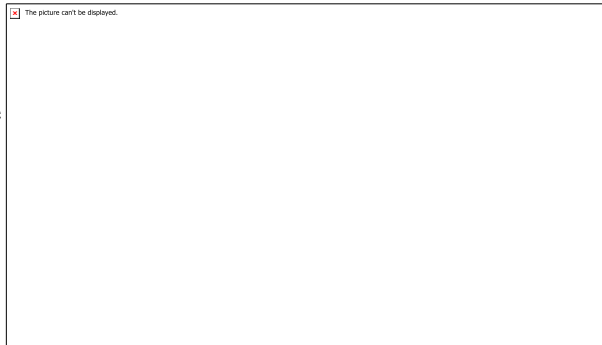


# Dickinson

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Greetings from Rabbi Ilyse S. Kramer, Interim Director of the Asbell Center

Throughout the year, giving “thanks” to people is a wonderful spiritual discipline, as well as, a great way to let all those who have helped build such a vibrant and creative Jewish Life here at Dickinson know how much it is appreciated—and—how much has been achieved!



First, my thanks to Ted Merwin, who has guided and provided leadership here on campus for the past 16 years. What he and so many others created together over these many years, clearly provided a solid foundation upon which to stand, and from which, to benefit as we continue to engage with “everything Jewish” at Dickinson this year: religious, social, educational, and cultural... Indeed, we have it all! Second, my thanks to all those people who have so generously supported the Asbell Center and Jewish life on campus over the years. I can assure you that it makes a great difference—and—it enables us to build a community where all students can find a place to make a difference in their own, as well as, in someone else’s, life. Third, my thanks goes out to all of the students I have met in the past 4 months. I am lucky to be surrounded by the inspiring and creative energy of so many wonderful students who are passionate about Jewish life, building a community, ideas of all kinds; and most importantly, passionate about building strong and lasting relationships with each other. Last, but not least, I am grateful for the many colleagues I have met and begun to work with here at Dickinson College (professors and administrators), and, most grateful for the opportunity to work with two very talented women here at the Asbell Center: Lori Loudon, our Administrative Assistant and Sydney Harlow, Engagement Associate.

As Interim Director, my focus has been to explore a model of collaborative leadership between the Center’s professional staff and student leaders, as well as, between the Asbell Center

(programs and staff) and other Centers on campus. Building upon the successes of the Asbell Center, the result has been a tremendous outpouring of creative programming in service of the overall mission of the College, and in particular, of addressing issues of civil discourse and productive conversations around more volatile issues with which we might disagree.

Some of our highlights this Fall Semester: We kicked off the beginning of the academic year with an interfaith bagel brunch co-sponsored with Rev. Donna Hughes and Religious Life, and with President Ensign, as our guest speaker. We experienced our second successful year of offering High Holy Day Services on campus led by Rabbi Rena Blumenthal, and with special holiday dinners to enjoy together to usher in a New and Sweet Year. For Homecoming/Family Weekend, we purchased our first “very big and spacious” Sukkah, which enabled us to welcome all of our guests (students, families, and alumni), and, to enjoy a special gourmet meal during our 4th Annual Stanley Ned Rosenbaum Judaic Lecture, offered by Professor Alan Levenson (Oklahoma University), entitled, “Joseph: Dreamer, Sage, Despot.” Shabbat Services were lively led by Rabbi Henry Shreibman '74 alum. In collaboration with the Jewish Federation of Harrisburg, we carpooled with a number of Dickinson students to attend a special conversation on civil discourse: “Discussion on Israel’s Path to the Future: Perspectives from the Left and Right.” We initiated our monthly Lunch and Learn Series, with Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, Professor Shalom Staub, “Waging Peace in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict,” who introduced us to a simulation video game he uses with students in his class before setting the scene for our discussion. We offered a student-initiated interfaith conversation and bagel brunch (Shabbat morning) to discuss a timely and complex topic, “Gun Violence and Prevention,” and I introduced the topic at a Friday Night Shabbat Service and Text-study as part of our interactive D’var Torah discussion.

Our exciting and broad programming continues into the Spring, with our Multicultural Seder (Tu’ b’Shvat and Environmentalism), featuring the Afro-Semitic Experience Band. We will co-sponsor an event with Hebrew Professor, Dr. Nitsa Kann, with guest author Ruby Namdar, *The Ruined House*. Our Spring Break study and volunteer trip will take us to Prague. In addition, our annual Pincus Lecture will welcome Dorit Price-Levine from Resetting the Table, an organization dedicated to building meaningful dialogue and deliberation from across political divides on a number of issues on campus and in the world today.

