

JANUARY, 2024

# GOPHER REPORT



## STUCK ON OCTOBER 7TH

In response to the crisis in Israel, Chabad U of M has witnessed a surge in student activism, including delegations to rallies in St. Paul and D.C. Students are embracing their Jewish identity with over 70 mezuzah installations and personal commitments like lighting Shabbat candles. The demand for our "Outsmarting Antisemitism" course reflects a strong desire for education and awareness. Chabad stands behind its students, providing support and fostering Jewish unity, resilience, and pride in these challenging times.



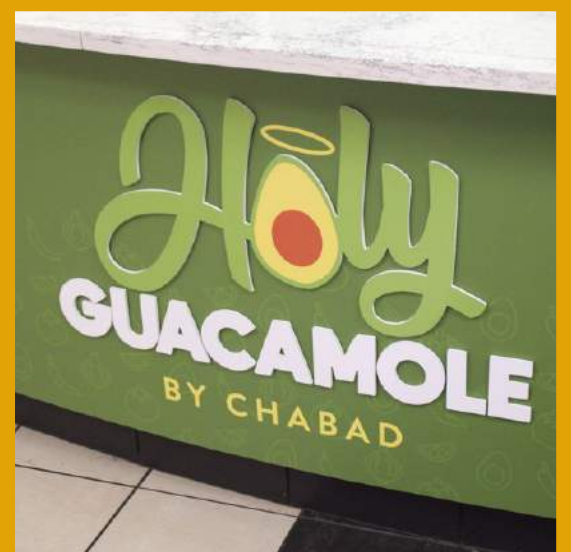
# TACOS WITH A PURPOSE

We're absolutely thrilled to announce the opening of Holy Guacamole, an exquisite kosher Mexican restaurant nestled within the food court of Coffman Memorial Union. The journey to the grand opening of Holy Guacamole has been a labor of love, marked by meticulous attention to detail, from the branding to recipe and menu development. Our exciting menu includes traditional tacos, burritos, and, of course, our signature guacamole.

But Holy Guacamole isn't just a restaurant. At the heart of our endeavor lies a steadfast commitment to making a statement that Jews have a place on the University of Minnesota campus, and that we will not cover in the face of antisemitism. Holy Guacamole is a symbol of Jewish pride and representation.

As the sole Mexican cuisine provider in the food court, we have already seen patronage from Jews and non-Jews alike. This support reaffirms the importance of fostering an inclusive environment where everyone can gather, dine, and celebrate the richness of cultural diversity together.

We invite you to join us on this culinary adventure celebrating flavors, fostering unity, and championing a message of Jewish pride.





# CHANUKAH BRINGS JOY IN HARD TIMES

Chanukah 2023 was epic! In a season marked by challenges and turmoil in the Middle East, the festival took on a profound significance. This celebration of Jewish perseverance and resilience was needed more than ever this year, and offered comfort during a difficult time. We hosted five events over Chanukah, including a bowling party, a midnight dinner during finals week, and a Chanukah-themed Shabbat. These gatherings provided much-needed opportunities to unwind, bond, and simply have fun amidst the chaos.

The celebration extended beyond our immediate community. We also hosted Chanukah parties in several fraternities and sororities - spaces that are predominantly non-Jewish. This served as a gateway to foster dialogue and understanding about Jewish culture, traditions, and the current global landscape. It opened crucial avenues for open discussions about the ongoing conflict in Israel, and its impact on Jewish communities worldwide. We embraced the opportunity to answer questions and address misconceptions.



# WHAT CHABAD MEANS TO ME

## Gaby Kotovsky, 2027:

When I think of Chabad, I think of it as my safe space. It is a place where I know I can go if I'm feeling down, happy, frustrated, or anything else. I know that I can go to Chabad and find the safe space that I need. As a freshman, Chabad has been very helpful to me in making new friends, with expanding my Jewish network, and building a Jewish community for myself on campus.

Some of my favorite moments from Chabad so far have been the New York Pegisha trip, the Jew Cruise during the High Holiday season, the Washington DC rally, and all the girl events. I love going to Chabad and knowing I have a second family on campus when I am away from home.



## Robin Brody

### Mother of Ansley Brody, 2026:

When the war broke out on October 7 in Israel, I knew Ansley would need support as her older sister is living in Tel Aviv. The first people I reached out to were Chavi and Yitzi, and they immediately calmed my nerves and assured me they would take care of Ansley. They have taken care of all Jewish students at the U during this horrendous time.

Whether Ansley goes for Shabbat dinner, a mock wedding, or just hangs out with Chavi making Challahs, I know she is in good hands. It amazes me how much Chavi and Yitzi really know these Jewish students and how much the students love celebrating being Jewish with Chabad.



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