

## County Residents Celebrate Israel at 75

BY STEPHEN E. LIPKEN

A joyous and fun-filled celebration of Israel's 75th anniversary was held at Temple Israel of New Rochelle (TINR) on Sunday, May 21, sponsored by the community Shlichah (Israel emissary) Shachar Liran-Hanan and Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI), who also had a photography display. Hillels of Westchester presented a Graffiti Wall.



An estimated 1,000 people attended.

Over 30 partners were involved in the event including: the Anti-Defamation League (ADL); American Jewish Committee {AJC} Westchester/Fairfield; Bet Am Shalom Synagogue, White Plains; Friends of Israel Defense Forces; Hillels of Westchester; Beth El Synagogue Center of New Rochelle; Hebrew Institute of White Plains; J-teens; Scarsdale Synagogue-Temples Tremont and Emanu-El; Temple Israel Center, White Plains; Shaarei Tikvah, Scarsdale; UJA Federation New York/Westchester; Westchester Jewish Council (WJC); Woodlands Community Temple, Greenburgh and Young Israel of Scarsdale.

Activities included Israeli dancing in TINR and Leffell School First Graders dancing to the music of the Holy Band in the Sanctuary. A liquor-tasting facility was available, "Jews and Booze."



Left to right: Hillels of Westchester Co-President Haina Just-Michael; Purchase Student Amber Nero; WJC Chief Executive Officer Elliot Forchheimer; Hillels of Westchester Executive Director Rachel Klein.

There was an inflatable tiger bounce castle, slide and crawl through outside, as well as an Israeli market with ceramics, Lily Toya Concrete Jewelry, Mezuzahs, scarves and food from "The Cheese Guy," Brent Delman, sold by his daughter, Maya, continued on page 4



Leffell First Graders in the Sanctuary

## Countywide "Gather Against Hate" Rally Unites Community

BY STEPHEN E. LIPKEN

The 2nd Annual Westchester County Wide, "Gather Against Hate" rally on Tuesday, June 6th, was held at Michaelian Office Building, 148 Martine Avenue, White Plains.



Left to right: Jill Friedman, Associate Regional Director, American Jewish Committee, Westchester/Fairfield; Karen Everett, Chair, Westchester Jewish Council; Pam Goldstein, Assistant Executive Director, WJC.

An estimated 150 citizens attended. A large group of speakers ranged from clergy, elected officials and Interfaith Intergroup Committee, Westchester Jewish Council Board. Many denominations were represented including Westchester County Board of Legislators Chair Vedat Gashi.

"It was Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. who said 'Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that,'" MC Reverend Dr. Stephen Pogue, Vice Chair, Human Rights Commission and Pastor, Greater Centennial Zion Church, A.M.E., Mount

Vernon observed.

Pogue introduced Congregation Anshe Sholom, New Rochelle, Rabbi Evan Hoffman, President, Westchester Board of Rabbis, who referred to Leviticus 19:17, "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart; thou shalt surely rebuke thy neighbor and not bear sin because of him." "Open and honest dialogue is the only way to avoid undesirable outcomes. The previous verse states, 'Love thy neighbor as thyself.'"

District Attorney Mimi Rocah informed the audience that her father was a Holocaust survivor who taught her the lesson that an attack on one community is an attack on every community.

County Executive George Latimer pointed out, "We are different because we are old, young, Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, left-handed, right-handed and ambidextrous. We are different because some of us are born with disabilities.

"But we are the same. We all feel pain. We all love and want to be loved. Before we worship the God of social media, with television stations telling us about differences, we need to step back and have a moment of clarity," Latimer stressed.



Left to right: Tejash Sanchala, Executive Director, Human Rights Commission; Crystal Collins, County Executive's Office; Reverend Dr. Stephen Pogue, Pastor, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, Mount Vernon and Vice Chair, Human Rights Commission; Mayo Bartlett, Esq., Criminal Defense Attorney



# JCRC-NY's Celebrate Israel Parade Celebrated Israel's 75th Anniversary

On June 4, the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York's Celebrate Israel Parade attracted over 40,000 people, who came together to support Israel and commemorate its 75th anniversary, under the theme "Renewing the Hope."

"This year's parade was an exciting celebration of the people, history, and culture of Israel! It was loud, joyful, and exuberant - just like the Jewish people, just like Israel, and just like New York City!" said Gideon Taylor, CEO of JCRC-NY which organizes the parade.

Governor Kathy Hochul, Attorney General Letitia James, Senator Chuck Schumer, and New York City Mayor Eric Adams, along with other local elected officials and Israeli dignitaries, marched in the parade to mark the momentous occasion.

Grammy Award-nominated singer/songwriter/rapper, Matisyahu, together with his son, Laivy, per-

formed, in addition to singer-songwriter Harel Skaat, renowned a capella group the Maccabeats and Israeli saxophonist Yarden Klayman. DJs Omri Anghel and Ido Friedman, and dancers from the Parparim Ensemble and Folk Dance Club Kaleidoscope also performed.

Genesis 10 CEO Harley Lippman led the march down 5th Avenue, as the parade's Grand Marshal. Honorary Grand Marshals for the parade included the parade's founder Ted Comet, NYPD Chief Michael Kemper, Mark Wilf, Doron Almog, Yaakov Hagoel from JAFI and WZO. Actress and advocate Noa Tishby along with Jewish lifestyle influencers Lizzy Savetsky, Chanie Apfelbaum, and Victoria Zirkiev also attended the parade.

This year also featured the JCRC-NY Celebrate Israel Parade's inaugural Block Party, which was run in partnership with the Edmond J. Safra Synagogue and located on 66th Street along the parade route.



## ANU Museum of the Jewish People Acquires The Codex Sassoon

The 1100-year-old Codex Sassoon, the oldest and most complete Hebrew Bible, was sold on May 17th at Sotheby's for \$38.1 million. The sacred text, considered the foundation of Jewish ethics and beliefs, will become part of the core exhibition and permanent collection of ANU - Museum of the Jewish People in Tel Aviv, Israel. The Codex Sassoon acquisition by the American Friends of ANU was made possible

by the generous donation of Ambassador Alfred H. Moses, of Washington, DC, and the Moses family.

"The Hebrew Bible is the most influential book in history and constitutes the bedrock of Western civilization. I rejoice in knowing that it belongs to the Jewish People. It was my mission, realizing the historic significance of Codex Sassoon, to see that it resides in a place with global access to all people," says Ambassador Moses. "In my heart and mind that place was the land of Israel, the cradle of Judaism, where the Hebrew Bible was originated. In Israel at ANU, it will be preserved for generations to come as the centerpiece and gem of the entire and extensive display and presence of the Jewish story."

"ANU embodies the Jewish narrative and safeguards the values, legacy, heritage and identity of the Jewish people," says Irina Nevzlin, Chair of ANU's Board of Directors. "We will be eternally grateful to Ambassador Moses and his family for ensuring that the most treasured, historic and complete Bible in existence will be permanently displayed at the world's largest Jewish Museum."

The Hebrew Bible is a sacred text, the source of eternal wisdom and knowledge for peoples across the globe representing many religions and sects. For thousands of years, people have



intensively studied, analyzed, and meditated on Scripture to acquire wisdom and attain spiritual enlightenment. This storied Hebrew Bible dates back to circa 900 CE and consists of 24 books presented in 792 pages made from several hundred sheepskins weighing a total of 26 pounds.

