Sigid, Beta Israel Jewish Ethiopian Holiday, Celebrated at Bet Am Shalom

BY STEPHEN E. LIPKEN

Israel Action Committee (IAC) of Five Synagogues of White Plains, in conjunction with Jewish Agency for Israel's (JAFI) Shlichah Shirach Liran Hanan and Shinshinim; UJA Federation of New York and Westchester Jewish Council (WJC) presented “Sigid,” an ancient Jewish holiday observed for centuries by the Beta Israel (Jewish Ethiopian) community, at Bet Am Shalom Synagogue, White Plains, on Tuesday, November 29th. Approximately 90 people attended.

Guest Speaker was Sigal Kanotopsky, JAFI Northeast Regional Director. Also featured was Kosher Ethiopian food, plus Ethiopian popular music by guitarist Habte Awalom.

“Sigid is part of the Jewish people,” Bet Am Shalom Rabbi Lester Bronstein stated. Referring to the Ethiopian immigration airlifts to Israel, Bronstein remarked, “Those events changed Israel for the better. You will see Black people walking up and down [Israeli] streets, white people, brown people...It’s a miracle. It is a paradox, celebration and contemplation. Sigid means to prostrate, to bow down.”

“A week ago, we celebrated Sigid on the 29th of Cheshvan, 50 days after Yom Kippur, a day of prayer and yearning for Zion,” Kanotopsky said. “Jews have been in Ethiopia for 2,000 years, leaving Israel after the destruction of the First Temple. We look to the sky and say, ‘Shimla, Shimla’ (stork), watching the storks migrate north to Israel. There are approximately 7,500 Ethiopian Jews left in Gondar and Addis Ababa. Some had converted to Christianity, but they want to go back to Judaism, under the Law of Return. Last year 3,000 Jews were approved to immigrate.”

Referring to Israeli religious customs, Kanotopsky noted that her mother was shocked to find food being kept warm on Shabbat. “My mother eats cold food on Shabbat,” Kanotopsky stressed.

Kanotopsky was asked whether she faced discrimination in Israel. “I was a soldier in the Israeli army, wanting to become a Communications Officer. ‘Listen, many soldiers have tried,’” the interviewer averred. “Choose something else,” he said. Kanotopsky averred. “I was a soldier in the Israeli army, wanting to become a Communications Officer. ‘Listen, many soldiers have tried,’” the interviewer averred. “Choose something else,” he said.

Kanotopsky added that her son in the Third Grade was called names, due to the fact he was Ethiopian. “I was a soldier in the Israeli army, wanting to become a Communications Officer. ‘Listen, many soldiers have tried,’” the interviewer averred. “Choose something else,” he said.

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PJ Library Offers Families Everything for a Lively and Entertaining Hanukkah

As fall moves toward winter, Jewish families begin to look towards Hanukkah, the Festival of Lights. Celebrating the rededication of the Jewish temple after it was taken back from the Greeks in the 2nd century BCE, it’s a fun and festive holiday spanning eight days and is best known for menorahs, latkes and dreidels. This year, families are invited to turn to PJ Library for a treasure trove of free resources created to ensure Hanukkah 2022 is a memorable one; included is an updated Hanukkah Hub featuring printable recipes and activity ideas, book lists, a new story-based podcast and so much more!

PJ Library is a program of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation which delivers more than 680,000 free Jewish story books to kids around the world each month. Now in its 17th year, the program hit a milestone in 2022 by shipping its 50 millionth book. Jewish families of all backgrounds at all levels of Jewish knowledge and observance – including interfaith households – may subscribe every child in their home to receive a new, age-appropriate book each month. PJ Library’s team of experts and educators curate the book list to provide the very best children’s stories that celebrate Jewish values, traditions, and culture to engage all Jewish families. And what could be a better Hanukkah gift than to receive a beautifully illustrated book arriving in the mailbox each month? This year, for example, younger readers (ages 3-5) will receive Varda Livney’s delightful picture book Hanukkah at Monica’s, a new and original release from PJ Publishing, the program’s in-house imprint.

Beyond the books, PJ Library will update their resource-packed Hanukkah Hub, which offers child-friendly versions of the Hanukkah story along with numerous unique craft ideas, delectable holiday recipes, and printable activities. One new offering is a lively Hanukkah-themed lava lamp activity, where children will test the density of different types of oil while creating calming faux “lava lamps” with recycled materials. This fun craft is a great addition to a night of enjoying foods fried in oil while embracing the Jewish values of curiosity and learning. In addition, families can turn to PJ Library activities and resources such as The Ultimate List of Books about Hanukkah offering up the very best in holiday page turners, as well as 10 Easy (and Kid-Approved) Hanukkah Recipes, or The Easy Hanukkah Guide: Recipes, Gifts and Activities For Each Night. And, on the award-winning podcast front, a new Afternoons with Mimi episode arrives on November 22 – just in time for the holiday! Perfect for children ages 2-5, “Kiddo Lights the Hanukkah Candles” has wise Grandma Mimi detailing the all-important lighting of the menorah, what it means and how to do it.

The new picture book, Hanukkah at Monica’s, is now on the PJ Library Amazon store https://www.amazon.com/pjlibrary. The colorfully illustrated new picture book is written and illustrated by Varda Livney. Synopsis: No one loves Hanukkah more than Monica and celebrating the Festival of Lights — lighting candles, singing blessings, eating delicious fried foods and playing dreidel — is even more fun with friends. Luckily, Monica has lots of friends, including a robot, a pirate, even a jellyfish! Who’s going to arrive at her party next?

Long a valuable resource for interfaith families, PJ Library also offers guidance this year, including their list of Hanukkah Books for Interfaith Families. Interfaith families who choose to celebrate Hanukkah can turn to Jessica Keith’s helpful blog post No, We Don’t Celebrate Both.

Finally, for those seeking creative gift-giving options, PJ Library has set up shop at amazon.com/pjlibrary. There, families can find colorful aprons for cooking and crafting and books from the PJ Library imprint, PJ Publishing, including recent additions My Hands Make the World, Havdalah Sky and Laila Too, Moon. The PJ Library Amazon store also offers a perpetual Jewish calendar kit, making it simple for families to personalize and track Jewish holidays month after month.

A Kid Friendly Donut Recipe for Hanukkah

In the Hanukkah story, one tiny jar of oil keeps the lamps burning for eight full nights. Since Hanukkah celebrates this miracle, it’s traditional to eat foods fried in oil as part of the festivities.

