

# THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY Hillel

*2023-24 Impact Report*





## About **OSU Hillel**

For nearly 100 years, OSU Hillel has been a home away from home for Jewish Buckeyes – it is the longest-standing Jewish organization at The Ohio State University.

Our mission is to create a safe, vibrant and inclusive campus community where Jewish students can thrive.

We aspire to ignite students' Jewish curiosity with education, experiences and empowerment; building an enduring love for Israel and the Jewish people.



*Did you know?*

**65%** of Jewish Buckeyes  
engage with OSU Hillel.

## 2023–24 **Impact Report**

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In this digital Impact Report, anytime you click an **Underline headline** it will take you to a video.



from our **Leadership**

“



*I am so proud of our Hillel staff and students. This has been a challenging year, but we have had so many wonderful moments of Jewish joy and pride.*

– Cindy Levy, Board Chair



*During a time of great adversity on campus, our community rallied behind us; thus, enabling Jewish Buckeyes to thrive.*

– Naomi Lamb, CEO



# 2024 **Reflections**

Dear OSU Hillel Community,

Last summer, when we started our journey together as the new OSU Hillel CEO and Board Chair, we never imagined what this year would bring. Less than two months into our roles, the Jewish people were struck by the shock, horror and devastation of the October 7 attacks.

Like Jews everywhere, we grieved, mourned and stood together, united with our entire Columbus Jewish community. However, before we could even process our emotions, another blow hit – the unprecedented surge of antisemitism and anti-Zionism on college campuses nationwide.

As one of the largest universities in the U.S., our campus was no exception to the hate, vitriol and disruption of student life that ensued post-October 7. But we rallied... just as our people have done for thousands of years.

Our team worked to create an array of opportunities to empower, educate and care for students. We prioritized physical and emotional safety and pivoted nimbly to meet students' evolving needs. Together, students, Hillel staff, faculty, administrative allies and community leaders demonstrated resilience, strength and courage.

We rose because our community propped us up. The love and care demonstrated by community members like you gave us hope and strengthened us, enabling us to meet the moment and go above and beyond. You stepped up in so many ways – from parents dropping off cookies to alumni and community members meeting with our students – you fueled us and kept us going.

In spite of a challenging campus culture, our professional staff and board are exceedingly proud of what we accomplished this year, and none of it would have been possible without you. Your generosity enabled us to create a safe, vibrant and thriving Jewish community at OSU.

As you can see, our impact is evident in the uptick in student engagement and advocacy:

- We welcomed Shabbat weekly with more students than ever before.
- Our student board received a record number of applicants; we created new student leadership opportunities to capitalize on this passion.

**Israel experiences**, education and engagement continued to be prioritized, creating safe spaces for students to explore their unique connection to our homeland and ask questions.

- Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) at OSU failed thanks to strong partnerships and student activism.

While we celebrate our successes, we understand that the temperature on college campuses continues to rise – antisemitism and anti-Zionism aren't going anywhere. We need your support to continue to keep our Jewish Buckeyes safe, engaged and empowered; it is imperative they remain connected with our community and that their passion for being Jewish endures.

We are building our communal succession plan: these students are our future Jewish leaders and OSU Hillel is here to invest in and nurture their leadership potential. Based on the leadership they demonstrated last year, we feel confident that there is a bright Jewish future ahead. It is an honor and privilege to serve our Jewish buckeyes and help facilitate meaningful unique Jewish identities they will carry forward post-graduation.

Thank you for believing in this work and the impact of Hillel at The Ohio State University.

Warmly,

Cindy & Naomi



October 7, 2023

# Strength & Solidarity



## We met the moment.

On October 7, we realized that Jewish Buckeyes needed our support more than ever – emotionally, physically and spiritually. We adapted our programming to hone in on impact areas that addressed immediate and long-term needs.



### **Security & Support**

The physical and emotional safety of Jewish Buckeyes is our top priority:

- We invested resources in personnel and building hardening to make OSU Hillel more secure.
- We partnered with OSU's counseling and consultation services, connecting Jewish professionals on their team with students in need of mental health support; we also offered pastoral care.
- We created a strong sense of community through frequent and meaningful programming.



### **Education, Leadership & Empowerment**

We equipped our students with the education and resources to speak up for Israel and advocate against antisemitism:

- We offered in-house educational programming and invited speakers on various topics.
- We provided diverse leadership opportunities.
- We guided students on how to successfully advocate for the interests of Jewish students on campus.
- We took 100 students to Washington DC to participate in the March for Israel; several students also joined us to lobby Ohio public officials on Capitol Hill.