The 24 books are divided into three sections: The Torah (Pentateuch), the Prophets, and the Writings. It is said to have been created by a Jewish scribe in Egypt or the Levant and has miraculously been preserved for over 1,000 years and up until 30 years ago, when it was last publicly displayed, has remained out of public view for centuries. The Codex Sassoon is named after its most notable owner and avid collector of Judaica, David Solomon Sassoon, who died in 1942. It demonstrates the meaning of survival, endurance, resilience, perseverance, and dedication, much like the Jewish People.

"The Codex Sassoon Bible is a powerful and meaningful manuscript of faith, history and culture," adds Daniel Pincus, President of American Friends of ANU. "As the basis of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, the Hebrew Bible is a seminal text to countless people, and one of the most important discoveries of our time."

For centuries, the Hebrew Bible has been a testament to the pillars of civilization, including

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LFT is an award-winning leadership development opportunity that enables young Jewish leaders to develop skills to advocate on behalf of the Jewish people, Israel and human rights around the world.

The **AJC LFT Westchester/Fairfield** program is open to students who will be high school sophmores, juniors or seniors in Fall 2023.

**Applications are accepted on a rolling basis but will close soon, so we encourage any interested student to apply at their earliest convenience!!**

**Interested students should submit an online application at <https://ajc.org/lftinfo>**

## Recruiting Singers for the 2023 Jewish Choral Festival

Each year since 1990, the North American Jewish Choral Festival (NAJCF) has attracted hundreds of singers who “Sing Their Hearts Out” and connect to Jewish culture during a five-day immersion in Jewish music. From around the country, hundreds of voices come together to form one harmonious choral community led by a renowned staff of conductors and other music experts who inspire and create a truly unique musical society. This year’s 34th annual event will be held from July 9 – 13, 2023 at the Sleepy Hollow Hotel in Tarrytown.

“The Festival is for anyone who wants to experience the joy of Jewish music,” says Matthew Lazar, Festival Founder and Director. “The participants are multi-generational and include amateur singers, professionals, cantors, conductors, and lovers of Jewish music of all ages.”

Festival participants from across North America and beyond, enjoy a wide variety of Jewish musical experiences. These include daily community sings; workshops and seminars on topics ranging from sight-singing and vocal technique to spirituality through music; and evening concerts featuring choirs and outstanding performers.

According to Sue Levin of New Rochelle, “The North American Jewish Festival is the highlight of my year. I’ve learned so much music, and about music, from attending and I have met many wonderful people. The Festival has changed my life.”

One of the distinguishing features of this Festival is that individual singers can participate in “Instant Ensembles.” All singers are divided into five different



Matthew Lazar

choirs, based on their sight-reading abilities and previous musical experience. The Festival culminates with ensembles performing for the entire group.

“I’ve been attending the North American Jewish Choral Festival since 2002. It’s one of the highlights of my year. It’s a great opportunity to learn, to participate and to be inspired by all of the music going on around you,” comments Steve Cohen of Larchmont. “I particularly enjoy the instant ensembles where pickup

choirs gather to learn and rehearse a musical program which is presented at the end of the Festival. I am always amazed at what can be accomplished in three days! It is a testament to the power of a group dedicated to a goal, with every individual blending into a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts.”

This year’s Festival celebrates the 75th anniversary of the State of Israel with choral repertoire by Israeli composers featured throughout the Festival program.

“The NAJCF to my wife and I, is essential to us as life itself. The liturgy describes G-d as the one who chooses the songs of ‘zimra,’” explains Jack and Fredda Mendelson. “The Zamir Chorale Foundation led by Mati Lazar, provides the life-giving musical manna that we all long for.”

“Whether you’re a novice or a pro, you’ll leave with new skills, new music and new friends to cherish as hundreds of singers gather together for an unforgettable experience,” concludes Mr. Lazar.

The North American Jewish Choral Festival is a program of the Zamir Choral Foundation. To register for this year’s Festival go to NAJCF 2023 Application - Formstack. For more information, go to zamirchoral-foundation.org.

## City of New Rochelle Mayor Noam Bramson Will Lead Sustainable Westchester in 2024

After a thorough and rigorous search, Sustainable Westchester, the county’s leading climate action advocate and provider of renewable energy, has announced that City of New Rochelle Mayor Noam Bramson will take the helm of the organization as its next Executive Director effective January 2024. Interim Executive Director Jim Kuster will remain in place until Mayor Bramson completes his current term in office.

Mayor Bramson has led New Rochelle for the last 18 years and is widely credited with advancing the city’s sustainability goals. Under his leadership, New Rochelle is experiencing its fastest growth in a century, serving as a regional and statewide model for environmentally friendly, transit-oriented development. Bramson was instrumental in adopting New Rochelle’s first-ever sustainability plan, GreenNR, now undergoing a comprehensive update to emphasize resiliency and climate justice. And he has been a champion of open space expansion, including ongoing efforts to create new parkland on the Echo Bay waterfront and along the “LINC,” a reimagined Memorial Highway.

New Rochelle was among the first large communities in New York to adopt the State’s Stretch Energy Code and is presently the second-highest scoring large community in the State’s Clean En-



Mayor Noam Bramson

ergy Communities program. In addition, as one of the founding Board Members of Sustainable Westchester, Bramson helped to establish the county’s innovative Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) program, with New Rochelle one of the first cities to secure clean, renewable energy through CCA.

“I am thrilled to join Sustainable Westchester as its new Executive Director,” said Mayor Noam Bramson. “Sustainable Westchester is among the most impactful public interest organizations in our region, with a dedicated, highly capable staff, a record of meaningful accomplishment, and a vital, growing role in helping localities, the County, and all of New York achieve ambitious climate and environmental goals. It will be a privilege to advance such an important mission, while working alongside colleagues, both in and out of government, whom I respect deeply.”

“Westchester is one of the state’s foremost leaders in combating climate change and Sustainable Westchester is an integral part of this work,” said Westchester County Executive George Latimer. “Noam’s leadership driving New Rochelle’s sustainability efforts has been exemplary, and he will be an asset to the organization and all they are doing county-wide. We wish him the best of luck in this new endeavor.”

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# National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism

On May 25, ADL (the Anti-Defamation League) welcomed the release of the first-ever comprehensive U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism and announced commitments to support the White House in its execution. ADL also welcomed the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism as part of the plan.

"As the U.S. Jewish community is experiencing antisemitism at levels not seen in generations, we deeply appreciate that the White House has stepped up and delivered this significant, comprehensive strategy," said Jonathan Greenblatt, ADL CEO. "It's particularly notable that this approach recognizes that antisemitism is not about politics – it's about principles. We are pleased that this strategy comprehensively addresses hate and antisemitism on campus, online, and from extremists on both the far-right and the far-left."

ADL actively assisted in the development of the White House strategy, contributing more than 30 distinct policy recommendations. ADL also organized grassroots advocates to urge Congress and the Biden Administration to develop a unified national strategy to monitor and combat antisemitism. The foundations for these policies were set in part by ADL's COMBAT Plan, a proposed set of government initiatives to fight antisemitism, which ADL originally released in June 2022. The COMBAT Plan articulated several of the key policies that were ultimately included in the White House strategy, such as efforts around education, community safety, hate crimes, and online hate.

In remarks at ADL's National Leadership Summit in May, Ambassador Susan E. Rice, Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy, noted that in developing this strategy, "I reviewed closely ADL's recommendations and found them to be helpful, creative, and smart."

