

## AJC CEO Ted Deutch's Statement and Call to Action After Hamas's Murder of Six Hostages

When I left Congress to join the American Jewish Committee (AJC), I was drawn by the opportunity to spend every moment of every day working to help the Jewish people and Israel. Since October 7, that work has given me, and my colleagues at AJC, the honor of spending an enormous amount of time with so many hostage families, joining them at meetings, and pouring our heart and soul into helping them in every way we can. Today's news is an especially shattering blow because we feel we have lost part of our family, and we mourn with their anguished survivors whose bravery has inspired us every day.

With this tragic news, I can't stop wondering how we can all make #BringThemHomeNow more than a hashtag. Everyone in the civilized world knows that Hamas terrorists took 251 people hostage on October 7, the same day they murdered 1,200 more. They are monsters. They are responsible for ending the ceasefire that existed on October 6, and they intentionally and callously subjected innocent Palestinian civilians in Gaza to the ravages of war. From Day 1, Hamas has held in its own hands the ability to end this by returning the hostages still held in captivity for 330 days.

For months, Israel and the Jewish community have seemed gripped by paralysis on the hostage issue. In Israel, there are shouting matches in government meetings and on the streets. In America and around the world, we demand that Hamas release the hostages, and we demand that the hostages



Ted Deutch

come home now, but we hesitate really pushing leaders in Israel and beyond to make it happen. "Only Israel can make decisions about its security," many rightly point out.

But after the murder of six hostages, including an American and several who may have been included in the first phase of a deal, hashtags into the wilderness aren't enough. So, I make this plea to five groups:

To President Biden, Vice President Harris, and your Administration: your sym-

pathy for the loss of these six lives is deeply appreciated. Hersh was American. Hamas, responsible for the murder of more than 35 Americans on or after October 7, killed another American. Please show the world your anger, and after these murders, lead an intense international pressure campaign against Hamas and Iran that is needed now and that only you can lead.

To Prime Minister Netanyahu and your government: please don't make finalizing a deal a choice between security or hostages. Ensuring Israel's security and bringing home the hostages are not mutually exclusive; they are inextricably linked. Please seize the opportunity to bring the hostages home now. Bring them home AND avenge their murders.

To Secretary General Guterres and the United Nations: condemn Hamas for these murders, condemn Hamas for the atrocities of October 7, condemn Hamas for continuing to hold 101 hostages, and call for their unconditional release. Condemn Iran for its role in supporting these evil terrorists. Only then will UN pleas for a deal be taken seriously.

To leaders around the world, from prime ministers and presidents to the Pope: acknowledge the horrors of Hamas so that they feel as isolated as they must be.

And to every American: remember that one more of our fellow citizens was murdered by Hamas, and seven more Americans remain in captivity, brutally held by Hamas. We should all wear yellow ribbons until all of the hostages return home.

The time to do all of this is now. We all have a role to play in helping to reach a deal,

as abhorrent as it sounds to make a deal with barbaric terrorists. We can all honor the memories of Hersh, Eden, Carmel, Almog, Alex, and Ori, together with every other hostage killed by Hamas, by helping to return the remaining hostages to their loved ones."

Redeem the remaining captives. Avenge the murders of these innocent victims. Prevent another October 7. We cannot be forced to choose only one.

Bring them home now.

### A Statement from Eric S. Goldstein, CEO of UJA-Federation of New York

We're utterly shattered by the news of the six hostages murdered in Gaza. For 331 days, we've been carrying these names and stories with us, their families' agony our agony.

We remember: Ori Danino, age 25; Carmel Gat, age 40; Hersh Goldberg-Polin, age 23; Alexander Lobanov, age 32; Almog Sarusi, age 27 and Eden Yerushalmi, age 24.

We hoped and prayed for the safe return of all the hostages. And we came to know their life stories. However, for so many of us here in America, the fate of the hostages was personified by Hersh Goldberg-Polin, an American citizen, born in California. We simply called him "Hersh" — as if he were our own son, our brother, our friend.

One of the reasons we came to know Hersh so well is because of his extraordinary parents, Rachel Goldberg and Jon Polin. With a steely resolve, faith, and eloquence that never once wavered, they traveled the world, crying out in the halls of power for the release of their son and all the hostages.

Some of us have known Jon from his time working at the Jewish Agency for Israel, UJA's largest overseas partner. And all of us came to know the indomitable Rachel. In late October, just weeks after Hersh and 220 others were taken hostage, Rachel came to speak with us at UJA, sharing that she wanted nothing more than to bring her son back to meet our community.

We've met with Rachel and Jon numerous times since then, both in New York and Israel, and actively supported their efforts to keep the plight of Hersh and all the hostages in the public eye.

We share their profound grief and the sorrow of all the bereaved hostage families. May the memories of Ori, Carmel, Hersh, Alexander, Almog, and Eden forever be for a blessing.

May the remaining hostages be brought home now. With prayers for better days.



Eric S. Goldstein

# No Hate in Our States – Back to School Edition



BY MYRA CLARK-SIEGEL, AJC WESTCHESTER/  
FAIRFIELD REGIONAL DIRECTOR

In 2024, the already overwhelming college application process is now overshadowed by a question for Jewish high school students and their families.

“Is the college safe for Jews?”

It is unacceptable that we have to ask this question in 2024.

This shift is not only disheartening but also deeply unacceptable in a modern, supposedly inclusive society.

The question of safety should not have to be at the forefront of any student's mind when considering higher education. College is a place where young adults should feel free to explore ideas, challenge themselves, and grow into well-

rounded individuals without fear. However, for Jewish students, the rise in antisemitism across campuses has made safety a pressing concern.

