



MCHEnews

MIDWEST CENTER FOR HOLOCAUST EDUCATION MAKING A DIFFERENCE SINCE 1993

SPRING/SUMMER | 2024

Applying Lessons of the Holocaust to the World Today

The MCHE mission calls us to teach the history of the Holocaust and to *apply its lessons* to counter indifference, intolerance and genocide. In all of our programs, we endeavor to help learners draw relevant connections. However, as the world evolves, so too has the urgent need to apply lessons of the Holocaust to pressing issues today. MCHE has responded by developing programs specifically designed to highlight those issues. In 2024, these are the most frequently requested.

Antisemitism: The Longest Hatred

As the world grappled with record high incidents of antisemitism through 2021 and 2022, we found ourselves teaching this program more frequently. Post-October 7th, it has become our most requested program for both adult audiences and educator groups.

This program examines the adaptability of antisemitism through the centuries by tracking six common tropes from the ancient world through the Nazi period to January 2024. It considers the consistency of the underlying messaging and imagery of antisemitism while tracing its adaptation to current world issues and delivery through modern media, such as social media. The underlying objectives of this workshop are to equip learners with a basic understanding of the history, the ability to identify a trope when they see it,

and to empower specific action when antisemitism is encountered. We cannot fight what we cannot identify.

Ethics and the Holocaust

Survivor Primo Levi reminds us that “Monsters exist, but they are too few in number to be truly dangerous. More dangerous are the common men, the functionaries ready to believe and to act without asking questions.”

This presentation explores the degree to which “bystanders” — those European non-Jews who neither directly hurt nor helped their Jewish neighbors — had knowledge and understanding of the events surrounding them and how they chose to react based on the pressures of the situation. The workshop further asks each of us to consider what responsibility we have in a world where information is readily available and based on the privilege and agency we uniquely experience in a given situation.

Americans and the Holocaust

This program critically analyzes the responses of the United States government and the American people during the 1930s and 1940s based on what they knew about the threats posed to the Jewish community by Nazi Germany.

An outgrowth of MCHE’s designation



Jessica Rockhold leads an antisemitism workshop at a training for educators on October 24, 2023.

as a member of the Community of Holocaust Education Centers (CHEC), this program utilizes materials from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum exhibition *Americans and the Holocaust*. It highlights the role of American politics and societal pressures in determining policy — especially as it regarded immigration in the period before war broke out in 1939. It then further explores what responses were possible for alleviating the suffering of European Jews after the outbreak of war and through the genocidal course of the Final Solution.

Democracy Destroyed: The Transformation of the German State

As politics have become more divisive, we are increasingly asked, “Is this like what happened in Germany?” Though nothing is quite like what happened in Germany, there are lessons to be learned from the Nazi rise to power and their successful dismantling of democracy that should be heeded by all members of modern society.

Continued on page 4

Authenticity in an Unexpected Place

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE | JESSICA ROCKHOLD

I remember looking at the itinerary and thinking that I had never heard of Zvolen — it was just our lunch stop that day. Unlike most of the other stops on the European Study Tour, which took place in prominent cities, Zvolen is a small community of 40,000 people in the middle of Slovakia. It was clear that the site of a bus load of Americans was unusual there — the residents literally stopped to watch us pass as we made our way through town. The fact that we were there to learn about and commemorate their pre-war Jewish community was so unusual and special that our tour guide had contacted the head of the city's Jewish community, who came out in the rain to meet us personally.

Slovakia was a collaborator nation. Part of the Axis, it participated in deporting its Jewish citizens to Auschwitz beginning in 1941. Those Jews who escaped deportation were later tracked and murdered in shooting actions following the Slovak National Uprising. This was the story in Zvolen.

Jewish Cemetery

Our first stop was the Jewish cemetery. It was a small space and clearly many Jewish headstones had been lost through the course of the war. What remained were five simply marked mass graves where local Jews, Roma and Slovak partisans are buried.



They had been shot by members of the Hlinka Guard and an *Einsatzgruppen* unit in the winter of 1944-1945 — their bodies exhumed after the war and reburied respectfully. Along the wall — together in memory as in the grave — are memorial markers and plaques. This was a community so small and so intimately connected that it was possible to individually name the Jewish and Roma victims of this action.

Park of Generous Souls

Just outside the gates of the Jewish cemetery is Zvolen's predominant Holocaust memorial. Two separate installations seek to commemorate the dead, as well as those Slovak non-Jews who offered support for their neighbors. Your eye immediately gravitates to the Obelisk of Hope, a tower composed of 620 stacked glass plates symbolizing hope and life.



This memorial — with its height and ability to grab the light — is juxtaposed with the Threshold of Life, a subterranean installation that takes you underground at the depth of a grave to walk beneath rocks tangled in brass wire symbolizing prayers for Slovak victims of Holocaust. The rocks

are suspended between plates of glass held between two train rails, symbolizing deportation to the camps. As you emerge from the grave you are taken up a white staircase and into the daylight at the foot of the Tree of Life.



Genuine Commemoration

As we walked to the center of town, we paused at the building that was once the synagogue — now a gym and Chinese restaurant — and we ended our tour at a fifth memorial in the center of town. The Crying Fountain in the Park of the Forgotten Neighbours is a broken door commemorating the deportation of members of the community to Auschwitz.

All of this points to a community that genuinely chose to commemorate their lost Jewish and Roma citizens. These monuments were not placed to draw study tours like ours. They are there to remind their own citizens of what happened in their community.

Connecting as Individuals

The Jewish community leader that met us that day is a member of the Second Generation. He was born after the war to survivor parents who chose to return home. He shared with us that

Extremist Resistance in Germany...and at Home

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE | STEVEN E. COLE



Left to right: Steve Cole, Laurie Horn, Evy Tilzer, Joyce Hess, Alexandra Hess, Jewish community leader from Zvolen.

there are only 12 Jewish people left in the community.

Our experience in Zvolen is best summed up in a profound moment when he was joined by the children and grandchildren of survivors on our trip to take this photo and commemorate this experience. There were more than a few teary eyes as we witnessed this moment of memory and shared experience, separated by years and miles and language and different lived experiences. Nothing about their lives was noticeably similar except that their parents and grandparents had survived the Holocaust.

As we stood there with him outside the Jewish cemetery, in his community with so few Jewish people that they cannot form a minyan, we witnessed the deep and personal impact of this history. As learners, we intellectually prepare ourselves to step into Auschwitz. We have easy access to learning about Jewish communities in larger cities — how they lived and what fate befell them.