In conjunction with the White House strategy, ADL is committing to strengthen cross-community engagements to fight antisemitism, including initiatives to convene community dialogues with diverse



Jonathan A. Greenblatt

partners to build mutual understanding, and to combat antisemitism on college and university campuses. ADL will also support Jewish Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) in the government and private sector to promote a diverse and inclusive workplace where Jewish employees can be their authentic selves. Finally, ADL will partner with the Interparliamentary Task Force to Combat Online Antisemitism for an effort to address the challenges and opportunities presented by the use of AI and other new technologies.

This strategy comes amid real concern about antisemitism among the American Jewish community. In January, ADL released topline survey findings showing the highest percentage of respondents harboring extensive antisemitic prejudice in decades. Antisemitic incidents also surged to historic levels in 2022, with a total of 3,697 incidents reported across the United States, an increase of 36 percent compared to 2021.

The announcement comes after several productive collaborations between ADL and the White House. Last September, the Biden Administration brought together diverse communities to stand together against violent extremism at the historic United We Stand summit, which came about after ADL partnered with several leading anti-hate organizations to call for such an event. And in June 2021, the Biden Administration released the first-ever National Strategy to Counter Domestic Terrorism, incorporating recommendations from ADL's PROTECT Plan.

ADL is the leading anti-hate organization in the world. Founded in 1913, its timeless mission is "to stop the defamation of the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment to all." Today, ADL continues to fight all forms of antisemitism and bias, using innovation and partnerships to drive impact. A global leader in combating antisemitism, countering extremism and battling bigotry wherever and whenever it happens, ADL works to protect democracy and ensure a just and inclusive society for all.

# Unity Summit Brings Together Community Groups and Faith Leaders to Stem Rising Tide of Hate

Governor Kathy Hochul recently announced an additional \$25 million will be made available to organizations at risk of hate crimes and vandalism. She made the announcement at New York's first-ever Unity Summit, a state-wide convening of more than 500 New Yorkers representing community groups, faith leaders and public safety experts sharing their perspectives on how New York can come together to fight the rising tide of hate.

"This is our defining moment – a moment to stand up as one New York and make clear there is no place for hate in our communities," Governor Hochul said. "I was proud to convene New York's first-ever Unity Summit to bring together leading experts working to fight hate and bias. Working together, I know we can make this state safer and more welcoming for all."

"At today's Unity Summit we brought together leaders, human rights advocates, and activists from around the world for a day of reflection and recommitment to the work we are doing in New York to drive out hate," said Lieutenant Governor Delgado. "This funding will bring resources and support directly to community partners who are building a more unified and tolerant state. I am honored to serve as the Chair of the Hate and Bias Prevention Unit and oversee this work going forward."

During her remarks at the Unity Summit, Governor Hochul announced \$25 million will be made available through the FY 2024 budget to support organizations serving communities that are at high risk of hate crimes and vandalism. This funding will go to help organizations enhance security measures in vulnerable places and support



Governor Kathy Hochul

training, public awareness campaigns, and other outreach efforts across the state. The 2024 budget also includes \$3.5 million in funding for the Hate and Bias Prevention Unit, whose work includes the coordination of 10 regional councils convened to address different biases and challenges across New York State. All 10 regional councils have been formed

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visiting from Israel.

A giant depiction in costume of Theodore Herzl, father of modern political Zionism, walked around the Synagogue. There was a poignant display, a replica of the Western Wall, inviting the public to submit messages to be forwarded to the Western Wall in Israel. There was a bean bag toss with the message, "Bring Israel to Your Home--- Host a Shinshinim."

"It's a beautiful day here at Temple Israel of New Rochelle, with all of Southern Westchester celebrating Israel's 75th anniversary," WJC President William Schrag stated. "It's a miracle. I was in Israel celebrating Yom Ha'atzmaut (Israeli independence) several weeks ago and it is great to see the Jewish community of Westchester here today."

## Complaint Filed at U.S. District Court Southern District of New York

A complaint for Declaratory Judgement, Injunctive Relief and Compensatory Damages was filed by Abrams Fensterman LLP on May 25, as Briarcliff Manor was sued in White Plains Federal Court for discriminating against a Hasidic group that bought the old Pace University campus in Briarcliff to open a religious school and place of worship. The plaintiffs alleged that the village violated their rights under Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act, the First Amendment, the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, the Federal Housing Act, and the New York State Constitution. Yeshivath Viznitz Dkhal Torath Chaim and Khal Torath Chaim of Rockland, Inc. Plaintiffs, Civil Action No. 7:23-cv-4384-vs. Village of Briarcliff Manor, vs. -Village of Briarcliff Manor, Village of Briarcliff Manor Village Board of Trustees, Steven A. Vescio in his official capacity as Mayor of the Village of Briarcliff Manor, Village of Briarcliff Manor Zoning Board of Appeals, Christopher Bogart in his official capacity as Chairman of the Zoning Board of Appeals of the Village of Briarcliff Manor, Village of Briarcliff Manor Planning Board, Malcolm Netburn in his official capacity as Chairman of the Planning Board, and David J. Turiano in his official capacity as Building Inspector of the Village of Briarcliff Manor, Defendants

## ANU Museum of the Jewish People Acquires The Codex Sassoon

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art, culture, law, politics and continues to transform and influence civility through the ages.

ANU – Museum of the Jewish People, formerly the Diaspora Museum or Beit Hatfutsot, offers a fascinating journey of discovery and exploration of the unique and ongoing story of the Jewish people through the generations, up to the present and into the future. With an ever-evolving story comes a totally transformed museum with a new name, ANU, "we" in Hebrew. ANU reflects the re-envisioning of the Jewish narrative that embraces culture and history, displays Jewish values and heritage, celebrates unity and diversity, presents the myriad threads of Jewish experience and enhances identity and a sense of belonging that transcends time and place.

With over 72,000 square feet of exhibition space, it is the largest museum of its kind in the world. ANU tells the singular and universal story of the Jewish people through multiple approaches and innovative technology, offering an immersive and interactive experience. To learn more about ANU – Museum of the Jewish People, visit [www.anumuseum.org](http://www.anumuseum.org)

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# The New Tower of David Jerusalem Museum Opens



Tower of David Jerusalem Museum. Credit Abir Sultan

After more than a decade in planning and three years of construction with a multi-disciplinary team of archaeologists, architects, curators, researchers, designers and creatives, the new Tower of David Jerusalem Museum opens to the public in the ancient citadel as the capital's official museum on June 1st with a completely immersive experience that combines ancient Jerusalem and interactive technology. And, for the first time in its history, the ancient citadel is now accessible.

The Tower of David ancient citadel, Jerusalem's iconic symbol, located between the old and new city, is uniquely placed to tell the story of Jerusalem, a city that has no equal in the world. With its new visitor flow - from the Jaffa Gate sunken entrance pavilion through the galleries, the Phasael Tower observation point and exiting into the Old City - the Tower of David Jerusalem Museum becomes the gateway to the exploration of Jerusalem.

The 4000-year story of Jerusalem and the significance of the city to the three largest monotheistic religions is told skillfully through different interactive ways making the visitor participatory in their exploration of the city's past. The 10 completely new thematic galleries are found hidden in the old guard rooms of the structure surrounding the open-aired courtyard filled with archaeological findings dating back 2800 years. Some galleries are in a structure built by the Ottomans in the 17th century, but others go back to the time of the Crusaders in the 12th century, and others to King Herod, some 2000 years ago.

