



## NORTH CAROLINA COUNCIL ON THE HOLOCAUST

NORTH CAROLINA DEPT. OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

[www.ncpublicschools.org/holocaust-council](http://www.ncpublicschools.org/holocaust-council)



# Back to School Edition

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# NC Council on the Holocaust: Program Planning Committee's Organizational Structure

*By Laurie Schaefer and Karen Klaich*

This past spring, the Council's Program Planning Committee (formerly Teacher Workshop Committee) advertised positions, reviewed applications, and selected Holocaust educators from across the state to be conduits of information about professional development opportunities and resources provided by the North Carolina Council on the Holocaust to teach the Holocaust. This is a purely volunteer role taken on by busy teachers because they are passionate about improving Holocaust education in North Carolina.

These teacher-leaders in our state will assist in making sure teachers in public, private, and charter schools in their counties receive information about programs and resources provided by the North Carolina Council on the Holocaust, as well as making sure that the teachers in their county are on the email database so they can receive the monthly updates.

The County Coordinators will attend at least two council programs each year, either in-person or virtually, and will maintain continuous professional development in the area of Holocaust education. If the Council chooses to hold an in-person workshop in their county, County Coordinators will help identify facilities and assist with the recruitment of teachers, as well as attend the workshop. They will not be in charge of leading the workshop, as that duty will still fall to the Eastern or Western Regional Workshop Coordinators, but we anticipate that they will be a helpful resource in the area, connecting us to teachers in many different ways.

The County Coordinators will work with other county coordinators to share resources, observations, and information. They will meet once a month via Zoom to be updated on news to share with their teachers and programming in their area, as well as networking with other coordinators in their specific regions. We currently have 76 counties represented and are working to find coordinators for the other 24 counties.

The Program Planning Committee looks forward to keeping the council updated on the fall and spring webinars, and hopefully, in-person programming. We hope you will choose to join us in the upcoming school year.

***See pages 27-34 to "meet" our Regional Directors and Program Planning Committee Mentees.***



# Holocaust Awareness Contest Open to NC Students

The Penny Daum Aldrich Holocaust essay contest is held annually for all high school students in North Carolina. The contest is to promote Holocaust awareness among young people in North Carolina, Jewish and non-Jewish alike. The intention is to inspire students to learn about the Holocaust and to think about the implications of it in their lives. The topic to write about is: "Understanding the Holocaust: Why it is relevant to my life." The deadline to submit the final essay is January 3, 2022. The winners of the essay contest are recognized and awarded their prizes each year at the Annual Yom HaShoah Holocaust Memorial Service, which is held in either Chapel Hill or Durham.

Email completed application to [foundation@jewishforgood.org](mailto:foundation@jewishforgood.org). Mark the envelope "To the attention of Grace Kaplan. Any student can submit their essay directly to the contest, or teachers can send a file of all the class essays together.

## Essay Guidelines:

Student essays will be judged on content rather than style and should demonstrate:

- Historical knowledge and thoughtful learning about the Holocaust.
- Ability to identify lessons learned from the Holocaust.
- An understanding of the relevance of the Holocaust in today's world.

## Students can:

- Research an individual from the Holocaust with whom they feel a connection.
- Examine the Holocaust in a particular location.
- Explore a specific event in the Holocaust.
- Compare an event in the Holocaust to current events.
- Write about any aspect of the Holocaust that interests them.

## Formatting Requirements:

- The cover page should include: Essay title, name, email address, and phone number so they can be contacted if they are selected.
- Maximum of 1,200 words.
- Times New Roman font, size 14, double spaced.

Prizes: 1st Prize ~ \$250, 2nd Prize ~ \$125

# Educator's Spotlight: Middle School

## "Appalachian Teenagers and the Holocaust"

By Kelly Muse

I have been an educator in North Carolina since I began teaching 8th grade English 20 years ago. The community in which I currently teach is located in the rural mountains of Western North Carolina in Transylvania County. While there are no classes in our middle or high schools dedicated to Holocaust studies, I implement an 8 week long Holocaust Literature unit. We read everything from first account primary sources such as *Salvaged Pages*, survivor testimony, and "picture books" like *Terrible Things*. The poetry in our unit is always a favorite among the students, for instance "The Hangman" and "Written in Pencil in the Sealed Railway Car." Other works we study include *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *Prisoner B-3087*, *Night*, American and European headline newspaper articles of the era, as well as song lyrics.