Be sure to check out all the descriptions below written by our student organization leaders about all of their activities during the Fall Semester, enjoy!

As always, we welcome your questions and comments about how we are serving our students on campus. Additionally, if you are interested in supporting (or continuing to support) our work on campus, please go to [www.dickinson.edu/gift](http://www.dickinson.edu/gift) and designate your donation to the Asbell Center for Jewish Life.

Thanks again for helping us to support students at every stage along their journeys at Dickinson College.

Be well,

R' Ilyse Kramer

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Update from Sydney Harlow, the Asbell Center Engagement Associate

This semester has been spent on so many different things I do not even know where to begin! I have continued to host my regular, weekly Tuesday Shmoozeday where students stop by the underground, grab a free smoothie and we chat about whatever is on their minds. I have met many new students and maintain our relationships with the students who are already involved. I also hosted a make your own shofar event. Students were able to come and make their own shofar and they were able to use them for the High Holy Days! We were able to co-host the Multiracial Mixer with The Popel Shaw Center for Race and Ethnicity for the second year in a row. A variety of different ethnic foods was provided and we discussed the connections between race and food. It was a great event that always leads to incredible and interesting conversations. Along with all of our amazing events, I have also been working with our student leaders and developing their leadership skills.

We were able to welcome back Ari Massefski to the Asbell Center from the Arava Institute. Eve Tendler and Shadi Shiha are Israeli and Palestinian respectively and they discussed what it was like meeting and living with people from their two respective communities. It was inspiring to hear how their friendships formed and it was great to hear about the Arava Institute and their important environmental work in the region. Shadi (who is a professional break-dancer) then taught a break dancing class the next day that was awesome!

We are also getting ready to have the largest Birthright trip that Dickinson has ever had! We

have 19 students traveling with us departing on December 20<sup>th</sup>! I will be staffing and we will be on the bus with Muhlenberg and York College students.

Best,

Sydney Harlow  
Engagement Coordinator

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### Cooking Club

Over the course of the semester cooking club has been working on creating a close knit community with those who share the same hobby... Cooking!!! Our club has grown because of the welcoming environment each member helps to create through inclusivity and positivity. We go out of way to make cooking club a place where people can come relax, eat and socialize. Our laid back vibes are constituted by our upbeat music and awesome conversations. Cooking club is a chill environment that students want to come to. Its low stakes and a really fun time.

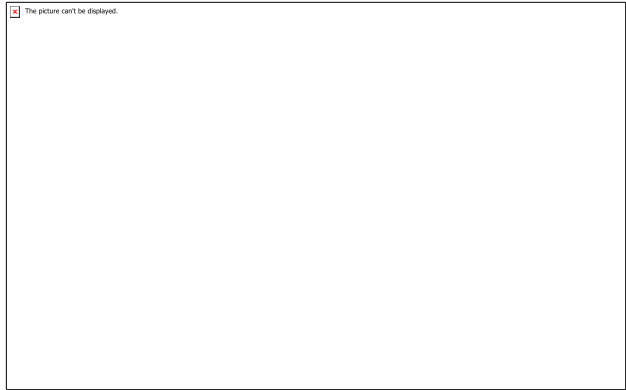


Aliya Nichols '20  
Cooking Club President, Fall 2017

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Hillel

This semester, Hillel has continued on our mission to provide a safe, loving supportive and fun community for students Jewish and Non-Jewish alike. To that end we have been focusing on having events ranging in subject and themes from a “spooky” late night bagel and donut feast to our weekly Shabbat meals, as well as interfaith work with the Dickinson Christian



Fellowship and the Office of Religious Life. So far, these events have created spaces of deep connection, close conversation and delicious food experiences and have served to bring the Dickinson Hillel community closer to the broader Dickinson community. Furthermore, our efforts to boost engagement through more concerted advertising and marketing efforts has brought a ton of new faces into our friendly spaces (pardon the rhyme) and I am proud to say that our Hillel continues to grow with each event! With the remainder of the semester we hope to continue on our upward trajectory and build on the success of this year to inspire the next group of Hillel leaders to engage thoughtfully with our community and to provide a space for all people to explore their Jewish identities and join us in having fun.