**Hanukkah Mini Donut Holes**

**Ingredients:**
- Vegetable oil
- 1 package of prepared pizza dough
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon cinnamon

**Optional topping ideas:**
- Powdered sugar
- Cocoa
- Jelly
- Melted chocolate chips

**Preparation:**
- In a large heavy pan (or electric skillet), add enough oil so that it is about one inch deep. Heat over medium high heat (between 375 and 400 degrees).
- Roll out pizza dough until it is about ½-1 inch thick. Cut rounds of dough using a one-inch cookie or biscuit cutter. If you’ve got a kid helper on hand, pass off the cookie cutters and put them to work, just make sure a grownup does the next step.
- Carefully place each dough round in the oil and cook about 1 minute per side.
- Remove the rounds from the oil and place them on a plate lined with paper towel.
- Now it’s time for your toppings! Combine the sugar and cinnamon in a bowl, and while the rounds are still warm, roll them in the mixture to coat.
- Serve immediately. 
- https://pjlibrary.org/beyond-books/pjblog/december-2016/hanukkah-recipe-donut

To find out more, visit pjlibrary.org.
Governor Kathy Hochul has announced the opening of applications for $50 million to strengthen safety and security measures at nonprofit, community-based organizations at risk of hate crimes or attacks because of their ideology, beliefs, or mission. This funding is the greatest amount ever available through the program. Nonprofit organizations that have previously received grants may now apply for new security projects, and for the first time, cybersecurity projects will be considered for funding. Additionally, Governor Hochul announced $46 million in federal funding for 240 nonprofit organizations across the state facing an increased risk of terrorist attack. This critical funding will assist in strengthening the security of their facilities, as well as enhance overall preparedness.

“Hate has no place in New York, and we will continue to support organizations that are most vulnerable to vicious and violent attacks,” Governor Hochul said. “With this new round of unprecedented funding, these at-risk facilities will be able to fund safety precautions, including cybersecurity projects, to protect vulnerable people from those who would lash out against them due to their ideology, belief or mission.”

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The announcement comes as hate and bias incidents persist throughout New York and federal authorities have warned of security threats in neighboring states targeting faith-based institutions. Hate crimes adversely and disproportionately affect entire communities, not just the intended targets. While the number of hate crimes reported to police in the state represents a small fraction of total crime, these incidents traumatize and instill fear in the greater community. New York State tracks these incidents separately from other crimes so trends can be monitored, and steps can be taken to prevent them from occurring in the first place.

Provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency through its Nonprofit Security Grant Program, $46 million in federal funds are being allocated to New York through two separate awards - $38.8 million for organizations within the New York City Metro Area and $7.2 million for organizations throughout the rest of the State. The New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services manages these programs in close coordination with local stakeholders. The 240 nonprofit organizations that are receiving federal funding are allowed to use those grants for plans detailing security risk management, continuity of operations, and incident response; physical security enhancement equipment, and inspection and screening systems; active shooter training, and security training for employees, members or the congregation; response exercises; and contracted security personnel.

Administered by the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), the state-funded Securing Communities Against Hate Crimes program is seeking proposals for the $50 million, which is anticipated to support approximately 1,000 projects across the state.

Created in 2017, the program provides funding to strengthen security measures and prevent hate crimes against nonprofit community and civic centers, cultural museums, day care centers, and other nonprofit organizations that may be vulnerable because of their ideology, beliefs, or mission. This funding can be used to support exterior or interior security improvements, including but not limited to lighting, locks, alarms, panic buttons, fencing, barriers, access controls, shatter-resistant glass and blast-resistant film, public address systems, and for the first time, measures to strengthen cybersecurity. Funds can also cover costs associated with security training. To date, a total of $83.1 million has been awarded to more than 600 nonprofit organizations to support approximately 1,700 projects.

DCJS will accept applications for up to $50,000 per project; each eligible organization may submit up to three applications for a maximum of $150,000. An eligible organization also may submit a separate application for up to $50,000 to fund a cybersecurity project. Applications must be submitted to DCJS by Tuesday, January 31, 2023. Visit the Grants/Funding page of the DCJS website for eligibility requirements, instructions, guidelines and additional information.
AMCHA Discovers Attacks on Jewish Identity Doubled on U.S. Campuses

AMCHA Initiative’s annual campus antisemitism report, released on November 16, unearthed an insidious and never-before-exposed phenomenon: Jew-hatred on college campuses: a pervasive and relentless assault on Jewish identity.

Unlike other campus studies released this year and in previous years, which examine whether campuses are safe or unsafe for Jewish students, this study investigated the nature, scope and trajectory of the threats to Jewish student identity on U.S. campuses, and it found a staggering doubling of such threats at 60% of schools most popular with Jewish students. The threats uncovered in the report include attempts to dissociate Zionism from Judaism, pit Zionism against progressive values, accuse Zionist Jews of undue privilege, power and control, and purge Zionism and Zionists from campus life.

As highlighted by a recent Pew survey, which found that more than 80% of Jews view Israel as integral to their Jewish identity, the threats documented in AMCHA’s study constitute a direct assault on the identity of many Jewish students. This is because whether understood as a religion, an ethnicity, a peoplehood, or some combination of these, Israel has played an integral role in the formation, history, observance and continued safety of Judaism and the Jewish people.

The study also exposes the main sources of these threats, details how if left unaddressed this pervasive and relentless assault on Jewish identity will result in dire consequences for the Jewish community in the years to come, and offers recommendations to begin addressing this profoundly alarming problem.

“On most campuses today, identity politics play a crucial role in campus life, and for Jewish students who identify as Zionists...campus life can be profoundly challenging,” note the researchers.

“First, the assaults themselves constitute a degree of harassment and identity suppression unparalleled on college campuses today. No other campus identity group is routinely subject to the kinds of well-orchestrated campaigns of identity assault that Zionist and pro-Israel students have had to endure for the last several years at schools across the country. Second, on campuses dominated by the politics of identity and oppression, the specific nature of the denigration faced by Jewish Zionist students, which draws upon classic antisemitic themes of Jewish malevolence and undue privilege, power and control, has not only made Zionist students social pariahs, it has made it extremely difficult for them to draw attention to the harms they are experiencing and to seek redress."

Main Findings:

Threats to Jewish identity doubled in the 2021-2022 academic year and were found on 60% of the campuses most popular with Jewish students.

- There were 254 attacks on Jewish identity documented on 63 campuses in the 2021-2022 academic year.
- Schools that played host to 10 or more such incidents were Harvard University (25), University of Chicago (13), Tufts University (12), UCLA (10) and Rutgers University (10).
- Bullying and intimidation of Jewish students tripled.
- Attempts to disconnect Zionism from Judaism and from progressive causes nearly tripled.
- Promotion of anti-Zionist Jews as more authentic than Zionist Jews doubled.
- Calls to rid the campus of Zionism increased more than six-fold, and attempts to cancel Israel-related events, programs, classes, and trips increased nearly five-fold.
- Calls for Jewish students to reject Birthright or other Jewish identity trips increased nearly 20-fold.
- Faculty and academic departments played a significant role in attacks on Jewish identity.
- Schools with academic BDS-supporting faculty were three to seven times more likely to have such attacks.
- Twenty percent of threats to Jewish identity took place at events sponsored by academic departments.
- More than one-third of anti-Zionist challenges to well-established definitions of Zionism, Judaism and antisemitism took place in programs sponsored by academic departments.