Kelly and Holocaust survivor, Giselle Cycowicz, at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem

“  
One lesson I have learned by teaching the Holocaust to teenagers... is that empathy can be found in every heart.”

One lesson I have learned by teaching the Holocaust to teenagers, who have grown up in very rural communities, is that empathy can be found in every heart. The more the students read about this historical atrocity and try to grasp the concept of man's inhumanity to man, one can see closure - closure between a gap of generations. Each word they read during this unit of study and every sentence they speak aloud brings together the adolescents of today living in a digital world with people their great-grandparents' age, living on another part of the planet, who endured what none of us can possibly imagine. "It's important work," I tell the students - work that perpetuates the legacies and stories and memories of those who no longer can, and you better believe that these mountain kids take it seriously.

Though the confederate flag and hateful slurs may be commonplace in these hills, our young people here will impress you. Each passing day of our Holocaust literature unit grows another grain of empathy for their fellow man, no matter their differences. The environment in the classroom shifts and a family emerges. They start seeing through the lens of acceptance and sensitivity more than they ever have, and they like the way that feels. The Holocaust literature they read and discuss becomes more and more powerful in shaping who they are as human beings. A lot of these teenagers find themselves doing "unimaginable" things, such as going home and having conversations with their families about what they're learning, or they may independently research information on certain topics presented to them that they can't stop thinking about. Will wonders never cease? I witness Holocaust education do that in my classroom.

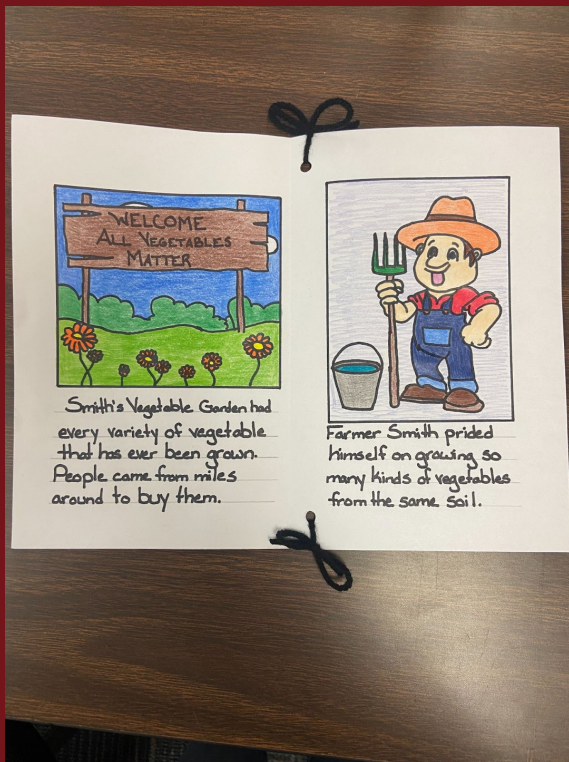
Reflecting upon my passion for these studies within my four walls reinforces one thing I know for certain. I will never stop. I will never stop striving to do some small part in helping create future generations of upstanders, one student at a time.

# Educator's Spotlight: Middle School

## A Student's Reflection of Mrs. Muse's Class

By Brooke LaRowe

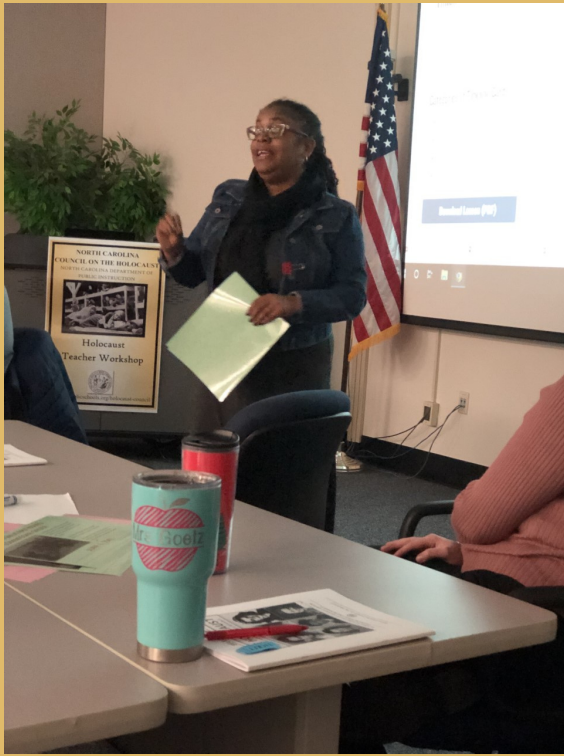
I have been profoundly impacted after learning about the Holocaust and reading a plethora of Holocaust literature in Mrs. Muse's class. I found myself doing more than just reading words on a page and sitting quietly in my seat. I could feel my heart breaking for Anne Frank after reading her last diary entry. I held my breath when a mother didn't get to finish what she wanted to write to her children in a poem called "Railway Car." My thinking was complicated trying to decide whether Peter in Salvaged Pages was Jewish or Catholic. There were many instances throughout our time studying Holocaust literature that affected me personally.