Incidents of hate speech, vandalism, and even physical violence against Jewish students have become alarmingly common, creating an environment of fear and exclusion.

This reality is a failure of the entire academic community to uphold its values of diversity, inclusion, and respect. The fact that Jewish families must prioritize safety over the quality of education, available resources, or the vibrancy of campus life speaks to a profound societal problem. It is a stark reminder that antisemitism, far from being a relic of the past, is very much alive and thriving in spaces where it should be least expected—our institutions of higher learning.

For Jewish students and their families, this question of safety is not merely about avoiding overt acts of hatred but also about the subtle, insidious ways antisemitism can manifest. It can be in the form of exclusion from social circles, the feeling of being unwelcome in student organizations, antagonism from professors, or the normalization of antisemitic rhetoric under the guise of political discourse. These experiences can erode a student's sense of belonging and diminish their college experience, leaving lasting scars.

It is unacceptable that in 2024, Jewish students and their parents must weigh their safety so heavily in their college decisions. Universities must do more than issue statements condemning antisemitism; they must actively create environments where Jewish students feel safe, respected, and valued. This includes not only robust security measures but also education and awareness programs to combat ignorance and hatred.

Jewish students deserve to choose their colleges based on their academic interests, not out of fear for their safety. As a society, we must demand more from our educational institutions to ensure that no student ever has to ask, “Is this college safe for me?” because of their identity.

AJC has three central recommendations for university administrators to help ensure that Jewish students and all campus citizens have a safer, more productive 2024-25 school year.

1) Prioritize issue-neutral rules, and ensure that those rules are applied consistently, without exceptions.

2) Clarify the rights and responsibilities of faculty.

3) Ensure that minority groups, including Jews, have the resources they need to gather and conduct their activities safely this academic year.

AJC's new Center for Education Advocacy is a bold, multi-tiered approach that builds on AJC's strong record of advocacy in education spaces to effect even more positive and lasting change.

Jews of all ages, in all educational spaces, must be able to learn and grow without the threats of harassment, intimidation, and violence.

We wish all of our students, families, teachers, and administrators a wonderful start to a safe and productive 2024-2025 school year.

AJC has tools and resources for parents, students, and college administrators to help Jewish students feel safe and welcome on college campuses, available at [AJC.org](http://AJC.org):

For Campus Administrators: *Confronting Campus Antisemitism: An Action Plan for University Administrators*

For High School Parents: Ensure you ask campus administrators what plans they have in place and are actively implementing them to ensure campuses are safe for Jewish students. Share AJC's Action Plan for University Administrators (noted above).

For College Students: *Confronting Campus Antisemitism: An Action Plan for University Students*  
For High School Students: AJC's award-winning LFT (Leaders for Tomorrow) program prepares 10th - 12th-grade students to be strong Jewish, pro-Israel advocates. Contact us at [westchester@ajc.org](mailto:westchester@ajc.org) for more information.

Together, we can be informed and prepared parents and students, and we can urge college administrators to do more – and do better – to ensure that Jewish students feel safe and can thrive on campus.

*Myra Clark-Siegel is AJC Westchester/Fairfield regional director. To get involved or request an AJC speaker: [AJC@westchester.org](mailto:AJC@westchester.org).*



## L'shanah Tovah U'metukah!

Wishing you and your family  
a sweet New Year filled with love,  
peace, happiness, and good health.

On behalf of your friends at AJC Westchester/Fairfield

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## Moshe Phillips Elected Chairman of Americans for a Safe Israel

Moshe Phillips, a veteran pro-Israel activist and author, has been elected National Chairman of Americans for a Safe Israel (AFSI).

“At this critical moment for Israel and the Jewish people, it’s vital for friends of Israel to speak out,” Phillips said. “In the months ahead, AFSI will play a leading role in pro-Israel activism from coast to coast.”

A past board member of the American Zionist Movement, Phillips previously served as National Director of the U.S. division of Herut, and on the staff of CAMERA (Philadelphia). He also was a delegate to the 2020 World Zionist Congress, and editor of The Challenger, the publication of the Tagar Zionist Youth Movement.

Phillips’s op-eds and letters have been published widely in the United States and



Moshe Phillips

Israel, including in the Jerusalem Post, Washington Jewish Week, Philadelphia Jewish Exponent, Israel National News - Arutz Sheva, Algemeiner, Jewish Press, Connecticut Jewish Ledger, Five Towns Jewish Times, Baltimore Jewish Times, and Pittsburgh Jewish Chronicle, among many other publications.

AFSI’s previous chairman, Mark Langfan, will now serve as Chairman Emeritus.

Americans for a Safe Israel (AFSI) is one of the oldest and most influential pro-Israel organizations in the United States. Established more than fifty years ago, AFSI is on the front lines of pro-Israel advocacy and education. AFSI is not affiliated with any American or Israeli political party.

AFSI is not affiliated with any political party in the United States or Israel.

## Protestors Disrupt Event for Wounded IDF Soldiers

Belev Echad, an organization dedicated to supporting wounded IDF soldiers in their recovery from both physical and mental injuries sustained in the war, hosted an event attended by over 300 guests from the New York metro area. Organized by Chabad of Larchmont and Mamaroneck, the event aimed to connect soldiers with the American community and bolster their healing journey.