Schools with both Jewish and non-Jewish anti-Zionist student groups had a significantly higher incidence of all categories of threats to Jewish identity than schools with only a non-Jewish anti-Zionist student group during the 2021-2022 academic year.

In addition, despite the fact that anti-Zionist student groups like SJP were the only reliable contributor to incidents intended to silence Zionist expression on campus, faculty who support academic BDS were the largest contributors to rhetoric dissociating Zionism from Judaism, denying anti-Zionism is antisemitism and denigrating those who say it is, and using classic antisemitic tropes to vilify Jewish or Zionist identity.

In explaining these results, the researchers state, “When faculty and academic departments assert as fact propositions that are germane to Jewish identity – for example, that Zionism is not an authentic part of Judaism; that anti-Zionism is not antisemitism; or that Zionists misuse religion to justify Israel’s crimes – they provide those propositions with academic legitimacy and the power to justify and incite behavior that targets Jewish and pro-Israel students for harm.”

The researchers warn that in the short term, the pervasive and well-coordinated attacks on Jewish identity will undoubtedly result in increasing numbers of Jewish students feeling the need to hide their Jewish identity on campus, or to detach from Jewish life partially or completely. They go on to caution that in the long term, the sheer scope of the assault on Jewish student identity could negatively affect the level of communal identification and participation of an entire generation of young Jewish adults and presage a major crisis for American Jewry.

The researchers also recommend that the Jewish community invest in strengthening Jewish life on campus and enabling Jewish students of all backgrounds and levels of prior Jewish engagement to be part of a vibrant community that can provide the support, encouragement, education and fellowship necessary for not only weathering a toxic campus climate but thriving as Jews.

AMCHA monitors more than 450 college campuses across the U.S. for anti-Semitic activity. The organization has recorded more than 5,000 anti-Semitic incidents on college campuses since 2015.

AMCHA Initiative is a non-partisan, non-profit organization dedicated to combating anti-Semitism at colleges and universities in the United States.


Governor Hochul Announces NY State Police Increase Protection for Hate Crime Targets

On November 21, Governor Kathy Hochul announced the New York State Police is increasing surveillance and protection for communities at risk of hate crimes, following a thwarted attack on Jewish communities in New York City and a mass shooting at an LGBTQ nightclub in Colorado.

These efforts build on Governor Hochul’s record increase in funding to protect targets of hate crimes and to combat domestic extremism.

“I have directed the New York State Police to ramp up monitoring and increase support for communities that are potential targets of hate crimes,” Governor Hochul said. “Here in New York, we will not tolerate violence or bigotry toward any community. We stand united against hate — today and every day.”

New York State Police Acting Superintendent Steven A. Nigrelli said, “The State Police will work in close coordination with our state, local and federal partners to keep all our communities safe from violence. We appreciate the resources and support from Governor Hochul to help us accomplish this mission.”

At Governor Hochul’s direction, New York State Police is ramping up surveillance for communities that are potential targets of hate crime. State Police is in contact with the NYPD and continues to monitor social media for hateful threats that may impact New Yorkers. Then New York’s Counter Terrorism Intelligence Unit is conducting outreach to LGBTQ communities across New York, as well as to synagogues and other Jewish community spaces in the state.

On November 20, MTA Police, State Police, the NYPD and the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force collaborated to arrest two armed men at Pennsylvania Station in Manhattan who are accused of traveling to New York City with plans to cause violence towards the Jewish community. Increased resources provided by Governor Hochul to the State Police and the New York State Intelligence Center contributed to these arrests.

Following the white supremacist shooting in Buffalo, Governor Hochul expanded state resources dedicated to combating hateful extremism and violence. Governor Hochul issued an Executive Order directing the New York State Police to establish a dedicated unit within the New York State Intelligence Center (NYSIC) to track domestic extremism and increase social media monitoring at the Intelligence Center. She also worked with the legislature to triple the state’s gun violence intelligence resources by staffing NYSIC with a team of analysts who can investigate gun crimes across the state. Governor Hochul also signed legislation that took effect last month increasing the reimbursement for victims and survivors whose personal property was lost or damaged as a result of hate crimes and other crimes to $2,500 - five times the previous limit.

Earlier in November, Governor Hochul announced a $96 million investment to strengthen safety and security measures at nonprofit, community-based organizations at risk of hate crimes or attacks because of their ideology, beliefs or mission. Governor Hochul also announced $10 million to support the creation of threat assessment and management teams in counties across New York State.

Online antisemitism is the most prevalent form of Jew-hatred today. Recent events have clearly demonstrated the critical importance of removing this vitriol before it festers. CyberWell is an ethical-tech Israeli non-profit dedicated to driving the enforcement and improvement of community standards and hate speech policies across social media platforms and empowering existing efforts and users to eradicate online Jew-hatred.

CyberWell has built a first-of-its-kind database that tracks, analyzes and reports online antisemitism across five of the leading social media platforms in multiple languages in real time, providing an accurate picture of the nature and magnitude of digital Jew-hatred and applying consistent pressure on the social media companies to do better.

“We envision a world where Jewish social media users feel safe to express their identity openly, free of harassment. By introducing a technologically advanced and scalable solution for public use, CyberWell is on a mission to improve the digital future for the Jewish people,” they state.

“Leveraging the most advanced and disruptive technology available in the open-source intellectual and big data space, we intend to air the dirty secrets and denigrations hosted by social media platforms until the accountability problem is solved, antisemitism and hate speech policies are enforced, community standards are improved, and changes are matched by dedicated communities.”


[Continued on page 12]
AJC CEO Ted Deutch To Join in White House Roundtable on Antisemitism

American Jewish Committee (AJC) CEO Ted Deutch thanked the White House for convening a roundtable discussion on combating antisemitism with the heads of U.S. Jewish organizations.

"Antisemitism is not a problem for the Jewish community alone. Venomous hate targeting Jews threatens American society, indeed our democracy," Deutch said. "By convening this important roundtable, the Biden Administration has demonstrated that it recognizes the severity of the problem and is committed to taking additional steps, in partnership with the Jewish community, to more effectively confront antisemitism in all its forms."

Deutch also recommended that President Biden appoint a task force charged with creating a national action plan to combat antisemitism.

Establishing such a task force is one of the key proposals in A Call to Action Against Antisemitism, AJC’s comprehensive society-wide nonpartisan guide to addressing antisemitism in America. The Call to Action provides U.S. leadership in all sectors of society with the knowledge and tools to understand, respond to, and prevent antisemitism.

AJC, the leading global Jewish advocacy organization, has long spearheaded initiatives to raise awareness of the multiple forms and sources of antisemitism and concrete policy recommendations for addressing the age-old hatred.

