Holocaust Center Looking to the Future

There are both advantages and disadvantages to being one of the oldest Holocaust Centers in the nation. We are proud of our role as innovators in this movement. We are deeply indebted to Tess Wise and a forward-thinking community of benefactors who made their dream a reality at a time when most people thought it was impossible. Our Holocaust Center has been successful beyond every expectation.

As we begin planning for our thirtieth anniversary, we continue to take stock of our strengths and our potential. We recognize that Holocaust scholarship has changed significantly since the day we welcomed our first visitors. And we have changed with it.

We have done well with our thirty-year-old space. We’ve added new displays to the permanent exhibit and greatly expanded our programming. Our resources for educators include new information and tools tailored to changing curriculum requirements. Bold initiatives keep the lessons of the Holocaust relevant to today’s students. Our museum is not the state-of-the-art experience it once was, so it is currently being updated with new technology.

But in spite of these efforts, our physical facilities are no longer large enough or flexible enough to meet our needs. This building, one that has welcomed thousands of visitors, stands as a powerful reminder of the lessons we must learn. But as we grow, this beloved building simply can’t grow with us.

Eight years ago the Board established a Future Vision committee to discuss the long-term strategies of the Center. This was followed in 2014 by the creation of a committee on the Center of the Future, tasked with evaluating potential plans for expansion. This committee, composed of dedicated board members and knowledgeable volunteers, is now visiting other Holocaust Centers around the country, carefully gathering notes on what will best serve our community.

As they diligently sort through all the professional proposals and the wish lists, they are coming close to recommending a master plan for a new Holocaust Center. The next step includes feasibility studies, consultation with architects, exhibit planning and more.

We will keep you informed of our progress, and encourage you to ask questions as we move forward. It is by no means an overnight project; a task this broad and this important demands careful attention to every detail.

Still, the long range vision is clear. The history and lessons of the Holocaust are still extraordinarily relevant. Our constant concern about ethnic wars, rising antisemitism, and brutal clashes here and abroad means that there is still work to be done. We must be proactive. We must ensure that our programs, our outreach, and our facilities are up to the challenges ahead.

Whatever tomorrow brings, we know, each and every day, that what we do here is meaningful. And we know that we have the support of a community of people like you who genuinely understand the importance of our mission.

Our goal of creating a more just community is fixed, no matter what other changes may come. We hope you will join us on this journey.
With my term as President of the Board of the Holocaust Memorial Resource and Education Center of Florida winding down, I look back with respect and admiration for what we have accomplished as an organization these past few years.

The mission of the Holocaust Center is to combat antisemitism, racism and prejudice. We fulfill this mission through an extensive outreach of educational and cultural programs, including our recent observance of the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act. We partnered with many community organizations to produce a compelling series of art and educational programs showing the consequences of hate and the need to be ever vigilant in securing equal rights for all.

We are proud to have partnered with Mayor Buddy Dyer and the City of Orlando in Stand Up Orlando – the Mayor’s campaign to end bullying. We are honored to be recognized for the value and impact our UpStanders: Stand Up to Bullying Initiative has had on more than fifteen thousand middle school students in 43 schools from 4 school districts. With this crucial and mutually beneficial alliance, our program continues to grow and expand throughout the region. Our goal is to place our curriculum in all middle schools in the State and beyond.

We are also excited to sponsor our first Heritage Tour to Poland and Prague in 2016. The scourge of antisemitism memorialized in the ruins and remains of the death camps there has not gone away. Indeed, a quick review of the news reminds us that the world can be a very dangerous place. Not a day goes by without reports of another act of antisemitism, another beheading, another loss of life at the hands of one extremist group or another. Amidst the carnage, however, there are the rescuers and upstanders who remind us daily that one person, or organization, can make a difference. People like Malala Yousafzai, who at 15 refused to back down to the Taliban and at age 17 became the youngest Nobel Prize winner. People like Sir Nicholas Winton who almost singlehandedly saved the lives of hundreds of children from Czechoslovakia during the Holocaust, and lived to see thousands of descendants of those children flourish because of his efforts.

Our challenges in making a difference may be many, but our dreams are big. They are big because they have to be. We must make sure the vision of Tess and Abe Wise remains as relevant today as when they founded our Center over thirty years ago. To that end, I’ve appointed a group of visionaries and community leaders as members of our Center of the Future Committee. With our ever expanding Central Florida infrastructure, we are becoming a major city that deserves and needs a major Holocaust Center. A Center that is relevant, compelling, accessible and top of mind to residents and tourists alike.