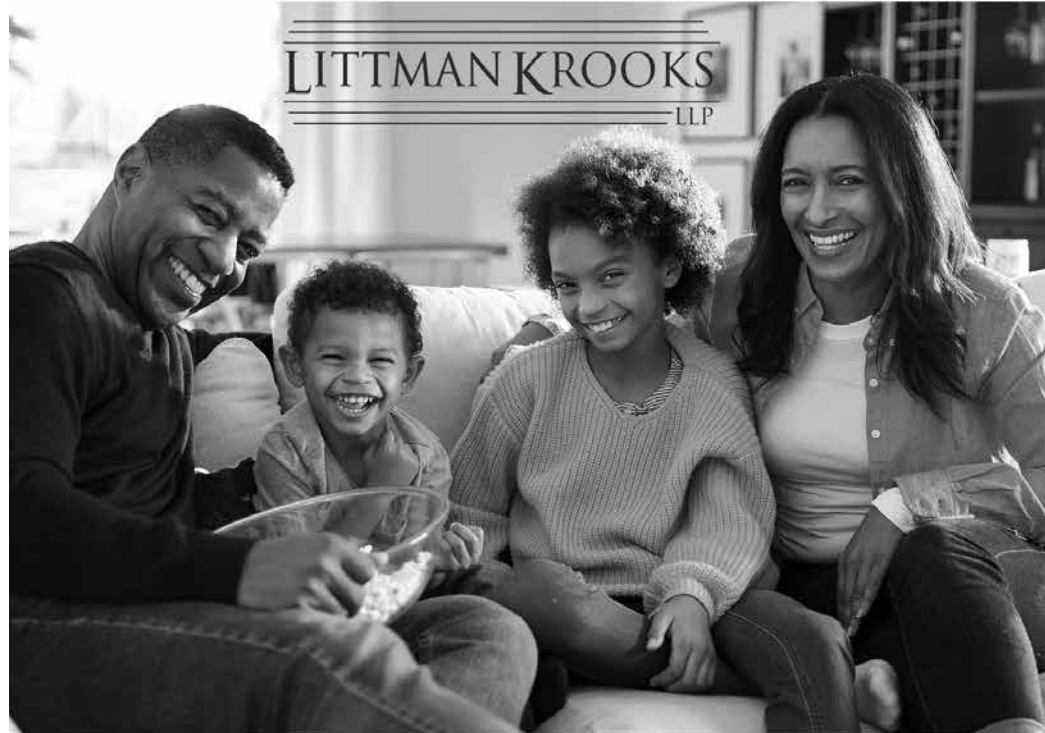
The event faced a significant challenge when antisemitic protestors crowded the road to the country club, displaying graphic and offensive signs. This incident reflects the troubling rise in antisemitism nationally, in the wake of the October 7 terrorist attack.

Despite this hostile interruption, the event continued, transforming a moment of adversity into one of unity and resilience. The courage of the IDF soldiers and the unwavering support from our local community highlighted the essential work of Belev Echad in aiding these heroes’ recovery.

Rabbi Mendel Silberstein, Director of Chabad of Larchmont and Mamaroneck, said, “It is truly heartwarming to see the outpouring of love and support to our brothers and sisters in Israel by the Jews of Westchester County, especially in the face of adversity.”

Rabbi Uriel Vigler, Founder and Director of Belev Echad, added, “These heroes have experienced the trauma of war firsthand. They come to the U.S. to aid in their healing, but sights like this can often trigger their PTSD. Nonetheless, the event proceeded as planned, thanks to our supportive community. This incident underscores the importance of standing against hate and supporting those who have sacrificed so much.”

Photo credit: Photos are courtesy of Belev Echad.



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# Hadassah Adopts New Policy Statements Speaking Out on Reproductive Health Care, Gender-Based Violence, and Antisemitic Efforts to Exclude Zionists

At its midyear meetings in Las Vegas, Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America, adopted three new policy statements, "Denouncing Efforts to Exclude Jews and Zionists," "Safeguarding the Whole Spectrum of Reproductive Health Care" and "Ending the Silence on Gender-Based Violence."

"Hadassah's leaders and members are passionate advocates driving action around the world," said Hadassah National President Carol Ann Schwartz. "We are proud to continue to update our policy positions so that we can lead the charge on the issues that matter most to us, like protecting reproductive health care, cultivating pride in Zionism, and demanding justice for victims of sexual violence."

Antisemitism and Anti-Zionism – In the face of an alarming 140% rise in antisemitic incidents in the United States in 2023, Hadassah adopted the policy statement "Denouncing Efforts to Exclude Jews and Zionists." This statement reaffirms the organization's commitment to combating antisemitism in the US and around the world. Hadassah condemns the use of discriminatory and inflammatory rhetoric which, in addition to being reprehensible, can have deep impacts, resulting in mental health effects, social exclusions, lost relationships, and professional ramifications.

Many civil society groups and professional associations have made declarations about Israel and the ongoing war that ignore and deny Hamas' role as a terrorist organization. Such statements isolate Jews and Zionists, and Hadassah denounces this exclusion. Hadassah will continue to empower its members and supporters to take pride



Carol Ann Schwartz

in their identities and embrace collaboration and cross-cultural ties during difficult times.

**Reproductive Health Care** – In the post-Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization policy landscape, there has been a proliferation of attacks and restrictions on reproductive health care, including fertility treatment, postpartum care, contraception, and abortion. The Hadassah policy statement

"Safeguarding the Whole Spectrum of Reproductive Health Care" demonstrates the organization's commitment to advocating, at every level of government, for secure access and resources for the whole spectrum of reproductive services.

Bans and restrictions are having negative impacts on already high maternal and infant mortality rates in the US, complicating the ability to seek emergency care while pregnant, and placing healthcare providers' jobs at risk. Hadassah will continue to mobilize around legislation and ballot initiatives that increase access to care.

