

Part III: Appendices

APPENDIX A: Nonprofit Stages and Lifecycle

Susan Kenny Stevens explains her paradigm in an easy-to-read book first published in 2002; in the past decade it has sold over 15,000 copies to nonprofit staff members, executives and board members, foundation officers, consultants and evaluators, and is now in its second printing.

NONPROFIT LIFECYCLES: Stage Based Wisdom for Nonprofit Capacity

Author: Susan Kenny Stevens

Published 2002

Winner of the Terry McAdam Book Award for Most Valuable Nonprofit Book

The first section of the book presents the rationale for approaching capacity as a stage-based dynamic, and provides a full description of the seven lifecycle-stages. This section ends with a self-assessment instrument and the Nonprofit Lifecycles Reference Guide, now referred to by many nonprofit readers as the “yellow-pages.”

The book’s second section, Lifecycles in Action, contains five chapters especially important for nonprofit managers and board members. Several of these chapters have received substantial content additions in this second edition, particularly the chapters on The Founder’s Lifecycle and Building Your Bench.

Finally, part three of the book discusses how foundations and consultants can use the lifecycle approach to create capacity-building programs and develop targeted capacity interventions. This section contains several new examples of foundations that currently use the lifecycle model as the basis for their capacity grant making. It ends with an in-depth discussion of the relationship between capacity-building and organizational change. The lessons contained in NONPROFIT LIFECYCLES are timeless.

Learn for yourself the lifecycles approach to capacity from this nationally recognized expert in this 148-page, paperback book.

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APPENDIX B: The Task Force Project Proposal

Hillel of Colorado requested and received the following proposal from Sea Change Consulting, Inc. to further its work; the proposal was accepted, and executed on October 31, 2014:

Based on input from Hillel of Colorado (Hillel) since Sea Change Consulting (SCC)'s initial proposal of September 3, 2014, we submit this revised proposal. Thank you for the opportunity to work with Hillel at this critical juncture in the organization's development.

History

Hillel has remade itself twice in recent history – once through a courageous board initiative with cooperation from the Allied Jewish Federation of Colorado, and once as a participant in a Rose Community Foundation sponsored BOOST initiative. While these initiatives led to new organizational structures, improved Hillel's facilities, and planned for Hillel's future, they did not provide the solutions Hillel needed to assure its relevance and fiscal stability. Hillel's current crossroad is even more profound as reserves are dwindling with earned income and fund development insufficient to meet current annual expenses; another executive hire is imminent while the past two failed to solve Hillel's most pressing problems; the challenges and opportunities presented by Chabad on Colorado's university campuses have never been greater; and past business plans have not brought long-term stability (due to a combination of factors such as: they failed to meet market demands, addressed the wrong issues, were no longer suitable to today's reality, or leadership did not implement them properly).

Following a late July, 2014 meeting with Board of Directors (board) president Michelle Brunschwig (Michelle), Sea Change Consulting (SCC) was invited to submit a preliminary proposal to assist Hillel with its upcoming executive hire and to retool its fundraising plan. On August 25, 2014, when I met with Michelle and board member Brenda Morrison at the Merage-Allon DU Hillel House to present and review that plan, these leaders increased the scope of the proposed engagement substantially. Consensus was that Hillel could not afford to make the assumption that its current programs, services, offerings, and collaborations are correct for today's market. This proposal was then altered to include a comprehensive process to determine Hillel's best overall programmatic strategy and offerings – and a procedure to vet them on a regular basis.

A subsequent conversation that Michelle held with potential funders reinforced the need to include in this process access to professionals highly skilled in real estate and non-profit financial models in order to assure that all possible business options are considered for Hillel's future.

On October 21, 2014 I met with Brenda Morrison at her office, and she shared with me some board concerns about the proposal's scope; based on her input, we revised the proposal by:

- Limiting the scope of this initial engagement to the eight-month first phase of the initial proposal, thus deferring consideration of SCC's training, coaching and mentoring of Hillel board and staff leadership until the initial phase draws near to its conclusion. (The first proposal included an additional sixteen months during which SCC would stay deeply involved to aid the new plan's implementation through training, coaching and mentoring which would begin at a more concentrated level and decrease subsequently.)
- Leaving to the task force's deliberation the decision about whether to/or in what manner to evaluate Hillel's current programs, services, offerings, and collaborations. (The first proposal assumed that a thorough analysis of the *Hillel product* was needed before embarking on

internal and external organizational changes needed to sell the *Hillel product*.) Now, the task force will determine if changes need to be made; if so, what process is needed to determine those changes; in what manner would Hillel implement those changes (if at all); and how Hillel would demonstrate to students, advocates and potential donors that current or new programs, services, offerings, and collaborations are impactful, unique, and necessary for the student market on the campuses.

Rationale and Scope

Hillel seeks a strategic planning partner to lead the next critical phase of the organization's development, guiding it through a comprehensive planning process. SCC will assist Hillel volunteers and staff to answer important questions; identify effective and cost-efficient paths to success; evaluate possible approaches; set goals, develop processes and continually revise them as needed; implement strategies and meet stated goals; develop evaluation processes; and help prepare staff and volunteers to lead effectively now and in the future.

Hillel's most obvious, presenting challenges are:

1. Determining (for each of the three Colorado campuses) how Hillel's programs, offerings, collaborations and services can be marketed for success with students and potential donors. Hillel must be able to demonstrate that it is needed, relevant, and best-in-class by asking and answering questions such as:
 - a. Are current programs, offerings and services meeting the needs of students, and if not, how can we change them to better do so?
 - b. Are we taking advantage of partnerships that might serve our community better, what might they look like, and how might we get there?
 - c. What metrics must we implement to demonstrate success for student clients and their families – and for current and potential advocates and funders?
2. Building a business plan that includes a realistic, balanced budget (that will not diminish Hillel's financial reserves), enabling the organization to continue its work on the campuses; this must include:
 - a. A realistic funding plan that includes examining creative earned income possibilities, and a sound development plan that creates and maintains a secure source of annual income - along with the systems, personnel and support to actualize and institutionalize that plan.
 - b. Expert "out-of-the-box" thinking and budgeting decisions that include examining all potentialities for new modes of conserving and earning.
 - c. Sound real estate and facility plans - and management of these for each of the three campuses.
3. Assuring the correct staff and board leadership and leadership structure, and properly supporting those individuals through institutionalized procedures, including:
 - a. Hiring the right executive staff leadership and setting staff up for success when current executive director Kelli Theis (Kelli) steps down between late-2014 and mid-2015.
 - b. Constituting and supporting a volunteer governance structure that assures adherence to the organization's mission and plan - now and in the future - and assures sufficient income to achieve programmatic success within a balanced budget.

Goals and Objectives

After three months of planning SCC and Hillel leadership have agreed that these are the goals and objectives of our engagement:

1. Seat and empower a task force that will confirm the scope and sequence of this engagement
2. Affirm how Hillel achieves its mission, including metrics and evaluation methods that quantify success
3. Examine and create a plan for real estate/physical facilities on each campus
4. Create and approve a draft three-year operating budget
5. Select fundraising philosophy and develop a fundraising plan
6. Determine the best staffing and board structures for Hillel
7. Assure proper board policies and documents, and begin fund development training
8. Assure that Hillel's marketing materials advocate effectively
9. Adopt procedures for implementing the business plan
10. Assist Hillel search for and select its next executive staff leadership

Once these goals and objectives are achieved, SCC encourages Hillel to institutionalize ongoing coaching and mentoring for key leadership – which could significantly minimize a repetition of the struggles that have existed for Hillel since the years following the BOOST initiative. The nature and extent of coaching and mentoring needed would be determined, in no small part, by the abilities and needs of staff and board leadership in June 2015 and beyond, and also by Hillel's willingness to implement cultural changes that include institutionalized and ongoing reflection and planning.

Exclusions

Any collaboration between a non-profit and an organizational consultant could lead to challenges involving authority and responsibility, and this is especially true with SCC's hand-on approach. While SCC is here to assist Hillel in all areas specified, above, Hillel alone is responsible to implement the business plan and any procedures (such as budgeting, safety, staffing, and administration); for mentoring, training or coaching beyond the time frame of this engagement; to assure that the organization is in compliance with its charter, and with all proper entities (including the campuses, Hillel International, financial institutions, and governmental authorities); to maintain and follow its written policies (such insurance, abuse and other legal policies); to supervise and train its staff to build and manage work plans, budgets, performance reviews.

This Collaboration

Daniel W. Bennett shall be your lead consultant and David M. Dye your associate consultant on this engagement. Each of us has many decades of experience leading non-profits, and a combined decade consulting with them locally and nationally. Other professionals associated with SCC will assist under our direction when their expertise will improve results. Some observations relevant to success with this engagement:

- We have seen change processes succeed, and witnessed ones that are less successful – and know how to identify and address the key factors that differentiate the two, thus maximizing chances for success.
- We both bring overall non-profit consulting expertise, and our experience and skills are also complementary - ideal for Hillel at this time for this process.
- In addition to overall consulting skills Daniel's experience and skills are especially suited to big picture strategic planning; approaching challenges creatively and realistically; out-of-the-

box thinking; managing and supporting leaders and teams; utilizing experts to maximize their impact and minimize expense; and attention to detail.

- In addition to overall consulting skills David's experience and skills are especially suited to building and guiding work plans; creating realistic and individualized budgets and innovative financial models with healthy functional ratios; and motivating and coaching leaders and teams to attend to the details that make organizations successful.

Success in this collaboration will begin with mutual acceptance of agreed-upon responsibilities and roles for each member of the task force and consultant team. Early in the process task force members and SCC consultants will build a work plan that achieves the goals and objectives, above. Implicit in this collaborative approach is communication, and mutual assurance that authority is commensurate with responsibility.

- Staff may play a role assisting the task force's work; we need to ascertain the extent of the support that they can provide and adjust expectations accordingly.
- David and I know well through decades of experience how to maximize the strengths of volunteers, while appreciating the limits on their time. We will be clear, check assumptions often, and clarify - collectively and up front - who is responsible for each task and how we will all determine their success.
- We will need access to key local individuals for interviews, and to past and current organizational and board documents for the assessment process. If possible we will also need data from other Hillels across the country and access to leadership at Hillel International.
- Finally, as we discussed, we will be "taking the bus off the road" for a period of time while the organization continues to serve its constituents and conduct its business. One of the board's key jobs - with our assistance - will be to equip Hillel's professionals and volunteers with the tools, training and coaching they need to keep Hillel's business functioning while key parts of the organization are being rebuilt or tweaked.

We are happy to discuss further how our individual and collective experience and skills are a good fit for Hillel at this time, and to supply resumes and references upon request.

APPENDIX C: The Task Force

I. Task Force Charter

Early in its work the task force adopted guidelines to govern its formation; mandate; structure; and what characteristics it expected from its members. Approval of this charter was universal:

Definition

This task force came into formation because the Hillel requires significant organizational change.

Mandate (or Purpose)

The mandate of this task force is to guide Hillel through a planning process that enables the organization to emerge clear, strong, and on a path to succeeding programmatically (fulfill its mission) and economically (annual revenues are sufficient).

Structure

The task force is chaired by a Hillel board member, and includes the Hillel board president; four community leaders; and selected students from the campuses. The task force shall meet monthly from January – June 2015. It shall be facilitated by non-profit consultants and shall draw on its research locally and nationally, as well as on input from students from each of the three campuses; Hillel volunteers past and present; Hillel staff past and present; current and lapsed community donors, leaders and advocates; and other stakeholders locally and nationally.

The task force will meet in December 2015 to confirm the scope and sequence of this engagement, then complete its work and produce a report to the Hillel board by June 30, 2015.

The task force's written report will be a blueprint for Hillel's future. Just as important will be the impact this process has on establishing new procedures, norms, and new organizational culture – and Hillel's ability and willingness to implement and institutionalize them.

Task Force members are individuals who are:

1. Willing to participate in an initial retreat that adopts this charter (as altered or amended); the project's scope and sequence; and the project time line; and the consultants' role;
2. Able to attend task force meetings, available for reasonable communication between meetings, and willing to undertake (with the support of the consultants) leadership of one area of the task force's work;
3. Confidential, and appreciative of its importance in the task force's work;
4. Interested in working collaboratively and assuring that a collaborative organization emerges;
5. Excited to become advocates for the plan within the organization and the community;
6. Committed to doing the work necessary (with the support of the consultants) to complete the task force's mandate on time;
7. Focused on supporting each other when facing challenges and difficult decisions;
8. Open to having fun while doing this sacred work.

II. Task Force Keys to Success

Clarity and agreement on keys to success enhance the probability of success for any group coming together to achieve a specific, enunciated outcome. During its initial meeting in January 2015, task force members discussed what makes task force deliberations successful, and adopted these values, expectations, and operating preferences:

KEY # 1

SCC top ten values toward creating a successful working environment for a task force:

1. Being True to Yourself and True to the Group (Integrity)
2. Imagining a Possible as Here Already (Vision)
3. Creating a Safe, Trustful and Powerful Container (Confidentiality)
4. Claiming your Beliefs & Communicating them (Clarity)
5. Being Open to New Ideas & Hearing Intention Behind the Words (Courage)
6. Being Honest and Tactful while Respecting Differences (Truth with Compassion)
7. Creating Openness about how Goals are Achieved (Flexibility)
8. Allowing Yourself to Give up Control (Vulnerability)
9. Allowing Humor into the Process (Balance)
10. Giving to Others What You Want (Respect)

It may help to consider what motivates you: Achievement; Power/Influence; or Relationships.