### **Coalition Building & Civil Discourse**

OSU Hillel is committed to building strong relationships inside and outside of the Jewish community. We partner closely with the university administration, the interfaith community and a myriad of student groups helping us foster relationships and create opportunities for dialogue.

Developing allyship and space for civil discourse is important, especially now. In the upcoming year, we look forward to expanding these initiatives to include even more diversity in our outreach.

#### **Hillel International's Campus Climate Initiative (CCI)**

OSU Hillel is proud to be a part of CCI. Five senior OSU administrators will join our CEO in an 18-month program with other universities across North America. This highly selective program will provide administrators with important educational opportunities on antisemitism and anti-Zionism and best practices in data collection, analysis and action planning – all geared towards improving the campus climate for Jewish students at OSU.





24 hours after October 7,  
500+ students, faculty &  
administrators rallied on  
campus to support Israel.





**350+** 

students attended vigils organized on campus and by the Columbus Jewish community.

**3 survivors**   
of Oct. 7 spoke to 200+ students.

**100+** 

students traveled to Washington, DC for the march.

*after*

## October 7

Our campus & Columbus Jewish communities united to mourn, support and empower each other.

### Our campus climate changed.

Despite its challenges, we rallied and advocated for Israel and against antisemitism.



#### **BDS failed**

Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) at OSU failed thanks to strong partnerships and student activism.



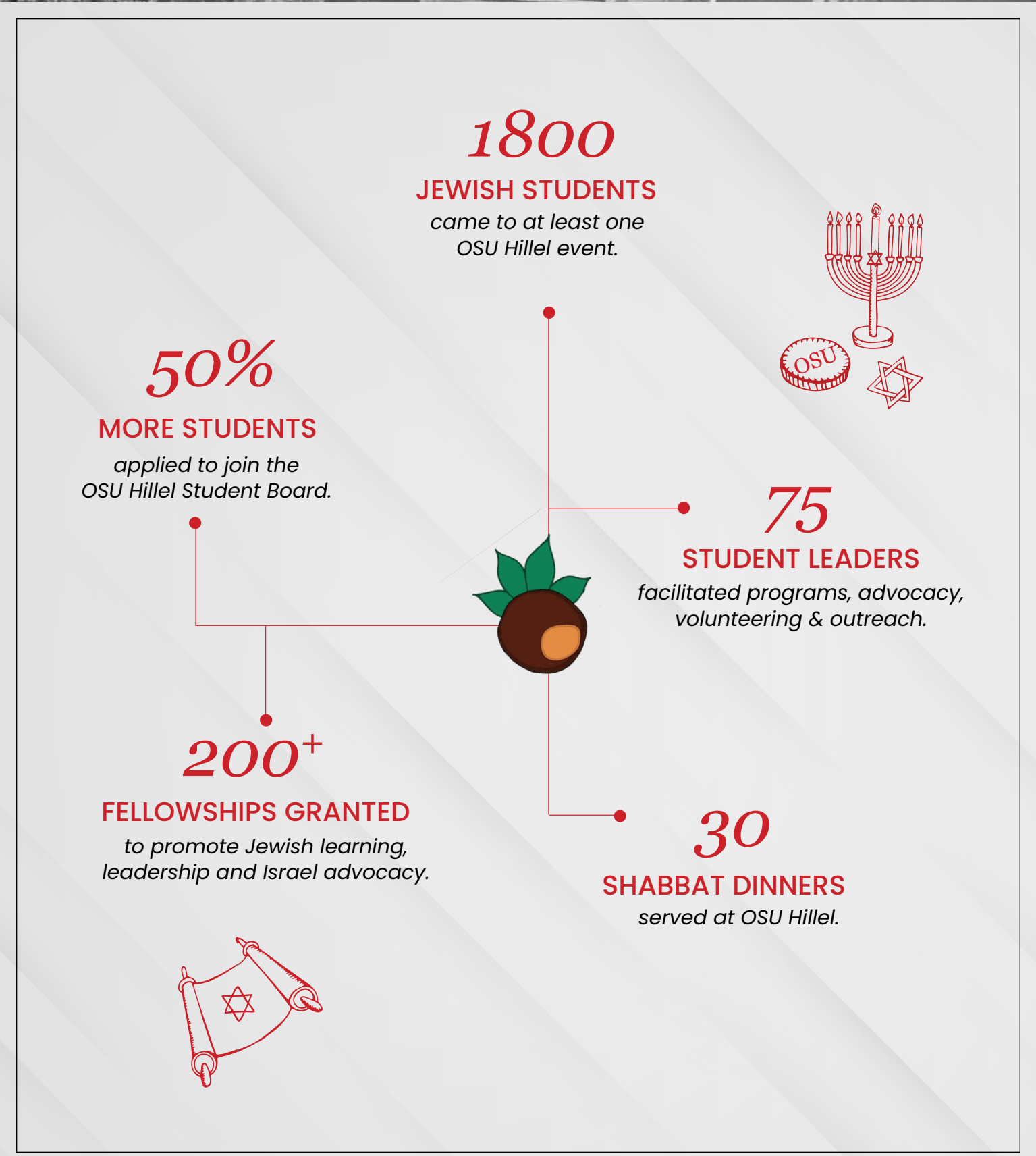
#### **Jewish students feel a deep sense of Jewish pride and strength.**