**Sexual Violence During Conflicts** – In 2023, conflict-related sexual violence around the globe increased 50% from the previous year. There is clear evidence that Hamas weaponized sexual violence against Israeli women and girls on October 7 and, in the months that followed, against the hostages. Hadassah's policy statement "Ending the Silence on Gender-Based Violence" reaffirms the organization's condemnation of gender-based violence and the erasure of the victims' experience by Hamas and the biased United Nations Commission of Inquiry. Hadassah is committed to countering the misinformation and fighting to hold Hamas

accountable for its crimes against humanity.

Hadassah continues to call on world leaders and the United Nations to demand action to counter the disturbing rise in conflict-related violence, including through an independent and thorough investigation into Hamas' weaponization of rape on October 7.

Visit [www.hadassah.org/get-involved/](http://www.hadassah.org/get-involved/) policy-statements to read Hadassah's policy statements, including "Denouncing Efforts to Exclude Jews and Zionists," "Safeguarding the Whole Spectrum of Reproductive Health Care" and "Ending the Silence on Gender-Based Violence."

Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America, is the largest Jewish women's organization in the United States. With nearly 300,000 members, donors, and

supporters, Hadassah brings women together to effect change on such critical issues as ensuring Israel's security, combating antisemitism, and promoting women's health care. Through its Jerusalem-based hospital system, the Hadassah Medical Organization, Hadassah helps support exemplary care for more than 1 million people every year as well as world-renowned medical research. Hadassah's hospitals serve without regard to race, religion, or nationality and in 2005 earned a Nobel Peace Prize nomination for building bridges to peace through medicine. Hadassah also supports two youth villages that set at-risk youth in Israel on the path to a successful future. Visit [www.hadassah.org](http://www.hadassah.org) or follow Hadassah on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Threads and X.



**ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS**

NEW YORK STATE SENATE, 35<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT

PRESIDENT PRO TEM ♦ MAJORITY LEADER

On this  
Rosh Hashanah,  
I wish all a happy and  
healthy new year.



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**Rosh Hashanah:** Thursday, October 3, 6:45 pm  
There is no charge, but donations would be greatly appreciated

**Yom Kippur & break-the-fast meal:** Saturday, October 12, 5:30 pm  
*Please email the names of your dearly departed for Nizkor to*  
[info@wchj.org](mailto:info@wchj.org)

Members free; non-members: \$20 at the door or \$18 if pre-registered at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/humanistic-yom-kippur-service-tickets-972440153677>

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For more information, please contact;

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# Project Lifesaver

Project Lifesaver is the premier search and rescue program operated in the United States and Canada by public safety agencies and is strategically designed for “at-risk” individuals who are prone to the life-threatening behavior of wandering and eloping. The primary mission of Project Lifesaver is to provide timely responses to save lives and reduce potential injury for adults and children with the propensity to wander/elope due to a cognitive condition. Cognitive disorders include, but are not limited to, autism, developmental delay conditions, Down Syndrome, Alzheimer’s, and other dementias.

In Westchester County, the Project Lifesaver program has been active since approximately 2009. It is administered by the Westchester County Department of Public Safety (county officers) and is managed by Westchester Jewish Community Services (WJCS). Project Lifesaver is a community-based, public safety, non-profit organization that provides law enforcement, fire/rescue, and caregivers with a program designed to protect and, when necessary, quickly locate individuals with cognitive disorders who are prone to wander or elope.

The organization was founded in 1999 in Chesapeake, Virginia in response to the correlation between cognitive conditions and the acts of wandering and eloping. With the dramatic increase in cognitive conditions, the program has grown from a localized program to one that is recognized internationally as a proven and effective method of “bringing loved ones home.”

Project Lifesaver was the first to apply locating techniques to aid in the search and rescue of individuals and its success rate is impressive. The search times have been reduced from hours, potentially days, down to minutes.

Westchester County employs the use of radio-frequency (RF) technology. Its major advantage, unlike GPS systems, is the accuracy and strength of the signal, which is only minimally diminished by physical obstructions or weather conditions. This signal is detectable by both ground and air assets. Officers are equipped with the necessary search technologies and have been specifically trained in the use of the equipment, implementation of methods specifically designed for the program, and community policing courses that provide a basic understanding of cognitive conditions to better comprehend the behaviors of an individual with a cognitive condition.

WJCS manages the application and admission process in Westchester. Individuals are provided with radio-frequency transmitters in devices worn on a wrist or an ankle that transmit a signal every second at a specifically assigned frequency. These devices need a battery change and maintenance every 60 days, services that are provided by WJCS and its affiliated battery change sites in Westchester. The program is open to children/young adults with autism or developmental delay who reside in Westchester with parents or legal guardians and to seniors with dementia who live with their primary caregiver in the county.

Contact Isabel M Pettersen, Program Manager at Westchester Jewish Community Services of Youth Project Lifesaver and Senior Project Lifesaver, at 914-761-0600 x2230 or [ipettersen@wjcs.com](mailto:ipettersen@wjcs.com) for more information.



# Calendar of Events

Events at The Jewish Museum

1109 5th Ave at 92nd St.

New York, NY 10128

Overflow, Afterglow: New Work in Chromatic Figuration  
Through September 15.

View new works by seven emerging artists who use supernatural color and uncanny luminance to challenge the boundaries of traditional figuration.