We settle into thinking about the Holocaust as a crime that happened to millions of people. What we must always remember is that it was a crime perpetrated and experienced individually millions of times over in every corner of Europe. In Zvolen, we were profoundly reminded of that individuality.

In February, my friend Karl reached out to me from his home in Geilenkirchen, Germany, to tell me about an anti-hate rally and ask me to suggest some words he could share there. Geilenkirchen is my mother's hometown where our family has roots going back to 1750. On *Kristallnacht*, my mother fled as townspeople threatened to burn her parents' home to the ground.

I was excited to learn that more than 2,500 people attended that anti-hate rally, persevering through the cold and rain! That 9% of those living there today congregated to push back against hate, resurgent rightwing extremists, and antisemitism almost moved me to tears! I subsequently learned that similar protests in major cities like Berlin, Munich, Hamburg and Dusseldorf had drawn hundreds of thousands.

Waking Up to Hate

For a generation after World War II, German citizens and leaders were largely unable to address their Nazi past. Today, every German child's education includes Holocaust education, focusing on the consequences of failing to repel and rebuff the voices of evil when they first raise their heads and spout their awful words. At the university level, students learn of former fellow citizens who were persecuted, killed, and labeled as the "undesirable other" in a culture-wide outbreak of xenophobia.

Does this commitment to Holocaust education mean the Germans have quashed the forces of hate? Unfortunately, not thus far. An Associated Press story on March 18, 2024, reported that if an election were held today, the nationalist far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) party would be the second largest party in government. Shockingly, it was discovered that groups affiliated with the AfD had recently devised a

plan to deport millions of people.

However, resistance is strong. In the country that perpetrated the murder of more than six million Jews and millions of others, large groups are speaking out to say, "Never again." Countrywide, organizers of the anti-AfD protests estimate more than 3.6 million people participated in their demonstrations. This is the equivalent of 14.4 million Americans demonstrating in the streets. In the words of one German, "The country is waking up."

Holocaust Education

These positive actions in Germany made me once again marvel at and find great purpose in the important work of your Midwest Center for Holocaust Education. Ignorance of what awful things people can do and what did occur is fertile soil for haters. MCHE's work to teach the history of the Holocaust, applying its lessons to counter indifference, intolerance and genocide, strives to rebuff the haters early and often.

Many are alarmed at manifestations of xenophobia and intolerance in our own country, but we must do more than talk about it amongst ourselves. We must commit to countering bad intentions by educating students and community groups about what happened. Germany's current efforts call us to do more to fight it here. MCHE's educational work with thousands of people annually contributes to that effort. MCHE is worthy of your support and participation today and in the years to come.

Steve Cole was for 28 years President of Dedicated Distribution, Inc., a national medical equipment and supply wholesaler. The son of Holocaust survivors Walter and Ilsa Cole, Steve is a father of three, a Second Generation speaker for MCHE, and along with his wife, Beth, a volunteer at the JFS Food Pantry.



Continued from page 1

This program explores the extreme conditions that existed in post-World War I Germany, the origins of the Nazi Party, its subsequent rise to power, and the rapid transformation of the German state from a constitutional democracy



Shelly Cline giving one of three recent presentations about the fragility of democracy.

to a dictatorship — all in the span of less than two years.

Propaganda and the People

In a digital age where media literacy is a critical skill, it is instructive to look at the highly effective messaging tactics

utilized by the Nazis. Both Hitler and Goebbels were master propagandists who seriously considered messaging techniques and delivery.

This program examines those techniques, still being utilized in modern politics and advertising. It examines the evolution of Nazi messaging throughout their time in power and

highlights how, far from being a brain washing technique, effective propaganda convinces and creates gradual sustained change. This presentation is highly interactive, discussion-based, and encourages close readings of images, deep analysis and media literacy.

Invite us to your group

These programs are offered periodically as public programs. They are more frequently delivered to private groups who contact MCHE requesting programming. We fulfill all requests that our schedule allows and encourage you to invite us to present to your faith community, social service group, professional association, or other interested group. Please send your request to info@mchekc.org.

New Partnership Collects Survivor Testimony

Partnerships born from MCHE's role in the exhibition *Auschwitz: Not long ago. Not far away.* have yielded many remarkable opportunities. The most recent is a partnership between MCHE and the Mizel Museum in Denver, Colorado, to collect testimony from Kansas City area survivors who had not previously shared their stories.

The relationship with the Mizel Museum originated when the MCHE and Mizel teams met in Poland as participants in the first year of the

Auschwitz Fellowship Program. Lacking a significant survivor population in Denver from which to collect testimony, the Mizel reached out to MCHE as a regional partner to identify survivors who had not participated in previous testimony projects but would now do so to enrich both the Mizel and MCHE archives.

MCHE provided a summary of survivor biographies to the Mizel team, which identified an initial group of three survivors who agreed to participate in a professional filming project conducted last December at Village Shalom.

Testimony was collected from Peter Newman, an Austrian survivor who endured several flights from Nazi persecution before finding refuge in an Italian camp and then in the Fort Ontario camp in Oswego, New York; Adela Dagerman, a Hungarian survivor of Auschwitz and Stutthof; and Elizabeth Nussbaum, a



The production crew – Jessica Rockhold, Shelly Cline, Becci Jacobs, Meg Robbins, Brad Austin.

Hungarian survivor of Auschwitz and Dachau.

Dr. Shelly Cline, MCHE's historian and Director of Education, was also recorded as a content expert, speaking on various historical topics, including gender in the Holocaust, eugenics and the T4 program, and antisemitism.

The recordings currently exist in a raw format suitable for research and archival purposes. Future projects will allow MCHE to edit the testimony for classroom use and add it to each survivor's profile on the MCHE website.



Survivor Elizabeth Nussbaum being interviewed in December 2023.

Holocaust by Bullets

YAHAD-IN UNUM PROGRAMS FOR EDUCATORS AND THE PUBLIC



A witness leads the Yahad-In Unum team to the site of a previously undocumented mass grave in Ukraine.

Before any killing centers in the Holocaust became operational, thousands of Jews had already been murdered in what is now known as the *Holocaust by Bullets* in the fields, forests and ravines of Eastern Europe.

Men, women and children were led outside the towns in which they lived, murdered before the eyes of their neighbors, and buried in mass graves, many of which remain unmarked to this day.