AJC’s annual State of Antisemitism in America Report, based on surveys of the Jewish and general populations, revealed that only 65% of Americans know what the term “antisemitism” means, 18% have heard it but are unsure what it means, and 16% have never heard of the term.

The AJC report also found that 39% of American Jews had changed their behavior out of fear of antisemitism, including taking steps to hide their Jewish identity, and 24% reported they have been the targets of antisemitism.

Support Needed for Birthright Israel Program

Inflation and increased travel expenses post-COVID are significantly affecting Birthright Israel’s budget, causing the organization to slash by up to a third the number of participants it can take to Israel in 2023 and beyond.

The Birthright Israel Foundation, the organization’s funding arm, is in conversations with its largest donors to brief them about this development and are confident they will continue supporting Birthright Israel and are hopeful they will increase their contributions.

But a significant shortage remains, and Birthright Israel is now seeking contributions from the wider American-Jewish community to maintain the organization’s provision of the critical program, which offers the gift of a 10-day trip to Jewish young adults, many of whom have never been to Israel.

In 2022, Birthright will bring a record 35,000 Jewish young adults from around the world to Israel, a number that could be reduced to 25,500 for 2023.

"There is a myth that Birthright Israel is funded by just a few large donors, including the Government of Israel and the Adelson Family Foundation, but that is not the case," said Birthright Israel Foundation’s President and CEO, Izzy Tapoohi. "Birthright Israel Foundation’s support comes from donors at all levels, from alumni, parents and mid and large donors, but we need more people to support this program, whether for the first time or at increased levels and today we call upon the entire Jewish community to help us maximize the number of future participants who can begin their Jewish journey on this critical program."

Expanding Birthright Israel’s reach, rather than reducing it, is vital now, when young Jews are being bombarded with anti-Semitic and anti-Israel sentiments on social media and on college campuses.

Extensive research has revealed that Birthright participants have a significantly stronger connection to Israel and a far deeper Jewish identity than non-participants. A recent Brandeis University analysis of the Pew study found that Birthright participants are substantially more likely to marry Jews and raise their children Jewish.

"Birthright is a winning formula for a vibrant Jewish future," said Mark. "Participants return to their communities more educated about Israel, more involved in Jewish life, prouder of who they are as Jews. They feel part of their communities and tend to make up to 40 new Jewish and Israeli friends from their trip. Birthright is the key to ensure a stronger Jewish community."

Donations can be made via https://birthrightisrael.foundation/donate
Latimer Announces Suspension of Sales Tax on Home Energy Costs

Ensuring residents aren’t left out in the cold and can save some much-needed dollars during the Winter months, County Executive George Latimer proposed– and the Board of Legislators subsequently passed – a suspension of sales tax on home energy costs. The exemption will run from December 1-February 28.

Latimer said: “Westchester County Government is constantly looking to find ways to make the lives of residents a little easier. This winter, heating your home will now cost you a little less. As we all face rising costs in our daily lives, this suspension of certain sales tax will add extra dollars to the wallets of those who call Westchester home.”

The sales tax suspension covers home heating oil, propane, natural gas, electric, coal and wood for residential heating purposes and covers homeowners as well as rental units. Landlords and renters will be eligible depending on the structure of the unit’s heat and electric use.

Grants to Expand Mental Health Services for Youth

Governor Kathy Hochul has announced more than $33.3 million to community-based healthcare providers that will increase access to mental health services for children and families across the state. Administered through the state Office of Mental Health, the federal funding is aimed at helping community-based service providers better serve children and youth who are diagnosed with mental illness and a developmental disability or substance use disorder.

“Access to mental health programs is a critical component of our efforts to ensure New Yorkers receive the care they need for themselves and their loved ones,” Governor Hochul said. “Too often, vulnerable populations face barriers in their ability to access mental health services, and these grants will help expand access to statewide programs, helping support more young New Yorkers to properly address their mental health needs.”

The grants are funded through the American Rescue Plan Act and time-limited expansion of the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage share of funds for Medicaid programs. Community-based healthcare providers were invited to propose innovative projects to meet the needs of the children and families they serve.

Locally, Westchester Jewish Community Services received a community based award.

Office of Mental Health Commissioner Dr. Ann Sullivan said, “These grants will allow our healthcare providers in communities across the state to enhance and expand the services they provide to vulnerable youth living with mental health challenges, as well as substance use disorders or developmental disabilities. By increasing access, engagement and coordination of treatment and services, our community-based partners will be able to effectively serve many more youth and families.”

Office of Addiction Services and Supports Commissioner Chaimao Cunningham said, “A comprehensive approach to treating both mental health and substance use conditions is an important part of the care provided to people across New York State. These are important initiatives that will serve a vital need, and thanks to this funding, more young people will have opportunities to access these critical services in their own community to support their long-term health.

The awards include more than $1 million that was divided among 35 not-for-profit community-based programs that operate under contracts with the Office of Mental Health or are funded by the agency or county mental health departments with local funds or state aid. These awards will support expanding suicide prevention initiatives, respite programs, family and youth peer support services and children’s non-Medicaid managed care programs.

Another $760,000 was divided among 19 community-based providers to support efforts to establish mechanisms to increase engagement and reduce the reliance on emergency services for transportation. Funded projects include the purchase of metro cards to help remove transportation barriers for people receiving services, and expansion and enhancement of High-Risk Outpatient Mental Health Services.

The awards also include $760,000 that was split among 19 programs to establish or enhance service coordination and multidisciplinary teams. Funded projects include implementation of an electronic data collection system and the creation of a Multi-Disciplinary Team meeting coordinator and facilitator for a provider’s Children’s Mental Health Rehabilitative Services Program.

Another $280,000 was split between seven programs aimed at expanding services for co-occurring treatment, for patients who are living with mental illness as well as a developmental disability or substance use disorder. Funded projects include addition of a clinician for dually diagnosed adolescents, providing staff training in medication-assisted treatment and trauma-based cognitive behavior therapy and implementation of an evidence-based treatment model for adolescents and young adults designed to decrease harmful substance use and improve mental health.

Celebrate Chanukah! Bring in the last night of Chanukah on December 25 at 2pm and sing and dance along to Klezmer band Litvakus Collective led by Zisl Slopevitch. Broadway/ National Yiddish Theatre Folksbiene performer Maja Jacobson will also lead in lighting a historic menorah from the exhibit about menorahs around the globe at The Museum at Eldridge Street, 12 Eldridge Street, NYC. Call 212 219 0392 or visit Eldridge street. org for more information.

On December 18, join the Chabad of the Rivertowns, as Irvington’s Main Street is transformed into a magical Chanukah Village from 1-4pm, with music, crafts, food , gelt drop and magic show. Go to Chanukah22.com for details or to RSVP.

