

But for me, to be an Israel Fellow is not only the way to strengthen a connection of American students to Israel. This is also the way to understand who they are, the American Jews. In what ways we are different, in what ways we are the same, and how, in the future, we will continue to build up our common culture and history. This position helps me to understand that in Israel, we have to be attentive to what happens with Jews in the world. We must try to create a future of Israel according to a vision of all the Jews over the world, not only according to the Israeli vision. After all, Israel belongs to all of us. This is probably the main sentence I would like to transfer to our students.

Ivan Goncharenko is the Israel Fellow at Hillel at Virginia Tech, second year. Ivan was born in Ukraine. His family moved to Israel when he was 10 years old. He studied International Relations and Middle East Studies at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Ivan served in the elite Israeli K-9 Unit, as a combatant and an NCO (non-commissioned officer).

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Daniel Knecht · a year ago

Excellent article on bridging cultural gaps and producing definite results in an increasingly distracted world with many competing interests. Taking the time to reach out and spend time with people in order to help is somewhat rare these days, Ivon, Sue, and the entire Hillel group are heard loud and clear by their actions not just what they hope or believe. Congrats on all their positive hard work and efforts.

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