



# NEWS & VIEWS

July 11, 2019 | 8 Tamuz 5779

## Introducing the Hebrew College Innovation Lab

### Bringing Learning to Life



As part of our continuing effort to bring the talents and creativity of Hebrew College students and graduates into the world, we are pleased to introduce Hebrew College's new **Innovation Lab**.

Spearheaded by new faculty member **Rabbi Jeff Summit** (above), the Innovation Lab will support the design and implementation of new projects through grants ranging from \$2,500 to \$5,000 per project. Rabbi Summit will lead a group seminar on Wednesday afternoons for Innovation Lab participants, and will also provide one-on-one mentorship and supervision.

"I find it impossible to be pessimistic about the Jewish future when I engage with our students and alumni, and witness their energy, talent, and desire to be of service. They are writing the next chapter of the Jewish story, and we are helping them do it from a place of depth, compassion, and creativity. The Hebrew College Innovation Lab is designed to elicit their bold ideas, and support them in bringing those ideas to life," said Hebrew College President Sharon Cohen Anisfeld. "I can think of no more wise and gifted mentor than Rabbi Jeffrey Summit to help guide them in this process. We are deeply grateful to a generous anonymous donor who has made this project possible."

Students and recent alumni from all Hebrew College programs are welcome to **apply by July 31**. Projects can be for the Greater Boston Jewish community or web-based, but participants must be local and able to attend the seminar in person.

[Learn More and Apply](#)



## Rabbinical Alumni Reconnect as Schusterman Fellows

During their first year of [Rabbinical School](#), Avi Killip Rab'14 and Becky Silverstein Rab'14 were *chavruta* partners, meeting one-on-one each day in the Hebrew College Beit Midrash to study, analyze, discuss, and debate Talmud and Tanakh.

They were also part of a larger cohort of rabbinical classmates, learners whom, they say, inspired them to be their best and continue to inspire them, even five years after ordination.

Now both rabbis, leaders in their communities in Boston and New York, are learning together in a new cohort. They are [Schusterman Fellows](#), participants in a highly-selective 18-month professional development program that helps Jewish professionals and lay leaders strengthen their capacity to lead, foster collaboration, and make an impact in the Jewish community and Israel.

"Becky was my Shana Alef *chavruta*, which makes this really really special for us," said Rabbi Killip, who now lives in the Riverdale neighborhood of the Bronx. "We had a strong cohort — a cohort you could call at any time to ask a question or discuss a text. And having a *chavruta* that I felt like I could confide in was incredibly helpful in allowing me to feel comfortable and find my place at Hebrew College."

"When you're studying with someone everyday, you build a deep sense of trust," added Rabbi Silverstein, who lives in Boston's Jamaica Plain neighborhood. "I had the great joy of seeing the ways in which Avi's critical thinking and unique life experiences brought something different to the texts we were learning."

[Read More](#)

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## New Hebrew College Community Learning Course in Cambridge: "Women in Judaism"

Join Eser, Hebrew College's young adult community program, for "[Women and Judaism](#)," a 6-part class summer series in Cambridge. Taught by Elisha Gechter, the class will focus on all things Jewish and female — from traditional women's rituals like shabbat candles and baking challah, to the ways that women mark time and dress. Explore where these concepts come from, how practices have evolved and how we can interpret them for our modern lives. This course is open to young adults of all backgrounds. No prior Jewish knowledge is required.

Eser is one of several Hebrew College programs that brings classes to living rooms throughout Greater Boston. Learn more about the College's [Community Learning offerings](#). For more information about this class or to create your own community learning circle, reach out to [Natan Margalit](#), the new director of Hebrew College's Open Circle Jewish Learning program.

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# HUMANS OF HEBREW COLLEGE





“Growing up in the URJ camp circuit, Dan Nichols was (and still is) a huge name. Debbie Friedman - she was like the Beatles of the Reform Jewish music — Noah Aronson, Elana Arian, and Alan Goodis are big musical influences of mine. So is my good friend Jacob 'Spike' Kraus, who is one of the newer folks bursting on the songwriting scene; he writes really cool, contemporary Jewish music. You hear it, and it sounds like top-40 pop music that you'd hear on the radio. Those folks have been big influences on the way that I share music, and they also empower me to try my hand at writing music. I've never been brave enough to write my own songs — I do a ton of arranging and sharing of other folks' melodies — but these talented contemporaries and predecessors in the Jewish songwriting world give me the courage to give writing my own stuff a try.”

— DJ Fortine, Cantorial Ordination for Spiritual and Educational Leadership (COSEL) student

Learn more about our Cantorial Program

## IN THE NEWS

**Rabbi Arthur Green**, Rabbinical School Rector, was featured in the July 8 Philadelphia Jewish Exponent article "[Podcasts Connect Listeners to American Jewish Life](#)." The article mentioned Rabbi Green's appearance on the [Judaism Unbound](#) podcast, co-hosted by 2018 IFJE Certificate graduate Lex Rofeberg.

Assistant director of the Early Childhood Institute **Linna Ettinger's** article "[Exercising Community](#)" appeared in the June 19 issue of eJewish Philanthropy.



issue of The Jewish Journal.

IFJE Director **Dr. Keren McGinity's** [article](#) "Why It Was So Hard to Say #MeToo and What I Learned When I Finally Did" was published in the spring 2019 issue of *AJS Perspectives, the Magazine of the Association of Jewish Studies*.

# 70 FACES OF TORAH

Posts from this [Hebrew College-hosted blog](#) are published weekly in [Patheos](#).

## Go Ahead and Ask Anyway

*Parashat Chukat (Numbers 19:1-22:1)*

By Rabbi Emma Kippley-Ogman, Rab `10  
Associate Chaplain for Jewish Life  
Macalester College, St. Paul, MN



"Anyone who looks at four things, it would have been better if they had not come into the world," the Mishna declares in a furious mood in Hagigah 2:1: "what is above, what is below, what is before and what is after." If you're anything like my children, the moment that someone tells you not to think about something, not to bother investigating it, that it is just not your business — that is the moment that piques your urgent curiosity to delve in exactly there. Indeed, for the rabbis of the Talmud, who shared this human drive, this Mishna becomes the jumping off point for their earnest explorations of what might reside above, below, before and after.

Rashi seems to take a strategy similar to this Mishna with the beginning of *parashat hukat*, which introduces the detailed procedure for how to prepare a purifying elixir from the ashes of a red heifer. The elixir mysteriously makes those who handle it ritually impure while purifying those who receive it. Torah introduces the passage with *zot hukat hatorah asher tzivah YHVH* — this is the law of Torah that God commanded. Torah's laws can be categorized in many ways; here the relevant division is *hukim* vs. *mishpatim*, that is, laws that have no external logical explanation (*hukim*) and laws that make sense for safety and kindness in human governance (*mishpatim*).

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