The Chabad of Bronvile will host Chanukah Festivities on the following days: On December 19 at 6 pm, a Menorah lighting in Leonard Morange Square, Bronxville, (Bronxville Train station and Palmer Avenue) will feature music by Zev; On December 20 at 6pm, a gelt drop and Menorah lighting will take place in Memorial Park, Eastchester (White Plains Road and California Road) with Eastchester Fire Department; On December 21 at 6pm, a Menorah lighting in Depot Square in Tuckahoe (Main Street and Columbus Avenue). All locations will feature latkes, donuts, Dreidels and Chocolate Gelt. To learn more, visit ChabadJewishCenter.com

On December 18, at 1:30pm, join Chabad of Larchmont starting at 146 Larchmont Avenue then going to Constitution Park, Larchmont, as they take a Chanukah Walk in the Village. At 3:45pm, a Menorah Ice Carving begins with a 4:30pm Candle Lighting. RSVP to larchmontchanukahvillage.com. Also, Chabad of Larchmont Mamaroneck hosts The Dreidel House at 101 Mamaroneck Avenue, Mamaroneck from December 19-26. Call 914-834-8000 for times.

On December 19, The Chabad of Pelham will host Chanukah Festivities at the Town House, 20 Fifth Avenue, Pelham at 5:30pm. For details go to ChabadPelham.com/Chanukah

The JCC of Mid Westchester [JCCMW], 999 Wilmot Road, Scarsdale, presents the following activities: On December 17, Shabbat Tots will take a Nature Walk, Chanukah edition, at 9:30 am at Sheldrake River Trails; On December 19, the JCC of Mid Westchester has announced that Daniel Ulbricht is returning to the Dance School at JCCMW to teach an intermediate level Holiday Master Ballet Class from 11am to 12:45pm. Pre-register at jccmw.org/dance-school; On December 20, The Great Chanukah Fry Off will take place at 6:30pm at the JCC of Mid Westchester; On December 25, a Chinese Lunch and movie screening of Fiddler on the Roof will take place at 11am; On December 25, the Friedland Makerspace will host Chanukah activities at 10am for children 8 and under and 12pm for children 8 and older. To RSVP for activities or for details, call 914-725-7300 or write info@jccmw.org

Annual AJC Thanksgiving Diversity Breakfast Stands Fast Against Hate Crimes

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faith, in the spirit of love,” Delgado averred, noting that his wife is Black-Jewish, and his children are being raised Jewish. Delgado visited the Western Wall, Israel in 2019.

“the strongest part of what we do is to once again create dialogue,” NYS Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins remarked, referring to the discussion tables. she pointed to people experiencing anti-Semitism, homophobia, Islamophobia and struggles with COVID.

NYS Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins.
TOGETHER WE CELEBRATE

MANY FLAVORS, ONE FAMILY

SEASONS

THOUGHTS WITH FAMILY
Holocaust & Human Rights Education Center Offers Annual Middle School Institute Program

The Holocaust & Human Rights Education Center (HHREC) hosted their 8th Annual Human Rights Institute for Middle School Student Leaders on November 15th, 16th and 17th at Congregation Emanu-El of Westchester in Rye. Students and teachers from thirty public and private middle schools in the Lower Hudson-Westchester region attended. HHREC staff and area middle school teachers facilitated a breakout session on the themes of Respecting the Individual and How to Be an Upstander, and students met within groups to develop activities to implement in their schools. High School students from Byram Hills, Dobbs Ferry, John Jay (Katonah-Lewisboro) and Somers helped to facilitate the breakout sessions.

The Institute began with a keynote presentation by Sheila Arnold, CEO and Lead Performer of History's Alive! Ms. Arnold has also performed as a Regional Storyteller at Colonial Williamsburg, the Valley Forge Teacher Institute, and at conferences across the U.S.

This program was developed to further the mission of the HHREC by laying the foundation to encourage students to become “upstanders rather than bystanders.” Participating schools included: Albert Leonard (New Rochelle); Benjamin Turner (Mount Vernon); Denzel Washington School of the Arts (Mount Vernon); Dobbs Ferry; Eastchester; Fieldstone (North Rockland); Fox Lane (Bedford); French American School; German International School; H.H. Wells (Brexter); Highlands (White Plains); Hommocks (Mamaroneck); Isaac E. Young (New Rochelle); Mahopac; Newburgh (Heritage MS, Meadow Hill Gem, South MS and Temple Academy); North Salem; Pierre Van Cortlandt (Croton-on-Hudson); Pleasantville; Port Chester; Rye Country Day School; Rye Neck; Scarsdale; Seven Bridges (Chappaqua); Somers; Westlake (Mt. Pleasant); and Woodlands (Greenburgh) middle schools.

“We are very pleased to continue offering this program to area middle schools this year,” said Julie Scallero, HHREC Co-Director of Education. “We really appreciate the support from their teachers to help us connect with their students, as we work together to help them learn about these important contemporary issues.”

For more information visit the HHREC website at HHRECNY.org or contact Julie Scallero at jscallero@hhrecny.org.

New Holocaust Educator School Partnership and Estelle Lubliner Scholarship

On November 11, 2022, Julianna Margulies met with Museum of Jewish Heritage Internship Program Coordinator Emily Szasz, and Rivkah Bryski and Phoebe Eilman, who are the first interns in the Holocaust Educator School Partnership Program, and then visited the Museum’s main exhibition, The Holocaust: What Hate Can Do. (Photo Credit: Museum of Jewish Heritage)

In its 25th anniversary year, New York’s Museum of Jewish Heritage - A Living Memorial to the Holocaust is deepening its commitment to Holocaust education with the launch of two new initiatives designed to engage teens and young adults as students, peer educators, and ambassadors for Holocaust education.

The Holocaust Educator School Partnership (HESP), made possible by a generous donation from the Lubliner and Finer Families, will financially support the college education of graduating 12th graders from the New York City public school system.

“I thank Julianna Margulies and Estelle Lubliner for their support at this pivotal time in our country’s history,” said Jack Kliger, President and CEO of the Museum of Jewish Heritage. “Education must always be at the center of all our efforts to counter discrimination and intolerance, raise awareness, advance inclusion, and address the root causes of hate and antisemitism. It is essential that we reach our younger generations so they can develop awareness and skills that inevitably help to create a stronger society.”

“It is our responsibility as educators to teach continued on page 11
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The Jewish Museum Celebrates Hanukkah

Celebrate Hanukkah with the Jewish Museum! Highlights include a selection of Hanukkah lamps on view from the Museum's renowned collection: special family programs including a concert with Oran Etkin on December 25; and unique menorahs, dreidels, and gift items available for sale in the Jewish Museum Shop.

Hanukkah begins on the evening of Sunday, December 18, and runs through Monday, December 26. The Jewish Museum is free on Saturdays, and children 18 and under are always free. Timed tickets are strongly recommended.

