



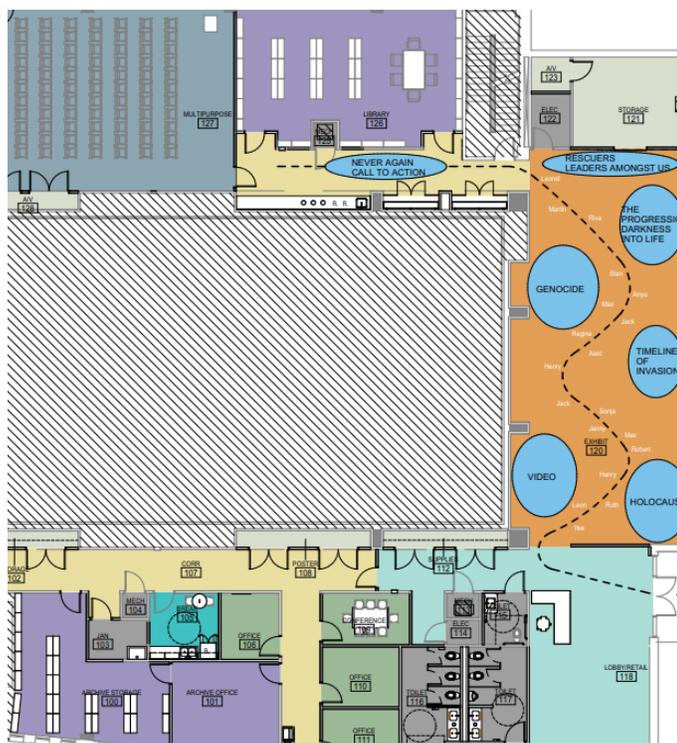
The newsletter of the BHEC

March 2021

BHEC announces plans for permanent home on Highland Avenue

As it enters its third decade, the Birmingham Holocaust Education Center is finalizing plans for a new permanent home at 2100 Highland Avenue.

Under a long-term-year lease with Temple Emanu-El, the BHEC will transform the Temple's former Discovery School into an 8,000-square-foot center that will include an exhibit area, multipurpose room to be used for education and community programming, lobby, archives, office, and its own entrance.



For more than 15 years, the BHEC was generously provided space in the Bayer Properties Building. During this time, the organization developed and promoted such impactful programs as the traveling Darkness Into Life exhibit, more than 125 teacher scholarships for advanced seminars, and more than 250 speaking engagements by survivors and Guardians of Remembrance.

Enhancing our mission to educate

“The Birmingham Holocaust Education Center’s exceptional education programs have educated 1,647 teachers and over 100,000 students across the state of Alabama in the lessons of the Holocaust,” says Board President Karen Allen.

“In this beautiful new space, we will continue to build on that mission, equipping the next generation with the tools to build a more just, humane and tolerant society,” add Fran Godchaux and David Silverstein, board members who are leading the relocation effort.

The project architect is KPS Group, led by Principal Gray Plosser and Senior Associate Liz Hunsicker. Rives Construction Co. will be the builder, and Method-1 Interiors, led by Principal Michael Norrell and Creative Director Edwina Loureiro, will oversee exhibit design, fabrication and installation. Larimer Waldrop & Associates has been engaged as project fundraiser.

The new facility is scheduled to open by late summer or early fall of this year.

April 11: Virtual Yom HaShoah program will feature speakers, music, and a noteworthy tree