Authentic artifacts, many displayed in-situ for the first time dating back to approx. 1500 years BCE, have each been carefully chosen to represent a different aspect of Jerusalem's long and colorful past among them minute ancient coins from 6th century BC which show the origins of the 1 shekel piece used today, stone cups from the 1st century, a Roman sword from the 2nd century, golden coins from Byzantine Jerusalem and many more. Models of the Second Temple, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and the Dome of the Rock center the rooms that trace Jerusalem's sanctity to Judaism, Christianity and Islam. These original artifacts and models lie side by side with innovative and engaging multi-media displays. The result is a sensory experience that encourages active engagement and allows visitors to explore Jerusalem's history in various

dynamic, stimulating and enjoyable ways.

The 12-meter interactive multi-media wall, Sands of Time, that runs the length of the introductory gallery allows visitors to discover for themselves Jerusalem's 4000-year history with just a quick touch. The media concept for this interactive installation was designed by Local Projects, the experience design team behind the 9/11 Memorial and Museum among others in the US. Other highlights include the animation of maps from the Middle Ages, the 3D scanning of a bird's eye view of 19th century model of Jerusalem, interactive projection onto a mosaic map, a copy of the famous Madaba Map and an interactive sphere of the world which with one touch measures the distance between different cities in the world and Jerusalem.

Films created for the museum include an animated history of 4,000 years of Jerusalem history in just three minutes by Golden Globe winner artist Ari Folman; several animated short films related to different periods based on archaeological and historical evidence and research, a multi-media visualization of the Arch of Titus worked on together with Yeshiva University NY, a 360-degree touch film of inside the Al Aqsa Mosque; an original film of Jerusalem from 1896, including footage by the Lumiere brothers, has been edited to bring to life Jerusalem at the turn of the 20th century. The "Circle of the Year" is an immersive experience in which a montage of images from different religious festivals are projected onto one of the vaulted ceilings in a guardroom. The soundtrack is originally created with choirs from the different religious communities living in Jerusalem. Created by David Polonsky, one of the most important illustrators working in Israel today, the seven-minute experience allows the three calendars of Judaism, Christianity and Islam to converge in an only-in-Jerusalem manner.

Director and Chief Curator, Tower of David Jerusalem Museum Eilat Lieber: "No other museum can tell Jerusalem's story in such a distinctive setting, within this citadel, that has witnessed so many eventful periods in the city's past. The iconic architecture, massive Jerusalem stone walls and beautifully arched ceiling guard rooms create a unique setting for this museum which will become the gateway to this unique city. Alongside the physical conservation of the walls and towers of this ancient site, we have developed a completely new permanent exhibition and creative

programming that tells Jerusalem's long, complex and colorful history in respectful, innovative and engaging ways. Whether it is a school child from Israel – or a visitor from overseas, I hope that the Tower of David can give them a basis for dialogue, tolerance and respect.

Visitors from near and far will leave the museum with a better understanding of Jerusalem, this eternal city."

There are daily guided tours in English at 10:00 am Sunday – Friday (except on National Holidays) included in the entrance ticket.

## Exhibition of Holocaust Survivor Portraits Receives Extended Run at New York's Museum of Jewish Heritage



Survivors: Faces of Life After the Holocaust, currently on view in its first major museum exhibition in the United States at The Museum of Jewish Heritage – A Living Memorial to the Holocaust in New York, has received a four month extension. Originally set to close on June 18, the deeply affecting exhibition featuring 75 portraits by award-winning photographer Martin Schoeller will now remain on view at the Museum through October 22, 2023.

The exhibition first opened on September 18, 2022 in the Museum's Rita Lowenstein gallery, with its soaring skylight that floods the exhibition with an ethereal, natural light. This unflinching series features Holocaust survivors captured in Schoeller's signature style of extreme close-up portraiture and bright lighting. His subjects gaze directly at the viewer, revealing their humanity—their pain, struggle, hope, and resilience. Each portrait is paired with a biography and personal statement from each survivor. The exhibition additionally features a video documenting the making of the portraits at Yad Vashem, where the project originated in 2019, and features live interviews with many of the sitters.

"We are pleased and not at all surprised that this exhibition has struck a chord with our visitors," said Jack Kliger, President and CEO of the Museum of Jewish Heritage – A Living Memorial to the Holocaust. "Schoeller's intimate portraits inspire reverence for the resilience of the human spirit, and insist we remember the atrocities survivors, some of whom have since passed away since the start of this project, have endured and the messages they have shared from those experiences. The soaring skylight and natural light in the Rita Lowenstein gallery accentuate the exhibit.

We are proud to extend the exhibition's run at our Museum and invite new and returning visitors to experience Martin Schoeller's extraordinary craft firsthand."

The Museum centers survivors and the first person accounts they share—an increasingly timely proposition as the final enduring generation of survivors is now elderly. Since 2019 when the portraits were made, more than 20 of the sitters have passed; in this exhibition they continue to connect across generations, building empathy and understanding.

"This project is very close to my heart, born out of my experience growing up in Germany, and I was so proud to bring it to New York's Museum of Jewish Heritage," said photographer Martin Schoeller. "It's been my hope that the series would resonate with the survivor community here and inspire New Yorkers of all backgrounds to envision a more tolerant and peaceful future."

Schoeller created his series with Holocaust survivors to combat rising hate and antisemitism across the globe and drew inspiration from the Holocaust education he received in his youth.

The portraits are on display in the Museum's third floor rotunda, which in 2022 was named in memory of Rita Lowenstein, who survived the Holocaust as a child, hidden under a false identity.

Also on display is the Museum's permanent exhibition, The Holocaust: What Hate Can Do, which similarly focuses on individual stories, bringing together over 750 artifacts to tell the history of the Holocaust through personal stories, family objects, archival video, and more.

*The Museum is located at 36 Battery Place, NYC. For more details, visit [mjhny.org/facesoflife](http://mjhny.org/facesoflife).*



# Local FIDF Supporters Joined Event Underscoring Power of Women in IDF

More than 40 Friends of the IDF (FIDF) supporters from Westchester and Connecticut gathered at the 583 Park in New York City for the 2023 FIDF Tristate Women's Brigade Luncheon to honor the courageous women of the IDF who are responsible for Israel's security and its thriving society. The event, which took place two weeks after Israel's milestone 75th anniversary, featured Nancy Spielberg, writer and award-winning documentary producer, and Ilana Yehav, world-renowned sand animation artist, and underscored the enormous contributions made by women on and off the battlefield.

Event guests included FIDF National Board members Wendy Moskowitz and Hyla Ruby.

From its very beginning, the IDF has leveraged women's unique strengths, and women in the military have helped to create the most moral and humanitarian army in the world. Co-Chairs Liz Winter and Tanya Zuckerbrot reminded guests that their freedom of Jewish expression and the existence of a Jewish homeland – a reality that our ancestors could only have imagined – is thanks to the brave soldiers who exemplify strength, determination, and resilience every single day. “In supporting the soldiers of the IDF through the Women's Brigade, we take our place among the millennia of women who poured their strength, resources, and love into growing a vibrant, safe and thriving Jewish future in Israel and worldwide,” said Zuckerbrot. “We join our legacy: a long history of female Jewish leadership. From biblical to modern times, women have always been the heart and soul of Israeli society.”

