Hebrew College's Miller Center Awarded Arthur Vining Davis Foundations Grant for Interreligious Work

The Arthur Vining Davis Foundations (AVDF) awarded Hebrew College’s Miller Center for Interreligious Learning & Leadership a three-year $250,000 grant to develop and expand the Boston Interfaith Leadership Initiative (BILI), an innovative fellowship program for undergraduate students.

The BILI fellowship, currently in its second year, trains students from eight Boston-area colleges to serve as effective interreligious leaders on their campuses and in the broader community. The year-long program brings together undergraduate fellows from Bentley University, Boston University, Brown University, Harvard University, MIT, Northeastern University, Tufts University, and Wellesley College.

The grant will enable the Miller Center to expand and further diversify its interreligious programming.

“We are honored that AVDF chose to support this important intercollegiate initiative,” said Rabbi Or Rose, director of the Miller Center for Interreligious Learning & Leadership, and a leading scholar and practitioner in the field of Interreligious Studies. “BILI’s student-driven model provides fellows with an important opportunity for substantive learning and cooperative programming across multiple traditions. We are excited to continue developing this initiative with talented and passionate students and colleagues in Boston and beyond.”

The Arthur Vining Davis Foundations were established in 1952 by former ALCOA chairman, Arthur Vining Davis. Grounded in Arthur Vining Davis’s principled and innovative leadership in national corporate life.
and philanthropy, The Arthur Vining Davis Foundations strengthen America’s intellectual life, humane instincts, and democracy through philanthropic support for private higher education, public educational media, interfaith leadership and religious literacy, the environment, and palliative care.

*Pictured: Current BILI Fellows at their recent retreat.*

**Save the Date for Our Spring Fundraising Event**

We’re changing it up. . .This year, we are excited to invite you to this year’s spring storytelling fundraising event: Hebrew College Live! *Stories in Honor of Our Teachers* on Thursday evening, May 30 at 6:30 p.m. at Temple Beth Elohim in Wellesley, MA.

We hope you will join us for this community event featuring Hebrew College faculty and alumni storytellers with emcee Mark Oppenheimer, host of Tablet Magazine’s podcast “Unorthodox.”

The evening will begin with schmoozing over plentiful hors d’oeuvres and wine, followed by five storytellers sharing memorable stories of their Jewish journeys, and conclude with a festive dessert reception.

Questions? Please contact Sharon Katz at advancement@hebrewcollege.edu or 617.559.8764.

**Tickets & Giving Opportunities**
Hebrew College To Host Multi-Religious Conference

Conversations about what it means to live well until the very end have a powerful impact on how we live—and how we die. Conversations can help preserve personal autonomy and respect for our faith-based values and practices, and serve as an entryway to a deep spiritual practice. They can save families from making uninformed medical decisions when confronted by a crisis.

On April 2, from 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m., Hebrew College will host the conference “Dying Well: Multi-Religious End of Life Conversations.” Members of the College’s adult learning team have long been in conversation with lifelong learning staff from other Boston Theological Institute (BTI) schools about our common interest in organizing programs and classes that bring meaning to people’s lives. As a result, Hebrew College and our BTI partners decided to offer a day of learning around “dying well,” a topic with which all faith traditions grapple. The program will provide fresh insights and resources to help facilitate sacred conversations in your families and institutions about the end-of-life.

The program is appropriate for all ages and stages of life and education. Students are especially encouraged to attend. Admission is $25 for community members and $10 for students.
“I was thinking about the text when the sages asked, ‘How did G!d create light on day one, but the sun, moon, and stars weren’t created until day four?’ It’s weird, right? They are describing a different light than the sun. That inspired me to write about where that light is hidden - in Torah - meaning literal Torah or in the people you love, in connection, in joy, and in song. Then [my partner] Lizzie created this piece, which has seven circles representing the seven days of creation. She captured the light I was writing about by making one of those circles gold. I love how the gold bleeds into the rest of the picture in a subtle way to hold everything together.”

(Rabbinical student Hayley Goldstein, discussing B’reishit from her Instagram project, Nireh Or.)

Read More about Nireh Or
SIGHTS & SOUNDS

Graduates of the Shoolman School of Jewish Education at Hebrew College doctoral program in Jewish Educational Leadership with Rabbi Michael Shire at the March 2019 Prizmah Conference in Atlanta. (l-r: Dr. Yehiel Hoffman, Dr. Sara Levy, Dr. Micah Lapidus, Dr. Jared Matas, Dr. Galya Greenberg, and Shoolman School Dean Rabbi Dr. Michael Shire.

On March 18, Hebrew College’s Rabbi Ebn Leader, Rabbi Or Rose (both pictured, right), and Rabbi Nehemiah Polen spoke at a Purim program, co-sponsored by the Israeli-American Council of Boston (IAC) & Hebrew College, called “Jewish Mystical Insights for Contemporary Life.”