KEY # 2

Once group goals are set, these are the stages of healthy team development; they may or may not be sequential:

1. Common Ground: Team members identify their similarities, expectations, resources and skills. They agree on a common purpose and set of values that will allow them to succeed as a group.
2. Expectations: The team works out its processes, roles, and resource needs. Members deal with their differences and communication issues. Group members may need to explore more deeply the group's purpose and alleviate resistance – building a tighter group.
3. Many Voices Needed: The team begins to collaborate in decision-making; to give and receive feedback effectively; to agree on direction and desired outcomes; to establish roles.
4. Succeeding as One: The team employs effective methods for meeting its goals, responds quickly to change and achieves the desired results.

- adapted from the work of Bruce Tuckman

KEY # 3

“Based on their experience with task forces, some organizations swear by them and others at them.”

- the Results Group, Santa Rosa, California

Task forces that begin properly are much more fun, and produce better, more timely results. “Properly” means the task force is thoughtfully constituted, prepared, and it takes the time it needs initially to address:

- i. Working Together:
 - a. Teamwork: identify task force members' strengths and how they will support each other.
 - b. Communication: understand task force members' styles; how they process best;

- preferred ways to integrate information & be creative; best ways to manage conflict.
- a. Resources: identify task force members' skills & strengths; backfill from outside as needed.
 - c. Leadership. decides who fills which roles. (convene, facilitate, record, research)
 - d. Responsibilities: plan success (Scope & Sequence), tasks & target completion dates.
- ii. Procedures:
- a. What are our agreements (e.g. attendance, assignments, roles)?
 - b. What does accountability mean for us?
 - c. What meeting agreements will we follow?
 - d. What tools will we use to stay on track and move quickly?
 - e. How will decisions be negotiated and finalized?
 - f. What process will we use for distributing information and resources to members?

III. Task Force Meetings

Below are the agendas for the meetings of the task forces. The agenda for the final meeting on July 6, 2015 is not included, as that meeting's agenda was to read and provide final editing and content suggestions for this report.

Task Force Meeting Agenda

January 28, 2015

- Opening
 - Introductions of Task Force Members
 - Observations about Hillel
 - How it all Began
 - What's in your Binder?
 - The Project's Scope & Sequence
 - Task Force Values
 - *Collective Impact*

- Goals & Gold
 - Task Force Charter
 - Individual Member Portfolios
 - Student Leaders on the Task Force
 - *Now, Won, How* Discussion

- Next...
 - Meeting Structure Going Forward
 - Accountability & Communication
 - Good & Welfare

Anticipated Outcomes of this Meeting:

Task Force Members will:

- *Understand their role.*
- *Be engaged, excited, motivated.*
- *Become better informed and leave equipped to learn more.*
- *Select their Portfolios.*
- *Be curious.*
- *Work well together.*

The Task Force will:

- *Endorse its charge, values, charter & structure.*
- *Select best structure for its meetings and for work between meetings.*
- *Determine its communication and accountability strategies.*
- *Understand its plan moving forward.*

How Will Hillel:

Serve

Structure

Finance

Task Force Meeting Agenda
March 3, 2015

Anticipated Outcomes for this Meeting:

- I. *Student Task Force Members will onboard: understand their role; be engaged, excited, motivated; become better informed; select their portfolios; be curious; work well together.*
- II. *The Task Force will:*
 - o *Affirm its charter & structure.*
 - o *Understand & engage with the findings of last month's working groups.*
 - o *Endorse its process for future meetings & working groups.*
 - o *Seat and charge existing & new working groups.*

Student On-Boarding

- i. Task Force Purpose
 - a. What is a TF?
 - b. Hillel's Scope & Sequence
 - c. Why we Serve
- ii. Students: Why are you here?
- iii. Nuts & Bolts
 - a. Notebooks
 - b. Meetings and Working Groups

Task Force Meeting

- I. On the Same Page
 - i. Introductions
 - ii. Quick Revisit
- II. External Assessment Report
 - i. Interviews
 - ii. Focus Groups
 - iii. Presentation Plan
- III. Internal Assessment
 - a. Working Groups
 - i. Working Group Protocol
 - ii. Current Working Groups
 1. What they did
 2. What they found out
 3. What they still need to know
 4. What recommendations do they have
 5. Discussion
 - iii. New/Continuing Working Groups
 1. What they need accomplish
 2. Task force member sign-up
 - b. Crystal Ball Projected Recommendations
- IV. Check Out
 - i. Next Meeting & Working Group Completion Dates
 - ii. Who is doing what? By when? How will we know?

Task Force Meeting Agenda
March 31, 2015

Anticipated Outcomes for this Meeting:

The Task Force will:

- *Revisit, revise, understand & affirm task force process April – June; discuss calendar & scope & sequence.*
- *Understand the function of external assessment & import for task force; discuss findings to date.*
- *Understand & engage with the findings of last month's working groups.*
- *Endorse and/or modify working group recommendations*
- *Seat and charge existing & new working groups.*
- *Begin to wrestle with major task force recommendations.*

Task Force Meeting

- I. On the Same Page:
 - i. Quick revisit of mission and purpose
 - ii. Quick review of scope & sequence
 - iii. Questions
- II. External Assessment Report
 - i. Interviews
 1. Purpose & utilization
 2. Summary of key findings to date
 3. Task force member reflections
 - ii. Focus Groups – update on plans
- III. Internal Assessment:
 - a. Working Groups
 - i. Current Working Group Presentations
 1. What they did; found out; still need to know
 2. Recommendations for the task force
 3. Discussion (as needed)
 - ii. April Working Groups
 1. Continuing & new working groups
 - a. Task force member sign-up
 - b. Goals for April
 2. Working group protocols – any changes needed?
 - b. Campus Visits
 1. CSU: April 26
 2. CU & DU: to be scheduled for May
- IV. Crystal Ball Projected Recommendations
- V. Check Out
 - i. Next meeting & working group completion dates
 - ii. Who is doing what? By when? How will we know?

Task Force Meeting Agenda
May 26, 2015

Anticipated Outcomes for this Meeting:

The Task Force will:

- *Revisit scope & sequence.*
- *Endorse (or appropriately revise)*
 - *Findings of the working groups*
 - *Additional task force recommendations*
- *Seat and schedule the budget-working group.*
- *Finalize overall June schedule.*

Task Force Meeting

- V. D'var Torah: Rabbi Yossi Serebryanski
 - i. Chabad and Hillel
 - ii. Q & A
- VI. Crystal Ball Projections
- VII. On the Same Page:
 - i. Goal of Meeting
 - 1. Reveal final report format
 - 2. What happens at the TF Review Session
 - ii. Questions
- VIII. Update on External Assessments
 - i. Interviews
 - ii. Focus Groups
- IX. Internal Assessment:
 - a. Report on Campus Meetings
 - i. CSU – April 26th
 - ii. CU – April 28th
 - b. Working Groups
 - i. Current Working Group Presentations
 - 1. What they did & found out
 - 2. Recommendations for the task force
 - 3. Consensus on each
 - ii. Additional Recommendations (if any)
- X. Check Out
 - a. Next Steps for this task force in June (leading to the July board Meeting)
 - 1. Travel Schedules
 - 2. Budget Working Group
 - a. Constitute
 - b. Schedule
 - 3. Schedule TF Review Session
 - b. Who is doing what? By when? How will we know?

IV. Task Force Working Groups

These are the Task Force Working Group process and recommendations in detail; groups met from January – June, 2015.

1. **Hillel Nationally Working Group**: What can we learn from Hillel International and what can we learn from other Hillels around the country.
 - Members Brenda, Paul, Stu; staff – Daniel.
 - Resources: Drive to Excellence, Hillel International’s new strategic plan; discussions with Hillel International VP’s and program directors; discussions with university Admissions and Advancement departments; discussions with staff and board members at other Hillels across the country.
 - **RECOMMENDATIONS**:
 - Hillel of Colorado can look to Hillel International in ways it has not been able to in the past.
 - Current staff in the national office (most of our contacts have been Hillel VP’s) are willing to share openly and free of charge:
 1. Their deep institutional knowledge that comes from a long association with Hillel and with the nonprofit world.
 2. Their honest impressions (pro and con) of Hillel’s progress nationally and in the communities: they know what they don’t know, and understand what they know that informs Hillel of Colorado as well as the limitations of their research to date.
 3. Their time and ideas.
 - Hillel International is in an internal reprioritizing process that it began with its report: Drive to Excellence. The evaluators at Hillel International, working with Rosov Consulting, Inc., will share what they are learning from their Drive to Excellence initiative when the time is right - most probably in the fall 2015.
 - Hillel International has begun several pilot initiatives for the campuses around programming, fund development, organizational revitalization/overhaul and evaluation; Hillel of Colorado will be invited to learn from these initiatives and position itself to be part of second or third phases of these nationally-sponsored programs to:
 1. Shine a spotlight on Colorado, the only Hillel with our unique three-campus centralized/decentralized structure
 2. Bring Hillel International’s presence and the momentum of multi-city initiatives to local advocates and potential donors, thus increasing local knowledge of other Hillels and national programs.
 3. Build leaders (staff, board) in the process, and look toward political integration of our board members and those of Hillel International.
 4. Hillel should be in close touch with Hillel International to ensure general program alignment, being sure always to address local needs first.

2. **Advocacy (Marketing & Fund Development) Working Group:** What are Hillel’s core mission, purpose, and definition of success? How does Hillel best position itself on and off campus - is there clear guidance at every level? Is our message clear & consistent to donors, clients, and staff? What’s our best plan to raise money and ensure security for Hillel?
- Members Amy, Emma; Staff – David.
 - Resources: Research how the organization is seen externally – and perhaps internally, as well; examine other nonprofits’ purpose, mission and values statements; continue and enhance on the working group’s ongoing Marketing & Messaging exercise with stakeholders; examine Hillel’s and other marketing materials; and discuss with other nonprofits the role of staff and board members in fund development: its plan creation, training, and mentoring.
 - RECOMMENDATIONS:
 - i. A revitalized 21st Century Hillel must be more than dinners and programs, but provide opportunities for broader community engagement; address Jewish life-after college preparation; and be “substantive as well as fun.”
 - ii. Hillel of Colorado’s one consistent mission provides direction for all staff and student leaders, and empowers students to “do Jewish and do life Jewishly” within a broad array of activities and programs.
 1. Mission-aligned activities and programs are student-determined, staff-supported and relevant to diverse Colorado Jewish college students.
 2. Students’ activities and programs are universal for all students.
 3. Within the mission activities and programs may be radically different to accommodate individual Hillel of Colorado campuses.
 - iii. A comprehensive Fund Development philosophy and plan:
 1. Hillel overcomes the image of being “lifestyle enhancement for the affluent” through focus on the lynchpin mission of “ensuring future generations of Jewish people” who are:
 - a. Involved in Jewish life.
 - b. Living a life based on Jewish values.
 - c. Have a minimal level of student buy-in.
 2. The Fund Development Plan includes:
 - a. Clear annual budget goals and success measures for the short-term and the long-term, and for reserve funds and endowments: all are messaged properly and strategically.
 - b. Diverse campaigns including annual, event, major-gift, and Alumni Association giving.
 - c. Personal 1-1 solicitation is vital along with personal, consistent nurturing of donor relationships.
 - d. Staff must have the resources it needs to provide solicitors all the tools they need to be successful.
 - e. Training and mentoring is critical to success.
 - iv. A marketing plan must be comprehensive, with sufficient budgeted resources to create, implement, revise and update the plan with:
 1. A social media (web site, Facebook, twitter) plan and presence.
 2. Columns in community newspapers, the IJN, and synagogue bulletins.
 3. A print collateral presence.

3. **Facilities & Real Estate Working Group:** Discussion of use of space is both philosophical and theoretical. How important are facilities to programming? To incoming generation of students? For identity? Determine what are optimum facilities to this generation of students – and the next: What does it look like? How is it utilized? Can it generate revenue? Who designs it? (Working Group is not to consider the sale of the Boulder house or specific future use of the DU house.)

➤ Members Andi, Brenda, Paul; Staff – David.

➤ Resources: Gather information by researching space use for student organizations b phone, visits, on line, and interviews; discuss and research best practices for the use of facilities; explore what can be done to increase use beyond the core involved students?

➤ RECOMMENDATIONS:

i. Physical space is very important:

1. To parents (and to a lesser extent for students) for campus recruiting.
2. To many students for the sense of place and community.
3. To most Jewish students as a place to participate in Shabbat dinners and holiday observances.
4. And must be relevant to the time and context, principles that need to be part of the design effort in future building or remodel.

ii. Marketing and promotion of physical space can improve: get word out to new students, constituents, and community as a whole.

iii. At the same time, Hillel ought not be restrained only to the space:

1. The Hillel Mission is also accomplished when dinners and observances take place in smaller gatherings at restaurants, homes, and apartments.
2. Students want to engage with the community beyond the house including on campus, with other students groups, and through community service.
3. Hillel can broaden its identity beyond being just a building to being an experience.

iv. Facility considerations:

1. Location is vital – centrality to student activities and existing academic and social life is important; but location can be overcome with excellence.
2. Students prioritize that home-away-from-home feeling they seek, so they are at ease, comfortable, and in a living room-like environment.
3. Annual maintenance needs to be planned, budgeted, and accomplished through periodic inspections by staff and students.
4. Use can be increased beyond core students:
 - a. Through creativity in advertising, increased student substantive services, and attention to student needs for convenience, comfort, and privacy to study.
 - b. By assuring increased availability throughout week (students can get in and use the house) that does not necessitate trying to find somebody with access to open the house.

