

Toledo Jewish News

The Monthly Newspaper of Jewish Toledo

 Jewish Federation
& Foundation
OF GREATER TOLEDO

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Shine a Light on Antisemitism rally



Please see the "thank you" on page 3 and the full article recapping the event on page 13!

**The Jewish Community Relations Council
of the Jewish Federation of Greater Toledo
thanks all of our community partners
who attended Shine a Light on Antisemitism**

Elected officials:

Mark Frye, President, Sylvania City Council
U.S. Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur
Erica Krause, NW OH Representative, Office of U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown
Neal Mahoney, Sylvania Township Trustee
Dr. Tiffany Preston-Whitman, Toledo City Council
Cayla Shreffler, NW OH Representative, Office of U.S. Senator Rob Portman
Ohio Representative Lisa Sobecki

Faith leaders:

Pastor Martin Billmeier, St. Lucas Lutheran Church
Imam Ahmad Deeb, Islamic Center of Greater Toledo
Pastor Andrew Edwards, Northwest Baptist Church
Father Tony Gallagher, retired Catholic priest
Pastor Noah Hagedorn, Cedar Creek Church
Dr. Samina Hasan, United Muslim Association of Toledo
Mary Igoe Meyers, Broadmead Friends Meeting
Robyn Perry, Maumee Valley Unitarian Universalist Congregation
Dr. Maseeh Rehman, President, United Muslim Association of Toledo
Pastor Luke Shortridge, Cedar Creek Church
Pastor Vern Swett, Senior Pastor, Sylvania United Church of Christ
Deacon Jennifer Vazquez, Sylvania United Church of Christ
Joe Zielinski, Vice Chair, MultiFaith Council of NW Ohio

Education:

Malaika Bell, Interim ED of Office of Diversity and Inclusion, University of Toledo
Dan Greenberg, Ohio Education Association
Julie Hoffman, President, Sylvania School Board
Aleiah Jones, Interim Director of Office of Multicultural Student Success, University of Toledo

Law enforcement:

Agent David Banach, Federal Bureau of Investigation
Chief Paul Long, Sylvania Township Police
Chief Josh Sprow, Maumee Police

Other community partners:

Sheena Barnes, Executive Director, Equality Toledo
Farhana Habib, Northwest Ohio Immigrant Rights Network
Diana Jacobson, Executive Director, Sylvania YMCA/JCC
Christina Yaniga, Coordinator, Northwest Ohio Immigrant Rights Network

Thank you to all our Jewish Toledo clergy for your participation!

Thank you to Congregation B'nai Israel, Congregation Etz Chayim, Temple Shomer Emunim, and the YMCA of Greater Toledo for your co-sponsorship. Thank you to Chabad House of Toledo for providing and lighting the large Hanukkah menorah.

Thank you to Jewish Federations of North America for making this event possible by awarding JCRC a generous grant.

Jewish Community Relations Council

Toledo Shines a Light on Antisemitism

Last month, in an event organized by the Jewish Community Relations Council (“JCRC”), Toledoans of diverse backgrounds came together in the pouring rain to spread awareness of rising antisemitism and support the Jewish community in our time of need.

The event was called Shine a Light on Antisemitism and was located outside the YMCA/JCC on our Jewish Toledo campus. It was organized in response to a significant increase in antisemitic violence, harassment, and intimidation – and a corresponding rise in other forms of bigotry, intolerance, and hate, across Greater Toledo and all of Ohio – and was co-sponsored by Congregation B’nai Israel, Congregation Etz Chayim, Temple Shomer Emunim, and the YMCA of Greater Toledo. This event was made possible by a grant awarded to JCRC by the Jewish Federations of North America.

All Jewish Toledo clergy participated. Rabbi David Kaufman of Temple Shomer Emunim spoke about antisemitism throughout history. Cantor Ivor Lichterman from Congregation B’nai Israel shared the Hanukkah story prior to the lighting of the menorah led by Rabbi Shemtov of the Chabad House of Toledo. Cantor Jen Roher from Temple Shomer Emunim led the community in a song called “Join Hands for Justice,” written by Lisa Levine. Jewish community member Blair Grubb also led the lighting of a Hanukkah menorah that survived World War II.

