

# Hillel

Fall 2021



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To Our Dear UVM Community,

I wish you could see the smiles and hear the laughter that fill our building these days. A year ago, I didn't believe any of this was possible. Today, the Burack Hillel building has become so much more than a building. It is a home for our students at UVM.

At any time of day you can see students of all years and backgrounds finding comfort, joy, and connection within our space. **This fall issue provides an inside look at what makes UVM Hillel the community our students need.**

In these pages, you'll discover our values and the ways these values bring meaning to our students' lives. I'm particularly excited to share how we support them through their entire experience at UVM and beyond.

You'll learn how we listen to our student's needs to guide the direction of our Hillel. They are what gives meaning to our organization, and we are a valuable part of their entire college experience, including their academics and professional growth. I am excited for you to see all the new initiatives that our incredible students have brought to life!

**We value being the place on campus where students can relax their shoulders, take a deep breath, and be their full selves.** Their home away from home is only possible with your help.

*Matt Vogel*

Matt Vogel, Executive Director

# Get to Know Hillel's Values

At UVM Hillel, we support students' spiritual growth and wellness through a safe and compassionate environment. We promote Jewish learning by finding new ways to incorporate aspects of Jewish life into memorable experiences. We help our students create a meaningful and ongoing relationship with Israel. Most importantly, UVM Hillel builds relationships with students so that they can feel empowered to make an impact in their communities and become the next generation of Jewish leaders.

**B'tzelem Elohim (In the Divine Image):** We welcome every student as their authentic self.

**Chavruta (Relationships):** Building relationships that are grounded in respect and kindness is the foundation of our work.

**Kehillah (Community):** We are committed to creating a supportive, diverse, and sustaining community that is committed to pluralism, giving space for different communities to encounter each other in a respectful manner.

**Ahavat Am Yisrael/Ahavat HaBeriyot (Love of the Jewish People/Love of All Humanity):** Our work is informed by both our love of the Jewish people and a commitment to be engaged global citizens dedicated to amplifying the good and repairing the broken in the Jewish community and the world.

**Torat Chayim (A Living Torah):** Our work is grounded in Jewish tradition. We are working to cultivate a vibrant Judaism attuned to the ever-changing experiences students face.

**UVM Hillel welcomes all students and provides a safe environment where students can express themselves through the lenses of Jewish culture and religion.**



# Student Board Shabbat

Shabbat is a special time of the week. It allows students from all over campus to come together as one community and find a state of relaxation that helps them feel at home. When the Hillel Student Board hosts Shabbat it brings more meaning to the night as they work together to help each student in attendance feel connected to one another and the Jewish experience.

Julia and Sarah are both current second-year students and hold the positions of our Student Board Shabbat co-chairs. Together they decide on the theme, menu, prep ingredients, and lead the cooking efforts in the kitchen to serve fresh meals to all who attend. They even get to use fresh produce grown by students this summer on the UVM Hillel Farm!

**“Students feel so grateful for Hillel and the opportunity to be together; everyone is always happy to be there,”** Julia shared when reflecting on Shabbat dinners. To her, Hillel is a home on campus and her goal is to create that feeling through Shabbat for as many students as possible. Sarah adds that Shabbat always feels inclusive to those without Jewish backgrounds. **“We want to use both the religious and social aspects of Shabbat to strengthen our bonds as a community,”** she shared.

**We are so fortunate to have dedicated student leaders who value spreading the sense of support and joy they found at UVM Hillel.**



## Community Building

UVM Hillel is building Jewish experiences that are meaningful, relevant, and accessible to all students. We do this by listening to them, taking a step back, and following their lead. **We empower our students to take ownership of their Jewish identity and create opportunities to engage their peers in Jewish life.** Every day we meet new faces joining our community, and new students creating their own paths.

UVM students value the outdoors, and we realized that there was no formal setting for students to connect that passion with their Jewish identity. We are proud of our students who recently launched the **Bamidbar Wilderness Explorers**, a group that brings others together to merge these identities. **They have demonstrated the excitement our students feel for exploring the beautiful world around them – physically, spiritually, and socially.**

Our students truly value one another, their differences, and their interests. As a campus entity, we want to provide things for them that they can't find on their own. We spread the joy of being together no matter who they are. Hillel provides the space they need to be their true selves and be surrounded by others who bring comfort through shared identities and growth through differences. **We are always working with students to create new community-building programs that feel genuine to them.**



# First-Year Engagement

"It can be scary to step out of your comfort zone when first arriving at college, and UVM Hillel wants to make it as easy as possible! That's why I believe the First-Year Engagement Coordinator role is so important. We help new students find their home in a new place. **By hosting events just for first-year students, we create a space where they can meet people who are going through the same transition.** Having these events creates opportunities for bonding time and meeting new people."

- Sarah Ladd, UVM Class of 2022



# Class Notes

## Life Beyond Graduation

We want to keep alumni updates relevant to you! Do you have a story to share from your time at UVM? Are you interested in sharing your personal successes and life journey with other UVM Hillel community members? We want to feature you! **Reach out to [ali@umvhillel.org](mailto:ali@umvhillel.org).**

We invite you to learn more about our organizational values and impact on campus by viewing the saved stories and posts on our Instagram (@umvhillel). You can scan the QR code to the right using your phone's camera to view our profile.



SCAN ME



\*These are four examples of other awesome programs that took place in the fall semester.



## Invest in the Future of Jewish Life

Thanks to a unique partnership with the UVM Foundation; alumni, parents, family, and friends can make a gift to UVM and have 100% of your donation be directed to Hillel. Every one of us holds a special connection to Burlington, Vermont and our UVM community. We invite you to share in the joy of giving to the university. Help make a difference for today's UVM Jewish students so they can make a difference in our world.



Open the camera on your phone and point it here to support UVM Hillel

Visit [go.uvm.edu/hillel21](https://go.uvm.edu/hillel21) to make your tax-deductible gift.