I’d like to take this opportunity to thank the Holocaust Center staff for their incredible work and assistance to me. Very special thanks go to Pam Kancher, our innovative and hardworking Executive Director, who makes everything, even the hard stuff, look easy. And, of course, the officers and board members who have made my term as President so fulfilling.
I remember as a child always measuring time by what I couldn’t wait to happen or do – I couldn’t wait to get my driver’s license, graduate from high school, land my first job, have children and so on. I was always looking forward to something big. Little did I know that eagerly anticipating my next birthday would greatly diminish over time! Now I often find myself reflecting on what was – little league games and playdates with my boys, our old home and family beach vacations with friends.

I think that this is a good lesson for our Center. While the history and lessons of the Holocaust are at the core of our mission, we need to look forward at least as often as we look backward.

For example, in 2014 we delved deeply into the history of the Civil Rights movement in the United States. We hosted a remarkable exhibit and facilitated productive conversations about the issues of prejudice, hatred and bigotry as well as the lingering effects of racism. We were thrilled by the outpouring of support and participation we received from a diverse group of local arts, civic and community organizations! For the future, we know that we’ve laid the groundwork for ongoing conversations and programs.

This year, 2015, is also a noteworthy year for us as we mark the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II. Throughout the year we’ve made note of the liberation of camps and the journeys of Survivors after the war. Our purpose is not only to remember, but also to capture those memories so that they will always remain in the world’s consciousness.

Of course, we have some exciting things happening right now. A new website is currently in production, enabling us to provide richer content and a more interactive experience for all of our users. This improvement is being funded by a grant from the Frances and Joseph Victor Fund at the Central Florida Foundation. It is one of more than 400 charitable funds established there since 1994, including our own Helen Greenspun Endowment for Holocaust Education. The fund was named after Helen Greenspun, a beloved local Holocaust Survivor who is still active as one of our emeritus board members. It was named to honor her decades as a volunteer speaker in hundreds of classrooms.

We are bringing new technology to the Center to enhance our visitors’ experiences. An engaging 45-minute audio tour, available in both English and Spanish, will guide our guests through our permanent exhibits offering insight into this difficult and challenging history. It reveals the cruelty of the Holocaust, but also the resiliency of Survivors and the moral courage of resisters and rescuers.

Looking forward, we are already planning a series of special events in 2016 to mark the 30th anniversary of our Holocaust Center and the 35th anniversary of its programming. We will celebrate all that Tess Wise “couldn’t wait to happen” and eagerly anticipate our next 30 years.
Mark Your Calendar

EXHIBIT Ravensbrück - Women in the Holocaust
(July 5 – October 1, 2015)
The inside story of the Nazi camp created exclusively for women.

Forum August 27 Ravensbrück and Nazi Persecution of Women, 6:00 PM
Forum September 24 Some Were Neighbors: Collaborators during the Holocaust, 6:00 PM
Film September 20 Playing For Time: The Women Who Made Music in Auschwitz, 2:00 PM

EXHIBIT Miriam Brysk: Scroll of Remembrance
(October 5 – December 30, 2015)
Digitally altered and blended photographs of lost people and places, layered with added details that evoke the humanity lost to hate.

October 25 Opening Reception with the artist
Holocaust Survivor Dr. Miriam Brysk will speak at an opening reception for her exhibit, 2:00 PM
Forum October 15 The Jewish Refugee Crisis of the 1930’s, 6:00 PM
Forum October 29 (at Rosen JCC) Eva Braun: The Strange World of Hitler’s Bride, 6:00 PM
Forum November 12 The Nuremberg Trials and Beyond: The Elusive Search for Justice, 6:00 PM
Forum December 10 Josef Mengele: The Making of the “Angel of Death”, 6:00 PM

KRISTALLNACHT November 8, 2015 Community program in remembrance of Kristallnacht, featuring presentation of the drama Kindertransport in partnership with the Theater at the J at the Roth Family JCC, 2:00 PM

EXHIBIT Parallel Journeys
(January 5 – March 25, 2016)
Stories of six teenagers who were witnesses, participants, and victims of World War II and the Holocaust.
Film January 17 Heil Hitler! Confessions of a Hitler Youth, 2:00 PM
Forum January 21 The Resilience of Youth: A Different Look at the Lives of Children Under the Nazis, 6:00 PM
Forum February 18 The Other Side of 1492: Jews of Spanish Heritage before and during the Holocaust, 6:00 PM

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EXAMINING THE CURRENT STATE OF ANTISEMITISM
WITH DEBORAH LIPSTADT

Thursday October 8, 2015 ~ 7:30 PM
Congregation of Reform Judaism
982 Malone Dr.
Orlando, Florida

Join us for Dr. Lipstadt’s presentation about the “new” antisemitism. She will explain how it is different from the religious and race-based hate of yesterday and how we, as a global community, should respond to it.