BLOGS
State of Formation is a joint venture of the Miller Center of Interreligious Learning & Leadership and Boston University's School of Theology

Sounds Without Words

By Jenn Lindsay, PhD
State of Formation Contributor

The nun across the table had devoted much of her life to the academic study of religious conversion. “One knows what religion one is meant to be,” she said to me over herbal tea, “when one finds a religious environment where the sounds of the music, the prayer, the rituals and even of the echoes in the sacred space feel like home.” I thought of my synagogue and my cherished Friday night Shabbat service. For decades I heard those familiar tunes, many of them in the reformed Jewish environments composed in the ‘70s and ‘80s by Jewish folksinger Debbie Friedman. If I hear Mi Shebeirach or Lecha Dodi sung in a certain tune, in those sounds I am home.

Those harmonies and melodies are in my blood. Without conscious decision, my body will rise up on tiptoes when we sing the word kadosh, holy. I find myself, without thinking, bending into a shuffling bow at the beginning of the Amidah prayer, or preparing my throat for the high note at the end of the Aleinu, like a long jumper who knows exactly when to launch into the skies at the edge of the runway track. I know the sonic contour of the reformed Jewish Shabbat liturgy very well; I know the sound of every word of those prayers and every sound means something to me. Yes, the aesthetics of this religion, particularly the sounds, feel like home to me.

Read more
Judaism has always concerned itself with proscribing ritual actions that govern our lives, not simply those related to prayer or the rituals of our holy days. In the modern world, this all-encompassing focus can seem oppressive, but paradoxically it can also be freeing. Buried within the seemingly endless descriptions of the sacrifices the Israelites offered in the mishkan, or portable Tabernacle, lies a hint as to why this might be.

Parshat Tzav opens by describing the burnt offering, or olah (lit. “raised up”). It is to be consumed by the fire of the altar, meant to be fully for God’s pleasure. While all sacrifices offered in ancient Judaism “went up” to God, the olah left nothing over. The priests are instructed that “a perpetual [tamid]fire shall be kept burning on the altar, not to go out” (Lev. 6:6), presumably so that many such offerings could be offered and burned each day. The most well-known olah, however, was the twice-daily olat tamid, the constant olah offered to inaugurate and conclude each day’s sacrifices. This sacrifice, in addition to being offered in a constant way, was offered identically each time—a year-old lamb along with a tenth of a measure of flour and a quarter of a biblical measurement (a hin) of both oil and wine (Ex. 29:38-41).
Rabbi Joel Baron, Rab’14
April 2 | 9:30 am-3 pm
Hebrew College
$10-$25 | Register

Preparing Our Hearts for Passover & Easter
Featuring Hebrew College’s Rabbi Ebn Leader, Rabbi Or Rose, Rabbi Jane Kanarek, Tom Reid
April 12 | 8:30 am - Noon
Temple Beth Zion, Brookline, MA
Information | RSVP

Huzzah! la'Hazzan
Celebrating Cantor Dr. Brian Mayer and the Establishment of the Scholarship in his name
May 6 | 1:30 pm
Hebrew College
RSVP | Make a Gift in Cantor Mayer's Honor

Nava Tehila Ensemble Concert
Co-sponsored by Hebrew College
May 12 | 7-9 pm
Temple Beth Zion, Brookline, MA
$20 General Admission | $15 Students & Seniors
Purchase Tickets

A Mini-Symposium: Ethnic Identity and Choral Singing
Sponsored by Zamir Chorale of Boston Alumni Association and the School of Jewish Music at Hebrew College
May 15 | 7:30-9:30 pm
Hebrew College
Learn More | Free Admission

Hebrew College Live! Stories in Honor of Our Teachers
With stories by Hebrew College Faculty & Alumni
May 30 | 6:30 pm
Temple Beth Elohim, Wellesley, MA
Information | Online Tickets & Gift Opportunities

Commencement
June 2 | 10 am
Hebrew College
Information

Cantorial Ordination
June 2 | 1:30 pm
Temple Reyim, Newton MA
Information

Rabbinical Ordination
June 2 | 3 pm
Temple Reyim, Newton MA
Information

Ani Kinor: Prayer Leader Summer Institute
Two-Day Intensive
June 3-4
Hebrew College
Learn more | Register

A Joyful Concert for Body & Soul
with Rabbi Jessica Kate Meyer `14, Dr. Hankus Netsky & Cantor Becky Khitrik `14
June 3 | 7-9 pm
Hebrew College
$10 General Admission
Learn More | Purchase Tickets

---

Hebrew College | 160 Herrick Road | Newton Centre, MA 02459
617.559.8600 | www.hebrewcollege.edu | Donate