

Jewish Community Relations Council

Jewish Community Security in a time of Rising Antisemitism:

A Discussion with Three Experts in the Field



Thursday, May 12
7 p.m. on Zoom



As part of our commitment to educating about antisemitism, Jewish Community Relations Council is organizing a program with native Jewish Toledoan, Rebecca Federman; our partner at a statewide Jewish security initiative, Ari Cohen; and the Jewish Federation of Greater Toledo's Community Asset, Safety and Security Manager, Dave Tullis.

Rebecca will provide a national threat analysis and overview. Ari will discuss matters happening across Ohio. Dave will focus on his work keeping us safe in Toledo. There will be time for Q&A.

Please register at <https://form.jotform.com/jewishtoledo/security> or by contacting Sherry at sherry@jewishtoledo.org or 419-724-0351.

Questions? Please contact Daniel Pearlman, JCRC Director at daniel@jewishtoledo.org or 419-724-0315.

Four ways Federation fights antisemitism

By Daniel Pearlman

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 ADL survey from the fall found that one in every three Jewish students on a college campus experienced antisemitism last year. Hillel International reports that there has been a 600% upsurge in antisemitism on campuses over the past six years. All of this comes after years of increasing antisemitism nationwide.

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 was also before the huge 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.

These jarring statistics may shock you, but it's important to remember that antisemitism is a serial hatred that typically tracks with broader patterns of discrimination, progressions of violence, and the fraying of democracy. While antisemitism is unique in many ways and has existed throughout history, people who hate Jews rarely hate only Jews.

It should come as no surprise, then, that incidents locally increased as well. Last June, a swastika was found painted near the Honors Academic Village at The University of Toledo. In September, a Holland, Ohio man was sentenced to 20 years in prison for attempting to provide material support to ISIS and attempting to commit a mass casualty hate crime on our Jewish Toledo campus.

The Jewish Federation's Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) educates about and addresses antisemitism, working for the betterment and

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safety of our Toledo Jewish community. Here are four ways that the Jewish Federation addresses antisemitism.

1. We help pass legislation: Working with our partners at Ohio Jewish Communities, we have advocated for several bills that will help to keep our Jewish community safe. Just last month, after an August meeting we had with Ohio Governor Mike DeWine, he signed an Executive Order that defines antisemitism based on the widely used International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition. It augments an existing Executive Order by providing a clearer definition of antisemitic acts, and it instructs state agencies, departments, boards, and commissions to consider the IHRA definition when determining whether an alleged act was motivated by discriminatory antisemitic intent. This comes just over a year after the formation of the Ohio Holocaust & Genocide Memorial & Education Commission.

Earlier this year, we supported passage of SB 181 that allows student athletes to wear their religious articles of clothing (kippah, hijab, etc.) while competing in school and interscholastic sporting events. Other pending legislation includes HB 504, which would increase penalties for disrupting a religious service, and HB 353, which would require each state institution of higher education to adopt a policy providing students

with religious accommodations. At the federal level, we have worked with other local Jewish Federations and JCRCs across the country to advocate for the Jabara-Heyer NO HATE Act, which passed last year.

2. We educate others – and ourselves: JCRC is tasked with educating members of our Jewish community and the greater Toledo community about antisemitism. In addition to conversations with faith leaders, elected officials, and journalists about antisemitism, we organize community programs to educate the public. Since each program has a different focus, some of them are geared toward the Jewish community only, while others are open to all. JCRC's Holocaust programming is in collaboration with the Jewish Federation's Ruth Fajerman Markowicz Holocaust Resource Center.

Last August, we partnered with Dayton's JCRC on a program about antisemitism on college campuses. In October, we had a program with Jonathan Tobin, editor of Jewish News Syndicate, about antisemitism on the left and the right. In November, we organized a lecture about antisemitism for The University of Toledo faculty and staff with James Pasch, regional director of ADL Cleveland. In December, we organized the Shine a Light on Antisemitism rally and I spoke at the Findlay Rotary Club about rising antisemitism. In January, I spoke about antisemitism at the Universi-

ty of Toledo's Dialogues on Diversity program. In February, I gave a lecture about antisemitism for Congregation B'nai Israel's Adult Education series.

Just last month, we organized two events with Father Patrick Desbois, a French priest who chronicled the lesser-known side of the Holocaust by interviewing thousands of eyewitnesses to the Holocaust by Bullets; an Equality Seder that had mostly non-Jewish participants, many of whom had never attended a Passover Seder before; and a Yom HaShoah Holocaust community commemoration event. And this month, we are organizing a program with our partners at a statewide Jewish security initiative.

3. We engage with our elected officials: We are a community that works with elected officials regardless of party affiliation. We communicate with them and their staff often, and we work with them to ensure they are aware of the needs in our community. Locally and at the state level, our relationship with our elected officials is what allows us to help pass legislation that we support. We work with city council members, township trustees, school board members, mayors, county commissioners, state representatives, state senators, Members of Congress (U.S. House and Senate), and more.

4. We help protect our Jewish institutions: The federal government's

Nonprofit Security Grant Programs (NSGP) provide funding support for target hardening and other physical security enhancements and activities to nonprofit organizations that are at high risk of terrorist attack, but it has a competitive grant process and limited funds. Fortunately, this program has allowed our Jewish community to apply for hundreds of thousands of dollars in security funding. Over the past five years, five Jewish Toledo organizations have received over \$400,000 in funding from seven federal and state security grants, including NSGP.

JFGT also hired Dave Tullis, our community's first Community Asset, Safety and Security Manager, to provide security for our community and for community events. Dave is also responsible for training the community and for building relationships with law enforcement at the municipal, county, state, and federal levels.

Questions? Comments? Want to get involved? We'd love to hear from you! Please email Daniel Pearlman, JCRC Director, at daniel@jewishtoledo.org.

