

Third Annual National Hillel Basketball Tournament to be Held at University of Maryland on April 12t

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Just a few days after the NCAA Men's and Women's college basketball championships will have been completed, the University of Maryland Hillel will host the third annual National Hillel Basketball Tournament to determine the best Jewish college basketball team in the country. Over the past two years, this non-profit, student-organized initiative has quickly become the largest inter-collegiate basketball tournament for Jewish students and has raised crucial funds to support Jewish life on campuses across the United States. This year's tournament will attract over 1,200 participants including 300 players from over 20 universities.

The tournament embodies a dynamic intersection between competitive basketball and Jewish camaraderie. Encompassing exciting and fierce events on the court, the tournament offers students a chance to make friends, spend a weekend at one of the most vibrant Jewish campus communities, and, of course, play basketball.

This year's tournament has been generously sponsored by Jonathan and Dina Leader, prominent New York-based philanthropists, with other sponsors including BodyArmor and Klipped Kippas.

Unique to this year's event is the addition of celebrity guest speakers throughout the weekend. Kicking off the tournament, the athletes will be addressed with a special video message from NBA Commissioner David Stern, who is also Jewish, and during the day Saturday ESPN's The Sports Reporters Host Andy Pollin will address the athletes at a tournament-wide luncheon.

The three-day long festivities will formally kick off on Friday night, with Shabbat Services and dinner for over 500 students on the floor of the Ritchie Coliseum, the practice facility for the Maryland Terrapins basketball team.

The first round tournament games will begin Saturday evening, and continue into Sunday morning, at University of Maryland's Reckord Armory and Ritchie Coliseum. Each team will play in three preliminary games and then move into the single-elimination tournament bracket. No word yet on whether the NCAA men's and women's champions will face the Hillel champion afterward.

The University of Maryland Hillel will be providing meals, a full Shabbat experience, and visiting teams will stay with University of Maryland students in what promises to be the best year in tournament history.

Participating Schools:

Baruch College, Barnard College, Boston University, Brandeis University, Columbia University, Cornell University, Goucher College, University of Maryland, New York University, Queens College, RIETS, Rider University, Rutgers University, Syracuse University, UMass Amherst, University of Wisconsin, Washington University in St. Louis, Yeshiva University, Stern College for Women, Golden Gate University.

About University of Maryland Hillel

University of Maryland, College Park is home to more than 6,500 Jewish undergrad and graduate students. Maryland Hillel is at the core of a vibrant Jewish community at one of the largest and most Jewishly diverse campuses in the country. Hillel supports over 40 student organizations, including four religious communities, four a'cappella groups, Israel advocacy and educational programming and multiple community service initiatives. Hillel serves a pluralistic community of over 6,500 students and in the course of a year connects with more than 3,500 students.

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