Hillel partners with Gift of Life, an organization whose mission is to help cure blood cancer. Vanderbilt Hillel students run

swab drives both on campus and in the community to add people to the donor registry to save lives. This year, students collected close to 1,000 swabs to save lives.



"The work we do is incredibly meaningful, and the Vandy chapter has facilitated 12 life-saving transplants by swabbing people on campus to join the registry."

AMANDA BORTNER, CLASS OF 2024

RELIGIOUS LIFE

SHABBAT



Every week, we offer student-run Shabbat services and free kosher Shabbat dinner. Vanderbilt Hillel offers both Conservative

and Reform services for the High Holy Days and provides

programming for other Jewish holidays such as Sukkot, Purim, and Passover. Each week, our students come up with weekly themes to incorporate into services. This year we had themes such as Tot Shabbat, Bring Them Home Shabbat, Israel Shabbat, NCJW Repro Justice Shabbat, and Camp Shabbat.



"Hillel allows me to express my love of music and Judaism through song leading."

REBECCA HURWITZ, CLASS OF 2026

ROSH HASHANAH SEDER



This unique Vanderbilt Hillel tradition combines the structure of a Passover seder with the themes of

Rosh Hashanah to give students a meaningful hands-on ritual experience around the dinner table. In addition to our general seders, specific student cohorts enjoyed their own seders such as First Year Students of Hillel, Seniors, Belmont, and graduate students.

SUKKOT

Students gather in the sukkah for meals, meetings, and programs. Our sukkah is an easy way for students to fulfill the mitzvah of the holiday even by just stopping in to study. Some of the Sukkot programs from this year consisted of Sukkot Wine and Wisdom for seniors, Pizza in the Hut, and Shakshuka in the Sukkah.

PASSOVER



Beyond the seder table, Vanderbilt Hillel offers social and traditional opportunities for students to make

Passover meaningful for them for the entire eight days. Students gather for matzah pizza making, text-based learning, and our famous matzah brie brunch buffet.

EDUCATION

JEWISH LEARNING FELLOWSHIP COHORTS

Vanderbilt Hillel's Jewish Learning Fellowship (JLF) is a 10-week seminar for college students looking to explore Judaism on their own terms.

Ancient Wisdom for Modern Well-Being



Ancient Wisdom for Modern Well-Being is a 10-week experiential, conversational seminar for undergraduate

students looking to deepen their understanding of and relationship to wellbeing and Judaism. This year, our students met weekly over nourishing meals to discuss Jewish wisdom around their relationships with themselves, others, and their spirituality.

Kol Yisrael

This year, students engaged in the Kol Yisrael program, which is a series that explores the Jewish diaspora relationship to Israel, looking to classical, rabbinic, and modern Jewish wisdom to engage in a contemporary understanding of peoplehood, responsibility, home, and homeland.

"My involvement with programs such as JLF has helped me deepen my understanding of how historical Jewish liturgy and philosophy applies to the modern Jewish experience, and the sense of community fostered with my peers at Hillel has been an invaluable emotional support structure during the challenges of the last several months."

HARLAN BANDY, CLASS OF 2027

HOLOCAUST LECTURE SERIES



The Holocaust Lecture Series is the longest-running lecture series of its type. This year, our speakers included survivors Mark Schonwetter and Jenny Kalsner, grandson of Holocaust survivor and author Philippe Sands, and Francine Hirsch, Chair of Russian History at University of Wisconsin Madison.

ISRAEL

MIZNON



Miznon is a program that provides an opportunity for students to learn about Israeli culture through cuisine and cooking. This year, students made falafel, sugfaniyot, hamantaschen, sabich (Iraqi-Jewish sandwich), leek latkes, and chocolate balls. They also are making "memory recipes" to explore the stories of fallen soldiers.

TAGLIT BIRTHRIGHT ISRAEL-CAMPUS TRIP AND ONWARD PROGRAM



Students are led through Israel by Jewish professionals and will experience Jewish history and Israeli culture through unforgettable tours, hikes, and unique activities.

Vanderbilt Hillel's Onward Israel Experience is an immersive internship program offering resume-building placements in a wide variety of opportunities in the greater Tel Aviv area for two months.