The FIDF Women's Campaign is a powerful group of women designating female-driven dollars to projects that will best benefit Israeli soldiers serving in the IDF. The group has funded several critical projects including a therapeutic retreat for bereaved family members, a Lone Soldier housing facility, reunions for Lone Soldiers and their families including flights home and more. This year, their focus is on funding Project Overcome, a lifesaving program for at-risk soldiers not traditionally considered fit for ser-



Left to right: Lt. Barr, Anat Chavkin, Director of Westchester and CT, Nicky Ziman, FIDF Westchester Committee member, Franne Weinberg, FIDF Westchester Committee member, Diane Levi, Sonia Gordon, Wendy Moskowitz, FIDF National Board member and Westchester Committee member, Sergeant Gila, General Nadav Padan, FIDF National Director. Photo Credit: Courtesy of FIDF.

vice and putting them on a path to gaining skills to change their life trajectory.

Guests heard from Maj. Alex, who went from a young girl with a troubled background to a commander in the Intelligence Corps through this program. “There is no doubt that the support I received from the IDF and FIDF, both as a Lone Soldier and a soldier from a unique population, allowed me to fulfill my potential and led to a future where I can continue to thrive and achieve,” she said.

Event sponsors included Jonathan Simkhai, Olya Kislin (of Figaru Jewelry) and Rachel Simons of Seed + Mill. VIPs in attendance included Maj. General (Res.) Nadav Padan, FIDF National Director; FIDF VP of Northeast Region, Galit Brichta as well as FIDF National Board members, Alice Klein, Sharon Mishkin, Wendy Moskowitz, Hyla Ruby and Anthony Westreich.

“The FIDF Women's Brigade is a leader in connecting American women to Israel through our staunch support of IDF soldiers,” said Orna Sheena, Director of the FIDF Women's Brigade. “I am thrilled that each year more and more women are joining our Women's Brigade and together making a tangible difference in the lives of IDF soldiers before, during and after their service.”

Friends of the Israel Defense Forces (FIDF) was established in 1981 by a group of Holocaust survivors as a 501(C)(3) not-for-profit organization with the mission of offering educational, cultural, recreational, and social programs and facilities that provide hope, purpose, and life-changing support for the soldiers who protect Israel and Jews worldwide. Today, FIDF has 25 chapters throughout the United States. FIDF proudly supports IDF soldiers, families of fallen soldiers, and wounded veterans through a variety of innovative programs that reinforce the vital bond between the communities in the United States and the soldiers of the IDF.

For more information visit: [www.fidf.org](http://www.fidf.org)

# Birthright Israel Welcomes Thousands of Participants

Birthright Israel will welcome 12,658 enthusiastic participants from US and Canada for its upcoming summer session, running from mid-May until September. The program, which is a gift of a 10-day educational tour of Israel, will welcome an additional 3,058 participants from 24 other countries, including Argentina, Brazil, Australia, France, Russia, England, Italy, Hungary, Germany and Ukraine.

Birthright Israel announced last year that due to inflation and higher travel costs, it would cut – by up to one-third – the number of participants it can bring to Israel beginning with the 2023 summer season. As a result, the number of this year's American participants is almost 40 percent lower than last summer's 18,358.

Birthright Israel's American participants this summer come from New York, California, Florida, New Jersey, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Massachusetts, Texas, Georgia, Michigan, Connecticut, Colorado, Arizona, Ohio, Virginia, North Carolina, Washington, Wisconsin, the District of Columbia, Minnesota, Missouri, Indiana, Nevada, Oregon, Tennessee, South Carolina, Alabama, Delaware, Kentucky, Rhode Island, Utah, Louisiana, New Hampshire, Kansas, Vermont, New Mexico, Montana, Idaho, Hawaii, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Alaska, Arkansas, Maine, Wyoming, Iowa, Mississippi and West Virginia.

“I am very excited to be going to Israel for the first time ever this summer with Birthright,” said Portia Carney, a 21-year-old



Portia Carney. Photo credit: Courtesy of Birthright Israel.

student from Juneau, Alaska. “I treasure the opportunity to learn more about my ancestry and Jewish culture and have many new adventures that I will never forget.” Portia attends Western Washington University in Bellingham, WA, and is majoring in Cell & Molecular

Biology, and pre-med.

Birthright Israel will also welcome about 3,000 participants of Onward Israel, the leading mid-term internship program, and the prestigious fellowship in business and technology.

“We are excited to bring so many participants from around the world for life-changing programs to Israel in the coming months. We are experiencing unprecedented demand in enrollment to Birthright. On top of the 16,000 participants for our classic 10-day trip, the 3,000 Onward participants and 60 Excel fellows, we had expected to come this summer, we have a waiting list of 20,000 young Jewish adults from North America and around the world,” said Birthright Israel CEO Gidi Mark.

“The inflation that has hit much of the global economy, and the rising costs of travel post-Covid, have driven up Birthright Israel's expenses,” he added. “Without offsetting donations, thousands of applicants in the future will be denied the chance, as were thousands this summer, to experience a Birthright Israel trip. We feel terrible about that, but we had no choice. Extensive research has revealed that young Jews have a significantly stronger connection to Israel and a far deeper Jewish identity following their participation than non-participants.”

Mark called Birthright “a winning formula for a vibrant Jewish future,” with partici-

pants “returning to their communities more educated about Israel, more involved in Jewish life, prouder of who they are as Jews.” He cited a recent Brandeis University analysis of Pew's 2021 study that found Birthright participants to be substantially more likely to marry Jews and raise their children Jewish. Nearly 60 percent of Jewish-communal professionals in the United States are Birthright alumni, Mark said.

“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,” he said.

Birthright Israel is the largest educational tourism organization in the world that has transformed the lives of more than 800,000 young Jewish adults ages 18–26 with a gift of a 10-day educational tour of Israel. Its mission is to ensure a vibrant future for the Jewish people by strengthening Jewish identity, Jewish communities, and connection with Israel. The organization also brings thousands of participants to Israel through its Onward Israel and Birthright Israel Excel Fellowship Programs.

The gift of a Birthright Israel trip is made possible thanks to the support of tens of thousands of donors to Birthright Israel Foundation and Birthright Israel Foundation of Canada as well as an innovative partnership between Jewish communities around the world and the Government of Israel. Our partners donors who support our mission see it as an ongoing investment in the State of Israel and its relationship with the Jewish world.



# The U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism



BY MYRA CLARK-SIEGEL,  
AJC WESTCHESTER/FAIRFIELD REGIONAL DIRECTOR

May was a particularly important month for the American Jewish community.

Together, we celebrated Jewish American Heritage Month (JAHM).

Since 2006, Presidents Bush, Obama, Trump, and Biden have all issued proclamations for Jewish American Heritage Month, which celebrates Jewish Americans and encourages all Americans to learn more about Jewish heritage and contributions to the United States.

Certainly, since the first group of Jews arrived in New Amsterdam in 1654, Jews have been active participants in our communities, dedicated to making the world a better place for others.

Indeed, the United States has many heritage months that celebrate communities that exemplify our country's diversity. By doing so, we learn about one another, and we celebrate and honor every community and the significant contributions each has made to our society.

Particularly at a time of rising antisemitism, it is important that we recognize and celebrate the accomplishments and impact of the American Jewish community. Indeed, we were proud to be recognized at the State Senate and State Assembly with proclamations celebrating Jewish American Heritage Month. Moreover, we were honored that the governor and members of Congress celebrated Jewish American Heritage Month and the impact

of Jewish Americans.

JAHM is particularly important this year against the backdrop of AJC's State of Antisemitism in America survey which revealed that 89% of Jewish respondents believe antisemitism is a problem in the United States today and 82% believe it has increased in the last five years. Importantly, nine in 10 Americans believe everyone must work together to combat antisemitism – that it is not just a problem for the Jewish community to solve.

