## The food truck is kosher, b presence at GW?

By Daniel Schere Political Reporter

For the last three weeks, kosher-keeping students at The George Washington University have had the opportunity to munch on pastrami sandwiches and knishes during their lunch hour, thanks to Rabbi Yudi Steiner of Jewish Colonials Chabad. Yet the truck's operation, along with this Chabad's presence in the District may not be valid.

Steiner said so far the truck has received a good deal of support with sandwiches selling out before 1 p.m. on some days.

Their most popular locations include the intersection of 18th and L streets, Gallery Place near the Verizon Center and Friendship Heights. The staff posts the location each day on its Twitter feed, which Steiner said has hundreds of followers.

"We've had a lot of interest from the kosher consumers, trying to figure out where we are on one specific day," he said. "I

"Rabbi Steiner is not authorized to run any official operation under Chabad. Rabbi [Shmuel] Kaplan has not had, does not have, and will never have the authority he is apparently claiming over Washington, D.C." —Rabbi Levi Shemtov

Steiner said all kosher food options on campus disappeared from campus about four years ago. He then set out to advocate for a kosher restaurant, but no one wanted to commit.

"At that point I decided I wanted to be involved in helping Jewish students maintain their Judaism," Steiner said.

Finally in September 2015 Carly Meisel, then a freshman, came to Steiner with the suggestion of starting a food truck to offset the lack of a kosher option on campus. The Chabad, which Steiner said attracts 1,000 Jewish students to events throughout the year, raised \$65,000 to acquire a truck and hire a culinary director from Brooklyn, N.Y., giving birth to Brooklyn Sandwich Company.

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Steiner served students as a Chabad rabbi on GW's campus for eight years, but has only been operating Jewish Colonials Chabad since 2014. The new Chabad came about after a longstanding feud with Rabbi Levi Shemtov, who runs the Washington office of the umbrella organization American Friends of Lubavitch, resulted in the termination of its contract with Steiner.

In December of that year, Washington Jewish Week reported that Superior Court Judge Neil E. Kravitz issued an order barring Steiner from running any Chabad-related programming within one mile from campus. Since then, said Steiner, he has been operating under the

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Customers line up during the lunch hour at 18th and L Streets to grab a nosh at the new Brooklyn Sandwich Company food truck.

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direction of Rabbi Shmuel Kaplan Chabad Lubavitch of the Maryland R gion.

Additionally a Jan. 12, 2015 letter fre Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky, the chairman Chabad's educational arm, Merkos Elnyc Chinuch, states that he contacted be Shemtov and Steiner, instructing each submit the name of a candidate to situreligious court in order to settle their pute, and that not doing so would resi the delisting of their names from the M database. It states that Steiner did not a candidate by the Jan. 5 deadline, res in his removal from the database.

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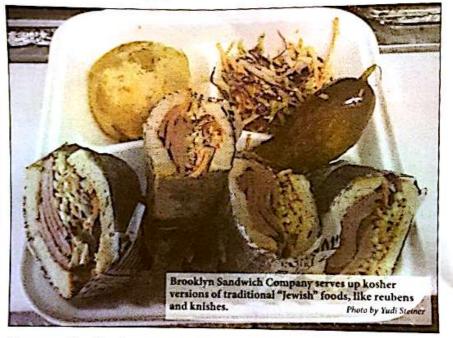
"His operation under Chabad of Maryland is illegitimate," Shemtov said. "Rabbi Steiner is not authorized to run any official operation under Chabad, Rabbi (Chabad,

land is illegitimate," Shemtov said. "Rabbi Steiner is not authorized to run any official operation under Chabad. Rabbi [Shmuel] Kaplan has not had, does not have, and will never have the authority he is apparently claiming over Washington, D.C."

"For Rabbi Kaplan to insinuate that anything has changed in Washington, absent any din torah and halachic ruling to the contrary is reprehensible," he added.

The website Chabad.org lists the phone number for American Friends of Lubavitch as the Chabad presence on GW's campus, although it does the same for Georgetown University, which also has a Chabad directly on campus.

Kaplan could not be reached for comment as of press time, but a source who is close to Chabad operations at its headquar-



direction of Rabbi Shmuel Kaplan of Chabad Lubavitch of the Maryland Region.

Additionally a Jan. 12, 2015 letter from Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky, the chairman of Chabad's educational arm, Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch, states that he contacted both Shemtov and Steiner, instructing each to submit the name of a candidate to sit on a religious court in order to settle their dispute, and that not doing so would result in the delisting of their names from the Merkos database. It states that Steiner did not name a candidate by the Jan. 5 deadline, resulting in his removal from the database.

Shemtov explained that the terms of the contract he had with Steiner stated that in the event of termination, Steiner was not to affiliate with any Chabad entity or entity doing similar work in the Washters in New York said Chabad does not officially recognize Jewish Colonials Chabad.

"Those involved in the leadership in New York are rankled by Rabbi Kaplan's breach of protocol, since Rabbi Steiner was clearly delisted from the database of official Chabad institutions after failing to comply with Chabad directives," the source said.

Shemtov said he could not comment on the operation of the truck or say whether he would contest its presence. He said it would depend on whether the preparation of the food meets standards of kashrut, in which case he would not have an issue.

"The enterprise itself is an attempted endrun if it doesn't completely run afoul of clear halachic rulings as well as the preliminary injunctions," he said.

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