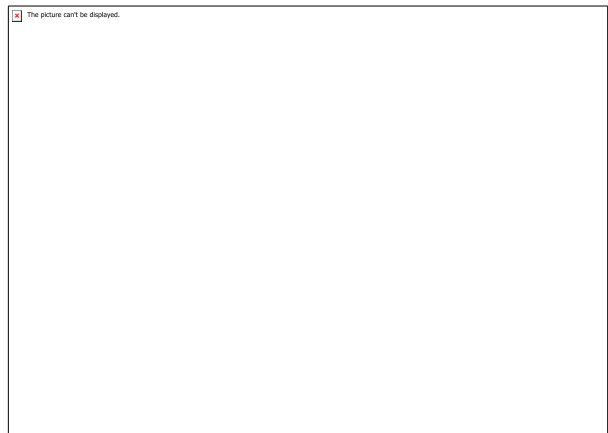
Geoffrey Cole '20

Hillel President, Fall 2017

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## Rosh Hodesh

Rosh Hodesh is the non-religious club for female identifying students through Asbell. Rosh Hodesh is a cultural Jewish tradition celebrating the start of each new Jewish month. Thus, once a month Rosh Hodesh holds social events each month with the focus of self reflection and friendship. This semester, we had High Tea on the Asbell first floor and plan to hold a mindfulness meditation session before finals.



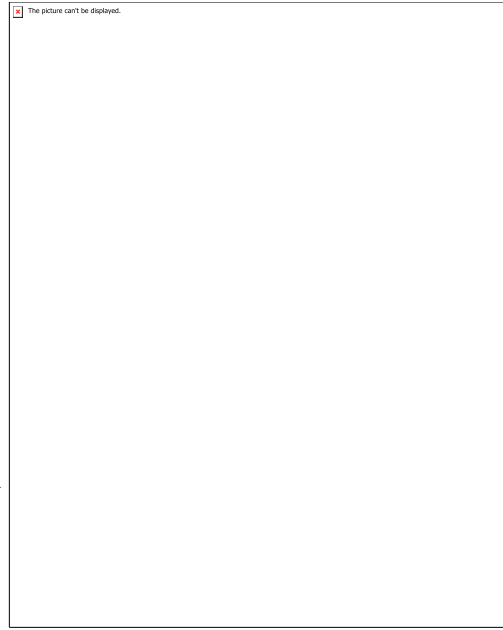
Abigail Israel '20

Rosh Hodesh President, Fall 2017

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### J Street U

J Street U is a Pro-Israel national student movement that seeks to promote a secure, Jewish and democratic future for the State of Israel. Earlier this semester, J Street U had a national Day of Action to protect Susya, a Palestinian village of 350 people that was faced with imminent demolition by the Defense Ministry of Israel. J Street U chapters all over the country, along with us here at Dickinson, posted photos of ourselves all over social media with the hashtag "#wontlookaway" with reasons why the people of Susya deserved to stay in their homes.



Noah Frank '20

J Street U President, Fall 2017

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Challah for Hunger



Picture from left to right: Rachael Franchini '19, president; Rachel Brenowitz '19, social media chair; Stephanie Czmar '19, treasurer and secretary

Challah for Hunger (CfH) is a national Jewish service organization that was started in 2004 at Scripps College, and now has over 80 chapters, mostly based in colleges in the U.S. The Dickinson College chapter meets every other week on Thursdays for five hours to bake, and then on Friday for an hour and a half to sell challah to the Dickinson community. Fifty percent of our profits are donated to MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger, which is the national CfH cause and a hunger relief charity. The other fifty percent of profits are donated to Project SHARE, an organization local to the Carlisle community that runs food pantry programs and other partnerships. The mission of CfH is to bring people together to bake and sell challah, and to raise money and awareness for social justice causes, as well as investing in future entrepreneurs, social activists and philanthropists.

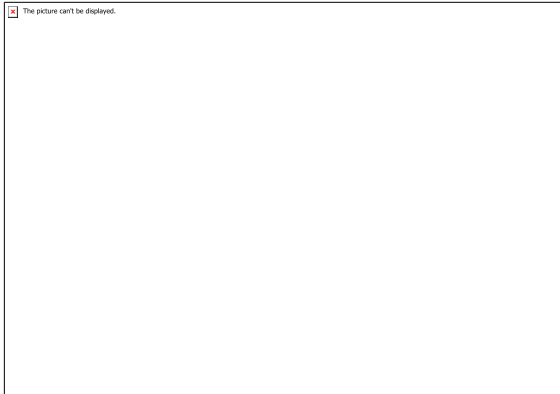
Rachael Franchini '19

Challah for Hunger President, Fall 2017

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SSI

Students Supporting Israel at Dickinson College has had a great semester! We hosted our first event of the semester with the My Truth Tour, a touring group of IDF soldiers on reserve, who spoke about battlefield ethics in the Israeli army. We are looking forward to a great spring semester with Artist for Israel coming to campus!



Amy Isaacson '18

Office of Engagement & The Dickinson Fund  
[alumni@dickinson.edu](mailto:alumni@dickinson.edu)  
717-245-1373



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