4. **Governance Working Group:** Determine what structure (board or other) is best for Hillel. What are the best practices from outside Hillel, locally and nationally? What type of board do we want (governing vs. programming or hybrid), and how can we best recruit, retain, and train for that? What is our best interplay of volunteers and staff? How does the possibility of a *collective impact* model bode for Hillel?
- Members Amy, Andi; Staff – Daniel.
 - Resources: Examine current Hillel structure and those of other Hillels, other nonprofits, and innovations in the field. Talk to staff and volunteer leaders who serve on boards; learn *collective impact* models from the greater community. Talk to Hillels around the country and Hillel International – what have they learned about models for students as part of the governance structure?
 - RECOMMENDATIONS:
 - i. Hillel needs to explore a *collective impact* model where governance (or at least strategies) would be shared by and among all Jewish communal organizations whose work impacts young adults ages 16-30ish.
 - ii. High performing Hillels (and other like nonprofits) all have good boards.
 1. Structures vary, but good boards carefully define themselves:
 - a. Some are governance-only boards and some are working boards – we recommend a hybrid board that supervises the budget and the executive, and raises funds; a committee structure that is built slowly as needed.
 - b. Some are large (up to 25 and more), some small (as few as five) – we recommend for Hillel 12-15.
 - c. Some meet monthly, some quarterly – we recommend ours meet quarterly w/committees doing work as needed.
 2. Many types of staff-director relationships exist – we recommend a total partnership model for Hillel.
 3. Good Hillel boards all share these characteristic
 - a. Volunteer leadership that came up through the ranks and learned from veterans.
 - b. Stability (turnover is planned) and freshness (new members are added regularly) and slowly through a thoughtful process.
 - c. Follow composite job descriptions, individual position descriptions, and training programs.
 - d. Students govern in good Hillel boards, but students as board members can be disempowering for student leaders; recommend for ours:
 - e. Campus student board presidents attend quarterly board meetings as ex-officio, representing their student bodies.
 - f. Hillel adds 2-4 recent graduates or graduate student to the board as full members representing no constituency.

5. **Programs & Evaluation Working Group:** Determining what programs and program structure is right for Hillel; how to best evaluate success.
- Members Andi, Paul, Hilary; Staff – David.
 - Resources: Determine through research and discussions what is working well and what isn't; finding out what the best & most effective college student groups do well; asking what relevant research exists about best practices in regard to student groups and utilizing it; reviewing Hillel's REACH initiative; deciding what does success look like and how (metrics tools, narratives) do we measure and evaluate it.
 - RECOMMENDATIONS:
 - i. General:
 1. Assure a clear structure and mission provided by Hillel of Colorado, within which students have freedom to take healthy risks, program, and meet their local needs.
 2. Hillel ultimately succeeds as it ensures and promotes the future of the Jewish people culturally, academically, socially, and spiritually.
 3. Create programs that serve students (e.g. matzah ball soup when sick, kosher cakes, and care packages) as much for parents as for the students.
 4. Create a statewide, shared digital space for student program ideas, marketing strategies, and other resources.
 - ii. For students during their college years:
 1. Students participating with multiple touch points within a year.
 2. Students participating with multiple touch points across years.
 3. Campus organizations are strong, with active engaged student boards, and with frequent, engaging, student-led programs.
 4. Provide regular statewide student board retreats and joint planning.
 5. Bring back collaborative events or activities that bring all Colorado Hillels together, such as rafting, skiing, and a spring formal.
 6. Students experience a sense of community, and have a group that is there for them.
 7. Stagger student board elections to maintain leadership and mentoring.
 8. Social responsibility & community engagement activities happen at least every other month, but not necessarily daily or weekly.
 9. Work toward 100% awareness and connection throughout the entire Jewishly identified student population.
 - iii. For students in the years after graduation, we endeavor to assure students:
 1. Have a stronger Jewish identity than they had when entering college.
 2. Are involved in their local Jewish community.
 3. Have created Jewish homes.
 4. Self-identify as Jewish.
 5. Tell others that their Jewish identity was enhanced through Hillel.
 - iv. For the Organization:
 1. The campus Hillel is as strong and vibrant, as it was 10-20 years before.
 2. Leadership is transferred so that there is always institutional memory.

6. **“Open Hillel” Working Group:** Open Hillel is part of the Hillel landscape now, so how do we respond rather than react? What are the challenges and opportunities?
- Members Brenda, Emma, Stu; staff – Daniel.
 - Resources: Find out what’s happening at Harvard and other such “open” Hillels, and talk to Hillel International legal department to hear their thoughts. Discuss with university officials and student organization leaders to hear their thoughts on the subject; wrestle with & understand the issue from all sides.
 - RECOMMENDATIONS:
 - i. The term “open” is a loaded term, as it implies all others are “closed.”
 - ii. The term is highly objectionable to Hillel International, which is strongly in favor of Hillels nationwide having open and wide-ranging discussions.
 - iii. Colorado Hillels must be places where students are encouraged to freely explore all issues from all sides within a container of respect and support for Israel. There is even room for learning about and examining the BDS movement, and such discussions may be appropriate. But all issues must be presented in balanced ways, and with education paramount.
 - iv. This issue makes clear the need for Hillel to have clear and consistent policies on a variety of topics.
 - v. Hillel of Colorado should review and adopt Hillel International policies when they are clearly articulated and do not conflict with our local sensibilities..
 - vi. The working group recommends a broad process that:
 1. Begin during the winter of 2015.
 2. Leads to a board resolution early in 2016.
 3. Includes in the decision-making process discussions with broad community representation - including ADL and JCRC, and visits with Hillel International’s legal team.
 4. Provides a clear sense of the history and the loaded issues; analysis of the two sides & stresses importance of being proactive.
 5. Frames the issue in a discussion of Hillel’s mission vis-à-vis broader issues, not just Israel.
7. **Staffing Working Group:** Create staff flow charts(s) with budget impacts for each; assign four key executive functions and commensurate support functions; develop job descriptions for different models with input from the Effective Campus Student working group and the Hillel Nationally working group; assure best practices are in place for the executive hire.
- Members Amy, Michelle; staff – Daniel.
 - Resources: Daniel will contact Hillel International to gather examples of recent job descriptions and organizational charts; he will prepare a seminar for the working group on March 15, 2015, to review possible models and their commensurate expenses; the working group will make its decision on recommendations at that day-long retreat.
 - RECOMMENDATIONS:
 - i. Hillel of Colorado is unique in its makeup, and its staffing structure must address its unique model: a central nonprofit business with three satellites in three cities, and most of the support traditionally coming from one city.
 - ii. Hillel is best when staffed by a five-person adult team, a mutually supportive unit; it is best when paid student interns support the staff functions.

1. An executive with a job description (including fund development) who “leads” - housed at DU with frequent visits to both CSU & CU.
 2. An administrator, who “does” - also housed at DU but in close touch with the campus directors.
 3. An independent campus director (at each campus): interdependent, mentored by the executive, and supported by the administrator.
 4. Student Interns and Ambassadors at each campus, and utilized in ways that support the specific needs of that campus
 - iii. An interim executive may be more cost effective for a year or two; enable Hillel to begin its strategic plan implementation so as to be healthier and more attractive to a new executive.
 - iv. The staffing structure needs to be supported by:
 1. At minimum one summer staff retreat and quarterly mini-retreats.
 2. Ongoing mentoring for all members of the team and executive coaching for all as funds become available.
 3. Close attention to business/marketing/advocacy as well as leading students and program delivery.
8. **Budget Working Group:** A successful budget is a blueprint for the present and future of any successful organization, and Hillel needs to be crystal clear how much annual income it needs to fund its programs and services as they now stand, and when they are revised.
- Members Daniel and Hillel of Colorado staff.
 - Resources: Build a zero-base, reality-driven three-year budget based on projected minimum expenses to run an organization that will implement to recommendations of this task force - with financial development suggestions for how to achieve it.
 - RECOMMENDATIONS: see Fund Development and Budget Recommendations.

During the course of its work the task force convened and then sun-setted two working groups when they had outlived their functionality; they were:

9. **Student Task Force Working Group:** Reviewed student applications, conducted phone interviews, and selected three student task force members.
- Members Michelle, Amy; staff – Daniel
 - The group placed three students on the task force as full members; brought them up to speed; integrated them into task force and working groups; and ceased to exist.
10. **Effective Campus Student Groups:** What can Hillel learn from other DU, CSU, and CU student organizations’ success, best practices, well-run Campus Student Groups.
- Andi, Paul, Hilary; Staff – David
 - Resources: Call and visit high-functioning groups and ask them what do the best, most effectively, and why. What best practices/relevant research is there with regard to student groups? What are best practices as far as student participation in governance; program planning, philosophy and implementation. What does success look like and how (metrics, other) do we measure it, evaluate it?
 - The group completed some tasks, and then merged into the Programs and Evaluation working group when it was clear that remaining tasks fit better into the mandate of that group.

APPENDIX D: Campus Directors' Thoughts

Each of the three Colorado campus Hillels has a professional leader responsible for empowering and guiding Jewish students at one of three campuses: University of Denver; Colorado State University; and University of Colorado, Boulder. The campus directors met together on June 23, 2015, to begin planning for the coming academic year. They were asked a variety of questions, and their answers painted picture of Hillel excellence as seen through their eyes.

The open-ended questions were:

- After asking directors what companies they thought were the very best (they answered Porsche, Apple, Google, REI, and Amazon) we asked them to tell us what it would look like for Hillel to be a Jewish student organization of that caliber.
- We asked them to tell us, in their opinion, why Hillel exists.
- We asked them to what must happen for Hillel to succeed (as they defined success) in the coming year.
- And finally, we asked them to tell us how we will know that Hillel has succeeded – what would it be like and what would be in place.

Their answers were wide-ranging, with over 106 individual measures proposed by the directors in 19 distinct categories. Their answers addressed what the organization must be to be successful; and what the campus professionals could do to facilitate success. We divided their answers into these four categories:

- ★ Hillel's Purpose, Values, Mission and Goals
- ★ Hillel's Programs and Services
- ★ Expectations for Environment
- ★ Hillel's Infrastructure

All of these are important to them, but **bold font** signifies things that are the most important:

According to campus staff leaders Hillel must pay attention to these:

- Hillel's Purpose, Values, Mission and Goals
 - ★ Hillel is **known for something and we can to say clearly what that is**: we all know, buy into and can explain our brand.
 - ★ Hillel's raison d'etre is:
 - To build community and provide a Jewish home away from home for Colorado Jewish students.
 - To “feed” students physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually.
 - To develop the next generation of Jewish leaders, brightening the future.
 - To make the world better through those touched by our programs and people.
 - ★ Hillel builds Jewish identity, honoring the heritage of our Jewish past to build a vibrant Jewish future.
- Hillel's Programs and Services
 - ★ We **care deeply about top notch “product” and student experience**.
 - ★ Student leadership passes from class to class and crafts student experiences.
 - ★ Are rich and diverse enough so all types of students want to come to Hillel.
 - ★ Are crafted strategically to address student desires, wants and needs.
 - ★ Work if **one student tells me Hillel changed his or her life**.

- ★ Connect students through services that:
 - Build Jewish identity, and
 - Facilitate students' resume and career building.
- **We have high expectations** for our environment and team, and are at our best when:
 - ★ Everyone (staff, volunteers, students):
 - ★ Buys in and **works together as a true collaborative team.**
 - ★ Has clear roles and adequate leadership training.
 - ★ **Cares about each other's professional success and personal well-being.**
 - ★ Pushes each other to be our best.
 - ★ Grow together as friends and have fun.
 - ★ We all *feel*:
 - ★ Supported, not alone.
 - ★ That we are learning from one another.
 - ★ That we are expected and guided to improve year over year.
 - ★ We strive to adapt: **to be open-minded**, open to change and revitalization.
- Measures of Hillel's Success
 - ★ External: The community knows, respects, supports and loves us.
 - ★ Internal
 - ★ Budget
 - ◆ Hillel's annual budget process is clear and transparent.
 - ◆ We understand how much money is needed to run Hillel and each campus, program, and function.
 - ★ Funding
 - ◆ **Hillel has a clear and powerful plan to secure enough annual income to thrive – and the means to implement it.**
 - ◆ The community donates enough money annually to do everything we need to do to achieve success.

APPENDIX E: Community Stakeholder Interviews

We conducted interviews with Hillel stakeholders from six categories (current and past board members, current and lapsed donors, university professionals, and Jewish community nonprofit professionals). Our nine formal interviews with ten stakeholders lasted between forty-five and ninety minutes each, and our informal interviews with eight other stakeholders lasted between ten and thirty minutes each.

A Summary:

Our summarized interview findings follow; Hillel stakeholders told us that:

- They believe that a Hillel-like organization is critical for the Jewish community and its students.
 - ★ Understand the importance of “providing Jewish stuff” for a Jewishly at-risk demographic that we can easily identify and reach more efficiently during their college years than at any other time in their lives.
 - ★ Know what they mean by “providing Jewish stuff,” even if they can’t clearly enunciate it – and they think Hillel knows, too.
 - ★ Are not unanimous around what Hillel should provide, but do have ideas that may be useful for the task force to consider.
- They do not think much is going well in the broader Denver-Boulder Jewish community, and don’t have a strong sense of how to make it better.
 - ★ Yearn for the better days of the past, strongly so where Hillel is concerned.
 - ★ Understand that the problems are not unique to Colorado and not even unique to the Jewish community.
 - ★ Have strong feelings about their Jewish communal institutions: ones they like and ones they don’t; ones they respect and ones they don’t; ones whose missions they support and ones they don’t.
- They believe strong community organizations have:
 - ★ Strong leadership both from the board and from the chief executive.
 - ★ Fiscal strength, transparency, and good management.
 - ★ Clarity about who they are and what they do.