Lipstadt is an Emory University historian and author of History on Trial: My Day in Court With a Holocaust Denier, which chronicles her victory in a libel trial held in a British court.

This event is open to the community. Tickets start at $18 and sponsorships are available.

For more info, please visit: www.LipstadtInOrlando.com or call (407) 628 0555

Dr Lipstadt’s presentation is being hosted by the Holocaust Memorial Resource and Education Center and the Congregation of Reform Judaism
Sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Greater Orlando, and Dr. Eve Homburger and Brad Jacobs

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Plan Your Next Visit With Our New Technology!

Your next visit to the Holocaust Center can be an entirely different experience! Thanks to an outstanding collaboration with QMedia, we are able to offer an audio experience that provides a narrated tour — complete with messages from our founder Tess Wise, our Resource Teacher Mitchell Bloomer, and student Nadav Weil — all on your android phone, iPhone, or tablet.

The recorded tour, which lasts about 45 minutes and divides the museum’s exhibits into 22 separate stops, is an important addition to our permanent exhibit’s text-heavy design. For the first time, it makes a meaningful visit possible for visitors with limited vision. It also includes a Spanish language version, making it a welcome help for our many visitors for whom English is not the primary language. Versions in both languages are downloaded at the same time using the instructions included here.

Even before you have a chance to use it in the museum space, you can download the app and use it like a talking book. It’s a wonderful way to brush up on Holocaust history, and to be reminded about why our mission is relevant to today’s world.

To download the app on your ANDROID phone or tablet:

⇒ Use your QR code reader on the code here:

⇒ Or you can use this link online: tinyurl.com/MuseumTourTwo

⇒ Or go to the PlayStore and search: ‘Holocaust Memorial Resource’

To download the app on your iPhone or Apple device:

⇒ Use your QR code reader on the code here:

⇒ Or you can use this link online: tinyurl.com/MuseumTourOne

⇒ Or go to the App Store and search: ‘Holocaust Memorial Resource’
We are pleased to present the newest works of Holocaust Survivor Dr. Miriam Brysk, an exhibit entitled *The Scroll of Remembrance*. Dr. Brysk is an artist, writer and retired professor living in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Dr. Brysk has created a unique process for creating her art, using digitally altered and blended photographs of lost people and places, layered with added details that evoke the humanity lost to hate.

Details from the Scroll of Remembrance panel, Warsaw ghetto, shows the face of a child who was lost there. In the background are some of the gravestones of the Warsaw ghetto cemetery.

Over the last decade the Holocaust Center has hosted her other two major exhibits, *In a Confined Silence* and *Children of the Holocaust*, both focused on the plight of individual Jews during the Holocaust. In this recently completed third exhibit, *Scroll of Remembrance*, her focus shifted from lost individuals to the destruction of entire Jewish communities. Her goal was to create panels to represent a cross-section of an entire Jewish world and its fate during the Holocaust. Panels about communities of Warsaw, Lodz, and Kovno; images of the terrifying camps of Belzec, Auschwitz, and Mauthausen; and the history of Einsatzgruppen and the heroism of Jewish Partisans all stand as testament to our need to remember.

Dr. Brysk refers to her new exhibit as the most powerful she has created to date, a visual narrative of the lives and communities lost to cruel hatred. She says that the work was inspired by the Megillat HaShoah: The Holocaust Scrolls, a powerful liturgical text that was created in 2003 to be read during observances of Holocaust Remembrance Day (Yom HaShoah).

Dr. Brysk will be featured at an opening reception for the exhibit on Sunday, October 25th at 2 PM. The reception is open to the public. No admission is charged, and reservations are not required.

Funding for the Holocaust Center’s Cultural Season is provided in part by Orange County Government through the Arts & Cultural Affairs Program, United Arts of Central Florida, the Florida Division of Cultural Affairs, and our generous corporate and individual donors who recognize the importance of our mission.

Dedication of New Sound System
The opening of the *Scroll of Remembrance* exhibit will include the dedication of the Holocaust Center’s new sound system.

Donated by Zelda Siskind and her late husband Melvin and their family, the new system includes enhancement for visitors with hearing impairments.