Yahad-In Unum, established in 2004 by Father Patrick Desbois, is a research and educational organization dedicated to documenting the crimes of the Holocaust in countless towns and villages of Eastern Europe in which the Jewish community was murdered by *Einsatzgruppen* actions.

Yahad's research seeks to confirm the location of previously unknown or unmarked mass graves, to collect testimony from non-Jewish witnesses to the crimes, and to restore the memory of the destroyed communities.

As of December 2023, Yahad's teams have conducted 210 investigative trips to 11 Eastern European countries, identified over 3,300 killing sites, and collected nearly 8,000 eyewitness testimonies to the murder of East-European Jews.

This June, Yahad-In Unum comes to Kansas City for two important programs conducted by Yahad educators and sponsored by MCHE.

Third Annual Operation Barbarossa Commemoration

JUNE 24, 2024, 6:30 P.M.

SOCIAL HALL AT THE JEWISH COMMUNITY CAMPUS

5801 W. 115TH STREET, OVERLAND PARK, KS 66211

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

June 22, 1941, marked the start of Operation Barbarossa, the codename for the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union, and it became a turning point in the Nazi policy of annihilation of the Jews of Europe. Between 1941 and 1944, over two million Jewish victims perished in the *Holocaust by Bullets*.

Over the years, Babyn Yar has become an iconic representation of this history. There are, however, thousands of sites like this infamous ravine scattered across Eastern Europe.

This program, presented by Yahad-In Unum representatives Ewa Schaller and Todd Hennessy, explores that history and the work of Yahad-In Unum.

Registration is requested at
<https://mchekc.org/operation-barbarossa-commemoration/>.

The Holocaust by Bullets: A Symposium for Educators

JUNE 25 AND 26, 2024, 8:30 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.

BOARD ROOM AT THE JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER

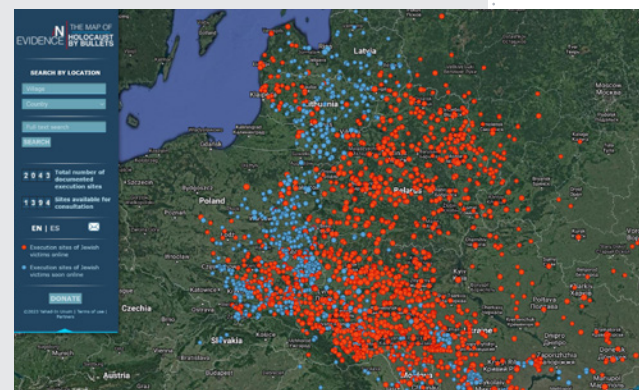
5801 W. 115TH STREET, OVERLAND PARK, KS

Most students are familiar with the concentration and death camps of the Holocaust — Auschwitz, Bergen-Belsen, Dachau. Fewer are aware that more than two million Jewish people and thousands of non-Jewish victims were murdered in the *Holocaust by Bullets*.

Educators are invited to this intensive workshop to learn about this essential chapter of Holocaust history. Hear the voices of those who witnessed the *Holocaust by Bullets* and study contemporary mass killings, including the Mayan populations in Guatemala and the Yazidi people in Iraq, both of which have been investigated by Yahad-In Unum teams.

Space is limited. Complete information and registration is available at
<https://mchekc.org/the-holocaust-by-bullets-a-two-day-symposium-for-educators/>.

The symposium for educators is made possible through the generous support of the family of Isak and Ann Federman in recognition of their commitment to Holocaust education.



Yahad-In Unum's *In Evidence* map – documenting the location of mass graves throughout Eastern Europe and a critical educational tool allowing researchers and educators to access archival information about these locations.

THANK YOU TO OUR SUSTAINING MEMBERS • CURRENT AS OF MARCH 15, 2024

Please visit mchekc.org/membership to become a member, reactivate an expired membership, or to give a gift membership.

LEGACY GIFTS Make Holocaust education part of your enduring philanthropic legacy by including a gift to MCHE in your will, your trust, or by beneficiary designation. Contact Jessica Rockhold at 913-327-8191 or jessicar@mchekc.org to become a legacy donor.

WHITE ROSE SILVER SOCIETY

Ellen Averett & Peter Smith
Ann Baum
Irene Bettinger
Steve & Beth Cole
Katherine DeBruce
Family of Isak & Ann Federman
Ed & Sandi Fried
John & Jocelyn Fry
Peter & Barbara Gattermeir
Susie Goldsmith
Garrett & Jessica Halton
Michael & Karen Herman
Henry & Kristi Kanarek
Stanley Kanter
Bill & Regina Kort
William & Babs Lowenstein
Sharon Milens
Dee & Joyce Pack
Cliff & Carol Trenton
Karl & Beth Zobrist

WHITE ROSE CHAI SOCIETY

Stanley Bushman & Ann Canfield
Donna Gould Cohen
David Cohn
Sam Devinki & Mary Stahl
Steve & Milisa Flekier
Frank & Sondra Friedman
Edward Goldstein & Rachel Krantz
John & Jenny Isenberg
Joe Parelman
Gloria Schoolman

WHITE ROSE SOCIETY PATRONS

Janet Provines Agron
Robynn & Michael Andracssek
Andy Erinstein
Bernice Fromm
Allan Golad
David Goodman
Allen & Gail Gutovitz
Charles Helzberg & Sandra Baer
Barnett C. Helzberg, Jr. &
Shirley Bush Helzberg
Ron & Barbra Hill

Harry & Gail Himmelstein
Tom Isenberg &
Ann Slegman Isenberg
Marie Koffman
Barry Krigel
Rachel Loeb & Zach Block
Lon Lowenstein
Joseph & Juanita Madrigal
Jack Nagel
Allen & Debra Parmet
Laura & Dennis* Patton
Jessica & John Rockhold
Bill & Marge Schlosberg
Kaley Wajcman Schwartzbard &
Jonathan Schwartzbard, Eliana,
Noah, & Danielle
Dana & Stuart Smith
Neil & Blanche Sosland
Lara & Dan Steinel
Howard & Gerry Trilling
Susan Vogel
Ellen Bresky
Michael Weindling &
Patricia Hurley
Gerald Zobel