*Note: Stakeholders don’t generally believe Hillel is currently strong, but they are not sure why; they do believe that Hillel can be strong in the future **as it was once was.***

- They are unified in believing that Hillel needs to be relevant now and in the future. For them, relevancy includes:
 - ★ For students:
 - i. Student-led programming.
 - ii. Meaningful leadership roles for students.
 - iii. Social programming.
 - iv. Value-added activities such as internships and skill-building programs, discussions of politics and values, and activities that provide students a “leg up” to post-college life.
 - v. Student-desired discussions on any subject they wish within a safe playing field.
 - ★ For supporters:
 - vi. Proof that it is serving the most students possible in the best possible ways.
 - vii. Consistent (but not overwhelming) communication with donors, community leaders, advocates.
 - viii. Strong and accessible (if possible also enlightened) consistent leadership.

Granular Responses

The responses of interviewees to direct questions about the Jewish Community and Hillel itself:

The Community:

- What is going well in Colorado's Jewish community?
 - i. Hard to Say.
 - ii. Not sure anyone is winning or doing particularly well.
 - iii. The nature of Jewish identity has changed with our increasing inclusion/integration in the United States.
 - iv. Not much – kind of feeble right now, but there are some bright spots.
 - v. Have to think about that – maybe directed giving.
- What makes the most effective Jewish organizations effective?
 - i. Leadership: Board leadership; good leadership with vision for the organization; respect for lay leadership; everyone is on same page, going the same direction.
 - ii. Financial Health: A clear model for financial sustainability; fiscally responsible; a clear mission they can implement within a sound budget.
 - iii. Transparency: You can see exactly where all money goes.
 - iv. Relevance: What the organization does is relevant to a current need in the marketplace, not a need that existed 50 years ago.
 - v. Innovation: Open to ideas and ways of doing things.
- What are the biggest needs with regard to young people and Jewish life?
 - i. Connection from age 13 – adulthood.
 - ii. Activity that is relevant to the world kids are in and growing into.
 - iii. Focus on activities with one eye on college applications or work resumes.
 - iv. They are social and want social activities, but the best activities are relevant and challenge students.
 - v. Kids want to feel useful and they want experiences that feel useful to them.
 - vi. It's important that these organizations are student-run.
 - vii. Young people live in an instant world. They want hands-on, want to see that what they do makes a difference.
 - viii. They want choices, not guilt.
 - ix. Students want to have fun sometimes, because they are legitimately really busy with school and work.
 - x. Student needs are social, identity, and skills – in that order.
 - xi. Millennials are suspicious and don't care for big institutions. They see the world as non-hierarchical, and don't attach and identify with organizations as much.
 - xii. Students want authentic, respectful adults – someone who is really an adult and can relate to them, but not be like them.
 - xiii. Mentoring.

Hillel of Colorado

- What about Hillel excites you?
 - i. It is really needed.

- ii. Something like 90-95% of adult identity is determined by college age experiences - and Hillel can directly impact that.
 - iii. Hillel is the most important institution for Jewish continuity because nearly every Jewish kid goes to college and identity is cemented then.
 - iv. Hillel provides continuity between Jewish children living at home and being in the working world as adults.
 - v. Especially where the Jewish population is small, Hillel provides a safe, welcoming place to gather.
 - vi. There is a huge, desperate need for effective Hillels on campus.
 - vii. Our Jewish world today is so fragmented, but the one place where we know kids will be is in college. It's the one chance we have to do something that will affect them for the rest of their life. Hillel is key to having a next generation of Jewish people in our country.
- What are Hillel's best opportunities?
- i. What would excite is not a focus on marketing or branding, but something real (leadership, board, structure) going on and being invited to help it grow.
 - ii. The opportunity for it to rebuild.
 - iii. To know there's something substantial there.
 - iv. Hillel could be a huge part of the community conversation...the community can learn from Hillel.
 - v. A flexible, responsive Hillel could serve as a learning lab about where society is now and where it is going.
- How can Hillel be more relevant in its work?
- i. Positioning
 1. Hillel needs to figure out what its added value is going to be regardless of what any other organization such as fraternities & sororities and Chabad do, and not react to them, but rather: "this is who we are and what we do."
 2. Position Hillel as "no entity has more impact than Hillel."
 3. Create a strong common brand, but allow for individualized expression at the local level – tweaks and customization for the local community and students.
 4. One size model for all three campuses unlikely to work. Campus cultures are different.
 5. A more clear purpose. They can't do everything. What is it they do?
 6. Collaborate with other organizations.
 7. Clarity of mission and what it does.
 8. Don't be so facility-based. Get out of the building – have the total pulse of campus life, young people, a community-organizing spirit.
 9. Can't just be about programs – has to be about relationships, mobilizing people (which historically our community hasn't been the best at).
 - ii. Leadership
 1. Strong board and strong executive leadership are both essential.
 2. Spend the money and hire a high caliber, dynamic CEO who recruits an equivalent board.

3. When the right person (or persons) is asking the community for money and has a good plan, people will say yes.
- iii. Student-Oriented
1. Peer-to-peer impact is increasingly important with young people. Synagogue and home influence are relevant for only 7% of this population.
 2. Foster civil dialogue around issues meaningful to college students.
 3. Activities with relevance for students and their future. Internships? Connections from college to professional life?
 4. For discussions of political subjects have a clear boundary: no shouting, name-calling, mutual respect at all times, timed discussions – rules that apply to all and foster dialogue.
 5. Get students involved at every level of Hillel, not just for programs.
 6. Respond to students’ needs and requests. Help programs to be student-led by providing the structure, support, and accountability.
 7. Question: are Jewish students looking for Jewish community...or just community?
 8. It’s important that Hillel is a safe space for Jewish kids. Period. It can’t become political in either direction.
 9. If kids want to talk about real issues, provide a safe platform for it.
 10. Give kids a place to voice their feelings, get educated, and to do things that help them to build their resumes.
 11. Allow students to have safe unfettered discussions about anything, including Israel.
 12. Do activities with students, not for students.
- iv. Chabad
1. These organizations have different identities and purpose.
 2. Chabad is a missionary organization focused on moving people to more ritual observance.
 3. Hillel should appeal to a much broader market and be a connection to community.
 4. Collaboration depends on personalities involved.
 5. Chabad is not a threat to Hillel when Hillel defines itself clearly.
 6. Chabad doesn’t have a social justice perspective.
 7. Don’t try to be like Chabad.

The Data

Below are nine interview transcripts – edited and anonymous. They represent the many community advocates, donors, former donors, and Jewish community leaders with whom we spoke.

Interview #1

What is going well in Colorado’s Jewish community?

Not sure anyone is winning. Salmon swimming upstream...this is the first time in history where everyone is a Jew by choice. Jewish identity is still there, but how they do Jewish is different than their grandparents and parents.

This has many impacts, including relationship with Israel.

Even most generous supporters are more giving to non-Jewish causes. Allied Jewish apartments has good business plan, model. Positive cash flow. Their institution is 50%+ non-Jewish.

National Jewish has Jewish heritage, but isn't necessarily Jewish.

There are many organizations that support the Jewish community. What do you believe are the most effective organizations?

Jewish Family Service is best run, best service – with most connection of donors. Increasingly non-Jewish...

Concentric circles...family, community, broader community...

JCC has a lot of following, but it's not necessarily a strong organization.

What makes them effective?

There has to be sustainability model to be strong. An organization without a sustainability model is not sustainable. Some organizations chase an historical market need, but that isn't necessarily still relevant.

With regard to young people and Jewish life, what is going well?

Something like 90-95% of identity is determined by college age experience.

I would make the argument that Hillel is the most important institution for Jewish continuity. Every Jewish kid goes to college. The identity is cemented then.

With regard to young people and Jewish life, where do you see the biggest needs?

Before college:

- Summer camp
- Youth group
- Day school
- Israel experience

These are all peer-based. For 93% of the population, synagogue and home is irrelevant. Peer to peer transformative experiences are vital.

The market need is incredibly important – it's the last step to influence a Jewish young person's life trajectory before they're in the real world.

How can Hillel be more relevant or more effective in its work?

Perhaps Hillel's new direction nationally... Fingerhut is trying to position Hillel as the "no entity with more / greater impact on identity" than Hillel.

Civil dialogue is necessary for community to hold together.

What's playing out on college campuses is a tension between 'open Hillel' which is good language that's been used to create tension and polarize the others as 'closed Hillel'.

National does some back office, donor platform, tax receipting...

Hillel is still a brand. It's easier to reimagine and revitalize the Hillel brand rather than blow it up and recreate. I can't imagine you can't take the national resources and make it work for you. It would be tragic to blow it up, lose the name.

There are two ways to drive change: revolution or evolution.

If you can drive change from within and drive sustainability it's more lasting change.

Revolution is tough to pull off well.

Innovation often happens outside traditional organizations, but then you have sustainability issues and the new idea gets bought out.

Hillel needs to figure out how to innovate and partner with people like Wilhelm.

In addition to Hillel, Chabad is also on every campus.

How do you see the role of each organization?

Chabad knows who they are. They are missionaries. There's a lot of good stuff in the Torah. If you're looking for spiritual fulfillment and rounding out, they do a very good job with that. Charismatic and good at what they do.

Hillel needs to collaborate, not compete.

Hillel theoretically appeals to a much broader market. Chabad is trying to move people along to more ritual observance.

Hillel is just trying to keep the Jewish community connected. They may not be as educated or trained or charismatic. A great Hillel campus director is a very difficult job to fulfill and succeed in.

Fundraising would be another whole level entirely. Someone who can engage and inspire kids isn't always the same to raise resources.

Hillel should be more of a franchise model with tweaks, customization, for the local community / kids.

Interview #2

What is going well in Colorado's Jewish community?

Not much; it is kind of feeble right now. Federation is not doing that well. Has been hub, is faltering, leadership is poor. Day school is picking up and gaining momentum (Denver campus...more organized) JCC more so as well. Both have come from stepping away from Federation.

There are many organizations that support the Jewish community. What do you believe are the most effective organizations?

CAJE with infusion from Joyce will take off, but other than that is on last leg. AIPEC (but not truly a Jewish org), BBYO, Rose Community Foundation

What makes them effective?

Leadership...board leadership. Fiscally responsible. A mission and budget that support each other.

With regard to young people and Jewish life, what is going well?

BBYO...by hearsay. Rose Youth Foundation – application process to get in. Be Jewish in some form. Follow-up interview, finalists, very structured, programmed, list of when you'll meet. Focused, elected student leadership. Adults teach how to run board meetings. Field trips to funded organizations.

Clarity of the mission. Involved parents where they were invited in and informed, mid-term of what they were doing. End presentation.

Rose Community Foundations Youth Board

Nordstrom fashion board. Very programmed and directed. They're working.

With regard to young people and Jewish life, where do you see the biggest needs?

JCC could do more than it does. Could be doing more leadership things.

After 13, synagogues went dark. They are struggling to become relevant. The world's changing and they're struggling to remain relevant.

Judaism your way and then nothing after that...
Structured and toward a purpose, then nothing...

Kids focused on activities with one eye on college application. Want relevant activities. They are social and want social activities, but the best ones are relevant, challenge kids, kids feel useful. They are social (not a grade). Finally, it will look good on their college application or resume. And it gives them experience that will be useful to them.

You support Hillel financially. What motivates you to contribute?

We've always looked at things that are education related and in case of Hillel we also looked at continuity of Jewish children living at home and being in working world and being adults. Case was made that Hillel was the link that keeps them connected.

Leadership contact has been sparse. There were some emails. Pat would periodically have lunch...informative. Thought perhaps to be invited to student pizza, etc. but that did not happen.

What about Hillel excites you?

Not really attached now, so with that caveat, still view it as that link.

The thing that still intrigues me, is where the Jewish population is tiny, there is a safe, welcoming place to gather. Just like a language house. Russian house. "Geek house".

How can Hillel be more relevant or more effective in its work?

I don't know.

Don't know what programs they have.

If they had clear purpose, they would be fully used.

Jewish films once / week.

Structured programs that involve information, food, etc.

Maybe teach Kabbalah?

Kids are fickle audience.

What could Hillel do that would motivate you to give at a higher level?

I would feel bad about giving more money at this point, without feeling that Hillel 'has it together.'

Would have to know there was a future, a plan, a structure, a program.

It's not about marketing / branding. It's about something real going on and "we need your help to make it grow."

Programs for incoming freshmen where you talk about how to budget time, study, succeed as Jewish student in campus environment.

Job fair, resume skills. Real workshops. Jewish job fair...

Put the kids in internships. Make a connection between Jewish businesses, internships, connections, community professional mentors...

Both a strong board AND strong Staff leadership is essential.

Real concrete action helping kids would mean more than flashy marketing.

In your own words, can you share with us what Hillel does?

Only viewed them as a social gathering place for Jewish students on campus.

In addition to Hillel, Chabad is also on every campus. How do you see the role of each organization?

Am not familiar with them or their work.

Thoughts on the Open / Closed issue?

You have to have one message. Here is the boundary. Here is what we're not going to tolerate: no shouting, name-calling, mutual respect will be present, timed presentations, etc. This is your time and no extremist shouting. Within those parameters, dialog is important.

Interview #3

Within your campus, what's working to engage and support students?

Chabad has some good practices.

More broadly than Jewish: students are engaged when they're part of the production process. Get them involved early. Don't tell them what to do.

CU students like clear directions. (more lecture unidirectional style)

DU students don't. (more informal teaching styles)

One size model for all three campuses may not work. Differentiated approach probably called for because campus cultures are very different from one another.

From my vantage point, each campus needs to be independent. Currently a bit of a McDonalds approach that doesn't necessarily work. Boulder vs. Denver reflect very different cultures.