One particular activity that Mrs. Muse had us do was listen to her read a book called *Terrible Things*. It looked like a children's book at first, but as she read through the pages it was apparent that it was not meant for children. That's why it's an example of an allegory. It has a hidden agenda using innocent woodland animals. When she had finished reading to us, we discussed the allegory and how the book was really about what "terrible things" can happen when you choose to be a bystander.

Mrs. Muse had us research different hate crimes in the southeastern United States within the last two years using the Anti-Defamation League's online resources. In pairs, we chose one specific incident and created our own 10 page allegorical picture book inspired by *Terrible Things*. We based our book on a verbal attack towards a woman in a Black Lives Matter group that took place in Asheville, N.C. Our allegory is using vegetables in a garden that refuse to grow alongside the "rainbow rooted carrots." I wrote the text and my partner drew the pictures. We then assembled our books and presented them to our classmates.

# Educator's Spotlight: High School *Bettina Pope*



**Bettina Pope  
at Williamston Workshop**

Believe it or not, I learned nothing about the Holocaust during the entirety of my formal K-12 education in North Carolina nor during my four years of college. It was not until I began teaching in Wake County in 1998 and was introduced to Elie Wiesel's *Night*, which was required reading for English II. I completed the novel in two hours; I was enthralled. I needed to learn more. The previous teacher left two resource books: one for the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and one from the NC Council (blue cover). They were invaluable, yet they were only the beginning of my journey into Holocaust education.

A life-long history buff wrapped in an English teacher's body, I began to seek more opportunities to enhance my knowledge. This quest has taken me across the state, the country, and the world. I have attended and am thankful for the multiple workshops offered by the NC Council on the Holocaust, NCCAT's annual Gathering of

Holocaust Educators, Centropa seminars in the US and Germany, three USHMM Belfer Conferences, and many more.

In 2019, I was honored to join the NC Council on the Holocaust as a Friend of the Council and was likewise honored to be selected as a USHMM Teacher Fellow. My cohort and I refer to ourselves as 'The Infinity Group' because due to Covid 19 we have yet to complete our Fellowship. This exploration into Holocaust education has not only exposed to me a network of phenomenal teachers and organizations to draw resources from, but it has made me a much better teacher - not just during my Holocaust unit, but across the board. I am grateful for all of the lessons and experiences that I have been afforded over the years and share the greatest lesson of all with my students: we must love, respect, hear and see one another simply because we are.

## Educator's Spotlight: University

### "How I Became a Holocaust Studies Scholar: Reflections on Growing up and Being Educated in Cold-War West Germany" (Part II)

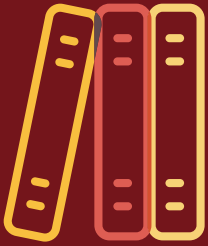


*This article is the second of a two-part series by Thomas Pegelow Kaplan of Appalachian State University. To read Part I, view our [May 2020 newsletter](#).*

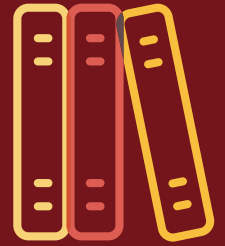
Working for my high school's student paper in the 1980s was an enormous learning experience. My article on the town's 1933 mayor came to the attention of the local CDU chapter. By then an octogenarian, the former mayor was one of the town's honorary citizens and a much-revered Christian Democrat. Chapter members threatened to sue me for libel. It was my high school principal who came to my rescue, also teaching me a lesson. "Show me your sources," he requested. I provided the evidence and he had my back. As I learned, the principal was a member of the SPD, the party the Nazis and their conservative allies had crushed. In youth press organizations, especially the Junge Presse Niedersachsen, peers offered broader perspectives steeped in analysis left of the SPD. Back at high school, my religion teacher, a critical Protestant theologian who explained how the Evangelical Church supported Nazism, was an unmatched inspiration. In her class, I wrote my first 100-page study. It examined the 1938 November pogroms, including the violence in a neighboring city.