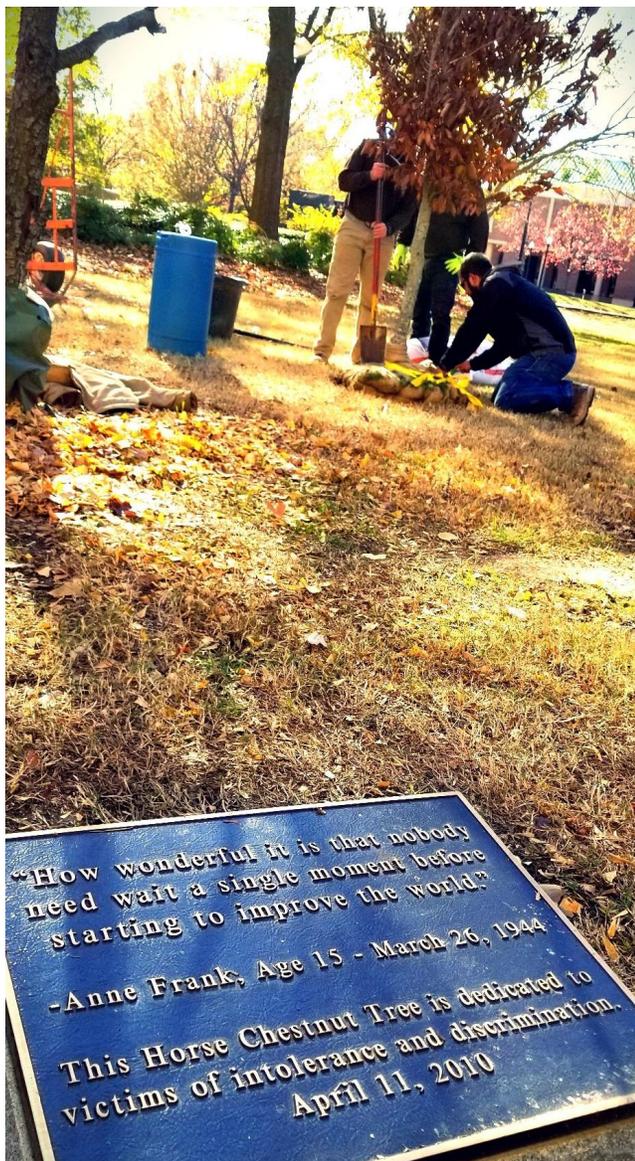
This year's annual State of Alabama Yom HaShoah, or Holocaust Day of Remembrance, will take place online on Sunday, April 11, at 2 p.m. In addition to a presentation by Governor Kay Ivey and other state politicians, the state-wide program will include the dedication of a new Anne Frank Tree that was planted recently in Birmingham's Kelly Ingram Park (see photo).

Birmingham Mayor Randall Woodfin will participate in the event along with Cantor Robert Wittner of Temple Emanu-El. The main speaker, Pastor Chris Edmonds, will recount how his father saved Jewish US Army POWs during World War II.

Violinist Niv Ashkenazi will provide music for the event as part of *Violins of Hope*, an artistic project comprised of instruments that were owned by Jewish musicians before and during the Holocaust. Niv will play one of these instruments.

Yom HaShoah is important not only to honor survivors, but also to continue reminding the people of Alabama of this horrific history.

A link for viewing this year's virtual Yom HaShoah program is forthcoming on



Remembering BHEC founder Phyllis Weinstein

Phyllis Grusin Weinstein, the founding president of the BHEC, passed away on January 6 -- only two days after her 100th birthday.

Phyllis founded the Birmingham Holocaust Committee (now the Birmingham Holocaust Education Center) in 2002. The organization has since grown to facilitate the education of thousands of Alabamians about the Holocaust's horrors and the dangers of bigotry and hate. She remained president for 16 years, and it is on her shoulders that this organization's achievements stand -- including designation as an official Holocaust Education Center by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.

"Phyllis was a visionary civic leader and builder her entire adult life, and Birmingham's Jewish and general communities are enriched today by institutions she helped to build," says Karen Allen, president of the BHEC board. "She leaves a lasting legacy of wise and forward-thinking leadership in our city and state -- not only as a force to be reckoned with, but as a kind and thoughtful friend and mentor to countless individuals."

Read more about Phyllis at [Southern Jewish Life...](#)



Meet the newest member of the BHEC professional team

New BHEC professional team member Zoe Weil is a passionate educator whose background in secondary social studies education is coupled with a strong foundation in historical research. A former BHEC intern, Zoe brings to the BHEC a broad knowledge of Holocaust history that is

based in academic research, Holocaust education, and survivor interviews.

While obtaining her bachelor's degree as a history major and her master's degree in history, Zoe's coursework included: "Holocaust on Film," "Europe Reconstructed," "The Cold War: Day by Day," and two independent research courses for which she wrote extensively about the Holocaust. In-depth study topics have included Auschwitz-Birkenau, Hitler's rise to political power, the Warsaw Ghetto, Jewish resistance, the denazification of Germany, and America's response to the Holocaust.



March 11: Watch 'Finding Refuge: How the Dominican Republic and Mexico Responded'

In July 1938, delegates from 32 countries, including the United States, met at the Evian Conference in France to discuss options for settling Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi Germany. The Dominican Republic was the only participating country that was willing to accept additional refugees. Why? And what were the prospects for refugees seeking a safe haven in Latin America?



This 6:30 p.m. online Zoom presentation by the US Holocaust Memorial Museum's Christina Chavarria will draw from the USHMM archives to reveal how the Dominican Republic and Mexico assisted Jewish refugees.

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