Campus programming does operate fairly independently. Fundraising and budget probably called for independence as well.

What do your experience and research tell you about student communities and what students desire and need in the coming years?

Opportunities for discussion, student led.

Jewish life is really defined by Chabad at CU right now.

What students want is a Jewish community that has non-Jews in it. (JS doesn't advertise birthright trips because not everyone can do it.)

Are there other organizations you work with that do a particularly good job? (If multiple campuses, comment on both?)

Other organizations are more clear about who to talk to...it's the on-campus person and that is very clear.

LGBT – Scarlet Bowen. They do good work.

What role does Hillel play on your campus?

Hillel does things like organize high holiday services. Not sure...but I don't have students coming to me asking for that. (or they go to Chabad)

BBQs...social things (more CU than DU)

Some Shabbat dinners. (There is a fear of getting too 'heady' at dinner.)

That garner a fair number of students. 18 months ago there were 100 students / standing room only. Gut sense that most were Jewish.

What do they do well? Relationship with Chabad on each campus? Campus dependent models or should be more of one model...

Campus dependent models. Cultures are different.

Relationship with Chabad...the question is whether it's a personality or program...they are both charismatic, warm and welcoming. Do things that college kids like to do. (More male than female.)

Opportunity for Hillel...female students. (Focus group opportunity.)

Don't see a lot of public collaboration. More high profile events tend to be Chabad. (Day of Jewish culture...no content, but fun...food.)

Chabad puts up sukkot. (Did a bike sukkot.) They do Shabbat dinners. Everything they do is free so they must have good inflow from donors. They're building a house on The Hill.

From Chabad's point of view, there's no competition. Chabad doesn't appear to feel any anxiety about Hillel the way Hillel does of Chabad.

Working relationships at DU were better. Some of it was personality.

Do you have an opinion on how can Hillel be more relevant or more effective in its work?

There is a huge, desperate need for an effective Hillel on campus.

Effective would mean: Responding to students' needs and requests for what they think are the kinds of things they want to do. Some students were raised marginally or in Day School. They come to Jewish studies...that's not the way it's marketed, but they're coming for it.

Unlike Hillel, JS is a place where Jews and non Jews can study Jewish together.

Average CU student is more mixed parents. DU parents more traditionally conservatively raised Jewish.

Example: students created a program and sponsored it...Jews, non Jews, Palestinians, etc. ...Palestinian peace activist came and presented. Should have been a joint Hillel-Muslim Union program.

Not an institutional/personality barrier...just not known for that.

There is a tension in leading 'student led'...how to help them do it.

Or you give them Chabad – which is someone telling them what Jewish is (and having fun).

Hillel needs to figure out what it's added value is going to be regardless of what anyone else is doing...e.g. fraternities, Chabad, etc. Not as reaction to...but "this is who we are and what we do"...maybe it's even seeding other Jewish students groups.

Campus directors can muzzled because of H Int'l. Students come to Jewish Studies because they can't talk about Israel issues.

Wonder if Jewish students are really looking for Jewish community or just community. It's more about the charisma of the people involved.

Comment on personnel – what makes a good campus director? Board chair?

Someone who knows how to mentor students to find their leadership voices.

And ultimately you want students leading other students.

Charisma...like the Chabad rabbis have. ... At least, they need to be someone that students want to spend time with.

There's an intersection where students come to Jewish Studies to fulfill a requirement and since it's Jewish they go there. Then that leads to other aspects, involvements, leadership. Community can be created anywhere.

Staffing models insight

In my experience, the current model ...the one's on the ground with the passionate experience with students should have conversations with donors.

Independent directors that engage students and donors...that are thinking about them earning their own dinner.

Three campus directors come together as a council and report to the state decision-makers. (This is the way every state Hillel works that I'm aware of.) Don't necessarily require a state ED as currently structured.

Community organizations serving local needs raising local money.

Interview #4

What is going well in Colorado's Jewish community?

Directed giving goes well – giving amounts to Federation and directing where they should go. Both through Federation and direct giving.

There are many (or... You mentioned) organizations that support the Jewish community. What do you believe are the most effective organizations?

What makes them effective?

With regard to young people and Jewish life, what is going well?

When you think of Jewish youth movement, starts with IST at CAJE. If successful, goes to Hillel.

CAJE – through IST flagship program.

TYGs – early on. To IST...at about 15, 16.

Perhaps Birthright.

With regard to young people and Jewish life, where do you see the biggest needs?

Important that it's kid-run.

I'm curious...you didn't mention Hillel, or glanced over it, is there a reason for that?

All orgs are defined by their leaders and there hasn't been one there since Pat Blumenthal. She built 3 houses, could raise money, was dynamic. After her, Hillel fell apart. Since she's left I've never met an ED, never been called by an ED, never been solicited.

They don't even know who I am.

There is also a small identity question between Hillel Day School...

What about Hillel excites you?

The opportunity to rebuild it. To know there's something there. There is nothing there right now.

The brand is not that important. In Colorado it might be easier to not use Hillel name due to Day School confusion.

Jewish Campus Students etc.

How can Hillel be more relevant or more effective in its work?

Hillel needs to pay 150k+ to be able to hire quality, dynamic folks. You need a dynamic, go in, and make a difference person. Board will rise to level of CEO. Board must hold CEO accountable.

You have to run a nonprofit as a for-profit. Recruit well, good talent force, you have to constantly be growing revenues, reinvesting in people, developing leadership.

Economy is fabulous right now. They could raise 800k.

What could Hillel do that would motivate you to give at a higher level?

It's about the director. When Pat asked for 10k I'd say yes.

90% of the people who give money to Hillel will never come to a function. They have breakfast, take 30 minutes to hear why it's important, then ask.

In your own words, can you share with us what Hillel does?

Hillel is a safe place for kids to retain Jewish identity in a non-Jewish world.

Can also help kids establish / find Jewish identity.

Thoughts on the Open / Closed issue?

You've got to create a safe space for Jewish kids. Period. You've got to make sure the discussions can happen. Is it okay to be Sunni or Shia and talk about who's right? If it becomes political, I don't want anything to do with it (on either side).

It's about the kid who just moved here from Boston and doesn't know anyone and wants to go to Shabbat dinner.

If he has to decide whether there should be a Palestinian state or not, he's not going to go or be there.

Bottom Line Thoughts:

Spend the money on a quality ED and it will come back to you. Pay someone 50k more than now and they bring in 200-400k more.

No employment contract: we will review every 6 months, have right to fire or give a raise, you have right to quit.

I would be happy to be on the search committee and interview them as a CEO...tell me how you're going to run your company, your core values, your plan for people, etc.

Interview #5

What is going well in Colorado's Jewish community?

I can't answer that question. I don't know either way. I don't have the contacts in the Jewish community the way I used to. Not really in the trenches any more.

Let's talk about Hillel...

In the past, Hillel was good then...what made it good then:

There were anti-Semitic events taking place at CU, there was a feeling Ed had that it was a critical time to provide a platform for Jewish youth to defend themselves.

Liberal environments tend to line up with Palestine and it counter-balances.

The mission is what made it effective.

Kids felt like they were fighting city hall. CSU closed their space in the student union.

You support Hillel financially. What motivates you to contribute?

We created a business board, 25k, 25-30 spots. The whole Palestinian demonstration was a stressful time and it helped make it more palatable to give money.

Is it the same now? There are opportunities with Iran, current US administration, etc.

What about Hillel excites you?

Ready, welcoming atmosphere, educates about Jewish identity, services, etc.

Appreciated having a place to go for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Creates a place for them to participate in Jewish life.

It's a service that no body else provides.

How can Hillel be more relevant or more effective in its work?

Neither recent ED had any relationship with Gary's generation or continued the relationships. I would write a check if I were asked and I haven't been asked.

What could Hillel do that would motivate you to give at a higher level?

I haven't heard from anyone at Hillel in four years. I don't hold any grudges, would certainly give again...it needs to be to a person.

Thoughts on the Open / Closed issue?

I have no problem with inviting different opinions so long as it's in a dialog and debate format. Not embarrassed that Hillel is and should be an advocate for Jewish kids, pro Israel. Don't believe that Hillel should be diluted by competing opinions and maintain it's focus while also allowing debate, dialogue, and mix of ideas.

Interview #6

What is going well in Colorado's Jewish community?

The only thing going well right now is Rose Community Foundation.
There is no one to go to if you are in trouble other than Rose.

Jewish Family Services
Day school on its way – good leadership.

What makes these organizations effective?

They are innovative. Open to ideas. Transparent...see exactly where money goes. Great leadership.

Good leadership – vision for their organization. Respect for their lay leadership allows meshing together so everyone is on same page, same direction.

With regard to young people and Jewish life, what is going well?

Moisha House is a success...social, meaningful programs, fun things, can bring non-Jewish friends, etc.

With regard to young people and Jewish life, where do you see the biggest needs?

Everything is instant now...wired.

Want hands on. Instant gratification. Want to see that what they do makes a difference. Want choices. Don't want guilt.

They want to be part of the big world and feel good about it.

They (kids) decide what the programs are.

They don't want to do all the work, but do want the fun and experience. They're busy.

Needs:

- 1st Social
- 2nd Identity
- 3rd Skills

Not sure if being back on campus or right in middle of UMC would matter if not doing something that appeals to kids.

You support Hillel financially. What motivates you to contribute?

Our Jewish world is so fragmented that we're always trying to find out where our Jewish kids are...we know where they are in college. It's the one chance we have to do something that will affect them for the rest of their life. I want to have a next generation of Jewish people in our country.

It's been challenging: When earlier leaders left, they left tough shoes to fill. After Pat left, it kind of dwindled. They hired poorly...

I've been invited to some events by email.
Two years ago invited to try to help reinvigorate.
Year ago asked to advise re: Boulder building.

What about Hillel excites you?

The time we know where kids are.
Some kids come from homes that did or did not do things and the latter need that opportunity to learn. Hillel provides that opportunity.

How can Hillel be more relevant or more effective in its work?

Does Hillel of Colorado need to be part of HI? No... HI doesn't provide financial, personal development. They don't help...

And they hurt... if kids want to talk about real issues and HI won't allow it, that's hurting participation. But, name recognition does matter and make a difference. Do they have a monopoly on name?

Don't try to be Chabad.

What could Hillel do that would motivate you to give at a higher level?

To help students feel good about being Jewish.

Give them a place to voice their feelings, get educated, interact, build their resume.

Community can be anywhere... a house is nice as a resource center. Nice to have a place to have dinners, recruitment for parents to see (libraries and Hillel house)

In your own words, can you share with us what Hillel does?

10 years ago Hillel was the jewel in the crown of Jewish community and it can be again.

A gathering place.
A social place
The religious aspect is last.

Beef up the board.
Get good leadership & staff.

Thoughts on Open / Closed issue?

Students need to be able to have these conversations.

You mentioned Chabad earlier – can you elaborate?

Chabad is different...religious. Proselytizing. Like Mormons. Can't understand how young female college students can go... it's for the nurturing, the kindness, the social. They don't believe in women's rights, women in the back of the room.

Interview #7

What is going well in Colorado's Jewish community?

We don't understand the world community. The Cleveland patriarch still goes to meetings.

People here – we don't get community and relationships...part of Cleveland's advantage is that it was restricted more so than Denver. People wouldn't sell to blacks and Jewish people. Because we don't have proximity and limitations we don't have the same connections. It's all about community.

We can only do it here with leadership. Community and lay leadership.

How can Hillel be more relevant or more effective in its work?

Where Hillel is missing it today is... I was in college during Vietnam, Wisconsin riots, etc. I was always on a path of logic and productivity. Confused, but wasn't a crazy liberal. Kids today...the J street type kids are buying a story that has no reality to it. That's where Hillel can play a role.

It's only because of the history of our people that the President can talk about a two-state solution when Hamas is sworn to Israel's destruction. It's not simple as 'settlements.' It's convoluted and incomprehensible.

There are 7 million displaced people in Syria and no one says anything...and yet people get upset at settlements.

What could Hillel do that would motivate you to give at a higher level?

In the past, we shook hands and that's how we did it. It wasn't about a song and dance and all that. We're Midwesterners – we have soul.

This is the west, we're very independent and we don't have continuity of relationships and connections.

My salary was published in the newspaper and no one called to sell me insurance or anything. There is a different marketing skill that we lack here.

Federation had a senior speakers series to bring young people into the connections, community, business people.

The old landed families really abandoned the community and all the people of all the various groups should have a list and stay connected.

XXXXX always said you have to create events that are fun. If they're groups then we want to hang out with them just to learn from those 25 older experienced guys.

When a door is closed, we always look for another one.

There's always a way to do this, but it requires leadership. Only with the right leader.

One hot button – if we felt like we were making progress against the naivety of young people. At least to provide some counter perspective to the messaging of the Saudis...billions spent there.

Quoting a mentor: “The idea of the settlements, whether you like them or not is irrelevant. IF a lot of people want to live in an area that is Arab it's fine, but the idea of a Palestinian state is ‘no Jews’.

To get kids to be realists...the symmetry you see doesn't reflect the balance today. The only place an Arab can really vote is in Israel.

The liberal's problem is that they don't recognize evil. So then an Arab gets upset and it's because this... A black does this and it's okay... But Jewish perspectives get beat up...

Interview #8

What is going well in Colorado's Jewish community?

I don't know how to answer that question. Not relating to the Jewish community much right now... it's a personal issue, not them...

The Jewish community is so well integrated in Denver that it creates some consequences:

- ✓ Synagogues took on more significance...more identity, less religious, than more global institutions do in other places.
- ✓ People belong to many synagogues and that has impact on other Jewish institutions.