WHITE ROSE SOCIETY BENEFACTORS

David Achtenberg &
Alice Jacks Achtenberg
Eddie & Gloria Baker Feinstein
Tyler & Stacy Benson
Bill & Maureen Berkley
Rita Blitt
Jeff Buhai & Suzanne Rosenblatt
Debbie & John Coe
Paul & Bunni Copaken
Peggy & Zandy Davis
Marcia Duke
Brad & Ginny Epsten
Art & Diane Federman
Lorie Federman
Paul Fingersh & Brenda Althouse
Reggie & Jonathan Fink
Karin Golden
Janey Goodman
Nanc & Winn Halverhout

Kathy Krigel Hawley &
Scott Hawley
Spence & Susie Heddens
Pamela Henrickson
Elliott & Kathy Hollub
Judy Jacobs
Marcia Karbank
J. Gordon Kingsley
Suzanne Kingsley
Jason & Heather Kort
Jeff & Polly Kramer
Bruce & Gayle Krigel
Lisa Lefkovitz
Peter & Enid Levi
David & Lisa Lowe
Larry & Beverly Mallin
Jack Mandelbaum, A"H
John Mandelbaum & Bruce Larsen
Kurt & Marilyn Metzl
Jill & Andrew Miller
Ministries of New Life
Mark Myron &
Debbie Smith-Myron
Marcy Nelson
Jeanie Parelman
David & Sylvia Radasky
Robert & Ann Regnier
Marty Rosenberg
Billy & Fani Schiffman
Chris Schumm
Roy Schwartzman
Martin & Claire Seem
John Sharp
Leland & Jill Shurin
Steve & Ileene Simon
Josh & Jane Sosland
Stewart & Esther Stein
Eric Swim
Lowell & Evy Tilzer
Steve & Debbie Trenton
Mike & Pam Zanders
Jean & Bob Zeldin

PARTNERS

James Barber
Susan Bernstein & Chucker Luetje
Mike & Sherry Blumenthal
Shelly Cline
Marilyn & Cal Cohen
Adela Dagerman
Mark Eisemann & Leslie Mark
Jerry Enslein & Hannah Harris
Deb Finkelstein
Dan & Mary Lou Fritts
Josh & Ronna Garry
Don Swartz & Karen Glickstein

Charles & Barbara Gorodetzky
Jane & Russell Greene
Fred Greenstein &
Marcia Schoenfeld
Don & Marilyn Griffin
Tina Hacker
Lynn* & Marilyn Hoover
Rocky & Susan Horowitz
Roger Hurwitz
Jonathan & Sherri Jacobs
Juliette Johnson
Kansas City Oasis
Lucas Karlin
Serena Klausner
Brad & Amanda Koffman
Sandy & Erlene Krigel
Scott & Susan Krigel
Bruce Culley & Linda Larkins
Donna Letsch
Craig & Colleen Ligibel
Michael & Beth Liss
Peter & Sharon Loftspring
Sheryl Maguire
Mark & Ellie Mandelbaum
Aaron March
Deborah & Gregory McIntire
Rebecca McKee
Tara Micham
Angie Miller
Thomas Miller
Max & Charlene Muller
Ronald & Donna Patton
Shelly & Stevie Pessin
Philip Reicher
Rosanne & Howard Rosen
Steve & Karen Rothstein
Dan & Miriam Scharf
Alan Schneider
Mary & Brad Schrock
Lynn Schweig
Cookie Segelstein
Steve & Judy Sherry
Peter Stern & Deborah Frye Stern
Fran & David Sternberg
Matthew & Rita Sudhalter
Steve & Evelina Swartzman
Marvin Szneler
Robert Tamasi
Paul Temme & Loring Leifer
Harvey & Donna Thalblum
Jerome Tilzer
Carol Dziadik Turner &
Daniel Turner
Chuck & Ester Udell
Loren & Tom Whittaker

HOT CHOCOLATE TO SPREAD KINDNESS



Eliana, Noah, and Danielle Schwartzbard held their 4th annual hot chocolate stand on a particularly cold Martin Luther King, Jr. Day to raise funds to support MCHE. As members of the fourth generation, they are extending the legacy of shared memory and have shown a deep commitment supporting our work. When they brought in their membership donation, we enjoyed the opportunity to discuss the images on the wall at MCHE and the people that they are connected to who experienced the Holocaust. They are proud to be MCHE's youngest members, to be part of the White Rose Society, and to have increased their membership this year!

ASSOCIATES

Erwin & Phyllis Abrams
Melanie & Daniel Allmayer
Avrom & Rachel Altman
Amy Anderson
Felice Azorsky
Bruce & Janet Baker
Mickey Batnitzky
Michael & Linda Begleiter
Tahl Ben-Yehuda
Cathy & Donovan Blake
Victoria Kaufman-Bluford & David Bluford
Fred & Cindy Bodker
Caitlin Brazner
Milton & Natalie Brod
Pam Feingold Brooks & Joe Brooks
John Burger
Margaret Burton
Nancy Carl
Henry Chamberlain
Jonathan & Ellen Chilton
Alexandra Colbert
Harry Collier
Julie & Jeffrey Colvin
David & Linda Cooper
Robert Corchine & Andrea Poisner-Corchine
Geri Crain
Rebecca Dalton
Jerome & Liz Davidow
Ardie & Gretchen Davis
Elinor Eisemann
Jane Emley
Roger & Virginia Emley
Susan Evans
Ken & Rose Fichman
Mark & Kathy Firestone
Joel & Annette Fish
Nancy & Mark Fitzpatrick
Elliott & Nancy Franks
Elizabeth George
Byron & Gerri Lyn Ginsburg

Carolyn Goldman
Sam & Roberta Goller
Mark & Ruth Gordon
Steven & Alison Gordon
Bob & Evie Grant
Laura Greenbaum
Ruvane & Clara Grossman
Maxine Grossman
Linda & Clint Hall
Linda & Steve Hammer
Alison Heisler
Stephanie & Jeff Herman
Jonathan Hermanson & Hannah Sullivan
Manuel & Maureen Hernandez
Bruce & Lori Hertzfield
Alexandra Hess
Joe & Deborah Hodnik
Joshua Hoffman & Jeramy Zimmerman
Tracie Holley
Alan & Joan Jacobson
Justin & Bev Johl
Keith & Deborah Jordan
Sid & Nan Kanter
Ann Karty & William Silverman
Milton & Sharon Katz
Kurt & Stephanie Kavanaugh
John & Ann Kenney
Susie Kirschbaum
Toby Kite
Lori Klarfeld
Carla Klausner
Mirra Klausner & Todd Clauer
James & Lisa Klein
Carol Kleinman & Wayne Pines
Piet Knetsch
Amanda Koerner
Jackie Kraft
Kliff & Sherry Kuehl
Martin Kupper & Dana Lamm
Shawn Kyndesen
Kelly Lambert
Randi & Bill Lefko