OSU administration is partnering with OSU Hillel to provide a comprehensive strategy on how we can better counter antisemitism, and build a campus climate in which Jewish Buckeyes feel comfortable expressing their identity.





We uplifted our campus community and spread **Jewish pride & joy.**





# Jewish Joy

This year, Jewish Buckeyes showed up for each other & our community.

## Holidays

Celebrating holidays is essential to OSU Hillel's mission of offering Jewish students a home away from home. This year, we held reform and conservative services for Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Purim (with a special drag brunch) and Passover seders and meals.

## Events

Our events are curated to represent all aspects of Judaism. We created programming that addressed issues of concern and interest to our community. Highlights from this year included:

- The social media sensation, *The Challah Prince*, bringing together 100+ Jewish Buckeyes including several Jewish Greek houses
- *Spread Cream Cheese, Not Hate*, promoting Jewish Pride at the Student Union and collecting signatures to stand up against Jewish Hate

## Local service projects

Service is a way to build community, engagement and demonstrate our goodwill as a part of the greater Buckeye community. We participated in monthly donation drives to support Jewish and non-Jewish causes, block cleanups and food packaging for the needy.





## Shabbat

Celebrating Shabbat is an integral part of the weekly calendar; it also provides regular engagement opportunities for Jewish Buckeyes and the campus community at-large.

**Friday Shabbats** are an OSU Hillel programming staple that students can rely on each week.

**Shabbat at the Shoe**, our biggest Shabbat at an iconic location, brought together 420 Jewish Buckeyes and community members in 2024. Its popularity made it a new OSU Hillel tradition that includes faculty, administrators, members of the board of trustees, football stars, students and community leaders.



*500 Jewish Freshman*  
attended Shabbat programming.



*400+ Participants*  
celebrated Shabbat with us at  
the Shoe.

TIKKUN OLAM  
COMMUNITY  
LOVE PEACE  
MITZVOT  
FRIENDSHIP  
TIKKUN OLAM  
COMMUNITY





# Jewish Pride

Jewish Buckeyes are campus leaders, community builders and advocates for change. OSU Hillel is a hub where Jewish students can seek out ways to get involved and make a difference.



*When students traveled to the March in D.C., they advocated on Capitol Hill with the help of Ohio Jewish Communities.*



## Education

Similar to our event programming, our goal is to provide educational opportunities for students that address current issues in the Jewish world and general education about Judaism and Jewish values.

### Learning Fellowships

- Josh Tolle, Director of Education and Rabbi Aaron Portman created a new learning fellowship to address antisemitism, *The Oldest Hatred*, which included weekly meetings and over 200 students.
- *Shabbat Hosting Lab* teaches students how to host Shabbat with funds provided by OSU Hillel.
- Freshman and sophomore Jewish Learning Fellowships
- Jewish Learning Fellowship 2.0 for seniors
- *Building Leaders Today* brings in community members to teach our students about leadership inspired by Jewish values.
- *Israel 101*, taught by our Israel Fellow, addresses current events in Israel and allows for discussion and discourse.
- Black and Jewish Fellowship

## Community Building

**This year, our Columbus community ecosystem grew.**

OSU administrators and campus and Columbus Jewish community leaders showed up for us, attending our events, Shabbat dinners and speaking with our students to hear and address their concerns.