Ilit Azoulay: Mere Things

September 13, 2024 – January 5, 2025

View Mere Things includes selections of work by Azoulay (Israeli, b. 1972; lives and works in Berlin) from 2010 to the present, featuring large-scale digital photcollages of archival objects that explore how images and objects transmit knowledge, shape memory, and support or undermine historical narratives.

Engaging with History: Works from the Collection

September 13, 2024 – January 5, 2025

The exhibition features a wall of portraits, including works by Richard Avedon, Dawoud Bey, and Kali Spitzer; a recently acquired tapestry by William Kentridge; a bracelet of charms assembled by Greta Perlman from late 1941 to late 1944 while she was interned in the Theresienstadt ghetto–concentration camp in former Czechoslovakia; an installation by Christian Boltanski; and highlights from the Jewish Museum’s extraordinary collection of Hanukkah lamps.

Visit [www.thejewishmuseum.org/visit#hours-admission](http://www.thejewishmuseum.org/visit#hours-admission) for museum hours and admission information.

JCCMW

999 Wilmot Road, Scarsdale

Continuing on Mondays, September 9, 16, and 23 from 1:30 p.m.–3:30 p.m.

Health for Life Program (HeLP)

Are you 55 or older with a chronic health condition or are you caring for someone with one? If so, the Health for Life Program (HeLP) will give you sensible, enjoyable ways to enhance your quality of life and manage chronic health conditions.

The program is free, but RSVP is required.

Visit [www.jccmw.org/event/help/](http://www.jccmw.org/event/help/) and click on Register now to register.

Save the Date and Register

Scarsdale Adult School Course

Recipes to Live By: An Evening with Al Roker and Courtney Roker Laga in Conversation with Joy Bauer

Temple Israel of New Rochelle

1000 Pinebrook Blvd., New Rochelle


Dec. 11, 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Tuition: \$50.00

Meet the world’s most famous weatherman Al Roker and his daughter, Courtney Roker Laga, as they discuss their new family cookbook, Al Roker’s Recipes to Live By. The Rokers will be joined in conversation with Joy Bauer, MS, RDN, CDN, one of the nation’s leading health authorities. Roker’s amusing anecdotes explain why he writes that “Food is the narrative that has shaped so much of who I am, and it’s the source of my warmest memories.” Registration includes a copy of the cookbook.

Visit <https://scarsdale.augusoft.net/info/landing/calendar>, go to the December calendar, and click on the course name for more information and to register.


## [www.westchesterjewishlife.com](http://www.westchesterjewishlife.com)




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To inquire about services, please call us at (914) 607-4500. To learn more, please go to [www.wjcs.com](http://www.wjcs.com) or contact William A. Mullane, Ph.D., at 914-761-0600 x3211; [wmullane@wjcs.com](mailto:wmullane@wjcs.com).




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# Hundreds of Voices Created a Harmonious Community at the 2024 North American Jewish Choral Festival



Maestro Matthew Lazar, Founder and Director of Zamir Choral Foundation

More than 500 singers joined together in celebration of Jewish Choral Music and to feel a sense of pride and belonging at Zamir Choral Foundation's annual North American Jewish Choral Festival (NAJCF), held in July at the Armon Hotel in Stamford.

Since 1990, the NAJCF has offered a unique and joyful opportunity to connect to the power of Jewish choral music and form lasting friendships with fellow music lovers during a five-day Festival. The participants of all ages came from across the U.S. as both members of choirs and individual singers and represented a variety of musical experiences from amateur singers to professionals, cantors, and conductors.

Many of the attendees are also members or alumni of Zamir Choral Foundation's musical programs including HaZamir: The International Jewish Teen Choir; Zamir Noded for young adults 18-30; and the acclaimed Zamir Chorale.

"From hundreds of voices comes one harmonious choral community led by a renowned staff of conductors and other music experts who inspire and create a truly unique musical society," says Matthew Lazar, Festival founder and Director.

Singers at the NAJCF have myriad opportunities to engage in their love of music. They are divided into different choirs based on their sight-reading abilities and sing in "instant ensembles" and join in daily "community sings" with the entire group.

The NAJCF attendees are treated to evening concerts by outstanding choirs including Zamir's own Zamir Chorale and Zamir Noded, who performed a moving rendition of Am Yisrael Chai in solidarity with Israel.

This year's guest choir roster featured Choral Torah Collective, New York, NY, Josh Ehrlich, Conductor; Hallel B'Shir, Temple Israel of Northern Westchester, NY, Edward Pleasant, Conductor; Kol Ram, New York, NY, Daniel Henkin, Conductor; Nashir: The Rottenberg Chorale, New York, NY, Benjamin Gruder, Conductor; Shir Chadash, Brooklyn, NY, Scott Stein, Conductor;

Shirah: The Community Chorus of the Kaplen JCC, Tenafly, NJ, Marsha Bryan Edelman, Conductor; Shireinu, Great Neck, NY, Deborah Tartell, conductor; and Yiddish Philharmonic Chorus, New York, NY, Binyumen Schaechter, conductor.

The Festival reinforces Zamir Choral Foundation's commitment to musical education and excellence. There are seminars throughout the five days on topics ranging from vocal technique to spirituality through music. Workshops at the 2024 NAJCF included "The Untold History of Jews of African Descent," "Israeli Songs of War and Peace," and "Spirited Songs Surrounding Potent Potables."

Master teacher and internationally acclaimed choral conductor Eleanor Epstein gave a special presentation "To Sing is to Belong: The Power of the Communal Voice" in tribute to noted composer Alice Parker, with whom she studied extensively. She discussed how the evocative music of the Jewish people is a powerful force for building understanding and connection.