Larry Leibson
Matt & Susan Leonard
Bruce & Devra Lerner
James & Karen Lesky
Adele Levi
Norman & Clara Levine
Tom & Alice Lewinsohn
Benni Lipschuetz
Frank Lipsman & Janet Mark
Emily Loeb & Lee Hammons
Eric Loeb
Rodney & Molly Longhofer
Jeff & Sharon Mallin
Fanny Mandelberger
Megan Mansfield
Adam & Kim Matsil
Howard & Vicky Mayer
John McKinney
Joseph & Alice Megerman
Tom Merrell
Matt & Stefani Miller
Marc Hammer & Alana Muller
Jim & Nicole Murray
Steven & Rosie Nochlin
Flossie Pack
Steve & Sandy Passer
Steven & Jennifer Paul
Floyd Pentlin
David & Carol Porter
Jay & Ellen Portnoy
David Potts
Mary Ramza
James Redington
Lindsay & Chad Roesler
Rachel Rothstein
Kenneth & Teri Sackin
Hal & Carol Sader
Neil & Bitsy Sader
Erika & Bill Schwartz
Penny Selle
Peter & Amy Shapiro
Bob & Aletha Simon
Ronald & Suzanne Slepitz
Paul & Debbie Sokoloff

Ed & Marcia Soltz
Kelly & Dan Somberg
David & Rachel Sosland
Sarah Stapp
Phyllis Stevens
Steve & Barb Stras
Bill & Marcia Tammeus
Robert & Paula Thomson
Kay Tisdell
Ted & Diane Traczewski
Ralph & Nina Turec
Patricia Werthan Uhlmann
Shirley Unell
Steve Unterman & Ellen Murphy
Dale Urie
Sue Vile
Ed & Donna Warren
Susan Warshawsky
Scott & Civia White
Gene Wolowski
Michael & Ruth Worthington
David Wristen
Stan & Joyce Zeldin
Nathalie Zugazagoitia

CONTRIBUTORS

Mark & Lucinda Adams
Mark Alpert
Audrey Asher & Michael Lerner
Harold & Marie Asner
Melanie Ball
Lori Barnett
The Bash Group
Georgia Baxter
David & Karen Lebovitz Berger
Andrew Bergerson & Jeanette Jones
Alice & Terry Bertels
Terry & Joan Coatta
Leonard Cohen
Ethan Corson
Kerry Cosner & Michael Block

Continued on page 8

Jannie & Patrick Cubbage
Deanna Culver
Denise Decker
Bob & Kathy DeWitt
Erica Dobreff
Monica & Myron Dreiling
Howard Eichenwald
Heidy & Norman Farber
Sarah Forti
Sandra Gaither
David Feingold & Trudi Galblum
Paul Gieringer
Bailey Goodman
Brian Goodman
Erin Gorny
Judy Hellman
Max Jevinsky
Julie Jordan Chapman
Sara Juarez
Andria Enns Kahclamat
David & Fran Kanter
Marian Kaplan
Maureen Kennedy
David & Lisa Klose
Patricia Koenigsfeld
Bill Kriege
William Kumbier
David & Toby Levine
Gayle Levy
David & Beverly Lewis
Bill & Patsy Lorimer
Dave & Sandy Lowery
Lynnly Busler Marcotte
Joel Markowitz &
Susan Krowley-Markowitz
Karl Mayo
Mary Ann Meeks
Dawn & Cary Minkoff
Ragen Murray
Jeff & Suzanne Myers
Daniel Nash & Sarah Hirsch

Molly Nickle
Carla Norwood
Janice & Michael Panknin
Lee & Esther Pearlmutter
Gay & Scott Ramsey
Deborah Reed
Jerry Rinaldi
Marvin Rogolsky
Walter Rosel
Deborah Rosenberg
Jennifer Safir
Jeff & Linda Sander
Mark Sappington
Nata Scharf
Howard Schwartz &
Barbara Kilikow-Schwartz
Erika & Cody Showalter
Richard & Connie Simon
Sonny & Max Singer
Rebecca Smith
Bruce & Celia Solomon
Stephen & Martha Sparks
Irene & Norton Starr
Todd & Shirley Stettner
Darcy Stewart
Tracy Tetrick
Charlotte Tevet
Alison Tilzer
Nancy Todd
Bradley & Barbara Warady
Felicia Weiner
Julie Wenderott
Craig & Carol Wilson
Elijah Winkler
Lorna Wright
Betty & Corey Yung

DONORS

Gela Adelman
Maggie Adler
Sylvia Agard

Ethel Ardow
Andrea Baran
Richard & Shari Barr
Barbara Bayer
Kate Bender
Phillis Bengis
Kristy Blackman
Diana Blessen
Elliot Brand
Walt & Pat Brayman
Melba Buterin
Jacques Cukierkorn
Ellen Dalen
Harold & Arla Edelbaum
Mary Emanuel
Michael Epstein
Martin & Joyce Fee
Brenda Fishman
Jim & Eva Foster
Joyce Fulps
Jonathan Gale
Susie Gershon
Laura Goettsch
Diane Greenspun
Sam & Susan Gutovitz
Mitch & Lisa Hamburg
Ralph Hartwich
Matthew Henrickson
Mark & Vicki Herman
Jonathan Holz
Theresa Jones
Baruch & Donna Kaelter
Barry Kaseff
Mark & Marcie Klein
Joe & Netta Krashin
Todd & Stacy Kudron
Ken & Sandi Lerner
Cheryl Lester
Joel & Bev Levine
Mary Ann McCue
Robert & Nancy Milgrim

David Newkirk
Karl-Heinz Nieren
Harrietalison Nohe-Hutchins
Joel Obermayer
Shannon O'Sullivan
Joel & Brenda Pelofsky
Megan Pener
Robert Regnier
Wendy Rosenthal
Sue Ross
Marc Russell
Ellie Schneider
Jessica Schneider
Carl & Bonnie Schulkin
Dana Schwartz
David & Jill Shapiro
Mark Sharp
Rosemary Yarmo Silverman
Robert & Debra Simon
Dolores Sosnow
Lacey Storer
Betsy Sullivan
Paul Teverow
Marni Thompson-Tilove
Jordan Tilzer
Eric Todd
Benesto & Sharon Tumanut
Jeannette Vahle
Joel & Susan Waxman
Andrea Weis
Gretchen Wills
Johnette & Shel Zimmerman