Barely graduated from high school, I received a different kind of education. The recently-unified country still had compulsory military service, but I had learned too much about the German military and refused to serve. As a conscientious objector, I was sent to nurse the dying in their homes. Many of them had belonged to the party, Wehrmacht or SS. I will never forget the elderly men who consistently greeted me with words like "Remember, the black Jews are worse than the white Jews!" After my service, I enrolled at the University of Tübingen to study the Nazism more systematically. Its History Department no longer had a professor who specialized in the Third Reich. Thus, I joined the Fachschaft Geschichte and, with others, brought Holocaust survivors and scholars to campus. Later, an instructor suggested to apply for a research assistantship for the new medieval studies chair. In the institute's hallways, I noticed portraits of his predecessors who had helped to turn Tübingen into one of Hitler Germany's "brownest" universities. To my astonishment – another professor had just called me and others "Communist pigs" – this Ordinarius agreed to their removal, when I urged him to do so. But we all knew that confronting this past remained an enormous undertaking. When I learned about a fellowship competition to study in the U.S., I applied. Perhaps I was ready for a break. When I arrived at the University of Oregon, the Aryan Nations/Church of Jesus Christ had just leafleted campus. There was no break.

Twenty years later, Appalachian State appointed me Leon Levine Distinguished Professor of Judaic, Holocaust, and Peace Studies and director of the Center by that name. I was excited about the Center's Rosen Summer Symposium that trained teachers how to approach the Holocaust in their classrooms. I had learned so much from my school teachers, many of whom had gone out of their way to set me on my path. It was time to give back.



# Why Holocaust Education Still Matters



By Michael Abramson

Holocaust education is a comprehensive lesson that consists of tolerance, ethics and history. Holocaust education explains what happens to a society when hatred and discrimination permeate all phases of public policy and thinking.

Holocaust education will combat historical revisionists who claim the Holocaust did not occur. Holocaust curriculum teaches students how to think, write, and use facts and concepts to create essays and narratives on human nature, racial insensitivities, prejudices, community involvement, citizenship, and morality.

Holocaust education is a balance of literature and history that portrays inhumanity as well as the lessons learned when evil conquers good and when good people do nothing in the face of evil.

Holocaust education teaches that democratic institutions and values are not automatically sustained but need to be appreciated and protected.

Holocaust education teaches that silence and indifference to the suffering of others or to the infringement of civil rights can, however, unintentionally, perpetuate problems in society.

Holocaust education teaches that the Holocaust was not an accident in history. It occurred because individuals, organizations and governments made choices that not only legalized discrimination, but also allowed prejudice, hatred, and, ultimately, mass murder to occur.

The lessons of the Holocaust will teach that societies can break, democracies can fail, ethics can collapse and ordinary men find themselves standing over death pits with guns in their hands.

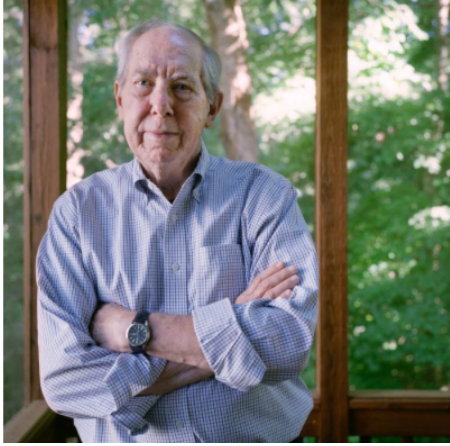
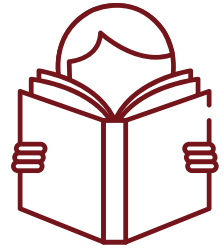
Michael Abramson is the Chairman of the North Carolina Council on the Holocaust. The Holocaust Council is a state agency under the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. The mission of the Holocaust Council are (1) to educate North Carolinians, especially North Carolina public school teachers and students, about the lessons learned from the Holocaust; (2) to teach tolerance and inclusion in human relations to public school students; (3) to provide an appreciation and respect for the values of diversity, democracy and pluralism to public school students; (4) to present historical facts regarding the Holocaust to North Carolina teachers, students and the broader community; and (5) to teach North Carolina public school teachers how to teach the Holocaust and the lessons learned from the Holocaust to their students.