Josh Shron, cantor, Israeli music expert, and radio personality, explored the healing power of music in an excerpt from his moving and inspiring program "A Musical Hug From Israel." His presentation is designed to help English speakers connect to the range of emotions felt in Israel and around the world, through a look at the meaningful songs released after October 7.

Each year, the Festival presents the Hallel V'Zimrah Award to honor individuals who have made important contributions to the world of Jewish music. This year's honoree Cantor Jacob Mendelson, world-renowned cantor and international performer, was recognized for his artistry as well as his devotion to the choral music of the synagogue in a special presentation that included performances by Fredda Mendelson, Daniel Mendelson, Amanda Kleinman, Alan Mason, Zamir Chorale and Zamir Noded.

For more information about the NAJCF and other Zamir Choral Foundation programs visit [zamirchoralfoundation.org](http://zamirchoralfoundation.org).

## Selichot

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**HIGH HOLIDAY SEASON, 2024 - 5785 -- SCHEDULE OF SERVICES**  
Led by: Rabbi David Sebbag      Cantor: Eric Freeman

**COMMUNITY NIGHT**  
**Sat., Sept. 28, 9pm** – Refreshments, 9:15pm - Special Movie Presentation, "Shalom Ireland"  
**10:30pm – Selichot Services**, officiated by Rabbi David Sebbag and Cantor Eric Freeman. Special musical guests Guitarist Rabbi Josh Alpert, Violinist Yohanson Rothman

**ROSH HASHANAH**  
**Wed., Oct. 2 (Erev Rosh Hashanah)** – Eruv Tavshillin, Candle lighting 6:17pm, Mincha/Maariv 6:20pm, followed by Holiday Dinner sponsored by Shul (No admission fee)  
**Thurs., Oct. 3 (First Day)** – Shabbat, Shacharit 8:30am with Shofar, Kiddush with Mincha followed by Tashlich  
**Thurs., Oct. 3 (Second Night)** – Candle lighting after 7:14pm, Maariv 7:15pm  
**Fri., Oct. 4 (Second Day)** – Shacharit 8:30am with Shofar Kiddush with Mincha to follow

**SHABBAT SHUVA**  
**Fri., Oct. 4** – (*Kaballah Shabbat*) – Candle lighting 7:25pm, Maariv to follow  
**Sat., Oct. 5** – Shacharit 10:15am, Kiddush and Mincha to follow. Shabbat ends 7:11pm

**FAST OF GEDALIAH**  
**Sun., Oct. 6** – Fast Begins 5:32pm  
**Sun., Oct. 6** – Fast Ends 6:56pm

**YOM KIPPUR**  
**Fri., Oct. 11 (Erev Yom Kippur/Shabbat)** – Fast begins 6:02pm, Kol Nidre 6:05pm  
**Sat., Oct. 12 (Shabbat)** – Shacharit 8:30am, Yiskor 12 Noon, Mincha 4:30pm, Neilah 5:55pm, Fast ends 7:00pm, Maariv/Havadallah to follow

**SUKKOT**  
**Wed., Oct. 16 (Eruv Tavshillin, Erev Succot)** – Candle lighting 5:55pm, Mincha/Maariv 6:00pm.  
**Thurs., Oct. 17 (First Day Succot)** – Shacharit 10:15am with Lulav/Etrog, Kiddush with Mincha to follow  
**Thurs., Oct. 17 (Second Night)** – Candle lighting/Maariv 6:52pm  
**Fri., Oct. 18 (Second Day)** – Shacharit 10:15am with Lulav/Etrog, Kiddush with Mincha to follow  
**Sun., Oct. 1** – Hol Hamoed begins after 7:19pm

**CHOL HAMOED SHABBAT**  
**Fri., Oct. 18 (Kabbalat Shabbat)** – Candle lighting 5:52pm followed by Maariv  
**Sat., Oct. 19 (Chol Hamoed Shabbat)** – Shacharit 10:15am, Kiddush with Mincha to follow, Shabbat Ends 6:49pm  
**Sun., Oct. 20 (Chol Hamoed)** – Succot Party in Succah starting 12.30pm with Luncheon including Entertainment by Cantor Eric Freeman and Guitarist Rabbi Josh Alpert. Admission for Party is \$25 per person.

**HOSHANA RABAH**  
**Wed., Oct. 23** – Shacharit 9:00am with Hoshanas

**SHEMINI ATZERET & SIMCHAT TORAH**  
**Wed., Oct. 23 (Erev Shemini Atzeret/Eruv Tavshillin)** – Candle lighting 5:45pm, Mincha/Maariv  
**Thurs., Oct. 24 (Shemini Atzeret)** – Shacharit with YIZKOR 10:15am (including Prayer for Rain), Kiddush/Mincha to follow  
**Thurs., Oct. 24 (Simchat Torah Eve)** – Candle lighting with Maariv 6:43pm  
**Fri., Oct. 25 (Simchat Torah)** – Shacharit with Hakafot 10:00am, Chatan Torah/Bereshit to be celebrated for Brad Landau and Jay Chapler and their spouses. Kiddush with Mincha sponsored by Chatan Torah to follow services by either Brad or Jay

**SHABBA BERESHIT**  
**Fri., Oct. 25** – Kabbalat Shabbat with Candle lighting 5:42pm, Maariv to follow, Shabbat Bereshit Shacharit Services 10:15am, Mincha and Kiddush to follow sponsored by Chatan Bereshit, either by Brad or Jay, Shabbat ends 6:40pm

NOTE: All candle-lighting times listed are for congregants living in the 10704 zip code.  
All other congregants are advised to check their local Jewish calendar for the exact candle-lighting time of their area, check online at <https://www.aish.com/sh/c/Shabbat-Candle-Lighting-Times.html>.