EDUCATORS

Shari Baellow
Christopher Bobal
Alyce Edwards
Ben Furnish
Karin Gastreich
Sharon Elbaum Glickman
Angela Gottesburen
Suzy Katz
Abe & Arlene Kopec
Brad Lucht
Mark & Vicky Nanos
Jennifer Padberg
Marlys Peck
Shannon Quigley
Jennifer Reeder
Mike Russell
Emma Sandler
Vicki Simmons
Erwin & Betty Stern
Tracy Williams
Maureen Wilt
Flora Winitz
Crystal Yakel-Kuntz

2024 MEMBERSHIP CHALLENGE

Our thanks to MCHE benefactors Karen and Mike Herman for their second year of support for the Herman Family Initiative — a challenge grant that matches the first \$50,000 brought in by new and increased memberships in 2024. We are grateful that they chose to give their planned gift in their lifetimes so they can see the legacy they are creating.

We invite you to join now or increase your current membership at year-end to
DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT!



State Holocaust Commissions

MCHE participates in state Holocaust commissions through Executive Director Jessica Rockhold's role as co-chair of the Kansas Commission and in Missouri where she serves on the curriculum subcommittee, which focuses on teacher professional development throughout the state.



Kansas Holocaust Commission

Each year, this group, appointed by the Governor, plans and hosts the state commemoration of *Yom Hashoah* during the annual Days of Remembrance.

The State of Kansas Holocaust Commemoration will take place on May 6, 2024, in Topeka, Kansas. Personal remarks will be provided by Micha Menczer, a child of survivors from Victoria, British Columbia. He will reflect on his father's experiences as a child during the Holocaust in Romania and his own experiences creating the online exhibition "My Father's Stories."

The commemoration is open to the public and school audiences, but registration is requested at <https://mchekc.org/kansas-holocaust-commemoration/>. The program will be live streamed on the MCHE Kansas City YouTube Channel.

Missouri Holocaust Commission

For the last two years, MCHE has helped to craft the state's curriculum framework and resource recommendations for teaching the Holocaust, which will be formalized by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and shared with Missouri educators.

Recently, our work shifted to participating in Commission-sponsored teacher professional development workshops throughout Missouri designed to equip educators with best pedagogical practices, resources and historical knowledge. MCHE's area of emphasis within these partnership trainings has been teaching about antisemitism, drawing both historical and contemporary lessons from the history.

We are grateful for our relationship with the Commission and with the St. Louis Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum as we all work together to support Missouri educators in effectively and thoughtfully implementing a state-wide mandate.

SURVIVOR PROFILE

Dr. Joseph Kanarek

OF BLESSED MEMORY 1926 - 2020

Joseph Kanarek was born in Plonsk, Poland, where he lived with his parents, Hershel and Golda, and his younger sister Rachel. The family spent summer vacations in the country with his grandparents, and in the winter they went ice skating, sledding, and skiing with friends and neighbors.

After the occupation of Poland, Joseph and his family were forced to move to the Plonsk Ghetto, where they lived from July 1940 to November 1942. From there, they were deported to Auschwitz, where his mother and sister were killed. Joseph and his father were assigned to forced labor at Buna-Monowitz from December 1942 until December 1944.

In January 1945, Joseph was transferred to Mittelbau-Dora where in the confusion he was able to remove his uniform badge and pass as a non-Jewish prisoner. He was assigned to the camp infirmary until April when he was liberated by the U.S. Army. His father was sent to another camp where he perished.

Joseph left Bremen, Germany, on the *USS Marine Perch*, the second ship bringing refugees from Europe. He arrived in New York in May 1946, where he was met by his aunt and uncle.

Joseph completed his education, becoming a doctor specializing in treating Cystic Fibrosis. In 1959, he arrived in Kansas City where he finished his training, built his medical practice, and raised his family.



Dr. Joseph Kanarek, 2017

To view Joseph's video testimony and learn more about his experiences visit <https://mchekc.org/testimonial/joseph-kanarek/>.



Memorial to the Children Victims of the War. This bronze sculpture by Marie Uchytlová commemorates the 82 children of Lidice who were gassed at Chelmno. It stands in a field where members of the village were shot.

The Price of Resistance

By Shelly M. Cline, PhD

For those who know the name Reinhard Heydrich, it usually brings to mind the Wannsee Conference where, upon Heydrich's invitation, Nazi government officials gathered on January 20, 1942, to ratify the "Final Solution." Or one might think about the opening of the three killing centers Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka, known collectively as the Operation Reinhard camps. What is perhaps less commonly recalled is what happened after Wannsee and what precipitated the naming of this operation.

Planning the "Final Solution"

In 1942, Heydrich was an ambitious 38 year-old who had achieved a position of prominence within the Nazi state. He developed the Security Service (*Sicherheitsdienst*; SD), headed the Gestapo, and then served as Chief of the Security Police and the SD. On July 31, 1941, Herman Göring authorized Heydrich to develop a "final solution to the Jewish question in Europe."

While coordinating the development of the killing process that would characterize the Holocaust, he was promoted to governor of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia in September 1941. Here, he oversaw a campaign of terror against real and perceived opposition to Nazi rule.

Confident in his pacification of the Czech people, he disregarded his own security measures. On May 27, 1942, he drove a familiar route in an open car through Prague, where two Czech parachutists, trained by the British and sent back into the Protectorate, ambushed his car. Although their gun jammed, they managed to throw a grenade at the car.

Heydrich escaped a direct hit, but splinters of shrapnel embedded in his back and leg, leading to infection and death on June 4. To honor Heydrich's memory, the Nazis named the operation to murder Poland's Jewish community Operation Reinhard.

Lidice, Ležáky, Prague

A few days later, Hitler ordered reprisals against the Czech people. The German police and the SS destroyed



(Top) Petschek Palace, Prague, built by Jewish Industrialist Julius Petschek in 1929, it became the Gestapo Headquarters during the Nazi occupation. (Bottom) Holding cells in the basement of the Petschek Palace where prisoners were held following violent interrogations.

the village of Lidice, which had been falsely linked to the assassination. They shot the men, deported the women to Ravensbrück, and sent the children to Lodz where many were later deported

The few foundations that remain of the original village form the basis of the Lidice memorial. The first formal memorial efforts were made in July 1945 by the Red Army. A small museum was established in 1962 and in 2005 it underwent major renovations.