Speakers included:

- Sarah Hurwitz (Speech writer for Barack Obama)
- Larry Moses
- Bobby Schottenstein
- Jay & Jeanie Schottenstein
- Les Wexner



## Leadership

Empowering and educating students to be leaders is one of the most important things we do; it ensures the continuity of Jewish leadership for generations to come.

There are many ways students can gain leadership experience depending on their interests and commitment level.

**Current opportunities include:**

- OSU Hillel Student Board
- Student groups
- Campus engagement internships
- Various program internship opportunities
- Internships with partner organizations, such as *Stand With Us* and the *Israel on Campus Coalition*



# We are grateful for our OSU Hillel community!

## Student Board

Jeremy Davis, President  
Lauren Greenwald  
Rachel Kurtz  
Abby Mehr  
Dahlia Moskowitz  
Becca Powers  
Deondray Radford  
Isaac Weiss

## Board of Trustees

Cynthia Levy, Board Chair  
Aaron Shocket, Immediate Past Chair  
Andrea Courtois, Treasurer  
Herb Asher, Executive Committee  
Dana Adler  
Richard Barnett  
Brandon Fine  
Scott Friedman  
Steven Glaser  
Ken Gold  
Gordon Hecker  
Robin Judd  
Darcy Kaplan  
Ali Seltzer  
Andrew Shafran  
Rebecca Shocket  
Andrew Smith  
Heidi Solomon  
Debbi Sugarman  
John Weaver

## Staff

Naomi Lamb, CEO  
Cydney Goldberg, Assistant Director  
Rabbi Aaron Portman, Senior Jewish Educator & Campus Rabbi  
Josh Tolle, Director of Education  
Shayna Monasch, Springboard Ezra Fellow  
Paz Tzadok, Israel Fellow  
Amanda Graff, Jewish Student Life Coordinator  
Joan Koebel, Director of Operations  
Peggy Redmond, HR & Finance Administrator  
Cathy Lewandowski, Executive Assistant  
Erik Anderson, Chef





# Financial Overview

## Your support helps us thrive & grow.

We are grateful for the support of our entire community – your generosity allows Jewish Buckeyes to thrive.

Additionally, we would like to recognize the support of our \$50K+ funding partners – your investment in our work makes a transformative impact on our students.

### \$50K+ FUNDING PARTNERS

*Leslie & Abigail Wexner and  
The Wexner Foundation*

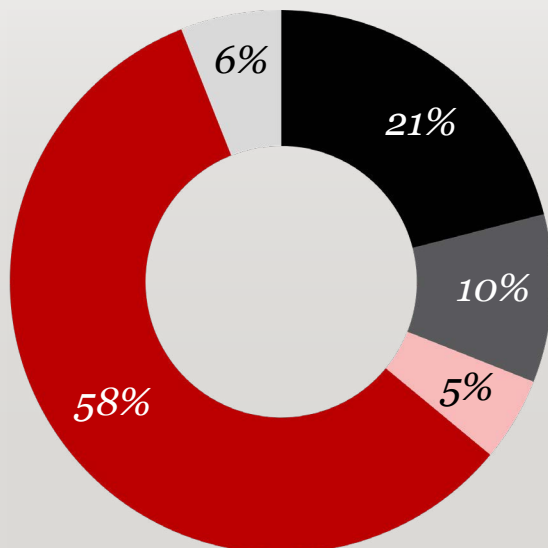
*Hillel International*

*JewishColumbus*

*The Max M. & Marjorie S.  
Fisher Foundation*

## FY24 Expenses

- PROGRAMMING
- SECURITY
- ADMIN
- BUILDING
- FOOD SERVICE



## Fundraising



### 40%

Donor base increase

- 2023 429 individual
- 2024 698 individuals



### \$648K

Dollars from Individuals



### \$599K

Dollars from Organizations



# WAYS TO STAY CONNECTED



## FOLLOW US

Facebook & Instagram  
@OSUHillel



## SIGN UP FOR OUR NEWSLETTER

You can do this on our  
website – scan here!



## GIVE

Your philanthropy  
enables Jewish life  
to thrive at OSU.



## EMAIL US

Tell us your thoughts or  
share your ideas. If you  
know a current or future  
Jewish Buckeye, send us  
their contact info!



## ATTEND AN EVENT

From Shabbat dinner  
to a speaker series, you're  
always invited! Check out  
our event calendar.



*Scan & follow*

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

# Hillel