Phoenix Holocaust Association

Annual Report 2024

As we witnessed a frightening increase in global antisemitism, 2024 has been a year when we have truly realized that remembering the Holocaust and teaching its lessons is more vital than ever before. It is our mission to "promote awareness of the Holocaust and contribute to *tikkun olam,* repair of the world." For the Phoenix Holocaust Association (PHA), this continues to be our path and with the huge efforts of our members, we have had significant accomplishments in 2024.

2024 Educational Projects

- In February we sponsored an educators' conference for local Holocaust teachers with an emphasis on attracting new teachers and we had over 30 teachers attend.
- In October we partnered with ASU to present the annual Zemel Educators' Conference. We had an audience of over 100 people with about 85 teachers. Teachers from all over Arizona attended including Tucson and Flagstaff. The opening session featured USHMM educator Christina Chavarria and the keynote speaker was Carl Wilkens who spoke on the anniversary of the Rwandan Genocide. We are proud of our PHA board member Kim Klett, Ashley Crose board member and AZ Teacher of the Year, and 2024 Shofar Zachor award winner Heather Land for teaching the breakout sessions. As part of the Conference, we also had an event at Mirabella, Generations of Remembrance with 3 generations of survivors.
- For the 2023-2024 school year we reached 11,000 students through the efforts of our Speakers Bureau. Two large events were at the Chandler Unified School District where we reached 3300 students over two days and at the Childsplay *Anne Frank* performances at the Herberger where a survivor presented after each performance for a total of 2500 audience members.
- We staffed a table at the AZ Dept. of Education Teacher Conference.
- A Facebook page for Arizona teachers, "Holocaust Educators of Arizona" was initiated by Ettie Zilber and Robin LaCorte.

2024 Remembrance Events

- Yom HaShoah was extra special this year. We were able to partner with CJP and hold the Commemoration at the JCC on May 5th. Attendance was outstanding with more than 400 people and over 20 Survivors. We held two additional events to continue our remembrance: a ten-hour reading of the victims' names on May 6th and a film showing of *Four Winters* at AZJHS on May 7th. This was the first year we published a memorial book for the community.
- In partnership with AZJHS, a ceremony honoring the Torahs rescued from Czechoslovakia during World War II was held in February.
- An International Holocaust Remembrance Day program was held at Temple Solel. PHA cosponsored the program with the Martin-Springer Institute. The keynote speaker was Tali Nates, founder, and director of the Johannesburg Holocaust & Genocide Centre.

- Participation with ASU's Genocide Awareness Week continues and we hosted author Ed Westermann at the JCC.

2024 Community Participation

- Continued our support of the Greater Phoenix Jewish Film Festival.
- Two local Holocaust survivors played a role in the January opening session of the AZ State Legislature. Rise Stillman led the Pledge of Allegiance and Kathy Gross led the invocation prayer. Our Executive Director helped to plan the program and readings.
- Oscar Knoblauch "graduated" from Chandler High School and was included in their graduation ceremony at ASU.
- PHA was at the Jewish Community Day with the Diamondbacks and survivor Herbert Marx threw out the first pitch.
- PHA hosted the fifth night of "Chanukah in Carefree". The speaker was our own Rise Stillman and we celebrated with sufganiyot (jelly donuts) for all.
- PHA continued to financially support and participate in the development of the Hilton Family Holocaust Education Center. PHA made a $25,000 donation and many of our Board members and our Executive Director remain involved in the planning process.

2024 Services for Survivors and Descendants

- Café Europa has had a great year as we continue our monthly luncheons and expand the number of participants. We have a diverse group of attendees with survivors, descendants, students, and other guests. In December for our Chanukah luncheon, we had over 80 guests and due to a generous donation, gifts were distributed to every survivor in attendance! The summer Ice cream social in July has now become a regular event.
- The Descendants' Forum continues with many events at the EVJCC.
- A social event to see *A Real Pain* at Harkins Theater was well attended with many members gathering for dinner before the movie.
- 3GAZ continues to grow and has hosted many activities throughout the year including a sold-out babka bake and a sharing circle in the sukkah.
- PHA was selected as Phoenix Theatre's Non-Profit Organization of the Month in June. We sponsored an event for survivors to attend a performance of *Fiddler on the Roof* at Phoenix Theatre which included lunch prior to the show.

Staffing

- Our part-time Executive Director completed the first year in her role. We benefited from her expertise and leadership in our programming, fundraising, and community outreach.
- Our part-time Communications Assistant continues to help us with all of our marketing and communications needs.

Fundraising

- We applied for and received generous grants from the Center for Jewish Philanthropy of Greater Phoenix, Claims Conference, Arizona Humanities, and the Gerald Rosenbluth Family Fund.

- We are grateful to all of our donors who support us throughout the year and keep PHA on their philanthropic lists.

Membership

- Membership increased by 22% in 2024.

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR MEMBERS, VOLUNTEERS, AND DONORS FOR ENGAGING WITH US AND SUPPORTING THIS VITAL WORK.