We are grateful for this very thoughtful gift from the Siskind family, knowing how much it will benefit our many visitors.
**Kristallnacht Program Scheduled for November 8**

*Kindertransport* by Diane Samuels  
**Sunday, November 8, 2:00 PM**  
At the Hymen and Harriett Lake Theater  
Roth Family Jewish Community Center  
851 N Maitland Avenue, Maitland

Diane Samuels’ fascinating 1993 play, *Kindertransport*, dwells on both the history of the Kindertransport itself and the impact of that evacuation on the children who were saved.

The most vivid story unfolding in the play is the history of the "Kindertransport" itself — the evacuation of 10,000 Jewish children from Germany to England between 1938 (barely a month after Kristallnacht) and the declaration of war in 1939. Children were separated from their parents and transported to the relative safety of Great Britain’s foster homes, orphanages, and hostels. Only about 10% of the children were eventually reunited with their families.

Samuels tells this story through the case of 9-year-old Eva Schlesinger, a fictional composite of several surviving "kinder" (children) whom Samuels interviewed. Renamed Evelyn by her adoptive mother, she is torn between her past identity and the new one she has forged for herself.

The drama slips between present and past, between anger and sorrow, between trying to remember and needing to forget. It is a harsh reality seen through the eyes of the child who was rescued and the woman that child became, one that should give anyone a clearer idea of the ultimate consequences of prejudice and hate.

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**WITNESS Readers Theater Continues to Educate**

The public is invited to attend a new performance of the Holocaust Center’s play, WITNESS, created in 2013 to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Kristallnacht. It will be staged in the historic sanctuary at the First United Methodist Church of Oviedo on Monday, November 9, at 7:00 PM.

Written by Holocaust Center staff member Susan Mitchell and her late husband Jack Lowe, it tells the story of that fateful night through eyewitness accounts from victims, perpetrators, and bystanders. Their words are accompanied by projected photographs that represent the people and places of the story. It has been performed more than 40 times by organizations as diverse as a college in California, a Hadassah group in Canada, and a small church in Ohio.

Information about the performance is available by calling the church at (407) 365-3255 or on the church’s website, http://www.fumco.net.
Yom HaShoah: Our Moment to Reflect

The annual commemoration of Yom HaShoah was held on Sunday, April 19. It is our opportunity to invite the community to join us in remembering Hitler’s Six Million Jewish victims and to honor the Survivors, Liberators and Rescuers whose stories will not be forgotten.

Memorial candles were lit by local Survivors Harry Lowenstein, Sonja Marchesano, Renata Bradley, Eliane Norman, Margot Glazer, Dena Axelrod, and Helen Greenspun. They were accompanied by UCF Hillel students Brandon Fisher, Shana Medel, Luke Haberman, Bianca Ungerman, Erica Lansky, Scott Nager, and by Jewish Academy of Orlando student Nadav Weil.

The Responsive Reading was led by Rev. Kathy Schmidt of the First Unitarian Church of Orlando, and Cantor Jacqueline Rawiszer led El Malei Rachamim and Kaddish.

Speaker for the event was Yael Hershfield, Associate Regional Director of the Anti-Defamation League. She spoke about the fight against indifference, and, using a ‘pyramid of hate’ she challenged the audience to think of ways that they could be part of a growing movement of people who recognize the causes and impact of intolerance, and who are ready to become active advocates for change.

The event Honorary Chair, Orange County Sheriff Jerry Demings, also spoke of the need for people to become actively involved with social justice initiatives.

The program concluded with the recognition of the winners of the Student Creative Arts Contest. Certificates and prizes were distributed by Sheriff Demings, Yom HaShoah Committee Chair Debbie Beckman, and Holocaust Center Resource Teacher Mitchell Bloomer.

Next year’s commemoration will be held May 1.

Orange County Sheriff Jerry Demings, Honorary Chair of the 2015 Yom HaShoah program, spoke about the need for communities to work together toward justice.

20th ANNUAL TEACHERS INSTITUTE: “A life-changing week”

Since 1995 the Holocaust Center has provided Florida teachers with an intensive week-long course on best practices for teaching this very difficult topic. Florida requires that instruction on the subject of the Holocaust be included in public schools.

This year’s Institute, which included teachers from as far away as Jacksonville and Miami, provided educators with information, strategies, and resources for all subjects and grade levels. For the first time, local teachers were able to apply for the Dr. Norman Wall Holocaust Education Scholarship Fund for part or all of their tuition. Three teachers — two from area middle schools and one teaching at a local high school — qualified for the subsidy.

It was an intensive week that provided forty hours of professional development. Its worth was clear from the comments of one of the teachers who attended.