That is why the May 25 announcement by the White House on the U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism was so important. This is the first government-wide approach in the United States to counter antisemitism in its multiple and distinct forms.

In doing so, the White House engaged 40 government agencies to develop tangible, time-bound commitments to address antisemitism.

As the global advocacy organization for the Jewish people, AJC convened a meeting at the White House in February bringing antisemitism envoys from around the world to share their own action plans and lessons with the interagency policy group.

The White House strategy incorporates numerous aspects of AJC's Call to Action Against Antisemitism, a society-wide guide that shows government, law enforcement, educators, the business community, and others how to recognize, respond to, and prevent antisemitism.

Among its key aspects, the White House strategy includes:

- A reaffirmation of the administration's embrace of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Working Definition of Antisemitism. The IHRA definition is the authoritative definition used by over 40 governments around the world, endorsed by more than 30 U.S. states (including NY) and the District of Columbia.
- A focus on Jewish American heritage and the ongoing contributions of American Jews to all facets of society, to be prioritized in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) efforts, educational

arenas, and beyond.

- A priority on Jewish safety and security, whether online or in synagogues or community centers, and promoting education to reverse the normalization of antisemitism.
- A vision to promote allyship to mobilize society to take collective action against hate.

AJC will continue to work with the White

House to mobilize American society against this hate, and there is a role each of us can play to ensure that there is No Hate in Our States. We invite you to join us in this effort and to celebrate the importance of May 2023 for the Jewish community.

Myra Clark-Siegel is regional director of AJC (American Jewish Committee): [westchester@ajc.org](mailto:westchester@ajc.org).

## Leffell School Student Selected for The Bronfman Fellowship

The Bronfman Fellowship has selected its 37th cohort of intellectually curious 11th-graders from across North America, among them the founder of InvestNow Clubs, a nonprofit which brings investment clubs to schools in historically disadvantaged communities; a published author whose historical research has been featured in publications such as *Scholastic's* Best Teen Writing; the founder and cohost of a podcast focused on political and social issues and how they apply to young people; and the founder of Good For Good, a club where students and faculty examine mass incarceration and read and respond to poems written by incarcerated individuals.

The 26 Fellows, who come from a broad spectrum of the Jewish community, will participate in a transformative, free Fellowship-year experience beginning with a summer in the U.S. and Israel, where they explore a rich, complex tapestry of Jewish texts and ideas in conversation with one another and a faculty team of leading rabbis, educators, and artists. They also interact with a group of Israeli peers who were chosen through a parallel selection process as part of the Israeli Fellowship, Amitei Bronfman. The new class of Fellows will join a vibrant, lifelong alumni community that includes some of today's most exciting Jewish writers, thinkers and leaders.

Locally selected, Hannah Mani-Abraham from Greenburgh, is an eleventh grader at The Leffell School in Hartsdale. At her school, she is a captain of the varsity track team and will be a captain of the varsity soccer team this fall. Hannah has attended sleep-away camp for seven years, three of which have been at Ramah in the Berkshires. She is an active member in her conservative synagogue, Beth El Synagogue Center of New Rochelle, where she reads Torah, is the Vice President of Israeli Affairs on the USY board, a teacher's assistant at the religious school and a teen mentor for younger Torah readers. Hannah is also a Teen Leader in HaZamir, the international Jewish choir. In her free time, Hannah enjoys learning to drive, reading, cooking, watching movies and spending time with her family and friends.

The Bronfman Fellowship was founded in 1987 by Edgar M. Bronfman, z"l, formerly CEO of the Seagram Company Ltd. and a visionary Jewish philanthropist. Mr. Bronfman passed away in December 2013.



Hannah Mani-Abraham

"Edgar Bronfman would have relished the opportunity to get to know this year's Fellows," said Becky Voorwinde, Executive Director of The Bronfman Fellowship. "They are a passionate, inquisitive, talented and incredibly bright bunch. I look forward to seeing them challenge and inspire one another and their communities throughout their lives."

Adam R. Bronfman, president of The Samuel Bronfman Foundation, said he was "impressed and heartened" by the new cohort. "The energy, diversity and intellectual firepower of this group speak to my

father's belief that young people can change the world in ways that previous generations couldn't have envisioned," he said. "My father treasured the Fellowship as an investment in the Jewish future, and I am proud to continue his work. It brings me joy to witness the magic that happens when Jews from all backgrounds come together to access Jewish wisdom and have important conversations. I look forward to getting to know the 2023 Fellows personally, and to joining some of those conversations myself."

Following a competitive application process, the 2023 Fellows are from 13 states and Canada, and represent a wide range of Jewish backgrounds, including Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, Just Jewish and secular/culturally Jewish.

The Fellowship promotes the study of Jewish texts, traditions, history and culture as a way for Fellows to expand their perspectives and engage with one another and the world. The Fellows will study with an esteemed faculty, including Hannah Kapnik Ashar, Director of Faculty, a fellow in Hadar's Advanced Kollel and at The Center for Rabbinic Innovation; Arielle Rivera Korman, Community Manager, co-founding director and the founding executive director of Amnud: Jews of Color Torah Academy and a Rabbinical student at the Jewish Theological Seminary; Rabbi Megan GoldMarche, Executive Director at Tribe 12; Dr. Evan Parks, faculty member at Columbia University; Dr. Ariel Picard, a teacher and research fellow at the Shalom Hartman Institute; and Rabbi Dr. Michael Rosenberg, faculty member at Hadar.

Upon graduating high school, the Fellows join an alumni community that has become a model for lifelong engagement, as Bronfman alumni continue to exchange ideas and inspire one another to contribute their talents, vision, and creativity to the Jewish community and the world.

## UJA Federation of New York Honors Mamaroneck Residents

Wendy and Neil Sandler from Mamaroneck were honorees at the UJA Westchester Celebration on Wednesday, May 10. The Sandlers' commitment and generosity has made a tremendous impact on the Westchester community and beyond. Michelle Dinenberg and Randi Rosenblatt of Chappaqua, the Young Leadership awardees, have both taken on an active role in shaping the Jewish future and they are working hard to make the community stronger and more vibrant.

Working with a network of hundreds of nonprofits, UJA extends its reach from New York to Israel to nearly 70 other countries around the world, touching the lives of 4.5 million people annually. Every year, UJA-Federation provides approximately \$180 million in grants. For more information, visit [ujafedny.org](http://ujafedny.org).



From left: Neil Sandler, Wendy Sandler, Tara Slone-Goldstein, UJA Westchester Regional Chair, Michelle Dinenberg and Randi Rosenblatt. Credit: UJA-Federation of New York



# Common Medicaid Mistakes



BY BERNARD A. KROOKS, CERTIFIED ELDER LAW ATTORNEY

We write often about the catastrophic cost of long-term care and how it can bankrupt many middle-class families who do not adequately plan for this. Unfortunately, Medicare does not pay for long-term care. Thus, many families are forced to pay out of pocket or try to qualify for Medicaid, which is a means-tested government benefit program that has strict income and asset requirements in order to qualify. Here are some common mistakes that are made when people apply for Medicaid:

1. Failure to keep good financial records. When applying for nursing home Medicaid in New York, you are required to submit financial and bank records for five years. The local Department of Social Services reviews these statements to see if there have been any uncompensated transfers of assets. Certain transfers of assets

could cause you to be ineligible for a period of five years, or longer. Thus, the local Medicaid agency has the right to review all transactions that occurred in your accounts during the Medicaid look-back period (five years). As the applicant, you have the burden of proving what happened to any assets that you had during the look-back period. Therefore, it is very important for you to be able to produce appropriate documentation, if requested.