# SHANAH TOVAH

— 5785 —

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# HaZamir International Jewish Teen Choir Provides Life-Changing Musical Experiences for Young People



HaZamir: The International Jewish Teen Choir provides meaningful musical experiences for young people in 35 chapters across the U.S. and Israel. Rehearsals for the 2024-2025 season begin this month, culminating in a gala performance at Carnegie Hall in the spring featuring hundreds of HaZamir singers. Teens entering grades 8-12 are encouraged to join the local HaZamir Westchester chapter, conducted by Dr. Marsha Bryan Edelman, for a rewarding experience of music, culture, leadership, and friendship. Contact [HaZaWestchester@gmail.com](mailto:HaZaWestchester@gmail.com) for more information.

HaZamir was created in 1993 by Maestro Matthew Lazar, Founder, and Director of the Zamir Choral Foundation, to provide an opportunity for accomplished young singers to perform great Jewish music at the highest standard of excellence and sing on the world's biggest stages.

"HaZamir gives young people an outlet to celebrate their Jewish heritage, connect with one another, and feel a sense of belonging and pride through the creative outlet of music," says Matthew Lazar. "Now, more than ever, this supportive community is crucial to teens."

HaZamir has long served as a training ground for the next generation of singers, conductors, composers, and leaders. Many HaZamir graduates have gone on to musical careers and have assumed leadership roles in their communities, while seventeen HaZamir alumni are now conductors or coordinators of their own HaZamir chapters.

HaZamir members rehearse weekly in their local chapters with expert conductors, as well as at regional gatherings throughout the year. A three-day Festival leading up to the an-

nual performance brings Israeli and American teens together to rehearse and to discuss important topics related to Judaism, providing an opportunity for them to learn about each other's traditions and cultures.

"This is a life-changing experience for these teens, as they express their Jewish identities through their love of music while building leadership skills and strong connections to peers from a range of backgrounds," says Vivian Lazar, Director of HaZamir. "The camaraderie and healing power of choral singing also boosts mood and self-esteem, allowing them to achieve great success."

The HaZamir choir is comprised of teenagers in 26 American chapter locations including Baltimore, Bergen County NJ, Boca Raton, Boston, Brooklyn, Central New Jersey, Chicago, Cleveland, Houston, L.A. Valley, Los Angeles, Long Island NY, Manhattan, MetroWest NJ, Miami, Minneapolis, New Haven, Orlando, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Providence, Silicon Valley CA, South New Jersey, Tampa, Washington, DC, and Westchester County NY and nine cities in Israel.

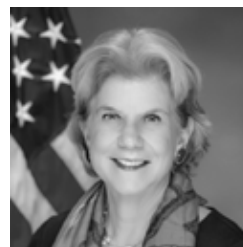
HaZamir alumnus JP sums up the unique benefits of the HaZamir experience: "HaZamir taught me invaluable lessons about unity, the power of the collective, Judaism, leadership, and friendship. As I look back on this experience, the many memories, while all exciting and different, share a common denominator: HaZamir brings out the best in everyone."

For additional information about HaZamir, Email [hazamir@zamirchoralfoundation.org](mailto:hazamir@zamirchoralfoundation.org) or visit [www.hazamir.org](http://www.hazamir.org) for additional information about HaZamir.

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# Estate Planning: What Does it All Mean?



BY BERNARD A. KROOKS, CERTIFIED ELDER LAW ATTORNEY

Often, estate planning clients come in with specific goals for their estate plan. They may want to disinherit someone, minimize taxes, or leave their estate to charity, among other things. Perhaps they may want a specific type of estate plan after reading about it online or speaking with one of their friends or colleagues. Their goal may even be just to get an estate plan, any estate plan, done before an upcoming surgery or travel plans.

There is nothing wrong with having goals for your estate plan. In fact, you should have some goals! But, oftentimes, a client's goals will focus almost entirely on one piece of the estate planning puzzle. When starting the estate planning process, there are many considerations that you and your estate planning attorney should consider.

**Tax considerations.** The federal estate tax exemption is currently \$13.61 million per person, for deaths in 2024. That means an

individual can leave \$13.61 million to heirs and pay no federal estate tax. This amount is doubled for a married couple. In 2026, the basic federal estate tax exclusion amount is scheduled to be reduced significantly unless Congress makes further changes. New York has a separate estate tax, and the exemption amount is \$6,940,000.

**Dispositive provisions.** One of the primary purposes of an estate plan is to transfer assets on your death. When making decisions about estate planning, you should consider the most efficient way to transfer those assets while remaining consistent with your goals. For example, if you want not only to leave money to your children, but also control how they spend it, you may wish to consider a trust. There are many different types of trusts which might be worth considering, depending on your wishes. Your estate planning attorney can explain the various types of trusts to you and why they might be appropriate in your situation.

**Probate avoidance.** Many clients have heard horror stories about the probate process. It can be invasive, time-consuming, and costly. However, probate is not always bad, or at least not as bad as people have heard. Nevertheless, some clients want to avoid probate, and your estate planning attorney can review the pros and cons of probate and probate avoidance.

**Qualification for benefits.** If you or one of your beneficiaries qualify for means-test-

ed government assistance now or in the future, this may require special planning and provisions. For example, an estate planning attorney may recommend you leave assets to a special needs trust for a beneficiary who risks losing their benefits due to an inheritance.