I can’t thank you enough for this wonderful experience. It was truly a life-changing week. I expected to learn and to grow as a teacher. I did not realize how much I would also grow as a person. I now understand how prejudices harm us all. I am arming myself to be an advocate for all the invisible children and adults in my life...
“Heritage, Not Hate.”
What Does That Mean?

Mitchell Bloomer
Holocaust Center Resource Teacher

In the wake of the horrific murders of nine churchgoers at Emmanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, the issue of the display of the Confederate battle flag on public grounds has returned once again to center stage.

Opponents of this flag see it as being closely linked to the ideology and violent imposition of white supremacy in all its forms. As such, they believe that it is irredeemable as a symbol of anything positive.

On the other hand, supporters of its display claim that it is neither intended to evoke nostalgia for slavery nor to support the ideas and practices of racism. Their message is that the flag stands for “heritage, not hate.” The debate between these two positions has been going on for a long time. Today’s heated emotions will eventually cool, but the underlying issues won’t go away anytime soon.

The term “heritage” refers to the ideas and values of the past that people cherish as shared tradition. Supporters of the Confederate battle flag say that it stands for Southern customs and traditions that they view as honorable and admirable.

Displaying the flag means more than just embracing these ideas on a personal level, though. It also means communicating them publicly for all to see. For those who see the Confederate battle flag as a non-racist symbol, it’s appropriate to ask if the message is getting through as intended.

The use of symbols as expressions of cultural heritage is problematic because they can mean very different things to the people who display them and to those who view them. Since the displayers are the ones who are sending a message, it is their task to make sure that it is perceived as they wish.

Non-racist supporters of the Confederate battle flag face a serious problem in that the flag has been used repeatedly in the modern era by those who stand for racial hatred and violence. Any attempt to deny this is simply false. For those who intend the message to be different, it’s not enough to speak the words “heritage, not hate”. Instead, they need to demonstrate their concept of non-racist Southern heritage in the thousands of acts - big and small - that make up daily life. Holding non-racist attitudes is a start, but acting as an open, active opponent of racism is the true measure of sincerity. Undoubtedly, some do this already, but it needs to be common across the board.

Friends of the Holocaust Center know that our core educational message goes beyond identifying histories of hate. We learn from the past, but always with the goal of creating a better future. We promote building an inclusive community where all members of society are treated with dignity and respect.

Supporters of the Confederate battle flag would benefit from this approach. Currently, they are most well known for their zeal in defending their symbol against all critics. When they are just as well known for their inclusiveness and for their civil rights advocacy on behalf of others as well as themselves, then “heritage, not hate” will have achieved its intended meaning.

Disney’s Hall of Flags displays the variety of banners that have been important to varied communities and times.
It’s hard to believe that The Holocaust Center’s UpStanders Program is entering its sixth year. Over time it has been modified to reflect best practices in bullying prevention, but there is one essential program component that remains the same: the field trip to the Holocaust Center. The goal of this field trip, much like many of the Center’s educational programs, is to explain to students what we learned from the Holocaust and how these lessons are still relevant today.

Parents and teachers often have questions about what an UpStander field trip looks like. Many are anxious to know what students experience when they visit the Holocaust Center, and the ways the Center is empowering our youth to combat prejudice, hate, and bullying.

The first thing a student receives when they arrive at the Holocaust Center is a clipboard featuring the story of a Holocaust victim: some who survived and others who tragically did not. These clipboards were created by Jackson Heights Middle School student Lauren Gipson, who donated them to the Center in 2013.

The first story pictured here tells the story of Inge Auerbacher, a German Jew born in 1935. Inge was only three years old when her family’s home was viciously vandalized by Nazi sympathizers.

At the age of seven, Inge was deported to the Theresienstadt ghetto in Czechoslovakia. After three years of imprisonment in the ghetto, Inge and her parents were liberated and later immigrated to the United States.

There is a different story on each clipboard, and as the students discuss the stories with one another they learn that every individual experience in the Holocaust was unique.

Prior to touring the permanent exhibit, students are given an introduction by the Center’s Resource Teacher, Mitch Bloomer. He explains that “Everything we put into the UpStanders Program, we put there because we first learned about it during this time in history.” The black and white photographs may indicate to students that this happened long ago, but they are reminded genocide is still happening in various parts of the world today and that the Holocaust was carried out less than a century ago.

Following this introduction, students are asked to look at the ‘Resistance’ panel in the permanent exhibit. This panel is essential to the UpStanders Program, showing how many people who witnessed the Holocaust chose to be bystanders, simply watching as terrible things were happening around them, while others were actively involved with resistance of all sorts.