There are many organizations that support the Jewish community. What do you believe are the most effective organizations?

Jewish family services...they are working on performing well. Strategic planning, fundraising, programs are phenomenal.

Synagogues – some might say.

Because its family and synagogue based, those families are paid deference. It means that people who aren't connected to synagogues or those families can feel disconnected...not part of the community. If you don't do it through synagogues or Jewish day school.

What makes them effective?

JFS The leader...not sure why, but she gets it done. She actually makes decisions...doesn't cow-tow. Tone. Doesn't grandstand and does the work.

Pat was an effective leader for Hillel. She was always tapping donors and constantly updating, communicating, organizing the base. Not just the big guppies. Internally, she was controlling, perhaps mid-range.

With regard to young people and Jewish life, what is going well?

No awareness. Not sure how kids today are connecting to their identity.

One of the things I do see (APEC and J-Street)...is they are doing a good job connecting young people. They make kids have a sense of being part of a movement, making a difference in the world, they need to be organizing, having fun, making a difference, being leaders.

With regard to young people and Jewish life, where do you see the biggest needs?

Long term connection to the Jewish community.

You support Hillel financially. What motivates you to contribute?

We know it's important. It's a place for some kids and we know some have trouble fitting in in college.

What about Hillel excites you?

Stop talking about the Jewish connection and let them have a good time. Stop wringing your hands about anti-Semitism on campus. If that's what students want, let them do it themselves. Provide places for them to meet each other, engage in social justice projects. That their Jewish connection has relevance to the world.

How can Hillel be more relevant or more effective in its work?

I haven't been spoken with in three years. I did receive an email once. Definitely need more leadership.

In the past, the adults were running Hillel, they thought it was student centered, but they weren't really.

Don't make it more than it is. Should be fun, projects, social impact. It's not 'creating leaders' but fostering leadership. Subtle difference. Teaching relationships and working together. Not dragging Leaders with a capital L.

Real problem globally – we teach self-importance. Need to be teaching humility. This is relevant to Hillel.

Thoughts on Open / Closed issue?

Hoey on donors who don't want to allow conversations.

It ultimately should be up to the students.

This is the contemporary version of my anti-Semitism rant.

Discussion can be respectful. Cannot hurt us physically – that's a good rule.

Hillel needs to contract with Building Bridges and learn how to communicate through conflict. It's not resolving conflict. It's how do you really talk without agreeing or believing the other is right. Acknowledging that their reality is different from my reality.

This should be a community conversation – for the community of students. Start there, with what they want. Then broaden over time. Don't start with the broader community.

University relationships – value to the campus community

At one point Hillel was a leadership organization on key social justice issues. It was at one point, but it requires giving up some other things to do that.

The people who control much of the purse strings in this town are not open to the kind of conversations we want to have in Hillel or other places.

Interview #9

What is going well in Colorado's Jewish community?

We don't fund the whole community, but among the grantees...

The economy is going well and that helps.

The people who do work on the ground are excited and we have good leaders in our organizations. There's a lot of interest and awareness that we're hoping to increase regarding periods of time when Jewish identity is formed... adolescent brain development is important.

We don't often hear our Jewish organizations talk about being there when the time is ripe. If we're successful at increasing the number of teens engaged in Jewish life, they will really need to have that same appropriate, stimulating, and relevant Jewish life on campus.

With regard to young people and Jewish life, where do you see the biggest needs?

We're still in the middle of this big shift in Jewish life. Millennials are suspicious and don't like big institutions. "Why would we support this organization that has been around since 1954"...viewed as fuddy-duddy just by age. "There must be something better."

They see the world as non-hierarchical. Board needs to be steeped in 'what does it mean to be a millennial as well as the Z gen.' What works? What doesn't? What do they value?

We need the Hillels to be part of our community conversation. We can learn from them. Hillel can be our learning lab.

We know from our experience and studies that our people don't attach and identify with organizations as much these days.

One of her Millennials feels that there isn't a rabbi that stays in a synagogue long enough to form a relationship / home at any rate.

What about Hillel excites you?

Opportunity for H to serve as a learning lab for all of community.

What are the needs of our students? What are they doing? How are they self-organization?

Have the total pulse of campus life, young people. They have to have a community organizing spirit, get out in community, not sit in their building all day.

How can Hillel be more relevant or more effective in its work?

If they want to be relevant today, they need to take a stand that students can have open unfettered discussions re: Israel. That's what young people want... if it's going to be student-led.

Recently attended a panel with a bunch of young people who were sharing conversation on divestiture issue. One far right student shared how open Hillel conversations were helpful to her because it allowed her safety to share her opinion in an intentionally open, inclusive environment. She wasn't reflexively shouted down by progressives.

College campuses are a litmus test for what the future will be. How young people are thinking about issues and what they're taking action on is very important for us in the Jewish world to pay attention to.

To the extent we don't listen to and respond to what young people care, think, worry, celebrate, we will lose a whole generation.

On college campuses everything needs to be about the students. To the extent Hillel does for them, not with them, that will be problematic.

Not be facility-based...community happens virtually and flexibly.

There's an evangelical aspect of home youth groups and parent volunteers that doesn't feel institutional.

Are Hillel staff trained / taught how to do this?

It can't just be about program. It's got to be about relationships, about mobilizing people...and historically the Jewish community hasn't been about that.

How do we do that better in the Jewish world?

Kids want authentic, respectful, someone who is really an adult and will relate to them, but not be like them.

What role does mentoring play for Hillel?

In the Jewish world we're blind to mentoring, we don't practice it, we don't have expertise at it... There is something to it that we know more about.

College students are hungry for mentoring while trying to figure out who you're going to be when you grow up.

In addition to Hillel, Chabad is also on every campus. How do you see the role of each organization?

Hillel's board needs to understand the difference and distinctions.

My second-hand thoughts: the reason Chabad works is that it's not institutional. It's home-like feeling. They serve alcohol to minors. It's comfortable. It's a meal. For a lot of Jews the orthodox are seen as authentic while everyone else is not-as-Jewish.

For a kid who wants to have chicken soup, matzah balls, a little homesick, it's comforting.

Some of the rabbis are not people I'd want to talk to if I were a woman...but they're caring, comforting people.

In what way should we appropriately partner? How are we different?

Chabad doesn't have social justice perspective. Can't comment in meaningful way to issues that are really relevant to young people. Don't try to be like Chabad.

Chabad is free, low barrier, don't ask for membership. They'll do anything they can... funerals, etc.

Final Thoughts:

Hillel needs to be doing human-centered design...the students, the people who are coming up behind them.

I would never design anything for teenagers without having them there beside me.

Historic Jewish-model is staff driven to serve the people and it's time to change that.

Maybe the way they're organized isn't correct any more.

Need student representation on the board.

What adults don't realize is that young adults have very deep and complex feelings and thoughts around their Jewish identify and JUST HAVING the conversations is very productive and helpful to them.

How exciting it would be to blow up old structure and have a 21st Century organization, structure, that unleashes energy of these young people.

Those teens are the Jewish community. If Hillel is helping them with the things they care about, they will co-own, co-design, co-invest, and raise money through, with, and parents will open their pocketbooks.

From a focus group I participated with: why is Judaism relevant: because I get to see worlds and people culture beyond my own. It makes me feel closer to my family. I've had a lot of problems and I realized that we're all made in G's image... and G must have problems and it makes it okay for me to have problems and work through them.

The inherent dignity and inherent brokenness in each of us. That's what we have to figure out...how to be relevant to these struggles.

We need translators of Jewish-values to teen experience.

We also need people who empower the kids to be in charge, make their own decisions.

Jewish community needs disruptive thinking. The old models don't really work.

Look at Jewish Voice for Peace on campus activity. ADL paints them as anti-Israel, but they're not necessarily.

APPENDIX F: FOCUS GROUPS

What follows is a summary of focus group attendees’ attitudes and insights. All stakeholders who participated in our focus groups were assured confidentiality in order to assure candor. We have not attributed comments to individuals, and names of participants are not provided.

The focus groups met at convenient evening times at the Hillel houses under the leadership and questioning of Maggie Miller of Maggie Miller Consulting, Inc. Maggie engaged some high school seniors from the metro area who were asked what they knew, anticipated, wanted, and had heard; and students from all three Hillel campuses who were asked how they came to Hillel (or didn’t in some cases), what they found and experienced, what worked and what didn’t, and what they could tell us that might make Hillel better.

Two groups were conducted at the Hillel House at CU Boulder, and two were conducted at the Hillel House at DU. (The students in one of the groups at DU were Jewishly engaged high school students.) There were a total of 33 people in the four focus groups.

<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Duration</u>	<u># of Students</u>
CU Boulder Hillel	April 28, 2015	6:00 pm	60 minutes	10
CU Boulder Hillel	April 28, 2015	7:00 pm	50 minutes	9
DU Hillel	May 27, 2015	6:15 pm	45 minutes	11
DU Hillel	June 3, 2015	6:15 pm	50 minutes	3

A Summary:

What follows is Maggie’s summary:

Students knew very little about infrastructure such as budgeting, fundraising, governance and administration; they knew their Hillel and its programs. These themes emerged:

- Hillel is very important to students for a variety of reasons centered on fun, community and leadership opportunities.
- While some programs aren’t as good as they could be, the fixes are inexpensive and easy.
- Hillel may want to try some educational, career-building or political programming – but only if it originates and is planned by the students.
- But Hillel should stick with what it does best: providing *home-away-from-home*, social, identity-building and cultural programs, and Jewish “feel-good” experiences.
- Leadership development is important to students, and Hillel is a powerful laboratory for them.
- When students feel welcome at Hillel, it’s wonderful. When they don’t it’s really bad.
- Student leaders and those on the “inside” absolutely love their Hillel, but some students feel left out; as “outsiders” often don’t return, or don’t feel good about themselves when they do.
- Professional directors are important as role models and “big brothers and sisters,” and could succeed in helping leaders be more sensitive to “outsiders.”
- Directors have great influence with students, creating a welcoming atmosphere, leading them and helping them in a variety of ways.

- Students want to be friends with the professionals; staff must walk a thin line between being friendly and becoming their friends.
- There are lots of ways to “do Jewish” at CU and DU (Hillel, Jewish Greek life, Chabad, clubs), and many students do more than just one.

This is summary of student voices from the focus groups, beginning with how they came to discover Hillel and ending with some specific ideas about improving Hillel.

How Students Find Campus Organizations

- They get involved in these organizations through friends who bring them to an activity.
- They seek out an organization because they’ve heard about it from somewhere and it resonates.
- They seek it out, or friends bring them.

What Do They Want to Get Out of Their Experience?

- They want community.
- They want to learn and grow.
- They want to gain experience and resume content.
- They want to gain general satisfaction and appreciation.

How Did Students Learn About Hillel?

- Some students seek it out in their college search.
- For some their parents influenced them.
- Others knew about it and heard it suggested by friends.
- Still others may not have known of Hillel before, and were brought by friends.

Why Does Hillel Attract Students?

- They want community.
- They want to learn and grow.
- Hillel gives students a safe and comfortable place to be with other Jews.
- Hillel helps students stay connected to or enrich their Judaism with lots of Jewish choice.
- For some, it’s a way to maintain Jewish engagement that was strong in high school.
- Hillel helps people “stay Jewish” and figure out how to maintain their Jewish identity as they navigate the transition into adulthood.
- Hillel is welcoming to anyone who wants a Jewish community.
- Hillel re-acquaints some students to a Jewish life from long ago, or introduces them to a Jewish life they never had.
- Some students come for programs; some of those want more variety in the programming.
- The Hillel Director serves an important role in the organization.
- The campus director supports us and models a welcoming attitude.
- Food is Very Important!
 - Best if menu items reflect students’ Jewish experience back home.
 - Snacks all the time are important.
 - Coffee always brewing (especially during tests) would be a huge draw.

Where Does Religion and Ritual Fit In?

- There's a fine line between creating a positive opportunity and turning us off.
- Some students like the opportunity to engage in optional light ritual and study.
- Havdalah can be a happy medium.
- Students who want ritual can find it at Chabad.
- Those who want more of a Reform approach appreciate what Hillel offers.

What About Hillel and Leadership Opportunities?

- Students love being tapped for leadership roles.
- They articulated a broad set of leadership skills that come with student leadership positions.
- They appreciate being supported by professionals and other students.

Is There a Downside?

- When students feel welcome at Hillel, it's wonderful.
- When they don't feel welcome, it is difficult for them.
- * Hillel's not the only game in town and is weak when you don't lead with your strengths.
- * Don't try to do everything - students have many other places to go to get their needs met.
- * Hillel doesn't need to offer resume-writing classes or courses in Jewish history.

* NOTE: these attitudes were strong at CU and DU, not at CSU.

What about the Hillel House? Note: all statements apply to all three Hillel houses

- An impressive building is important to parents, and is nice for students.
- What students really want most a big living room, a place to study, and a place that is "theirs."
- A convenient location is important. But *convenient* for one person is *inconvenient* for another.
- Students will walk a long way if they were going to a place they really want to be.
- They come to programs at the house, but they also use the space to hang out and chill before going somewhere, or just to stop in to get a snack if they are walking past the house.

The Data

Below is raw data from the report submitted on June 18, 2015, by Maggie Miller Consulting.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS – BIG PICTURE

Involvement in Student Organizations:

The students in the focus groups are involved in a variety of student organizations. Many are involved in several different groups. Those who are deeply involved in Hillel leadership in Boulder (and one in Denver) are involved only in that campus organization.

Campus groups...