Crypt of Saints Cyril and Methodius Cathedral where members of the resistance hid and made their last stand against the Nazis in a siege that lasted six hours. Today this space is a memorial and museum dedicated to their bravery.

and murdered in Chelmno. They killed the pets and animals. Then they dynamited and burned the village to the ground. Later that month, the village of Ležáky was also destroyed and all 50 residents shot. Today all that remains of these villages are a few foundations left by the Nazis as a warning about the high price of resistance.

Even after the destruction of the villages, the Nazis had little information about the whereabouts of the men who carried out the attack. On June 16, one of the men turned himself in to collect reward money, which led to a series of raids and arrests. Those arrested were taken to the Petschek Palace in Prague, once a bank but then used by the Gestapo for interrogations. Eventually, under torture, they gave up the location of the remaining parachutists who were hiding in the crypt of the Cathedral of Saints Cyril and Methodius. After an extensive gun battle and attempts to flood the crypt, the remaining parachutists killed themselves to avoid capture.

Known as Operation Anthropoid, it was the only successful government-

organized assassination of a top-ranking Nazi official during the war. In total over 15,000 Czechs were arrested, sent to camps or killed in reprisal.

Reminders of Terror

Since 1948, the former Petschek Palace building has belonged to the national Ministry of Trade and Industry. But the basement where the Gestapo constructed holding cells and conducted brutal interrogations remains largely unchanged to this day. The cells and worn and peeling linoleum look the same as they did in 1942. Amid this space that feels forgotten by time is a small exhibit detailing its wartime use.

This is a place not accessible to tourists, but rather reserved for special commemorative and educational visits like our own. While standing in the ruins in Lidice one is struck by the empty expanse, the void created by Nazi reprisals. In the basement of the Petschek Palace one feels a claustrophobic oppression. Both remind us of the terror inflicted on millions of ordinary people throughout Europe by the Nazis.

Yom Hashoah

**SUNDAY, MAY 5, 2024, 1:30 P.M.
THE WHITE THEATER AT THE
JEWISH COMMUNITY CAMPUS
5801 W. 115TH STREET,
OVERLAND PARK, KS**

In response to an expected final liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto, on April 19, 1943, the remaining inhabitants of the ghetto launched their final act of armed resistance.

For 27 days, these ill-equipped Jewish fighters held out against the Nazis. By May 16 when the Germans succeeded in suppressing the uprising, at least 7,000 had been killed in the fighting.

Approximately 42,000 ghetto inhabitants were then deported, and most were later murdered over two days in November 1943 in an action known as Operation Harvest Festival. This year marks the 81st anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, the largest Jewish uprising during the war.

In 1951, the Israeli Knesset established *Yom Hashoah* as 27 Nisan, commemorating this act of resistance. Kansas City survivors originated our community's *Yom Hashoah* memorial service that we continue to this day and commissioned a memorial both to remember those they had lost and to celebrate the heroism of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. This year marks the 61st anniversary of the dedication of the Memorial to the Six Million.

The 2024 community *Yom Hashoah* service is chaired by Dr. Henry Kanarek, son of Holocaust survivor Dr. Joseph Kanarek.

The *Yom Hashoah* commemoration is a free event open to the public. Anyone unable to attend in person is invited to watch the livestream event on the MCHE Kansas City YouTube Channel beginning at 1:30 p.m. that day.





(First) POLIN Museum built on the site of the former Warsaw Ghetto.
 (Second) Milkcan from Oneg Shabbat Archive in The Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw.
 (Third) Interior of a women's barracks in Auschwitz Birkenau.
 (Fourth) Topography of Terror documentation center and memorial in Berlin.

ITINERARY HIGHLIGHTS

European Study Trip 2025

The memory of the Holocaust is woven into the fabric of modern Europe. This tour experience for MCHE members — September 6-18, 2025 — will provide a deeper understanding of this history.

Major Memorial Sites and Museums

In each of the cities we travel to we will visit sites that explore the rich diversity of Jewish life that existed for centuries before the Holocaust, including the Jewish Museum of Berlin, the Kazimierz District of Krakow, the POLIN Museum of Warsaw, and the Vilna Gaon Museum of Jewish History in Vilnius.

Ghettos

When Germany invaded Poland in 1939, it began its policy of ghettoization. Despite the dire conditions created by the Nazis, ghettos were the last spaces that Jewish populations lived together as families and communities. We will visit three significant ghettos.

- Krakow, from which there were major deportations to Belzec and Auschwitz.
- Warsaw, the largest ghetto, which once held 400,000 people, was the site of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, and where individuals secretly collected and preserved a record of ghetto life, known as the Oneg Shabbat Archive. Our visit will include a visit to this collection, now housed in the Jewish Historical Institute.
- Vilnius, then known as Vilna, a vibrant center of Jewish culture and language.

Concentration Camps and Sites of Terror

Within the first months in power, the Nazi government established the first concentration camp to incarcerate political opponents and enemies of the state. One of the first was Sachsenhausen, located outside of Berlin. Here we will see

the beginnings of the camp system and understand how it evolved.

Once the war started, the camp system expanded to occupied territories. While in Krakow, we will visit the site of Płaszów labor camp, headed by Amon Goth.

While in Berlin we will visit the Topography of Terror, a museum built on the site of buildings that housed the Gestapo, Reich Leadership SS and Reich Security Main Office.

Death Camps and Killing Sites

As Nazi policy escalated to genocide, they established six killing centers in Poland. We will travel to the two largest of these death camps. Treblinka represented an earlier, more rudimentary system. Despite its small geographic size and lack of infrastructure, it was the deadliest place in human history until Auschwitz displaced it months later. During our visit to the Auschwitz camp complex we will remember the 1.2 million individuals murdered there in the industrialized killing process.

Before the Nazis established stationary killing centers, they used mobile killing units to murder their victims outside of the towns in which they lived. While in Vilnius we will visit the memorial site of Ponary, where thousands of Jews from the Vilna Ghetto were murdered.



MCHE members are invited to contact Shelly Cline at shellyc@mchekc.org to register for the 2025 experience.