Many non-Jewish attendees tasted traditional Hanukkah foods (all kosher) for the first time: latkes with apple sauce and sour cream, gelt, and four different kinds of sufganiyot (donuts). Recipe cards were prepared for attendees who wanted to try making latkes and sufganiyot at home. The Multifaith Council of Northwest Ohio, an organization that regularly joins with JCRC on various interfaith initiatives, had a table to distribute materials and share with community members more about their work.

Attendees included local, state, and federal elected officials; various religious, ethnic, and minority groups; K-12 and university educators; and law enforcement, as well as many members of the Jewish community and the public. Several non-Jewish allies spoke, including Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur; Sheena Barnes, Executive Director of Equality Toledo; Cayla Shreffler, the Northwest Ohio district representative of the Office of U.S. Senator Rob Portman; and Erica Krause, the Northwest Ohio district representative of the Office of U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown.

Other speakers included Ste-

phen Rothschild, CEO of the Jewish Federation of Greater Toledo; Sue Ann Hochberg, JCRC Chair; Hindea Markowicz, Director of the Ruth Fajerman Markowicz Holocaust Resource Center and Chair of the JCRC’s Antisemitism, Hate, and Holocaust Education task force; Rosemary Chaban, Chair of the JCRC’s Community Engagement task force; and Daniel Pearlman, JCRC Director.

Across North America, more than 60 Jewish and non-Jewish organizations and corporations held similar “Shine a Light” events to raise awareness of antisemitism during Hanukkah.



Prior to the event, State Senator Teresa Fedor presented a Senatorial Citation to JFGT CEO Stephen Rothschild and JCRC Director Daniel Pearlman, commending Jewish Federation of Greater Toledo for organizing this important event. Thank you, Senator Fedor, for your support!

The event was educational, and the local turnout – with over 125 community members in attendance despite the terrible weather – was inspiring. Speakers provided an introduction to Judaism and Hanukkah and gave an overview of historical and contemporary manifestations of antisemitism including recent events that took place locally and nationally.

According to the FBI, 57.5% of all religiously motivated hate crimes in 2020 were against Jews, who make up just 2% of the U.S. population. An American Jewish Committee (“AJC”) survey published two months ago found that one in every four American Jews has been exposed to antisemitism over the past year. In addition, an Anti-Defamation League (“ADL”) survey from this fall found that one in every three Jewish students on a college campus experienced antisemitism in the past year. All of this comes after years of increasing antisemitism nationwide. Hillel International reports that there has been a 600% upsurge in antisemitism on campuses over the past six years.

Here in Ohio, the FBI reports that hate crimes increased 55% in 2020. Statewide, there were across-the-board hate crime increases targeting specific groups, with reported antisemitic hate crimes tripling from 2019 to 2020. These numbers

do not include the crimes that go unreported. This data was also captured before the spike in antisemitism in May 2021, when antisemitic incidents in the U.S. more than doubled during the conflict between Israel and Hamas and its immediate aftermath compared to the same period in 2020.

It should come as no surprise, then, that incidents locally increased as well. In June, a swastika was found painted near the Honors Academic Village at the University of Toledo. In Cleveland, a group of six Jewish teens were shot with a paintball gun in a drive-by attack. In September, a Holland, Ohio man was sentenced



“Nobody should be attacked for who they are or where they come from or what they look like or who they love,” said Sheena Barnes, Executive Director of Equality Toledo, during the event. “We must shine a light on antisemitism and all forms of hate. It’s up to all of us to stop its spread.”

Visit www.shinealighton.com to learn more about antisemitism and how to fight it. Get in touch with our JCRC to get involved and updated by emailing daniel@jewishtoledo.org and visiting www.jewishtoledo.org/jcrc. And make sure to call out bigotry whenever and wherever you see it. It is up to all of us to shine a light on antisemitism.

