



Hillel receives University and Community Partnership Award

BLACKSBURG, Va., Feb. 1, 2007 – Hillel at Virginia Tech, a foundation for Jewish life which offers students the means to explore and celebrate their Jewish identity in a dynamic and comfortable environment, was honored with a University and Community Partnerships Award at the international organization's 2006 Professional Staff Conference in Baltimore in December.

Hillel at Virginia Tech (<http://www.hillel.org.vt.edu/v2/>) was recognized for its presence on the university's campus as a value-added partner in enhancing student life at the university. Due to the success of sponsored events, including an evening with Elie Weisel, a recent concert featuring Matisyahu, and sponsorship of the Jewish Cinema South, Hillel has been recognized as an organization that can deliver and one that enriches both the campus and the local Jewish community.

Last year, the Hillel Program Center received Virginia Tech's "Student Organization of the Year" award.

"Much of the success of Hillel is due to the efforts of Sue Kurtz, the executive director," said Debbie Shapiro, senior associate for accreditation at the Hillel Shusterman International Center. "She is a risk-taker; and her passion, determination, and creativity have energized Hillel and set the path for its significant growth. Since she began working to build the Hillel nearly three years ago, there has been dramatic growth and receipt of significant programmatic funds from the university. The relationships that she has built with the students and the administration have helped Hillel to flourish in a very short time."

In the nomination process, Hillel organizations were asked to demonstrate that they have influenced their school's culture through multiple and diverse value-added alliances with student groups, key university departments and offices, and parents and alumni. Hillels were also asked to demonstrate a financial consequence of their partnership--that is, the Hillels that were competitive for this reward were able to illustrate that their strategic partnerships and their contribution to university life have resulted in relationships with university trustees, a symbiotic collaboration with the development department, and receipt of the university's student life funds.

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