The Jewish Museum’s collection of Hanukkah lamps is the largest in the world at nearly 1,050 pieces and was amassed over the 118 years of the Museum’s existence. A selection of lamps are currently on view in Scenes from the Collection, including Peter Shire’s Menorah #7 (1986), a portable Hanukkah lamp from the 18th century, and an earthenware lamp from 1956 by Otto Natzler (pictured). An over-five-foot-tall Hanukkah lamp (1752-53), which was likely first used in a synagogue in Odessa (present-day Ukraine), will be on view in the Museum’s lobby during the holiday.

Hanukkah Art Mix
Sunday, December 18, 2022
11 am - 3:30 pm EST
Scheuer Auditorium & Exhibition Galleries
Celebrate the beginning of Hanukkah with artmaking and an exploration of striking Hanukkah lamps in the Jewish Museum’s galleries. Capture your discoveries through playful drawing activities, collaborate on an “illuminated city” installation with The Giant Room (a creative hub for children), create unique Hanukkah cards and prints, and re-mix everyday materials to design a holiday sculpture inspired by art on view in New York: 1962-1964. The Giant Room will be leading their drop-in installation project from 11:30am-1:30pm. All other activities are ongoing.

Free with Museum Admission; children 18 and under are free. Reservations are recommended.

On Sunday, December 25, 2022, Oran Etkin Concert will have two Sets: 11:30 am to 12:30 pm or 2:30 pm to 3:30 pm in the Scheuer Auditorium for ages 3 and up.

Hear jazz, klezmer, and the music of Africa as Oran Etkin weaves global melodies and rhythms. Enjoy tunes from Wake Up Clarinet!, Finding Friends Far From Home, and Gathering Light in honor of Hanukkah in this musical world party.

Concert ticket reservations are required for both adults and children to reserve seats.

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To all the Readers of Westchester Jewish Life

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Wishing you light, love and laughter.

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Pew Survey on Jewish Identity

Birthright Israel, a program that since 1999 has brought more than 800,000 young Jewish adults on a ten-day trip to Israel to introduce them to the country’s ancient roots and modern wonders, significantly strengthens American Jewish young adults’ connection to Israel and commitment to leading Jewishly engaged lives. This finding was based on recent analyses of the Pew Research Center’s survey of nearly 5,000 American Jews conducted from late 2019 through mid-2020 and released last year.

Pew’s survey included questions about Jewish identity, religious observance, cultural involvement, connections and attitudes toward Israel, perceptions of anti-Semitism and political leanings. Prof. Leonard Saxe, the director of the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University and his team analyzed the raw data made available by the Pew Center. The findings, to appear in the academic journal Contemporary Jewry demonstrate that, compared to younger adult respondents with similar Jewish backgrounds who did not visit Israel, Birthright participants were:

- 85% more likely to be “somewhat/very” attached to Israel (63%, compared to 34%)
- 54% more likely to feel a “great deal” of belonging to the Jewish people (40%, compared to 26%)
- 58% more likely to feel “a lot” in common with Israeli Jews (71%, compared to 45%)
- 160% more likely to have a spouse who is Jewish (39%, compared to 15%)
- 45% more likely to have attended a Seder the previous Passover (77%, compared to 53%)
- 53% more likely to have donated to a Jewish charity (29%, compared to 19%)

“Pew’s 2020 survey of American Jews provides independent evidence of Birthright’s broad impact on the American Jewish community,” said Saxe. “They demonstrate that Birthright Israel creates meaningful changes in Jewish identity and engagement that are shaping the future of American Jewish life.”

Prof. Saxe and colleagues’ analyses of the Pew data estimated that among age eligible Jews (18-46 at the time of the survey), 25 percent of those who were not raised Orthodox have participated in Birthright. Many of the younger people in this group remain eligible to participate and many of the older individuals had only a narrow window during which they could have participated. Nearly 30% of Jewish parents with an adult child have a child who participated.

New Holocaust Educator School Partnership and Estelle Lubliner Scholarship

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all of our kids about our full past and to make sure we always remember the Holocaust,” said Schools Chancellor David C. Banks. “We are so grateful to the Museum of Jewish Heritage, actress Julianna Margulies, and Estelle Lubliner, for their generous support of these initiatives which will advance the teaching of Holocaust memory and counter the contemporary rise in antisemitism through education in our public schools.”

“Sadly, far too many young people are unaware of one of the most horrific periods in our world history, when millions were murdered during the Holocaust,” Julianna Margulies said. “Throughout our history we have witnessed evil prevail in the face of silence and inaction, so it is vital that current and future generations understand our collective responsibility to combat antisemitism and hate in all forms, from words to actions. I am proud to support the Museum of Jewish Heritage’s Holocaust Education School Partnership because it seeds hope and opportunity, where young adults are messengers and teachers. Through their commitment, we can create a better world for all of us.”

The Holocaust Educator School Partnership (HESP) is a paid internship program for undergraduate and graduate students currently studying in the New York metropolitan area. HESP interns are trained on how to teach the history of the Holocaust and then work with local public middle and high school students to understand this history.

HESP interns attend intensive trainings at the Museum with staff, hear testimony from Holocaust survivors, and learn methods for teaching from the Museum’s extensive collection of 40,000 artifacts and photographs. Following their training, HESP interns work in pairs, visiting local schools to teach an introductory classroom lesson and later give tours to these classes at the Museum.

With plans to serve more than 1,000 middle and high school students per semester, HESP will expand in Spring 2023. The program’s goal is to preserve Holocaust memory and counter the contemporary rise in antisemitism through education, while cultivating the next generation of leaders, teachers, and scholars with professional ambitions for this work.

The Estelle Lubliner Scholarship will award $20,000 annually to at least one graduating high school student from New York City public school system to support their college education. Scholarship applicants are asked to submit an essay in response to a choice of prompts that explore Jewish life in Europe during the period of the Holocaust and to “consider how Jewish cultural identity and responsibility to the community affected their response to antisemitism and persecution.” The deadline to apply is February 1, 2023.

The new scholarship program is made possible by the generosity of Estelle Lubliner, a second generation survivor, or 2G. Ms. Lubliner’s parents were Moses (Moishe) “Max” Lubliner and Ida Lubliner (née Finer). Max and Ida met in the Lödž Ghetto during WWII, before emigrating to New York together.

For more information, visit mjhny.org.

Hanukkah and Antisemitism

As we light the candles of Hanukkah, we commemorate driving out forces of darkness over the Jewish people. And we must continue to Shine a Light on the oldest hatred: antisemitism.

The ongoing and increasingly horrific string of anti-Jewish rants that emanated from Kanye West (“Ye”) have perhaps drawn the most attention. Words matter. Eventually, many business partners severed business ties when this hate was made public.

Then Brooklyn Nets star Kyrie Irving felt a need to tweet about a book and documentary filled with vicious antisemitic tropes, including a denial that the Holocaust happened. After declining to apologize, Irving was suspended for several games without pay. Only then did he say sorry – sort of. Whether anyone believes him is another matter.

So much hate is directed against the Jewish people who comprise barely 2% of the U.S. population and just 0.2% across the globe. Yet, Jews are among the country’s leading recipients of hate.