# ***A Boy's Journey***

## *Peter Stein's Life Overview & Reader's Praise*



Peter J. Stein is a Holocaust educator who has taught middle school, high school, college students, teachers, and faculty in a number of states including New Jersey, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Indiana, New Mexico, and Washington DC. Colleges included UNC, Duke, NC State, CUNY, Fordham, NYU, Meredith College, Dennison, Penn State, and community colleges.

Stein was born in Prague, Czechoslovakia, two years before the Nazi occupation of Prague, Czechoslovakia, to a Jewish father and a Catholic mother. His father was forced into slave labor and then deported to Terezin (Theresienstadt) which he survived. His father's

mother, sisters, and brother, their spouses and children all were killed in concentration camps. Peter's father escaped this fate by marrying a Christian.

During the war, Peter attended a school in Prague where photos of Adolph Hitler and the Nazi flag were displayed in every classroom. He dealt with antisemitism in school and the neighborhood, experienced air raid drills and bombings by Allied aircraft. Peter remembers the constant presence of German soldiers, the disappearances of relatives, and increasing food shortages. At school he was taught German propaganda but on Sundays, from his Catholic grandparents, learned about Allied war victories.

After the war, Peter heard powerful accounts from cousins who resisted and -survived Nazi camps, resisted their captors, and even escaped. After WWII ended Peter's family had to wait almost two years to receive visas to the United States. At age 12, Peter, an immigrant, arrived with his mother in New York Harbor in November of 1948 and they were overwhelmed and delighted with the lit-up sights of the Statue of Liberty and the pace of downtown Wall Street.

He attended public school in New York City, learned English, graduated from the City College of New York (CCNY) and earned his PhD in sociology from Princeton University. After decades of college teaching and research from 2016 to 2018 Peter served as the Holocaust Scholar for the NC Council on Holocaust Education, training history and social studies teachers around the State.

Peter is grateful to colleagues Lynda Moss, Lee Holder, Marianne Wason, Chrisy Horgan, MJ Limbo, Sharon Halperin, Mike Abramson, and others with whom he developed a curriculum and resources for the teaching of this critical topic.

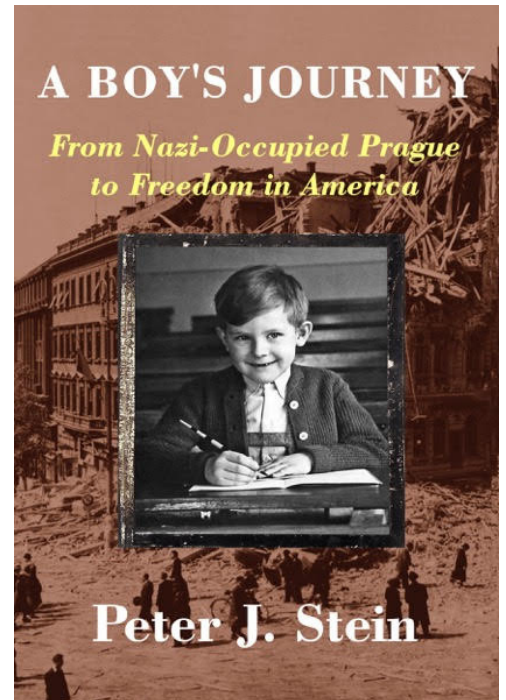
Stein is a recognized Holocaust educator who recently published a riveting memoir of a childhood in Prague and the U.S. titled *A Boy's Journey: From Nazi- Occupied Prague to Freedom in America*. Peter and his three generation family now live in Arlington, Virginia where he is a Survivor Volunteer at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) lecturing to school and adult groups.

Please visit Peter's [website](#) to learn more about his life experiences during and after the Holocaust. You will also learn more about his book, *A Boy's Journey*.

## ***Reader's Praise for A Boy's Journey From Nazi-Occupied Prague to Freedom In America***

By Sharon Halperin, Director of the Center for Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights Education in North Carolina.

