



THE TALENTS ENTRUSTED TO OUR CARE

The Campaign for Muhlenberg College



L'Dor V'Dor

(From Generation to Generation)

A Plan for the Next Generation of Muhlenberg College Hillel

The history of Jewish life at Muhlenberg College is rich and unique. A college of the Lutheran Church, Muhlenberg is proud that at no point in its history was there a "quota" on the number of Jewish students. At times when other academic institutions openly discriminated against Jewish students, Muhlenberg's religious values fostered not only tolerance but an embrace of all students.

That history has created the unique Jewish community that exists at Muhlenberg College today.

About Jewish life at Muhlenberg today:

- Muhlenberg has the only fully accredited Hillel Foundation at a small liberal arts college in America.
- Our Jewish population is the 9th highest, by percentage, in the country. Jewish students represent approximately 34% of the Muhlenberg student body.
- In the past 20 years, there has been a 300% growth in the number of Jewish students at the College.
- This trend has grown even stronger recently with a 49% increase in Jews over just the last four years.
- Jewish students from across the country are increasingly choosing Muhlenberg for their undergraduate education because of the strength of its Hillel. Our young leaders began their leadership as regional and national leaders of our community's best youth groups – BBYO, NFTY, USY, NCSY.
- Muhlenberg College is attracting students from the best Jewish high schools in the country. In response to student concern, the College is in the process of adding fully-supervised kosher kitchens to its renovated student union.
- Participation in Hillel is at an all-time high. Weekly Shabbat Dinners routinely have more than 200 participants.



About the Hillel staff at Muhlenberg College:

- In response to increased student participation, Hillel began this academic year with double the number of people on staff as last year.
- Muhlenberg's Hillel Director Patti Mittleman, now in her 20th year at the College, has been honored with every award given by Hillel International and with every award given by Muhlenberg College to its student life professionals. She was also awarded AIPAC's 2008 "Ally of the Year" award.

About the Muhlenberg College administration:

- Muhlenberg's President Randy Helm was honored by Israel Bonds with its 2008 "Builder of Israel" award for his unprecedented support for Jewish life on campus.
- President Helm was a participant in the 2005 UJC/JCPA college presidents' mission to Israel.
- Since coming to Muhlenberg in 2003, President Helm has been an unparalleled supporter of Jewish life on campus.
- Provost Marjorie Hass P'11 has been a board member of Hillel since 1993 and has been an invited speaker at Hillel International conferences.
- Rev. Peter Bredlau, College Chaplain, and Dean Karen Green, Vice President of Student Affairs, are regular participants in Hillel events.



Hillel at Muhlenberg College now faces an extraordinary challenge. Rather than worrying about how to entice young Jews to participate in Jewish life, the Muhlenberg Hillel staff spends their time concerned with how to accommodate the overwhelming numbers of students who flock to its programs. Many weeks the number of students who want to participate in Shabbat Dinner far exceeds the numbers who can fit in the existing Hillel House. Currently, students hold religious services in attics and eat Shabbat Dinner on every available surface. *Sadly, but routinely, some students turn away because it is simply too crowded.*



Fortunately, the administration of Muhlenberg College understands that it is intolerable to have students who want to participate in Jewish campus life discouraged because of the limitations of the current Hillel House. Together with Hillel staff and student leadership, the College administration has created a vision for a renovation and expansion of the existing Hillel House that incorporates a magnificent addition including a Shabbat Dinner Hall with seating for over 300, a dedicated sanctuary, an institutional kitchen, additional student and staff office space and a student-designed lounge. The total project is estimated to cost approximately \$3.5 million, not including additional academic space that is part of the design.

Commitment to this important project is growing each day. In February 2008, a fully renovated Rhoda Plum Memorial Kitchen was named. Muhlenberg College's dedication of over \$600,000 in funding allowed upgrades of existing space to begin in summer 2008. We began the school year with a \$1 million challenge gift from a Muhlenberg family. Momentum is building daily.

Due to the pressing need for additional space to serve our students, this project is on a fast-track schedule, but construction cannot begin until the necessary funds have been committed. We hope to receive adequate commitments from members of the Muhlenberg community by April, so that we can break ground this summer.

It is anticipated that, once operational, these newly renovated spaces will require an additional \$88,000 in annual operating and maintenance costs. We hope donors will also consider endowment gifts dedicated to the maintenance and operation of the expanded, renovated Muhlenberg Hillel House.

The next generation of Jewish leaders is on the Muhlenberg College campus. They need your investment in their future today.