VOLUNTEERING IN ISRAEL

This year, nine students volunteered in the south of Israel over winter and spring break.

Their activities included agricultural volunteering, meeting with Israelis living near Gaza who were affected by the war, programming with young Israelis, and listening to a speaker who specialized in the geopolitical conflict, and organized Shabbat dinner/led Shabbat rituals.



ISRAEL SUMMIT

Ten Vanderbilt Hillel students attended the Israel Summit, hosted by Hillel International, which included two days in Atlanta with student leaders from all over North America gathering to learn about Israeli advocacy on campus.

VANDERBILT HILLEL *Updates*

GROUNDBREAKING TO CELEBRATE THE START OF THE BUILDING RENOVATION



To celebrate the start of construction on its building renovation, Vanderbilt Hillel hosted a groundbreaking event on February 25, 2024. The building celebrated its 20th year with a clear need for building upgrades for security, the meat kitchen, and office and programmatic spaces. With a large grant from the Benjamin D. and Ruby G. Schulman Foundation and gifts from generous Kitchen Naming and 20th Anniversary donors, Vanderbilt Hillel has raised over 2 million dollars for the building renovation.

"Thank you for your strong commitment and dedication to making Hillel a safe environment. We are excited to see the enhancements to security and safety."

MARVIN & SONYA SLOTT,
CURRENT PARENTS

"I'm excited for the new building. It should be a nicer, safer place for Jewish students on campus. All my favorite spaces in the building will be improved, so all the things I love about the building future students will continue to enjoy."

ETHAN SHERMAN,
CLASS OF 2024



FUNDRAISER HONORING GOLDIE AND SYLVIA

A large part of Vanderbilt Hillel's 20th Anniversary campaign efforts will go towards renovating the meat kitchen. Despite the cramped and poorly equipped kitchen, Sylvia Shepard and Goldie Shepard have spent thousands of hours cooking Shabbat and holiday meals for Vanderbilt Hillel students for almost 20 years. In the summer of 2023, Vanderbilt Hillel launched its "Kitchen Naming Campaign." Thanks to its generous Kitchen Naming Donors, Vanderbilt Hillel raised over \$400,000 towards renovating the meat kitchen. The success of the campaign culminated in the annual fundraiser honoring Sylvia Shepard and Goldie Shepard on November 12, 2023. Goldie and Sylvia were honored, and the meat kitchen was named, "The Goldie Shepard and Sylvia Shepard Vanderbilt Hillel Kitchen."



"Each week, Shabbat at Hillel is filled with laughter, joy, and community. Goldie and Sylvia's food is just like my mom and bubbe's food- it completes the Shabbat experience and makes Hillel feel like a home away from home. All the students are so appreciative of the home cooked meals they provide every week."

NATHAN APPELBAUM, CLASS OF 2024



"It's an honor for me to chair such an important fundraiser for Vanderbilt Hillel. I am a Vandy graduate who spent time in the kitchen preparing challah and enjoyed countless Shabbat dinners prepared by them. Thanks to the support of the Nashville community, Vanderbilt Hillel alumni and parents, and our matching donors, we have raised funds to greatly improve the facilities for Goldie and Sylvia to maintain their amazing legacy of serving Vanderbilt Hillel students."

ALYSSA JAFFE HASSENFELD, EN'15, SECRETARY - VANDERBILT HILLEL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS, KITCHEN NAMING CAMPAIGN CHAIR



"I was so pleased to help with the effort to raise money for the new Goldie Shepard and Sylvia Shepard Vanderbilt Hillel Kitchen. It was 18 years ago that I implored Goldie to take on this project enabling our community to welcome so many Jewish students over Shabbat dinners. As for Sylvia, if there is a more generous woman in our community, I haven't met her yet. What a privilege to know these women."

CINDEE GOLD, PAST PRESIDENT - VANDERBILT HILLEL BOARD
OF DIRECTORS, KITCHEN NAMING CAMPAIGN CHAIR

YOUNG ALUMNI EVENTS



Ari Dubin connects with young alumni with happy hours in New York City and Washington D.C.