Not just another Holocaust book, *A Boy's Journey From Nazi-Occupied Prague to Freedom in America* by Peter J. Stein grips the reader with heartfelt revelations that can only be expressed by a survivor. The best books on the Holocaust are not only interesting to read but also ask readers to think about their own lives and what they would have done in similar situations. *A Boy's Journey* reminds us to do just that.



Born in Prague two years before the Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia, Peter Stein spent his early childhood years experiencing the cruelties of Hitler's regime. Stein's book offers an honest, riveting account of life under Nazi rule as seen through the eyes of a child. Readers then experience his transatlantic sailing to America, where he and his mother finally reunite with his father.

So begins his life in a country busy absorbing refugees fleeing war-torn Europe.

The study of the Holocaust is now a required part of school curricula in an increasing number of states across the country. Stein's book should be included in a short list of recommended Holocaust memoirs for students and teachers.



Peter Stein and Sharon Halperin

*Are you interested in writing a book review for our newsletter? Submit a form!*

# Denial

*A film review by Garrett Southerland*

*Denial* is a biographical movie produced in 2016 and based on the book *History on Trial: My Day in Court with a Holocaust Denier* by Deborah Lipstadt who is the main protagonist in the film. It brings to light the circumstances that surround the UK court case of Irving v Penguin Books Ltd in which David Irving, a prominent British writer on Nazi Germany, sued Ms. Lipstadt for libel.

Ms. Lipstadt is portrayed by Oscar-winning actress Rachel Weisz who brings an amazingly spot-on embodiment of Ms. Lipstadt as she fights not only for her name as an author and a teacher of Holocaust but for the legacy and memorial of the Holocaust itself. David Irving is portrayed by popular British actor Timothy Spall with Oscar-nominated actor Tom Wilkinson as Richard Rampton, Lipstadt's barrister. The story focuses on Mr. Irving's libel lawsuit against Deborah Lipstadt and her publishing company for declaring him a Holocaust denier in her books. Unfortunately, in the British system of justice, the burden of proof lies with the accused. Therefore, Ms. Lipstadt, along with her legal team, headed by Mr. Rampton and solicitor Anthony Julius (Andrew Scott), must prove that Irving deliberately lied about the Holocaust; with Irving serving as his own barrister in the trial. The case also prominently focuses on the death camp of Auschwitz and the remains of the camp after the war in both sides arguments to prove or disprove the evidence that the Holocaust occurred. *Denial* also brings to light the various arguments made by Holocaust deniers today and the importance of accurate historical representation, especially when it comes to Holocaust history and education.



*Denial* is rated PG-13 for brief strong language and thematic material. It is 110 minutes in length and would be recommended for students at either the middle or high school level. The film does focus more on the after-effects and response to the Holocaust after the fact and may be more useful in a larger course dedicated to Holocaust education.

**Director:** Mick Jackson    **Screenplay:** David Hare

**Based on:** *History on Trial: My Day in Court with a Holocaust Denier* by Deborah Lipstadt

Garrett Southerland has been a Humanities Teacher for twenty years. Seven of these years have been dedicated thus far to Holocaust education. Within these years he has also served as the Piedmont Coordinator for Exhibits for the NC Council on the Holocaust. Garrett resides in Durham, NC.

# Survivor Profile: Walter Ziffer

By Steve Goldberg

Walter Ziffer, a 94 year old Holocaust survivor living just north of Asheville, NC, is a treasure. Mention his name to anyone who knows him -- lots of people know him -- and their face lights up.

"Oh, Walter is wonderful!" is a common refrain. "Our community considers him a gem," said Deborah Miles, the former head of the UNC-Asheville Center for Diversity Education. "Walter always has a twinkle in his eye," Miles added. "He walks around with sage and humorous wisdom."

Mark Gibney, a professor of political science at UNC-Asheville who focuses on human rights, has hosted Walter as a guest speaker in his classes several times over the years. "I've been teaching since 1984," Gibney said, "and you can tell when students are engaged -- you could hear a pin drop when Walter spoke."