- *Cultural events board*
- *I'm a student ambassador, which is a tour guide.*
- *I'm in Greek life*

- *I'm in a sorority*
- *Community service stuff with my fraternity*
- *I'm part of Leads Ambassadors, which is with the business school here*
- *I'm active in the Psych Labs around here at DU*
- *I was previously on Clarion staff which is the DU Newspaper.*

More groups and clubs, on and off campus...

- *I am a part of DU Service and Change, as the project volunteer co-chair.*
- *I've been involved with the social justice LLC.*
- *I do Fem International, it helps women in Israel get health education and feminine products*
- *I'm involved in different environmental organizations on campus, Students for Sustainable Food, and help out with the campus gardens.*
- *I was part of a DU Boss Campaign for CAPE, so Center of Advocacy and Peer Empowerment.*
- *I do inter-faith work.*
- *I'm a slam poet, so I'm involved with the poetry community in Denver.*
- *I'm in the psychedelic club*

Theater...

- *Green [] Theater at DU*
- *I am on an improv team*

Sports...

- *I'm a board member for the Back Country Club, which is like a ski and snowboard, backcountry ski and snowboard club. Besides that, I study, and rock climb, and some other stuff.*
- *I'm on the CU cycling team*
- *CU Ultimate Frisbee team*
- *I'm on the recreational Frisbee team.*
- *I do martial arts*
- *I've been on the club gymnastics team since I got here.*
- *Club soccer player*
- *DU Grilling Society*

Jobs...

- *I was a resident assistant last year; I'll be the desk manager next year.*
- *I work at the residence halls as a desk assistant.*
- *I work in the Psych Lab.*

Jewish organizations...

- *I have a job as a Sunday school teacher working at Har HaShem Sunday school*
- *I'm pretty involved with my fraternity. I'm in a chair position and I was on the executive board. Besides that, I don't know, if there's any Jewish spin on it, I'm probably involved.*
- *Alpha Epsilon Pi.*
- *I frequent the Israel Political Action Committee.*
- *I also am involved in Chabad*
- *Never Again, which is the Holocaust and Genocide Awareness Group*

...and Hillel.

- *I do a lot at Hillel*
- *I've been involved in Hillel since the beginning of my freshman year. I joined the board at the first opportunity to do so my freshman year, and I've been on board since.*
- *I'm super involved here. That's pretty much the only campus group.*
- *It's actually the only organization I'm involved with.*
- *Yeah, I'm on the board of Hillel and that's pretty much all the organizations I'm involved in.*
- *This [Hillel] is really the only organization that I'm closely involved in at Boulder.*
- *I'm on the board of National Hospitality Society for Minorities, which I'm quitting. [I'm on the special events DPB board and next year I'm going to quit both of those because I want to devote my time to Hillel and get a job.*

How Do Students Get Involved in Campus Clubs and Organizations?

They seek it out, or friends bring them.

- *My first semester I didn't have any friends. I was like by myself and I was like, "I don't want to meet new people. It's scary." **So I forced myself to look up clubs** and then it said [the one I ended up joining was] a new club, so it was less intimidating to go in because I knew people wouldn't already be super close with each other.*
- *I feel like **every single organization I'm in I ended up involved in by accident.** My friends would be like, "Oh yeah, I'm going here tonight. You should come with me." I'd be like, "Yeah, all right," and then I'd end up really liking what it was because obviously I share the same interests as the people I'm friends with, and would end up being really super involved.*

What Do They Want to Get Out of Their Experience?

They want community, to learn and grow, to gain experience and resume content, and to gain general satisfaction and appreciation.

- *You have, as you graduate from high school, you have who you are right now. You go to college, you look for clubs, you're like, "Oh, this is like me. I have interest in this and that." **You join the club, and then that club gives back to you that your value system helps you grow more.***
- *[Facilitator: What do you want out of your involvement in a student organization?]*
 - To have a sense of community...
 - Friends
 - Community
 - *A sense of community because there's nothing like seeing familiar faces on a huge campus.*
 - To learn and grow...
 - *An all-around perspective.*
 - **I want to learn** how to back country ski and know all the dangers of that. I also want to be better at rock climbing. Those are why I joined those 2 clubs. Stayed active in them. They take me on trips and show me the ropes.
 - *In my life, I **want to be active and I want to do as much as I can**, and experience basically encompasses me doing stuff. I think that's cool, to be able to say, "Yeah, I was involved in Hillel" and "Yeah, I was in psychedelic club, yeah, I was playing Frisbee" instead of saying "Yeah, I just kind of sat on my ass all through college," you know?*
 - To gain experience and resume content...
 - Experience

- Resume building
- Impressive points on a resume. Probably leadership experience, more specifically.
- Obviously **in the work world, it's very important that you don't just do school and you show that you have other interests and take leadership roles like help out in the community or something like that...**
- Being a business student, it's always about building your resume, so just to be able to say that you've been in a leadership position. You know how to work with other people, maybe not all the time it'll be agreeable, but you know how to manage certain situations, negative and positive and it's just ... It shows that you know how to function in different areas and not just where you're comfortable.

Satisfaction and appreciation.

- Satisfaction.
- It seemed like training people in CPR and first aid was a relatively easy thing to get licensed for, and it seemed like something really valuable to give back, so I felt like for what I ... **for putting time into it, I would get a lot out of it.**
- Results...
- ..I like results, especially for sports, like, you don't practice so you can just play. **You practice so that you can do really well and accomplish something.**
- Appreciation. Raising money for philanthropies and stuff like that, I love doing that kind of stuff because I think it's for a great cause, but **I want it to be recognized that we're doing good** and it's not just about PR for the Greek system in general and stuff like that.

HOW ABOUT HILLEL?

How Did Students Learn About Hillel?

Some students seek it out in their college search. Parents influenced others. Others knew about it and were brought by friends. Others may not have known of Hillel before, and were brought by friends.

- [Facilitator to high school students: I know you are living the whole college search right now; have you found yourself asking questions about getting involved Jewishly?]
 - For me it's a really big part. Usually, during the tour if they don't point out the Hillel house I'll ask if they have one or the percentage of Jewish people there, how active they are. I know that, for me, because **NFTY has played such a big part in my life that I want there to be something for me to continue.** I know at first I was really concerned about Macalester because they don't have Hillel, but then I found out that they have the Minnesota Jewish Organization or something that was the equivalent. Just making sure that it's somehow represented on campus, I think that's really important to me.
 - I have a college counselor and, so, she knows that Jewish life and how important Judaism is to me and, so, she's been working with me to **make sure that the schools I'm looking at they do have Hillel** on campus and it's actually an active Hillel instead of one that not a lot of people go to. Making sure there's just opportunities to get involved in Jewish life.
- I actually came to Hillel just because **my mom and my grandparents were forcing me** to, and then I ended up making friends here.
- I celebrate Shabbat back home so **[my parents] were like: "Okay, come here for a good meal every Friday."** When **[my family]** dropped me off for the first day. We came here and Hanan was here, the guy in charge. **[My parents]** just met him and were like: "Yeah, come to Friday night dinners."

- *I heard about Hillel through some friends that I had. I grew up Jewish and I grew up involved in the Jewish community, and **when I found out some of my friends were coming to CU as well, and heard that they were going to Hillel, that inspired me** to kind of take the initiative and come to the first Hillel event and be with them, experience that.*
- *I started coming because [a students leader in Hillel] was actually my friend in the dorm. **She's the one that introduced me to Hillel** and was the first person when I came here.*

Hillel Gives Students a Safe and Comfortable Place to Be With Other Jews

- *It's a **home away from home** when you're on a college campus.*
- *I just felt like it was easier to get involved in the Jewish community because immediately, **right off the bat, you have something in common.** You were probably raised in a similar way.*
- *The reason why I like hanging out at Hillel and why I come to Hillel a lot is because **I'm surrounded by a bunch of people who have the same values as me** and just have the same mindset and understand things that my non-Jewish friends just don't understand at all.*
- *It's a safe community to be Jewish in, which is important. [Facilitator: Can you elaborate on what it means to be safe?] So, I'm sure you've heard, on the news, there's always a lot of anti-Semitic facts and stuff happening, and historically, there's been a lot of hatred towards the Jewish people, and a lot of times that can turn people off to Judaism, but coming to Hillel, I can be Jewish and not have to worry about what people think. **People here aren't going to make Jew jokes.** If I say like, "Oh, I want to save some money," they're like, "Oh, is that because you're Jewish?" Seriously, my friends outside of Hillel will say that stuff and it's cool to be here and not be subjected to that kind of hatred.*
- *[Facilitator to high school students: I've had college students tell me that it is sometimes it's just relaxing to be with other Jews. You don't have to explain things. Talk to me about how that makes sense or doesn't make sense to you. Project yourself onto a college campus and what about that would be important or not.]*
 - *I know that for me being Jewish is a really big part of my life and, so, **whenever I meet somebody else who's Jewish it's like you can automatically relate regardless of how Jewish or not they are.** Whenever you're trying to explain things, like what NFTY is or an event or anything like that, it's so difficult when the person's not Jewish or you don't talk to them all the time about it, so they basically feel like they're Jewish and, so, as soon as you meet another Jewish person they're like, "I'm on a Hillel with a bunch of other Jews."*
 - *I think that since the Jewish community is a fairly small community I think that **we automatically just have this connection with each other where we're just like, "Oh, you're Jewish. Oh, my gosh, so am I."** It's just something ... a conversation starter and then you can talk about youth groups and, so, it just gives you common ground to talk about which I think is important in college.*

Hillel helps students stay connected to or enrich their Judaism with lots of choice.

For some, it's a way to maintain Jewish engagement that was strong in high school.

- *I got involved in Hillel because my belief has been very active in my Jewish Community. I was part of the youth group in high school and had been going to camp and basically **Judaism has been a big part of my life, so when I got to college I figured, I wanted to still be active in that Jewish community.** Especially as a freshman in college from a different state, and didn't know anyone. It was just a good way to get to know more people and continue that Jewish journey.*

- *I got involved in Hillel because I grew up in a pretty Jewish area and most of my friends in high school were Jewish and **always promised myself I would join Hillel** because I knew moving to Colorado that I would be around a ton of Jews.*
- *I engaged with my Jewish identity in high school in my youth group in NFTY, so **this was the natural segue**. I've been involved in the community and continuing to engage with that. Sort of a section of who I am. It's a vibrant community and I enjoy those type of communities and so I stuck with it Hillel helps people "stay Jewish" and figure out how to maintain their Jewish identity as they navigate the transition into adulthood.*
- *[Hillel] is basically keeping me Jewish. It's giving me a reminder that I am Jewish and that I was raised Jewish. If I didn't come to Hillel, I probably wouldn't even do anything Jewish-wise, Judaism-wise. I would not try and keep Shabbat, I wouldn't try to even keep kosher. It's basically reminding me of my heritage and where I've come from.*
- *I'm raised in a reformed home but a very culturally Jewish ... I think that I was part of BBYO growing up or in high school and then coming here I just wouldn't have felt the same if I didn't have that be a part of my life because it's been such a big part throughout my entire life, it's a part of who I am. Hillel plays that role in making part of my identity because **if I didn't have Hillel I probably wouldn't have all of my identity** if that makes any sense, what's so ever.*
- *[Hillel] has helped me accept that **there will always be a way, if I let there be a way, to maintain my Jewish identity** and I definitely credit a lot of my continuity in college [to Hillel].*
- ***This whole foundation set for us when we were growing up** and at least for me, the transition to college and going into being an adult, I wasn't really sure how I was going to, I wanted to carry what I had as a kid into my adult life because I loved it and think it was a great foundation. **I wasn't really sure how I was going to do that in college** and I think whatever you want to do, you can do here. **You can be as involved as you want to be.** You can go to high holidays if you'd like to and go to Shabbat if you'd like to. It's just an awesome way to transitioning out of state or just to college in general, is a little uncomfortable and just to **carry that part of you and have Hillel be able to facilitate that** for you is awesome.*
- *For me personally, Hillel was the next step. I've grown up Jewish and I did the religious school classes. I had my bar mitzvah, I got confirmed. Then **there's college and that's when it was really on me to, I guess, quote, unquote, "be Jewish."** It's been a big part of my personal identity to ... I draw a lot from the morals of Judaism and that is kind of how I live my life, and **coming to Hillel helped me express that the way I want to.** It's a very personalized experience, like [another student] was saying. It's what you make of it at this point. That's what I like about it.*

Hillel re-acquaints some students with Jewish life from long ago; for others Hillel introduces them to a Jewish life they never had.

- *I got involved in Hillel because I had some friends that were involved in it and they finally dragged me out here. **It nice to be back involved with some Jewish people. I haven't done that since I was a kid.***
- *[I'm] from the South. At home there was no Jewish community at all, so **coming to a big university gave me an opportunity to be involved with something that I couldn't do when I was down there.***
- ***My father is Jewish but also wasn't raised in a very Jewish way.** It's always been more of a cultural aspect in life, and not really just ...[So] **for me personally, not being raised Jewish, as many people who attend Hillel events are, I think it's been really eye opening.** Not so much in a religious sense, but cultural...being Jewish is really interesting. It's a part of myself that I always wanted to*

get involved with but never really had a chance because my hometown is not populated by many Jews and so this has been a really awesome opportunity to explore that.

- *[Not heard: Well I'm like Jewish, but] I'm not Jewish at all, and I come here pretty much because I like the community. I had Jewish friends in high school. **I fit in with Jewish people, and it also makes my mom happy**, so- [Facilitator: Wait, hold on. You said you're not Jewish, but it makes your mom happy?] Like, I'm Jewish. [Facilitator: Oh, I get it.] But I don't really practice it at all.*

Hillel is welcoming to anyone who wants a Jewish community.