Consider AJC’s 2021 groundbreaking antisemitism survey, where one in four American Jews said they had experienced antisemitism in the last year. And 11 in 10 said they had changed their behavior to avoid being publicly identified as Jewish, such as self-censoring on social media, or not wearing a yarmulke or Star of David (Magen David) necklace.

In 2022, in the United States of America.

What’s more, the Jewish community is often not included in DEI (Diversity, Equity, Inclusivity) conversations or task forces, in schools, college campuses, or workplaces. As the number one target of all religiously based hate crimes according to the FBI, how is that possible?

AJC is working to reduce those shocking numbers and situations through our Call to Action Against Antisemitism, and “Translate Hate” glossary that explains common antisemitic tropes.

These resources provide guidance and tools to help leaders understand, respond to, and prevent antisemitism. Let’s be very clear: antisemitism is everyone’s problem.

Importantly, many Westchester County municipal leaders have partnered with AJC and the U.S. Conference of Mayors to sign a powerful joint “Mayors United Against Antisemitism” statement.

And, AJC Westchester/Fairfield’s recent Thanksgiving Diversity Breakfast, with hundreds of extraordinary community partners from nearly every faith and background, highlighted the power of our communities standing strong together in unity as a Community of Conscience.

Together, we can Shine a Light on these issues and celebrate the strength of our diverse communities. As we celebrate Hanukkah, let us re dedicate ourselves to standing up against hatred and antisemitism, and strengthen our society overall.

Myra Clark-Siegel is regional director of AJC (American Jewish Committee). To learn more: westchester@ajc.org.
Inflation and What it Means to Seniors

BY BERNARD A. KROOKS, CERTIFIED ELDER LAW ATTORNEY

Unless you have been living under a rock the past year or so, you have probably felt the impact of inflation on your pocketbook. Going to the grocery store or filling your car up with a tank of gas just isn’t what it used to be.

Now, imagine you are a senior citizen living on a fixed income and have long-term care costs to deal with. According to a recent article in the Wall Street Journal, long-term care facilities are raising prices and tacking on new fees to the already high cost of long-term care, which often exceeds $200,000 a year in the New York Metropolitan area.

Some facilities, in addition to raising their rates by 10% or more this year, are tacking on a new inflation-related daily fee of $25 or more. While $25 a day may not sound like much, it translates to $750 monthly; a lot of money for someone living on a monthly fixed income.

For those families who cannot afford these additional costs, the choices are slim. One option is to move your loved one to another facility. This is not ideal from several perspectives, including the fact that many seniors are frail and not able to move, and even if they could, are comfortable where they are and have a support group of friends and colleagues that help them avoid feeling isolated. Alternatively, parents can move in with their adult children. This can involve costs to make the home accessible to mom or dad, in addition to other logistical issues.

If paying more money, moving to a less-expensive facility, or moving in with adult children, are not viable options, perhaps looking into government benefit programs that might be available to help pay for the cost of long-term care should be considered. If you are a veteran, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs may offer some programs that can provide financial assistance if you qualify. Some of these programs provide a monthly amount for seniors who can stay at home and others provide nursing home benefits. In fact, there are some nursing homes that will accept veterans who qualify based on disability and other factors.

If a VA facility is not an option, you can explore Medicaid planning. Medicaid is a jointly funded federal/state program that pays for long-term care for those who qualify. There are strict income and asset requirements to qualify. When Medicaid was originally enacted, it was intended to be a health insurance program for people who were destitute; it has turned out to be a safety net for the middle class.

Qualifying for Medicaid involves understanding and complying with a labyrinth of complex and arcane rules and regulations. For example, there are different rules for those who are single versus those who are married; different rules for those who need care at home and those who need care in a nursing home. Moreover, the way these rules are interpreted by Medicaid may vary depending on where you live, where your application is submitted, and who reviews the application.

If Medicaid is going to be a consideration for you, it is best to plan. By planning in advance, you can usually save a significant portion of your assets and not have to spend those hard-earned dollars on the cost of your long-term care. It is never too late to consider Medicaid. Even if you are already in a nursing home and paying privately for that care, Medicaid may still be an option for you if you know how to navigate the system. Best to work with a Certified Elder Law Attorney who can help you through this process.

Bernard A. Krooks, Esq., is a founding partner of Littman Krooks LLP. He was named 2021 “Lawyer of the Year” by Best Lawyers in America® for excellence in Elder Law and has been honored as one of the “Best Lawyers” in America since 2008. He was elected to the Estate Planning Hall of Fame by the National Association of Estate Planners & Councils (NAEPC). Krooks is past Chair of the Elder Law Committee of the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel (ACTEC). Mr. Krooks may be reached at (914-684-2100) or by visiting the firm’s website at www.littmankrooks.com.

What to Do After an Alzheimer’s Diagnosis

BY GILLIAN RITTMASTER, LCSW, ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF WJCS JEWISH PROGRAMS

News of an Alzheimer’s diagnosis or of any related dementia is shocking and frightening. Those who faced this reality often don’t know where to turn. Unfortunately, the number of people coping with this situation is growing.

Over 6 million Americans aged 65 and older are living with Alzheimer’s, according to the Alzheimer’s Association. More than 11 million Americans provide unpaid care to loved ones with Alzheimer’s or a related dementia. The stress on individuals who are diagnosed as well as their caregivers can be enormous, from both a practical point of view as well as an emotional one.

The population in Westchester County is increasing at a rapid rate. Residents over 60 represent 20 percent of the total population or one in five people. It is estimated that one in four individuals in Westchester will be 60 and older by 2030.

WJCS will help families in Westchester as they address the decisions and logistics involved in senior care as well as Alzheimer’s and related dementias. They recognize that caregivers play a significant role and often do not receive the vital support they need to be a best care for their loved one. They provide information and resources to help families manage financial and legal matters and offer free consultations to assist loved ones as they determine the best care options. WJCS support groups create a comfortable space in which caregivers can share their feelings and coping tips and feel less alone in what can be a very isolating experience.

It can be devastating to witness what starts out as seemingly “normal” forgetfulness develop into severely impaired memory and an inability to perform daily activities of living and self-care. By providing families with guidance and support, WJCS aims to help loved ones grappling with their major caregiving challenges and sadness.

While the progression of Alzheimer’s varies from individual to individual, there are important steps to take as soon as a diagnosis is made:

• Contact an elder care attorney to discuss your financial planning and need for a power of attorney, will, and advanced directives.
• Connect your loved one to proper medical care including a gerontologist and a neurological team.
• Evaluate your home environment to ensure safety for your loved one.
• Be proactive and prepared for behavioral changes.
• Speak with your family, friends, and neighbors to seek emotional and practical support.
• Explore local resources.