I would refer to him as "Mr. Ziffer" in this article, but that feels wrong. Everyone I spoke with referred to him as "Walter," and again, they were effusive about how much Walter has contributed to the Asheville community since he and his wife Gail moved to the area in 1993. Within two years of their arrival, Walter, in his mid-60s, had thrown himself into the academic and cultural life of Asheville -- he started teaching classics and Jewish Studies at UNC-Asheville and got so involved with his new synagogue, Beth Israel, that he was recognized as "Member of the Year" in 1995. Students at UNC-Asheville, and later at Mars Hill University, where Walter also taught were counseled, "it doesn't matter what the class is -- if Walter is teaching, take the class!"

Walter has a unique perspective -- he grew up in Czechoslovakia, in a town on the border with Poland, and he was 12 years old when Germany invaded Poland. His family was evicted from their home and lived in ghetto after ghetto, until he was separated from his family in 1942. He then survived seven slave labor camps. After his liberation, he discovered that his mother and sister had survived as well and he connected with them. The three of them went home to their town in Czechoslovakia, where they discovered that Walter's father had also survived. He had been a lawyer and one of the heads of the Jewish community in his town. Walter's father was unable to practice law after all he had been through during the Holocaust, and Walter, age 18 felt like he had to leave -- there was nothing for him in Czechoslovakia.



Walter (left) with his best friend, George Loeffler, in a photograph from 1940 -- both are wearing white armbands that identified them as Jewish in the ghetto in Czechoslovakia.

When I interviewed Walter for this profile, we spoke outside on his porch for nearly three hours. He had the same enthusiasm at the end of our conversation as at the start. Here's a [2-minute video](#) of Walter narrating a picture of his family, taken a few years before World War II started. While his nuclear family survived, almost everyone else in the picture died in the Holocaust.

Walter sees that picture every morning in his dining room, so for him, every day is Yom Hashoah, a day of remembering the Holocaust.



Left: Walter in a 1993 interview, showing the armband his mother wore in the ghetto in Czechoslovakia. She took the care to embroider her armband and she somehow kept it through the war.



Right: Walter took a picture with the same embroidered armband in July of 2021.

As an 18-year old back home in Czechoslovakia after the war, Walter feared that he would be drafted to serve in the Czech army, which would further delay his education. His father helped him secure a student visa and Walter went to Paris. After two years there, Walter got a visa to come to the US in 1948. Walter lived in Nashville with his uncle Bruno, a chemical engineer who had made it out of Europe days before World War II started in 1939.

After graduating high school in one year, Walter enrolled as an engineering student at Vanderbilt University (there's a great story about how he got into Vanderbilt with just six high school credits -- hear Walter tell it [at this link](#) -- watch two minutes from 1:40 to 1:42).

While at Vanderbilt, Walter fell in love with Carolyn, a woman who was a member of the Church of Christ, a fundamentalist, mostly southern church. For a host of reasons (read his memoir), Walter converted to Christianity. After he graduated from Vanderbilt, he had a brief career as an engineer working for General Motors in Ohio -- but, as Walter wrote in his memoir, he felt that there had to be "more to life than coming up with ever better door and window seals for cars." Walter went back to school at Oberlin where he earned the first of several degrees in religion, focusing on the New Testament. He became a minister, and he and his first wife, Carolyn, worked and lived in France from 1964 to 1971.

The town in France where the Ziffers lived, Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, is famous for having saved thousands of Jews -- hiding them from the French government that was cooperating with the Nazis (see <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/le-chambon-sur-lignon>). One day, Walter's eldest daughter, Elizabeth (age 12 at the time), came home from school. Her friends had been talking about the brave things their parents and grandparents did during World War II, so she asked her father, "what did you do during World War II?"

Her father, a pastor, replied that he had been a prisoner. Elizabeth just about fell out of her chair. "What did you do wrong?" she asked -- and that question led to Walter and Elizabeth staying up until midnight, talking about the history of antisemitism and some of Walter's experiences during the Holocaust.

After earning his PhD in theology in 1971, Walter and his wife and their four children moved back to the United States. They lived for a few years in Washington, DC, then moved to Brussels, and finally retired to Canada in 1982. Walter then settled briefly in Maine, where he divorced his wife and rejoined the Jewish religion. In 1993, Walter and his second wife, Gail, moved to North Carolina, where the two of them have made an indelible impact.