- *It's kind of different for me because I'm not Jewish. I mean, I want to be Jewish. My entire life, my best friend of 14 years is Jewish, so I've done all the holidays and stuff with her and then for the past 3 years I worked at a Jewish summer camp, so I've been immersed in the culture for a while, but it's not something I was raised with. I can't convert because of my family, so it's just ... **I like coming here if not to renew my Judaism because I'm not Jewish, but it's good to hold onto something that is a nice dream.***

When students feel welcome at Hillel, it's wonderful. When they don't feel welcome, it is difficult for them.

- *I walked into the door and I'm a scared little freshman. I was like, "great, **I'm so glad this kind of community exists on campus because it's so welcoming** and I don't know anyone and it's a great place to meet people and make my, make those connections, and feel comfortable in that scary freshman situation."*
- *I came to the first dinner, first year orientation and kind of **had a negative experience**, came back and **had another negative experience and just never really came back** until this year when Jamie started to nudge at me. Jamie is pretty cool so I started coming because she really encouraged me and I found some cool people here, now as I'm ready to graduate. [One of the other students tonight] talked about meeting her friends at Hebrew class, and I skipped first year Hebrew, and I was in second year Hebrew with four girls who were on the Hillel board but who all didn't really reach out to me as a friend. **They were the kids who I saw in class who then completely ignored me when I came to Hillel.** I can list at least four other folks who came with me to those dinners and didn't find it [welcoming].*

(A Note About Greek Life and Jewish Studies)

There is quite a bit of crossover on both campuses between Hillel and Greek life, and there is also a significant amount of crossover at CU between Hillel and Jewish Studies. While no one addressed this directly, it seems obvious that a student who is not in these overlapping organizations might need some extra welcoming and engagement.)

ASPECTS OF HILLEL

Location

Of course a convenient location is important. But at CU, a convenient location for one person is inconvenient for another.

- *[At DU] Last year my friends and I came here every weekend. **Before or after a party even, to use this to all hang out and chill** before we were going somewhere. We have a few other friends that live the opposite direction down the street, and so sometimes if we are walking home from their house we just stop here to get a snack.*

- *[At CU] It's really like 50% of people live on the hill and 50% of people live on this side, so either way you're going to make people unhappy.*
- *[At CU] In regards to where your club is actually set up, the actual location is like, yeah, it would be nice if it was convenient, but if I'm dedicated to that club, I'll go wherever the hell it is.*

Amenities and Updated-ness

If possible, find the money to update the CU Hillel House a bit, and increase its curb appeal. It is probably impossible to supply the kinds of amenities that CU Chabad has, but some amenities may be affordable.

- *[At CU] The building in and of itself... It's a really old building. It doesn't have the upkeep. There's always things falling apart, so, and that's a problem we've addressed a lot.*
- *[At CU] It's definitely like an old building, but it gets the job done. We're able to use it, and even though it may not be the best building, upkeep wise, it's still homey and everybody feels comfortable here.*
- *[At CU] [Chabad] is decked out, all kinds of crazy things to do and coffee and all this ridiculousness. It's like decadent to a point, where I don't understand why they spent so much money on it. At the same time it's super accessible for me to do anything that I could want to do like have space for me to do homework or play an X-box on a 80 inch television. You know what I mean? It's super accessible and super convenient.*
- *[Facilitator at CU: What would you like to see in a Hillel house,?]*
 - *For sure coffee...*
 - *...Yeah, coffee would be awesome...*
 - *...And if they had books. Yeah, I think if there was like a separate room to study in and there's coffee. And another room to hang out, so people could chill.*
- *[At DU] My house was on the complete opposite side of campus and so, all my classes are over here. Especially for students who live off campus, this is can be a home base for us. I'm not someone who comes to Shabbat dinners every Friday night and I'm still using it. There's always food in the fridge, so I know, I forgot to pack a lunch today, I can grab a snack at Hillel, sit, there's wi-fi, do my homework.*
- *[Facilitator at DU] What are the infrastructure pieces that make this a place to be, besides location?]*
WiFi. The couches. The TV. Food.
- *[From a high school student at DU] One important thing to have is a mix between the college atmosphere, but then also have all the different Jewish values that we have here. There are couches over there, for example, but then there's also a menorah and different things about Israel and that stuff. I think it's important that there's also the Jewish aspect. Everywhere you walk around mezuzahs everywhere and stuff.*

Food is Very Important!

The more that the menu items can reflect students' Jewish experience back home, the better. Complaints weren't about the quality of the food, they were about the choice of menu.

- *[At CU] One of my biggest complaints about Hillel is that the food is not traditional Jewish food at all. Chabad, they have brisket, I'm pretty sure, on Passover. That's a huge pull for me, because I'm not home for Passover. I miss the food, I miss the brisket. Hillel just sits on their ass honestly. There's no traditional food here. We have lasagna. On the holidays I should want to come here and have traditional Jewish holiday food...*

- *[At CU] That's a big aspect about how I feel like it makes me feel at home. **The food at Chabad reminds me of my mom's cooking.** Then, I don't know, for Rosh Hashanah on like the second night here they had pizza. I was kind of put off by that. Because it's the second night, and you should be having brisket.*
- *[At DU] When Hillel and I didn't click so much, my friend was really involved with Chabad, so I started going to Chabad every week and the reason I was going to Chabad was because I had friends there, and I made friends there and it felt warm. **My family did Friday night dinners with chicken and rice and broccoli every Friday. The food at Chabad felt more comfortable, the candles, the [].** The whole thing felt more comfortable in that sense.*

Variety in Programming

Some students want more variety in the programming.

- ***We need more of a variety of things** because right now, it's primarily dinner and that's what Hillel's known for, but a lot of what [one student leader] was doing here last year was expand events like Rock-con [rock climbing?] or like broom ball. You know, different types of stuff. [What are some other examples of the kinds of variety that you might want?] Last year, we did a winter retreat where we go [to the mountains] for people who want to ski or snowboard or tubing or stuff like that and hang out, like a weekend. We've done that. We've done hikes. We've done ice cream socials, we are going to eventually do a broom ball. We've done holiday parties.*
- *There's an ice cream social. We go ice skating...I think there was something here during finals maybe...**We do a lot of structured events at the beginning of a semester.** It's [a] try and people to come. **Then it tapers off, and by the end of the semester we're doing nothing but our dinners.** Kind of like we start of strong every semester, and then we're like, mmmm. Everybody should keep up the structured events more throughout the semester, instead of just having like: "Welcome to Hillel, we're going to do all this." Then all of the sudden like: "Just kidding, we don't actually do that."*

Where Does Religion and Ritual Fit in?

There's a fine line between creating a positive opportunity for students to engage in optional light ritual and study (which some students would like), and turning them off. Havdalah can be a happy medium.

- ***"All right, we're going to have dinner and have an hour or Torah study"...** That would be a major turn-off. Something like, every once or twice a month, some weekend afternoon, like, "Hey, we'll talk about some lesson today" or do something like that, so it's totally optional. You don't have to go to it, but just so that there is a place to learn or something like that. I'm talking about literally just **"What is the Torah portion this week, and what are we going through and how does that relate to what we're going through?"** [That would be good.] Not so that we push on anybody. I know a little bit last year, that some people did services before on Friday. **Just kind of a casual service, and that, I think that was cool for some people to be more involved in terms of Judaism. I also think it would be kind of cool if maybe once a month, Hillel sponsored a Havdalah event. It's optional and you can go if you want to, and it would be cool to just be more in touch with the Jewish side.***
- *If Hillel was like: "Oh, **we're going to meet every week to discuss Judaism** or something..." I'd be less likely to go. As opposed to if they said, "Let's just go hangout or something."*

- *I like that you can come and it's not like "You have to learn this, you have to talk about this." **It's just a place that we can come and kind of take a little break and hang out with friends.** I mean, there's like, **you do the blessing, and then there's dinner, and then you leave.***
- *I would go to Wednesday night and Sunday services to hang out with my friends, but my Jewish, specifically my Jewish friends. That continues on here with our Friday night's dinner. There's not so, speaking candidly, there's not that much of a religious side I think. **We don't do Shabbat services, we do, do the prayers, but that's about it. I'm still engaged with the Jewish people and so that's what the continuity has been for me.***

About Leadership Opportunities

Students have appreciated being tapped for leadership roles in Hillel and being supported in those roles. They articulated a broad set of leadership skills that come with any student leadership position.

- *For both of the student organizations I'm in, so Hillel as well as [my other club], I didn't go into either of the student groups thinking I was going to become a part of the leadership. It was more after I have already been in both of them for a semester, there were things that I thought could use improvement. **At Hillel, I wasn't even planning on being on the board...I had mentioned that we should do events other than dinners.** Like, other special events outside of what we normally do, and basically [Hanan] was like, "Oh cool. **You do it then. You plan it.**" I was like, "Okay." That's how [my name]-The-Coordinator came to be.*
- *[Facilitator: How did you get into leadership positions, what leadership skills you are developing, and what support you are getting?]*
 - *I was reached out by our current president, one of the presidents and she asked me if I wanted to join board because **I'm very interested in marketing** so I handle all the marketing for events.*
 - *The chair position that I have right now, I didn't even sign up for it. I signed up for other ones and it's like: "We think you'd be good at this one." That's the thing, **there is definitely a sense of pushing and saying "We think you'd be good at this so we want to pick you for this."** There's definitely some guidance and helpfully pushing along the right path.*
 - ***You always have a support system** and other people that you could have. Help you out and stuff.*
 - ***Knowing when to ask for help.** I remember doing an activity whenever we were kind of joining the board that was all about like, if anytime you're hesitant it's all about being an open community.*
 - ***Logistics and event planning.** Then also being able to direct people. With confidence, I guess.*
 - ***Being able to work with people.** Like organizations and it's never a board of one, it's a board like 10. You have to agree on something.*
 - ***It's also about flexibility,** like plans change at the last minute a lot. You kind of go with the flow and figure out what to do.*
 - *There's also a big part of how you act when you are a leader. Not even in leadership situations. About **holding yourself accountable.** I was vice president of my fraternity for a semester. If you're going to say certain thing, you really have to back it up with the way that you act. You have to lead by example, I guess.*

The Hillel Director serves an important role in the organization, in terms of supporting student leaders and modeling a welcoming attitude.

- *I think a facilitator is necessary, or director, something along those lines, that ... Without having someone to push you in the quote, unquote "right direction," there's a lot of room for error or for chaos.*
- *[Our director] is just very real and very concerned with making sure that folks from all different, both religious and cultural and student backgrounds are included. There are a lot of folks at this table who are involved with Greek life. I'm not involved with Greek life and so this school is very siloed. Making sure that folks who, of all different student backgrounds, cultural backgrounds, religious backgrounds are welcomed and wanted and goes up to you and says "hello."*

Context

In Boulder, Hillel is Not the Only Game In Town.

Students have many ways to get their needs, from resume-writing to learning about Jewish history.

- *You can go to the business school and they have workshops and stuff like that to build, like, learn how to write a resume.*
- *There's a bunch of classes offered here on campus. If you want to learn about the history of the Jews at any point in time, you can learn about it.*
- *I feel like Judaism is more than one organization. It shouldn't be like, "if you're Jewish you go to Hillel," kind of thing.*
- *There's like a whole Jewish studies program, the Israel support [organization].*
- *[And] fraternities. There's also the JCC here in Boulder, and they're making a new community center.*
- *The local temples.*
- *Hillel can definitely open the door just because there's opportunities. It's like you're kind of just out there in the Jewish community and make you want to expand and, if you want to get more in touch with that, Hillel's a good place to start. For me, I joined A Phi because I came to Hillel one weekend.*

Hillel and Chabad

Students who want ritual have to choose between Hillel and Chabad. Some of them want the ritual that Chabad brings but with the Reform approach that Hillel offers.

- *We're not the most religious type of people at this table, and I think we're more here for the community, less of the whole rules and regulations of Judaism. We were all raised being Jewish and it was more like a culture thing, less of a religion thing. I feel like Hillel kind of gives that culture, where at Chabad it's more of that religion...*
- *...I think also the ideologies are very different. Chabad is from an Orthodox point of view.*
- *...Hillel is reformed. With a touch of "do whatever."*
- *I would be more likely to come hang out [at Hillel] if there was a more structured event that I could engage more religiously. [Chabad] meet my needs spiritually. [But] Chabad is more religious than I want to be. [Hillel] is the community that's probably a little more on my end of the spectrum of how I feel religiously.*
- *I grew up in a pretty traditional home. I like coming here for the people and I don't want to be that religious as Chabad. I do like the Judaism and the structure that they have [at Chabad], so that's why I like going there so much.*
- *They [Chabad] do more with the holidays I feel like, than Hillel and I just like the more traditional aspect of Chabad. [And] there is a basketball courts...*

- ...*Oh yeah, there is a basketball court. I do use that basketball court.*
- *I was raised in a conservative Jewish household...at the beginning of college it was really hard for me not having any sort of middle ground. **It was the very reformed Hillel and then the really religious Chabad.** It was hard for me to ... I was very involved in Hillel more than Chabad from the very beginning but it was hard for me too accept that there really wasn't the conservative option as much.*

BRIEF CONCLUDING THOUGHTS FROM MAGGIE

Not having the bigger picture that Daniel brings, my sense from these focus groups is that Hillel should stick to the following: Be a welcoming place for Jewish students and their friends to hang out (that is, drink coffee, sit on sofas, use the internet, eat snacks), do fun activities (e.g., ice cream socials, broomball, hikes), have Friday night dinners with very light ritual and very traditional food, offer extremely light optional personally relevant Torah study, and offer programming around Havdalah. And of course, continue offer leadership opportunities and support the students in those positions.