2. Making changes to how assets are held without consulting a lawyer who understands Medicaid laws. Sometimes, people will try to navigate the Medicaid process on their own and this can be costly. Some mistakes that we have seen include failing to take advantage of exempt transfers, making transfers of assets at inappropriate times, and not considering the tax consequences of transfers. One client thought she was doing the right thing by gifting her home to her daughter while she was alive in an effort to protect the house from Medicaid estate recovery. Unfortunately, when the daughter sold the house after mom died, she incurred several hundred thousand dollars in capital gains taxes which could have been avoided by using a Medicaid asset protection trust.

3. Applying for Medicaid too soon. Some clients hire a non-attorney or have the Medicaid application submitted by the Medicaid coordinator at the nursing home. While this might make sense if there were no

asset transfers or other assets that the person wished to preserve, it can be a disaster if assets were gifted during the look-back period. Sometimes, waiting just a short period of time to submit the Medicaid application can save tens of thousands of dollars, or more. There are complex Medicaid penalty period calculations that must be done in order to determine the appropriate time to submit the application. Filing too early can cause a longer penalty period to apply and a Medicaid denial.

4. Thinking it is too late to do any planning. While it is always better to plan early, it is never too late. Of course, the sooner you plan, the more money you will be able to save, but in most cases, at least some assets can be preserved even if someone has already gone into a nursing home.

5. Not understanding applicable exempt resources and asset transfers. As stated earlier, Medicaid imposes a penalty period on uncompensated transfers of assets during the look-back period. However, certain transactions may be exempt, such as spending down countable resources by paying off debt (mortgage/credit cards), purchasing a prepaid funeral for the Medicaid applicant and spouse, transfers of assets to disabled children or to qualified trusts for disabled individuals, to name a few.

6. Not executing a durable power of attorney. This common mistake applies to many individuals, not just ones seeking to apply for Medicaid. At some point, many of us may suffer from a cognitive impairment, which necessitates decision-making by a third party,

usually a family member. The most cost-effective and simplest way to accomplish this is to execute a durable power of attorney which appoints one or more people to act on your behalf if you are unable to do so. While there are many “boilerplate” forms out there, caution should be taken in simply using an old form when the laws may have changed which now requires more specialized knowledge about the anticipated needs of an incapacitated individual. Therefore, it is important not only to execute a durable power of attorney before it is needed, but also getting the right kind of power of attorney to maximize the options both now and in the future. Failure to do so might necessitate the need for a time-consuming and expensive guardianship proceeding.

That is just a few of the mistakes that we have seen people make as they go through the Medicaid application process. This is truly the case where an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!

*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](http://www.littmankrooks.com).*

## WJL Summer Happenings

On June 18, a special Father’s Day Walking Tour of the Lower East Side will start at 10:30 am in front of the Bialystoker Synagogue, 7-11 Bialystoker Place, NYC, with the Lower East Side Jewish Conservancy. For more information call 212-374-4100.

On June 17 and July 15, Shabbat Tots in Nature, a guided Shabbat Nature Walk and snack, geared to young children younger than 5 with their families, organized by the JCC of Mid Westchester. Meeting place will be sent after registration. Call 914-725-7300 or write [info@jccmw.org](mailto:info@jccmw.org) to register.

On June 17, Bet Am Shalom, 295 Soundview Avenue, White Plains, hosts a discussion at 1:15pm, celebrating the Spectrum of Gender in Religious Tradition with Rabbi Jay Michaelson. Hybrid/ Zoom. For questions call 914-946-8851.

On June 22, AJC will host a musical evening at 7pm, honoring Israel Nitzan, Consul General of Israel and Mona Abramson, Regional AJC President, at Temple Sholom, Greenwich, Ct. RSVP to [westchester@ajc.org](mailto:westchester@ajc.org)

On June 22, the Spring Theater series at The Museum of Jewish Heritage will feature Out Loud by The Braid, celebrating the LGBTQIA+ community through stories in Edmond J. Safra Hall, 36 Battery Place, NYC. For more information visit [mjhny.org](http://mjhny.org)

On June 24, Beth El Synagogue Center, 1324 North Avenue, New Rochelle, will host a Pride Shabbat with guest speaker Rachel Kunststadt. Call 914-235-2700 for more information.

On June 25 from 12-3pm, the JCC of Mid Westchester, 999 Wilnot Road, Scarsdale, will host Survey Says, a mix and mingle event for Jewish adults 50+ with a game show format, lunch and wine. Learn more at [jccmw.org/survey-says](http://jccmw.org/survey-says)

On July 13, The Robison Summer Concert Series begins with Tramps Like Us, a Bruce

Springsteen Tribute Band from 7-9pm at Kensico Dam Plaza, 1 Bronx River Parkway, Valhalla. Free Admission, bring blankets and lawn chairs.

On July 18, Tour the Bialystoker Synagogue, 7 Willet Street, NYC, from 7-8:30pm with The Lower East Side Jewish Conservancy. For more information, call 212-374-4100 or write [info@nycejewish-tours.org](mailto:info@nycejewish-tours.org)

On August 10, Matisyahu and G. Love & Special Sauce bring their soulful sound to the Bears-ville Theater, Woodstock, NY. Tickets are available on [radioWoodstock.com](http://radioWoodstock.com) or [Bearsvilletheater.com](http://Bearsvilletheater.com).



On August 20 from 12-6pm, Westchester’s Jewish Heritage Festival will be held rain or shine at Kensico Dam Plaza, Valhalla. Admission and Parking are free. Go to [parks.westchestergov.com](http://parks.westchestergov.com) or call 914-864-PARK to learn more.

## WJCS Presents Fashion & Compassion Luncheon

Westchester Jewish Community Services (WJCS), one of the largest human service organizations in Westchester County, hosted a “Fashion & Compassion” Luncheon at Neiman Marcus at The Westchester on May 11th. Ten percent of the sales made after the fashion show luncheon were donated by Neiman Marcus to WJCS and directed to support the food pantry at the WJCS Mary J. Blige Center, which helps under-resourced families in Yonkers.

“Food insecurity has become a significant problem in Westchester and has only grown more so since the COVID pandemic began,” said WJCS CEO Seth Diamond. “We are very grateful to our events Committee and all those who attended the event as well as to our partners at Neiman Marcus. We are fortunate that Neiman Marcus is a caring and committed business partner in our Westchester community.”

“We are thrilled to partner with WJCS on this fantastic in-store event. Community connections are incredibly important to Neiman Marcus Westchester,” said Nicole Vellucci, General Manager.

The WJCS Event Committee included Scarsdale residents Michelle Brettschneider, Sarah Kayle, Linda Plattus, Nina Ross, Nancy Schwartz, Robin Silk, and Suzanne Yearley. Fashion show attendees enjoyed time together and seeing the hottest looks coordinated by super stylist Samantha Brown.



## Unity Summit Brings Together Community Groups and Faith Leaders to Stem Rising Tide of Hate

continued from page 4

and will begin meeting in the coming weeks.

The Unity Summit featured keynote remarks from former U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch. Panels included “The State of Hate in New York,” featuring State agency leaders discussing their efforts to combat hate crimes, “Working Together to Address and Prevent Hate in Our Communities,” featuring Jewish, AAPI, Muslim, Sikh, LGBTQ+, Hispanic and African American community leaders, and “How are Federal, State and Local Stakeholders Addressing Hate.” The day concluded with remarks from Lieutenant Governor Antonio Delgado who leads the Hate and Bias Prevention

Unit within the New York State Division of Human Rights.