Students are then asked to think about what they might have done if they lived during this time. They are reminded that there were some people who chose to stand up for themselves, their families, and their neighbors.
They are told that during the Holocaust, we called them ‘Rescuers.’ Today, we call them UpStanders. Students choose one person from the panel and describe how they resisted the Nazis. Special attention is given to ‘The Righteous Among the Nations’, those non-Jews who risked their lives to save their Jewish neighbors.

(We teach) the dangers of prejudice, the value of diversity, and the role each of us plays in promoting mutual respect in our society... “It all starts with you.”

As students exit the museum, they are clearly touched by their experience here. Every young person would benefit from an opportunity to visit our museum. Students are empowered when they realize each of us plays an integral role in creating a community of respect and that one person can make a difference.

The lessons learned during the field trip to the Holocaust Center enrich the remaining components of the UpStanders program. As students learn more about the consequences of inaction, they develop the willingness to stand up for their peers who are being bullied.

For more information about the UpStanders Program, please visit: www.holocaustedu.org/education/upstanders.

Students have the opportunity to explore the negative impact of propaganda fueled by prejudice and the devastating consequences of inaction. This year, students will have the opportunity to view artwork from Miriam Brysk’s Scroll of Remembrance.

For the final thirty minutes of a field trip session, students watch the short film, Auschwitz: If You Cried, You Died. The film features two Survivors of the Auschwitz concentration camp who return to the site with their spouses and children.

The Survivors describe their experiences and make comparisons between the oppression they experienced and the many other forms of hate experienced by people in modern times. The film also features youth discussing the dangers of prejudice, the value of diversity, and the role each of us plays in promoting mutual respect in our society. Holocaust Survivor, Mike Vogel, ends the film by pointing to the viewers and saying, “It all starts with you.”
Empathy – A Catalyst For Change

By Dr. Bahiyah Maroon
Senior Director of Research Design, Eripio Institute

Today, in Central Florida, a seed has been planted that has the power and capacity to solve the nation’s bullying epidemic. That seed is the UpStanders: Stand Up to Bullying initiative. The initiative strikes at the heart of bullying and trains youth to effectively shut down and disallow abuse and harassment.

We know based on extensive research in the field, that one of the most powerful weapons to discourage and discontinue abuse is empathy. When individuals practice empathy they are less likely to engage in abusive behaviors. Individuals that practice empathy are also more likely to stand up for others. The UpStanders: Stand Up to Bullying program is on its way to becoming a national resource to prevent youth harassment and abuse, because of its methods of instilling empathy and a call to action among youth.

A key strength of the Holocaust Memorial Resource and Education Center’s UpStander’s program is the powerful emphasis placed on Holocaust education. Youth in the UpStanders program visit the Holocaust Memorial Resource and Education Center as part of the program and this museum experience is leaving a tremendous impact on youth, empowering them to change their own behaviors and to stand up on behalf of other youth. Since the inception of the UpStanders program, I have conducted an objective third party evaluation of the methods and impacts of the program. To date over 16,000 youth have completed surveys and numerous focus groups have been held giving youth a chance to voice their perspectives. What the data shows and what is evident in youth voices from written feedback to interview feedback, is that the encounter with the history of the Holocaust is having a profound and important impact on middle school children.

When youth in the UpStanders program speak of the program’s impact on them, they are often drawn to talking about their experience watching testimonials and film documentation of what was suffered by victims of the Holocaust.

When youth in UpStanders are asked to talk about what is significant to them in the program, they share how it feels to look at images of people who were starved in concentration camps and why they feel the Holocaust was a tragedy. That is to say that youth in the UpStanders initiative demonstrate emotive recognition and felt sympathy for the pain and suffering of others – of people who came decades before them and who lived in distant countries that they have likely never visited. The affective empathetic experience mediated through encounters with the history of the Holocaust is an innovative and unique yet entirely reproducible contribution of the UpStanders program to methods of generating behavior change in youth.

The multi-year evaluation results of the UpStander’s program indicate persuasively that it is a needed and effective model of bullying prevention for youth today.

The program is a scalable model whose emphasis on Holocaust education and experiencing immersive history at the Holocaust Memorial Resource and Education Center produces a level of growth in empathetic response sets that is rarely found in other bullying prevention models.

The UpStanders program, based on evaluation results, warrants the investment and attention of policy makers and stakeholders including school districts and interfaith social organizations throughout the nation that are committed to demonstrable solutions for creating safer positive school age experiences for our children.

