

"People call me Rabs."

# LOOK WHO'S TALKING

> **RABBI MOSHE LEIB GRAY**, *Executive Director of Chabad at Dartmouth*



## **What does Chabad offer?**

We provide a home away from home for Jewish students. They can come to celebrate the weekly Shabbat with a big home-cooked meal. We do services, holiday celebrations such as Passover and Yom Kippur, social events and, of course, study. I teach a lot of extracurricular classes, and we do an annual Birthright trip to Israel.

## **How many students come to Friday Shabbat dinner?**

Around 35 or 40, depending on the term.

We've had as many as 120 for a Passover Seder, which we do outside in a tent. Then we pray to God for some good weather:

"Melt that snow, make sure the ground is dry, have it be warm." My wife does the dinner—she's the brilliance that makes this all work, the calm in the storm.

## **What does your position as executive director entail?**

I'm responsible for raising our annual budget. We just bought a new house on Allen Street. It's a dream come true and a massive capital project. I've got my duties with the Tucker Center and I also do a lot of one-on-ones. In a good term, I'll have coffee with between 80 to 100 students.

## **What do you discuss with them?**

Sometimes I have things that I want to bring up, but usually it's whatever's going on in their lives. It can be great things, like job advice, and it can also be difficult things, like illness in the family or, God forbid, even death. It runs the gamut, although I do have one rule: I don't bring up dating unless they bring it up first.

## **You've gained quite a reputation as the "CrossFit Rabbi." How did that get started?**

Four years ago, when I was 33, I had high cholesterol. My doctor, my father and my wife all said I had to do something about it. Eventually I hired a personal trainer who told me about CrossFit. I had never heard of it before. Now I do it five or six times a week. I would say I'm well above average in my strength, but my endurance and cardiovascular are subpar, so it balances out.

## **People also call you "Rabs"—where did that term of endearment come from?**

It started on my first Birthright trip. I led it with another rabbi, and his students called him Rabs. All of my students were like, "We like that. We're gonna call you Rabs." Now I have parents, CEOs and hedge fund managers who call me Rabs.

—James Napoli