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‘Center to Combat Antisemitism and Reinforce Multicultural Acceptance’ Launches

- [By Harry Glazer](#)
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For the leadership of the Jewish Federation in the Heart of New Jersey, commemorating the attacks of October 7 and responding to the stark increase in antisemitism in the U.S. after that awful day was simply not enough. They had to take proactive steps to combat the tide of ignorance and hatred.

In that spirit, Jewish Federation Executive Director Susan Antman announced at the Federation’s “October 7th: Marking One Year” event on Sunday, October 6 that the Federation has launched the Center to Combat Antisemitism and Reinforce Multicultural Acceptance (CARMA), which will be based in the Federation’s offices in South River (see article about the Federation’s Oct. 7 program on page 58). She stated that as a child of Holocaust survivors, she is particularly proud to partner with CARMA’s director, Dr. Stacy Gallin, to scale her center’s work to address current challenges.

As a press release from the Federation elaborated, “This initiative was conceived to meet a universal need here at home by providing education, support, and other tools for schools and their students, municipalities, and private sector companies in the region.” The release added that CARMA “aims to reduce antisemitism and other forms of identity-based hate

through education, dialogue, and tools for education professionals, students, and others—including a new support helpline.”

Murray Katz, president of the Jewish Federation, told The Jewish Link: “Antisemitism doesn’t just pop up in adults. It grows over many years. The idea here is to attack before it has a chance to grow. CARMA is designed to address antisemitism initially at the primary and secondary education levels through education and dialogue. Meetings and hopefully programs will be set up with every public school superintendent in Middlesex and Monmouth counties. Some have already taken place.”



Dr. Stacy Gallin speaks with Rabbi Ken Brodkin of Congregation B’nai Israel in Manalapan, at the Jewish Federation in the Heart of New Jersey’s “October 7th: Marking One Year’ event.”

The Federation press release outlined the origins of the CARMA/Federation partnership: “CARMA’s mission is rooted in the belief that education and dialogue are the most powerful tools in combating hate,” said Gallin, CARMA’s director and founding director of the Ferencz Institute for Ethics, Human Rights and the Holocaust. “By equipping individuals with local solutions for addressing often nuanced issues head-on, we can create lasting change in our communities.

“CARMA, which grew out of the Center to Combat Antisemitism (CCA), a partnership between Marlboro Jewish Center and the Ferencz Institute, was developed in direct response to an alarming rise in antisemitism in Monmouth and Middlesex counties, particularly in the aftermath of the October 7 Hamas attack on Israel. With need sharply rising, CCA joined with Jewish Federation in the Heart of NJ, which had been doing similar work, to scale CCA’s reach and impact across Monmouth and Middlesex and beyond.”

Speaking to The Jewish Link at the Oct 7 event, Gallin stated: “I entered this partnership with the Jewish Federation in the Heart of New Jersey because I saw a dire need. I have a background in Holocaust education and I have interviewed many survivors. I always told them that we would preserve their legacy. This is a very important way to do that.

“A lot of my work prior to October 7 was internationally focused in places like India, Africa and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, to help make the lessons of the Holocaust relevant and promote equality and dignity for all people. I never thought I would see this level of antisemitism here at home, in my children’s schools. That’s when I realized I needed to shift my focus and energy more locally.”

Gallin said that she is looking forward to working with different educational institutions, including Rutgers University, to provide support and training for those facing antisemitism.

To learn more about CARMA, please see: www.carmacenter.org