Generations of Memory Initiative

ENGAGING FUTURE GENERATIONS OF OUR SURVIVOR FAMILIES

MCHE's educational philosophy stands on the foundation of local survivor testimony. For many years we benefited from the first-hand transmission of Holocaust testimony — both in the form of in-person events and archival recordings. As recently as last year, MCHE hosted seven survivor speakers who left an indelible impression on audiences hearing first-hand how the Holocaust impacted individual lives.

Alongside this critical storytelling, children of survivors — the second generation — have carried the mantle. Since 2006 their presentations have enabled learners to continue to see the personal impact of this history on families and generations beyond the survivors themselves.

Next Steps

For many years we have contemplated what engagement looks like beyond participation in the speakers bureau. With the grandchildren of survivors, we have opened a conversation that is just beginning about what this history means in their lives and how they want to address that part of their identity.

MCHE is pleased to announce a new Generations Initiative to support and engage the family members of our survivor community. We invite members of the second, third and fourth generations and survivor family members to join us as we launch a series of programs to build community while empowering them to find their own individual paths to participating in the work of Holocaust education and the critical transmission of personal memory.

Programming designed specifically for these groups began in March with a private presentation about the fragility of democracy, examining how the Nazi Party dismantled the Weimar democratic structure and then implemented a complete dictatorship between January 1933 and August 1934.

Generations of Memory

Over the next two years, our program plans include:

1. Learning opportunities of unique interest to the family members of survivors.
2. Family history preservation workshops, including hands-on help with scanning photos and documents, conducting interviews, and transmitting family history to next generations.
3. Second and third generation testimony collection including a writing project.
4. Community-building and social opportunities for each group.

We invite the family members of Holocaust survivors to participate in this programming. You are in a unique position to ensure your family stories live on and make a difference. We encourage your input on how we can best meet your needs and ask you to join our mailing list by sending your contact information to info@mchekc.org so we can keep you apprised of future programming.

This project is supported by a generous grant from the White Family Supporting Foundation at the Jewish Community Foundation.



Alexandra Hess, granddaughter of Sonia Golad, speaks about her memories of her grandmother.

Save
the Date

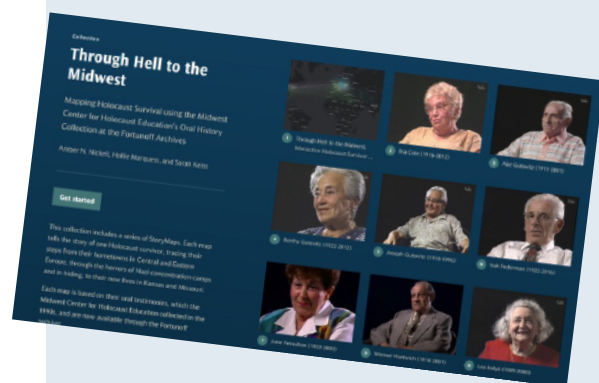
WEDNESDAY
JUNE 26, 2024
6:30 P.M.

MCHE Annual Meeting and Elections

LIGHT RECEPTION, 6:30 P.M.
ELECTIONS AND PROGRAM, 7:00 P.M.
SOCIAL HALL AT THE JEWISH COMMUNITY CAMPUS
5801 W. 115TH STREET,
OVERLAND PARK, KS

FEATURED GUESTS:

Dr. Amber Nickell and Hollie Marquess, Primary Investigators and Project Co-Authors at Fort Hays State University Department of History, present *Through Hell to the Midwest* — a mapping project featuring survivors in the MCHE Witnesses to the Holocaust Archive



NOMINATIONS:

MCHE members are invited to submit nominations for the MCHE Board of Directors and Council of Advocates to Nominating Committee Chair Karl Zobrist by May 4.

Register to attend or submit a nomination at www.mchekc.org/annualmeeting.

SPRING/SUMMER PROGRAM CALENDAR

Full details about all MCHE programs are available at mchekc.org.

APRIL

April 4

Americans and the Holocaust –
Hays, KS



April 17

Terezin Presentation –
Lowell Milken Center in Fort
Scott, KS

April 18

America Must Respond to the
Uygher Genocide

April 18-19

Jews in the Americas - KU Jewish
Studies Conference – Lawrence, KS

April 20

Big Sonia showing at
the Glenwood Fine
Arts Theater



MAY

May 2: Antisemitism:
Evolution and Escalation

May 5

Annual Yom
Hashoah
Commemoration

May 6

State of Kansas
Holocaust
Commemoration

May 7

MCHE Annual
Academic
Awards



JUNE

June 24

Annual Operation Barbarossa
Commemoration



Witnesses
help Yahad-In
Unum locate
a mass grave
in Ukraine.

June 25-26

Holocaust by Bullets Educator Workshop



June 26

MCHE Annual Meeting and Elections

MCHE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President | Steven E. Cole

Immediate Past President | Karl Zobrist

Vice Presidents | Robynn Andracssek • Stacy Benson • Jackie Hermanson • Rita Sudhalter

Secretary | Brian Goodman

Treasurer | Stewart Stein

Assistant Treasurer | Dr. Lowell Tilzer

Board of Directors | Professor Andrew Stuart Bergerson • Debbie Coe • Alan Edelman • Reggie Fink • Dr. Kurt Graham • Dr. Allen Gutovitz • Dr. Mirra Klausner • Rosanne Rosen • Marvin Szneler • Bill Tammeus • Chuck Udell

Council of Presidents | Mark P. Adams • Steve Chick* • Hon. Arthur B. Federman • Steve Flekier • Karen M. Herman • Joyce E. Hess • William B. Kort • Gayle P. Krigel • Colleen M. Ligibel • Carol Sader • Dr. Blanche E. Sosland

Directors Emeriti | Maria Devinki* • Isak Federman* • Jack Mandelbaum*

** of blessed memory*

MCHE TEAM

Jessica Rockhold
Executive Director
jessicar@mchekc.org

Dr. Shelly Cline
Director of Education/Historian
shellyc@mchekc.org

Dana Smith
Accounts Manager
danas@mchekc.org

Laura Patton
Program Associate
laurap@mchekc.org

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO
OUR GRANT AGENCIES



**Midwest Center for
Holocaust Education**
5801 West 115th Street,
Suite 106
Overland Park, Kansas
66211-1800

Platinum
Transparency
2024

Candid.

**Charity
Navigator**



• FOUR-STAR •

J.E.D.I. Award Recipient
Justice – Equity
Diversity – Inclusion
Perspective Group, LLC
Lawrence, KS