FROM UPSTANDER STUDENTS

“We all have different cultures and religions and we all have rights. Everyone should be treated equally.” – Sarah, 6th grade

“Even if someone is different, they still want and need to be accepted as a human.” – Briannah, 6th grade

“Words can hurt. We should stop bullying and stand up for each other.” – Alina, 6th grade

“I know people are bullied for many different reasons, but any reason is wrong.” – Destiny, 6th grade
Holocaust Victims Still Seeking Reparations and Assistance

The popularity of the critically-acclaimed new film, Woman In Gold, is inspiring further conversation about the issue of reparations for Holocaust victims and their heirs.

The film, based on a real story, follows the efforts of Maria Altman (played by Helen Mirren) as she attempts to reclaim family possessions that were seized by the Nazis. Among them is a famous portrait of Maria’s beloved Aunt Adele: Gustave Klimt’s Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer I. With the help of young lawyer Randy Schoeberg (Ryan Reynolds), Maria embarks upon a lengthy legal battle to recover this painting and several others. Although there was sufficient proof that the family once owned what was considered “Austria’s Mona Lisa,” Altman was faced with cover-ups, denials, and resistance at every turn. Her ultimate success, however, has made her the exception rather than the rule. Most lost property remains lost; most businesses, land, and fine art stolen by the Nazis will never be returned.

There is, however, some small hope for people with persistence, especially in Florida. Ours is one of the few states with specific laws and outreach programs designed to help Survivors and their families qualify for benefits.

Florida Chief Financial Officer Jeff Atwater continues efforts on behalf of Florida Holocaust survivors to assist individuals seeking to recover proceeds from an insurance policy issued to a Holocaust victim, and restitution for Nazi-confiscated bank accounts, art and property. To date, Florida residents have received positive decisions totaling close to 20 million dollars.

Survivors, their families, or their representatives can contact Lynn H. Grossman, Holocaust Claims Coordinator, Florida Department of Financial Services, Division of Consumer Services at 1-800-388-4069 for more information.

New Polish Reparations Program Announced

Holocaust victims who were Polish citizens at the time of the Holocaust may be eligible for monthly payments of about PLN 400 (approximately $130) from the Polish government. New rules dispense with an earlier requirement for recipients to own a Polish bank account. The change took effect last October for residents of the European Union and in March 2015 for those in the rest of the world.

The Office for War Veterans and Victims of Oppression administers the payments. Their informational website (http://polishrestitution.com/pensions/) has information about the payment program. Although the website includes information for applicants from abroad, the online paperwork requires an applicant to understand and fill out forms in Polish.

The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany has begun sending out English-language applications to those believed eligible worldwide, and the government of Israel is expected to send applications to another 7,000 of its citizens.

Demands for additional restitution are still being made. The Special Envoys from the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Israel, Macedonia and the United States -- all designated by their governments to deal with Holocaust issues-- recently called on Serbia to return confiscated property.

Earlier this month, Jewish community representatives from Lithuania met with restitution officials and government officials for the first session of a joint restitution panel. Although these steps are laudable, it is, as one survivor noted, so little and so late for the victims of such enormous persecution and loss.
GIFTS IN HONOR
Betsy & Murray Brooks in honor of Lester Mandell’s birthday
Rabbi Sholom B. Dubov in honor of Tess Wise
Peter & Brenda Fides in honor of Eli Friedman
Marilyn Goldman in honor of Mattitahu Braun’s Birthday
Gwynne & James Homan in honor of Valeria & Jim Shapiro
Renee Kaplan in honor of Jeffrey Kaplan’s retirement
Howard Kichler in honor of Yom HaShoah
Cathy & Mark Lieblich in honor of Pam Kancher
Joan & Frank Pohl in honor of Ken Walker and Alexis & Jim Pugh
Eva London Ritt in honor of Stuart Kuper’s birthday, Abigail Elizabeth Sorokurs’ Bat Mitzvah and Maureen Perlstein
Sharon & Martin White in honor of Ted Maines and Jeff Miller
Sherry Wright & Larry Hechler in honor of Michael Wright

GIFTS IN MEMORY
Joanne & Sheldon Aboff in memory of Peshi Bat Yitzchak Aron Aboff
Karen & Arthur Blumenthal in memory of Kenneth Murrah
Betsy & Murray Brooks in memory of Alice Simensky and Helene Arost
Marilyn Goldman in memory of Beatrice Ettinger
Howard Kichler in memory of Goldie Cash and Rob Roberson
Jenece Leckar in memory of Martha Leckar
Irene Lober in memory of Richard Lober
Paul Luckett in memory of the victims of terrorism
Retirement Planning Associates, Inc. in memory of Glenna Louise Werthman
Eva London Ritt in memory of Sally Luther Neumaier
Drs. Shari Yudenfreund-Sujka & Stan Sujka in memory of Eli Friedman
Lori & Peter Tankel in memory of Allan TANKEL
Nancy Yuasa in memory of Lonia Goldstein

