

Collection #
M 1192
OM 0594

HILLEL FOUNDATION AT PURDUE UNIVERSITY RECORDS, CA. 1966-98

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Processed by

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 2 manuscript boxes, 1 oversize manuscript folder, 2 folders photographs

COLLECTION DATES: ca. 1966-98

PROVENANCE: Susan Prohofsky, West Lafayette, IN

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS: M 0878 Hillel Foundation at Purdue University

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2005.0340

NOTES: This forms part of the records of the Indiana Jewish Historical Society Collection.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

Hillel, a campus organization for Jewish college students, was founded in 1923 at the University of Illinois in Urbana Champaign, and began to expand nationwide with the support of B'nai B'rith in 1924. Its purpose is to offer a broad variety of Jewish-related social, cultural, and religious activities to all Jewish students, bringing together and providing for the needs of students of different religious and ethnic backgrounds. In September 1939, the "Purdue Union of Jewish Youth" in West Lafayette, Indiana, became an official chapter of the Hillel organization. In 1951, Purdue Hillel moved into a new building at 912 State Street, where it remains today. In 1955 Rabbi Gerald (Gedalyah) Engel became the Director of Hillel at Purdue. Most of the collection dates from Rabbi Engel's tenure as Hillel Director and Director Emeritus. In addition to the student activities, Hillel became involved in the larger community with two significant projects. The first, the Committee for Human Rights in the Soviet Union, was founded to campaign on behalf of refuseniks in the Soviet Union. Engel and others began writing letters in the early 1970s and in 1977 formed an ecumenical committee to work for the release of specific refuseniks. The second project, the Greater Lafayette Holocaust Remembrance Committee, was founded in 1981 at the request of the mayors of Lafayette and West Lafayette to conduct an annual educational conference relating to the Holocaust. The committee is not an official Hillel organization, but Hillel provides sponsorship, meeting space, and many committee members.

Sources:

Materials in the collection

www.purduehillel.org

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection fills in some gaps of the other Hillel Foundation at Purdue University (M 0878) records. The collection is representative of the political and social activism undertaken by Hillel and other community members in the Lafayette area, mostly from the 1970s-1990s. Most of the items in the collection are related to the Committee for Human Rights in the Soviet Union and the Greater Lafayette Holocaust Remembrance Committee. In addition, there are two folders of correspondence documenting a Purdue Admissions Policy enacted in the late 1960s that capped the number of students admitted from the New York City area, and Hillel and other Jewish alumni, students and faculty felt as though the policy was discriminatory to Jews.

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