Since taking office, Governor Hochul has prioritized tackling hate crimes and bias. In December 2022, Governor Hochul unveiled the Division of Human Rights’ new Hate and Bias Prevention Unit. In November 2022, she signed two new laws cracking down on perpetrators of hate crimes and creating a new statewide diversity and tolerance campaign. In the FY23 Budget, Governor Hochul made significant changes to the bail laws to expand arrest-eligibility and bail-eligibility for repeat offenses and hate crimes.

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## WJC Bestows Distinguished Service Awards

On May 9 at Temple Israel Center, White Plains, Westchester Jewish Council bestowed the Annual Julian Y. Bernstein Distinguished Service Awards to 21 of the 2023 Honorees. Over 280 guests attended the Awards Ceremony. The following were given awards by their organizations or Synagogues:

AJC Westchester/Fairfield, Stephne Behrend; Beth El Synagogue Center, Alan Greenberg; Community Synagogue of Rye, Susan Zeitlin; Congregation Anshe Sholom, Morris Schoeneman; Congregation Emanu-El of Westchester, Jane Meryll; Congregation Kol Ami, Alison Gilmore; DOROT, Linda Levine; First Hebrew Congregation, Fran Olmsted; Greenburgh Hebrew Center, Bruce Segall; Hillels of Westchester, Michael Scheffler; JCC of Mid-Westchester, James F. Lasser; The Leffell School, Allison Kellman; Pleasantville Community Synagogue, Robert Marshak; Shaarei Tikvah, Lauren Lappen; Temple Beth El of Northern Westchester, Norma Klein; Temple Israel Center of White Plains, Jonathan Shankman; Temple Shaaray Tefila of Bedford; Ira Russo; UJA Federation of NY / Westchester Region, Ben Mes-safi; United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, Ron Arsham; Westchester Jewish Community Services, Meira Fleisch; Westchester Jewish Council, Dan Reingold



Pictured above from left to right: Madison Leifer, Sheila Rennert, Gary Trachten, Michael Scheffler, Stuart Kolbert, Haina Just-Michael from Hillels of Westchester

## 10th Annual Westchester Water & Wine Celebrates Israel

Nearly 200 philanthropists recently came together at Congregation Emanu-El of Westchester for Jewish National Fund-USA's signature annual event, Water & Wine. There, they delighted in an entertaining, interactive, geographic wine tasting "tour" of Israel and learned about the organization's game-changing initiatives spanning from the Negev to the Galilee.

Jewish National Fund-USA's CEO, Russell F. Robinson, and Joshua Greenstein, Executive Vice President of the Israel Wine Producers Association, brought Jewish National Fund-USA's 122-year-old story to life while attendees enjoyed an elegant food and wine pairing with Israeli wines produced in the highlighted regions.

Robinson emphasized how Jewish National Fund-USA builds a strong, vibrant future for the land and people of Israel, focusing on how its Travel and Tours Department provides thousands of Americans with a "backstage pass to Israel." He also discussed how the organization improves the quality of life for individuals with disabilities and makes Israel accessible to all, as well as the various ways in which Jewish National Fund-USA is creating infrastructure and programs to bring 800,000 residents to Israel's north and south.

In addition, the crowd heard from event Co-chairs Jessica Adler, Lissy Carr, and Nina Fisher, as well as Jewish National Fund-USA Westchester Co-Presidents Diana Sklar and Brenda and Mike Benn. "Jewish National Fund-USA's strategic vi-



Dr. Rob Weber, Lori Weber, Erica Epstein, Lawrence Epstein

sion has been and always will be to secure a prosperous future for the land and people of Israel," said Sklar. "I have been involved with them for many years and have seen the incredible return on our investment and the impact we are making as part of this extraordinary organization."

"Our family supports Jewish National Fund-USA to ensure that Israel maintains its existence, that the great hope for peace is realized, and that our people, will always have a Jewish homeland to turn to when in need," added the Benns. "The future of Israel is in our hands. We want to leave the next generation a strong, thriving, prosperous land, and we all need to join as a community to do so."

Attendees were also encouraged to register for Jewish National Fund-USA's first-ever Global Conference for Israel ([jnf.org/global](http://jnf.org/global)), taking place in Denver, Colorado, from November 30-December 3, 2023.

## President Biden Appoints AJC CEO Deutch to Holocaust Memorial Council

President Joe Biden recently appointed American Jewish Committee (AJC) CEO Ted Deutch to serve on the United States Holocaust Memorial Council.

The council is the governing board of trustees for the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.

"I thank the president for this tremendous honor," Deutch said. "The museum does an incredible job of telling one of the most difficult and tragic of stories. But it's one we all must hear. I look forward to working with other members of the council to ensure the museum has the resources it needs to further its vital mission."



Ted Deutch

The council consists of 55 members appointed by the president, as well as five members each from the Senate and House and three ex-officio members from the departments of State, Interior, and Education.

The museum is chaired by Stuart Eizenstat, a former ambassador and presidential aide who helped draft the legislation that created the museum. Eizenstat also serves as a special adviser to Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Holocaust issues.

The museum, which opened in 1993, is a public-private partnership that receives some federal funding for its operations.

## JCC Mid-Westchester Honors Former Board President and Volunteers at Annual Fundraiser

JCC of Mid-Westchester (JCC-MW) in Scarsdale, honored its former board president Ellen Reinheimer and three high school volunteers – Jaden Tepper, Maya Glick and Ilan Brusso – at the organization's May 23, 2023, spring fundraiser, recognizing their dedication to vital efforts that helped strengthened the Westchester community in recent years.

"The JCCMW has long excelled at bringing together Westchester's most talented, hard-working and committed individuals to support the work and values we champion every day," said Elise Dowell, CEO of JCCMW. "Ellen, Jaden, Maya and Ilan all represent the best of what this community has to offer, and we are delighted to celebrate them."

Ellen Reinheimer served as JCCMW Board President from 2017 to 2022 – a time frame that overlapped with the onset of COVID-19. Under her leadership, JCCMW not only withstood the pandemic but strengthened its operations, reaffirmed its mission and enhanced its programming. Critically, it continued the work of bringing together community members, combatting the isolation and loneliness that pervaded that era.

Jaden Tepper, a senior at Scarsdale High School, championed the JCCMW program JTech, which provided vital assistance to seniors looking to quickly navigate the use of digital technology to augment and replace in-person experiences during the pandemic. He initiated JTech in fall 2021 and continues to use it as a means of offering individuals personalized assistance with digital tools.



(L-R) Ilan Bruso (honoree), Maya Glick (honoree), Ellen Reinheimer (honoree), Elise Dowell (CEO), Rachel Moseley (Board President), Jaden Tepper (Honoree). Photo credit: Chloe Apple Seldman/Michael Priest Photography

Maya Glick, a senior at the Lefell School, leveraged her love of competitive swimming at the JCCMW to create its Swim-A-Thon, a program that has raised more than \$40,000 since 2018. The funds have supported JCCMW operations as well as carefully selected worthwhile causes.

Ilan Brusso, a senior at the Lefell School, has served as a dedicated volunteer for JCCMW's Sunday Funday offering – helping special needs children in the community with vital social-skills development. The program requires a dedicated commitment on the part of its teen volunteers, who get to know and support the participating children on an individual level.

Funds raised will enable the JCCMW to provide exceptional, uplifting programming that supports its strong community year after year.



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