This list reflects donations received between January 1 and July 1, 2015

SUMMER RELIGION SERIES INTRODUCES EIGHT FAITH GROUPS

Three years ago the Holocaust Center, in partnership with the Interfaith Council of Central Florida, introduced a series of community programs on the major faith groups in Central Florida. The yearlong series of Religion 101 brought a number of new friends and important conversations. That was followed by a series Religion 201, which provided a more in-depth look at how different religious groups address the great moral and philosophical questions of today.

Based on the success of those programs, this summer the Center and the Interfaith Council sponsored a series entitled Understanding our Tapestry of Faiths. Thirty-five people enrolled in the series, which brought together representatives of two faith groups each of four Wednesdays, asking them to share ways their faith tradition is unique as well as things they have in common with other religions.

Presenting were Rev. Kathy Schmitz (Unitarian Universalist), Jasbir S. Bhatia (Sikh), Dr. Sheri Dressler (Baha’i), Dr. Jason Micheli (Protestant Christian), Rabbi David Kay (Judaism), Imam Hatim Hamidullah (Islam), Virender Chauhan (Hindu), and Dr. Michael Moriarty (Buddhist). Pastor Jim Coffin, Executive Director of the Interfaith Council of Central Florida, served as moderator.

You donation in any amount will help support the Holocaust Center’s vital programs and services.

THANK YOU!
JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES FEATURED IN EXHIBIT COMING IN SUMMER 2016

Scholars who talk about the victims of the Holocaust generally number the casualties as “six million Jews and five million others.”

In addition to Jews, Hitler’s targets included individuals whose disabilities, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or faith undermined his goals. In every nation there were those who did not believe in the Nazi ideology and who were willing to die for their beliefs. Perhaps no other group stood so firmly against Hitler as the Jehovah’s Witnesses.

When asked to sign documents of loyalty to the Nazi ideology, they refused. Jehovah’s Witnesses were forced to wear purple armbands, and thousands were imprisoned as “dangerous” traitors.

The exhibit Jehovah’s Witnesses: Faith Under Fire, on loan from the Florida Holocaust Museum, will be on display June 6 through August 26, 2016. Additional programming on this remarkable group is being planned for those months.
Philanthropy clearly does not happen on its own. It takes families who set good examples and encourage children to think beyond their own immediate interests. Their efforts are key to growing a new generation of people who will build a better world.

The most endearing story about local philanthropy involves young Marc Homburger Jacobs. His parents, Dr. Eve Homburger and Brad Jacobs, are often among the first to underwrite Holocaust Center programs and to participate in the Center’s activities. Marc’s grandparents on both sides were Holocaust Survivors, so from a very early age Marc understood the importance of the work we do.

Marc attended the 2015 Dinner of Tribute, and was touched by the message of the event. He decided — with no prompting from anyone — that he wanted to give his birthday money to the Center. He delivered a contribution, with a proud smile, for our efforts.

Young Marc had a specific purpose in mind when he chose to make this gift. He said he thought about all of the people who fought in one way or another to save others, a clear part of our message to students.

He decided that the money he donated should be “in memory of those who showed courage in the face of danger,” a very touching choice from this fine young man.
Thank you to our 2015 Dinner of Tribute Sponsors

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Holocaust Center Executive Director Pam Kancher and Board President Jeffrey Miller were among those celebrating Disney’s latest round of philanthropy.

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Thanks, Mickey!
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For more information, please contact Pam Kancher at the Holocaust Center: 407-628-0555 ex. 316 or Pkancher@HolocaustEdu.org
Mission Statement

The Holocaust Memorial Resource and Education Center of Florida is an organization dedicated to combating anti-Semitism, racism and prejudice with the ultimate goal of developing a moral and just community through its extensive outreach of educational and cultural programs. Using the lessons of the Holocaust as a tool, the Center teaches the principles of good citizenship to thousands of people of all ages, religions and backgrounds, each year.

Our Center is one of the oldest facilities of its kind in the nation. It houses permanent and temporary exhibit space, archives, and a research library. It is a nonprofit organization supported by tax-exempt donations, and is open to the public free of charge.