For more information and to arrange for a free consultation contact Gillian Rittmaster, LCSW, Assistant Executive Director of Jewish Programs at grittmaster@wjcs.com; 914-761-0600 ext. 2142.
Holocaust & Human Rights Education Center Announces New Staff

The Holocaust & Human Rights Education Center (HHREC) of White Plains, has appointed Jeanne Claire Cotnoir and Deborah Boxer Minchin as Co-Directors of Education and Programming. Cotnoir and Minchin will work with HHREC to expand participation of area schools in the entire range of education programs offered by HHREC.

Cotnoir was formerly a social studies teacher at Briarcliff High School, and Minchin was formerly a social studies teacher at New Rochelle High School. They have both also served as adjunct lecturers at area universities.

“We’re very happy that Jean Claire Cotnoir and Deborah Minchin have joined the HHREC team as Co-Directors of Student Programming. They each bring a tremendous amount of experience and enthusiasm to these roles.”

For more information, visit HHRECNY.org.

Museum of Jewish Heritage – A Living Memorial to the Holocaust Honors Founders at its 25th Anniversary Generation to Generation Benefit

The Museum of Jewish Heritage – A Living Memorial to the Holocaust marked its 25th anniversary with an annual Generation to Generation benefit that raised more than $1 million and honored founders George Klein, Robert M. Morgenthau z”l, Manfred Ohrenstein, Peter A. Cohen, and Howard Rubenstein z”l on Tuesday, November 15, 2022.

The annual L’dor V’dor brought together 300 friends, family, and generations of survivors to support the Museum’s timely mission to serve as a beacon for education about antisemitism and bigotry through lessons of the Holocaust.

“We are humbled to be in a room with generations of family. Tonight, we honor the Museum’s founders, but we also honor the survivors and their descendants,” said Jack Kligler, President and CEO of The Museum of Jewish Heritage. “The same way the Torah is physically passed down from grandparents, to parents, to children at b’nei mitzvahs, we must pass down these responsibilities, and wisdom, along with spiritual knowledge and cultural traditions.”

“This living memorial, this beautiful building, is one of the great buildings of our city, is a memorial to those who did not survive, and a living educational institution inspired by those who did survive,” noted Museum Board Chair Bruce Ratner. “Survivors have been the heart and the soul of everything that we do. After 75 years we are thriving.”

George Klein added, “We created not only an exhibition but a living memorial. That was the whole purpose, a living memorial is a memorial that tells a story. We have to remember, because if we don’t remember, we will repeat it again.”

For more information, visit mjhnyc.org.

Mazel Tov

Luz Liebeskind Named CFO of UJA Federation of NY

Luz Liebeskind has been named as the new chief financial officer of UJA-Federation of New York, beginning January 1, 2023. She succeeds Irvin Rosenthal, who is retiring after more than 22 years in the role. Ms. Liebeskind will report to UJA CEO Eric S. Goldstein.

“UJA-Federation’s long history of strong financial controls and transparent reporting are core to our success and mission. Luz is a person of enormous integrity, with an outstanding track record, and shares our commitment to excellence in management and operations. Equally important, Luz’s expertise in leading complex transactions and negotiations, and proven ability to work collaboratively across constituencies, make her the ideal professional for the job. We are thrilled to have Luz join UJA,” said Eric S. Goldstein, CEO, UJA-Federation of New York.

“As a New Yorker, one sees the impact of UJA-Federation’s work everywhere you go — and it’s a privilege for me to be joining this extraordinary organization. I look forward to working with UJA-Federation’s excellent lay and professional team, as well as its unparalleled network of nonprofit partners, in helping to achieve UJA-Federation’s vital mission,” said Luz Liebeskind.

In her new role, Ms. Liebeskind will be responsible for the financial stability and management of the Federation’s approximately $225 million endowment, $1 billion in medical treatments that save lives.

“I am delighted to be joining Hadassah,” said Alperin. “As chief development officer, I will be able to use everything I have learned in previous roles in the service of a mission to which I am personally, as well as professionally, committed. And in Naomi Adler, I will have a fundraising partner whose vision and passion inspires everyone who meets her.”

Alperin earned a BS in political science from Rutgers University and an Executive Leadership Fellowship with the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation. She was selected for the first cohort of the Jewish Federation of North America’s Fundraising University (2012-2014). An accomplished baker and entrepreneur, she built and ran Sweetiepies, a dessert business, before becoming a philanthropy professional.

Hadassah Names Judith T. Alperin Chief Development Officer

Hadassah, The Women’s Zionist Organization of America, has announced that Judith T. Alperin has been named Chief Development Officer. Alperin, who will lead a team of 50 philanthropy professionals around the country, will report to Chief Executive Officer Naomi Adler and will be a member of Hadassah’s executive leadership team.

The position was effective November 3.

In addition to overseeing Hadassah’s US fundraising group, Alperin will partner with Adler to solicit and steward major gifts. Alperin will also work closely with the heads of the Hadassah Offices in Israel and Hadassah International, the organization’s global fundraising arm, to raise funds to support the work of Hadassah Medical Organization, Hadassah’s medical center in Jerusalem. Another special area of focus will be raising funds for Hadassah’s Youth Aliyah villages, which provide wraparound services for at-risk Israeli teenagers and for young immigrants from places in the world where it is no longer safe to be a Jew.

Alperin comes to Hadassah after almost seven years as CEO of the Jewish Federation Foundation, and JCC of Greater New Haven. During her tenure, she completed the integration of the Federation and New Haven’s JCC into a single $10 million operation with a staff of 350. In 2021, the Federation adopted a strategic plan based on the results of a community review, visioning and planning process led by Alperin.

“UJA-Federation’s long history of strong financial controls and transparent reporting are core to our success and mission. Luz is a person of enormous integrity, with an outstanding track record, and shares our commitment to excellence in management and operations. Equally important, Luz’s expertise in leading complex transactions and negotiations, and proven ability to work collaboratively across constituencies, make her the ideal professional for the job. We are thrilled to have Luz join UJA,” said Eric S. Goldstein.

Ms. Liebeskind served since 2008 as CFO of RiverSpring Living, a leading nonprofit dedicated to helping older adults, which operates the Hebrew Home at Riverdale, middle income independent living, affordable senior housing communities, and a managed long-term care plan. During her tenure, Ms. Liebeskind played an integral role in helping to grow RiverSpring Living from a $120 million to a $1.1 billion annual operating budget.

Before joining RiverSpring, Ms. Liebeskind was deputy controller for the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and previously served as the corporate controller at Montefiore Medical Center. She began her career at Ernst & Young.

Ms. Liebeskind serves on the board of the Baruch College Fund and was the treasurer from 2000 to 2012. She is co-chair of its finance committee and a member of its audit committee. Ms. Liebeskind also served on the Board of Directors of the North Shore Synagogue and is a certified public accountant in New York.
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For information on our community please call Jean Dunphy, General Manager at 914-428-3782 ext# 104 or email jdunphy@theambassadorscarsdale.com

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