**Planning for incapacity.** Estate planning is not only planning for your assets after your death, but it also includes planning in case you become incapacitated during your lifetime. While you are able, you should make decisions about who you want to manage your assets if you cannot do it yourself and who should make medical decisions for you if you are unable to do so yourself.

**Simplicity.** Estate plans vary in their complexity. In our experience, most clients prefer simplicity, if at all possible. Please understand that, depending on what you are trying to accomplish or your life circumstances, your estate plan may need to be more complex than you would like. For example, if you have a blended family with children from a prior marriage, you may need an estate plan that is a bit more sophisticated.

It's a two-way street. Estate planning is a collaborative process. We need your help. If we do not have accurate information about your family situation, assets, and goals, we cannot do a good job for you. That is why we are going through an extensive process with you to ensure we have all the information

we need to do right by you. We need to understand the family relationships, personalities, spending habits, etc. of all interested parties. This way, we can make appropriate recommendations to you about how to best accomplish your estate planning objectives and goals. We also need information about assets, such as the types of assets, amounts of assets (at least an estimate), and how assets are titled. We need to know whether the assets are retirement assets or non-retirement assets. We will want to know who your other advisors are, including your accountant, insurance person, investment professional, etc. so that we may work with them, as needed, for your benefit. Estate planning is most effective when a team approach is utilized, and you are part (a big part!) of the team.

Bernard A. Krooks, Esq., is a founding partner of Littman Krooks LLP. He was named 2021 "Lawyer of the Year" by Best Lawyers in America® for excellence in Elder Law and has been honored as one of the "Best Lawyers" in America since 2008. He was elected to the Estate Planning Hall of Fame by the National Association of Estate Planners & Councils (NAEPC). Krooks is a past Chair of the Elder Law Committee of the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel (ACTEC). Mr. Krooks may be reached at (914-684-2100) or by visiting the firm's website at [www.littmankrooks.com](http://www.littmankrooks.com).

## Belev Echad Welcomes Nine Severely Wounded IDF Soldiers to New York for a Healing Trip

Last month, Belev Echad, a nonprofit organization that helps Israel's wounded soldiers rebuild their lives successfully, was excited to welcome nine severely wounded IDF soldiers to New York for a healing trip. These trips provide the opportunity for wounded IDF soldiers to bond with one another, receive life-changing medical support, and know that they are surrounded by love from our community as they continue on their recovery journeys.

These heroes have experienced and survived the trauma of war in defense of our homeland. They are survivors who embody resilience and use these healing trips as an outlet to share their stories.

Like Itamar, who was just 21 when he found himself face-to-face with terrorists on October 7. Patrolling near Gaza with four of his comrades, rockets began to explode near the border and four terrorist groups were headed straight toward him. Itamar was in a hammer vehicle when his two friends left to fight the terrorists. As they exited, they were shot and killed. When Itamar went to engage with the terrorists, he was shot in the arm. His commander then went out to help Itamar and was shot in the head—thank G-d he

survived, but he is still severely injured. Itamar was convinced this would be the day he died. It took many hours until he was able to reach Soroka Hospital, and when he arrived, the hospital was completely inundated with soldiers. By the end of the day, he had to check into another hospital to have surgery.

Or Ori, a tank gunner in the Armored Brigade, who was enjoying Shabbat at a friend's house until he heard the explosions ring out. He made a quick stop at home to say goodbye to his parents, promising his mother that he wouldn't get injured. Ori kept his promise, but only because he never made it to Gaza. Ori was severely wounded when he went North and lost his left leg at the hands of terrorists who launched an anti-tank missile at his brigade.

As they share their incredible and haunting stories of survival with partners, donors, and hosts, each soldier takes a critical step toward healing.

Save the date, Monday, November 25, to ensure you don't miss out on the Belev Echad Gala. Email [info@belevechad.nyc](mailto:info@belevechad.nyc) and enter "Fill a table at the Gala" in the subject line for reservation information.

## Rye Brook Student Named to American Jewish Committee Campus Global Board

Ben Messafi, a University of Pennsylvania student from Rye Brook, has been named to the American Jewish Committee's (AJC) Campus Global Board, which is dedicated to training and empowering Jewish student leaders as they confront increased antisemitic and anti-Zionist activity at their colleges and universities.

Messafi, a sophomore studying finance and international relations at Penn's Wharton School of Business, is also active in the university's Hillel chapter, where he serves as president of the Penn-Israel Public Affairs Committee. He is also co-founder of PA Leads the Fight, a coalition of Pennsylvania Jewish students fighting campus antisemitism.

The board's advocacy has taken on added resonance amid a surge in anti-Israel protests following the October 7 Hamas massacre of 1,200 Israelis, with widespread demonstrations on college campuses last spring – including, many plagued by outright antisemitism. Some Jewish students said they were harassed and intimidat-

ed to the point where some were afraid to attend classes and faulted the response, or lack of one, by their schools' administrators.

"Jewish students – like all students – deserve to feel safe and protected," said Moshe Lencer, AJC Director of Campus Affairs. "Members of our Campus Global Board like Ben are strong advocates dedicated to creating and preserving campuses where Jewish communities can grow and thrive. Through their advocacy, they ensure Jewish students feel seen and heard."

The Board's work will also be informed by AJC's State of Antisemitism in America 2023 Report, which found that 20% of current or recent Jewish college students, as reported by current or recent college students or parents of this group, felt or were excluded from an event because they were Jewish, 24% said they felt uncomfortable at an event because they were Jewish, and 26% avoided expressing their views about Israel on campus out of fear about antisemitism.



Ben Messafi

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