Before COVID, Walter would travel hours to any audience that wanted to hear his story and learn from him. A master

storyteller, Walter is kind and joyful and has a zest for life (with his beard, he gives off a Santa Claus vibe). He both engages and challenges his audience; he is not afraid of controversy. At a recent talk, he proposed that rather than take down Confederate monuments entirely, it would be better if the statues were “dethroned from their physically elevated position and placed next to the pedestal that had previously supported them.” More details are on [Walter's blog](#), which he started in 2018.

Yes, a 91-year old started blogging. His main motivation seemed to be ICE's family separation policy. That issue is particularly poignant for Walter, because he was separated from his family in 1942. In the speeches he gave during the previous presidential administration, Walter made clear that he felt there were parallels between the immigration policies of the United States and the policies of Germany. This greatly troubled him and made him want to encourage people to ask questions about what is going on in the world.

Walter has dedicated himself to helping people learn about and remember the Holocaust so that it does not repeat itself. He estimates that he has spoken to a total of 45,000 to 50,000 people. It would have been even more, but his regular speaking routine was interrupted by COVID. Walter had six engagements “on the books” when COVID hit. The books are kept by Walter's wife and best friend, Gail, who supports Walter's work and makes it possible for him to speak as often as he does.

In 2009, Walter was invited back to his hometown of Cesky Tesin in the Czech Republic for a reconciliation ceremony. While there, he went to visit the Jewish cemetery and he discovered that it was in a state of disrepair. The graves were not kept up and nature had reclaimed the area. The cemetery badly needed repairs -- and Walter gently insisted this happen, and it did.

At age 94, Walter is sharp and a delight to speak with, but he is also aware that his time is limited. And he is, frankly, tired. “I have problems from the tip of my head to my toes” Ziffer told me, with a laugh. “I'm going bald (he points to a bald spot and allows, ‘that's not so bad’)” ... he then catalogs problems with his eyes (which slows down his reading); his hearing (he has hearing aids) ... and my toes are bad.”

In an effort to ensure that his story lives on, Walter spent a year working to publish his memoir, *Confronting The Silence: A Holocaust Survivor's Search For God*. The book was published on Walter's 90th birthday, in March of 2017. A decade earlier, Walter had written a 400 page manuscript about his life -- but that was just for his family. With the help of his two eldest daughters, he pared his manuscript nearly in half -- to just over 200 pages. Reviews of his book are appropriately gushing, and the book contains many powerful moments.

One particularly poignant moment -- and one that he often mentions during his talks -- appears on page 74. Walter is describing the second of the seven (yes seven) slave labor camps where he was a prisoner from 1942 to 1945. He had been wondering about awful screams he had heard when the commander of the camp, a sadistic man named Kurt Pompe, took roughly a dozen people away at random during the morning roll call. Walter soon discovered where the screams were coming from when he and two other boys were given the job of cleaning up the wash barracks.

Walter writes: “...what we saw defies description. There, on the tiled floor in the midst of blood, body fluids and excrement, lay a dozen nude bodies in various states of convulsion. These were shapes that refuse verbal representation. Any attempt at description would be an understatement of the horror I witnessed. For lack of any

of any better comparison, I can only think of store window mannequins whose arms, legs, and neck had been twisted out of shape into bizarre new configurations and all this sprinkled and stained with blood and filth.

Our job was to clean up these chunks of inanimate flesh which only a few hours before had been thinking and breathing human beings. ... Never in my life had I seen the result of such an orgy of violence. Witnessing this devastation was the beginning of my descent toward loss of personhood ..."

Walter's book chronicles other miseries in the camps, including a time when Walter witnessed a prisoner beaten nearly to death in front of him (also by Pompe). These moments cannot be forgotten -- they are poison in his soul. But when you interact with Walter, you would have no idea these things happened to him. He is jolly and gentle -- he has regained his sense of personhood (and then some). "He's one of the most human human beings I know," said Gibney.

In his talks, Walter tells of his first love -- a girl named Lydia who he met when they were 15 years old and their families had been evicted from their homes and were forced to live in a ghetto in Czechoslovakia. Walter and Lydia held hands and sat cheek to cheek on their daily train ride to a worksite. However, Lydia's family decided to try to escape the ghetto. The day before they left, Lydia gave Walter a locket that said "I Love You" when you spin it. A few weeks later, Walter's father learned that Lydia's family had been shot dead. As Walter writes in his memoir, "A German patrol had apparently intercepted them and murdered them on the spot. I was heartbroken."

A teacher in the Asheville area was so moved by Walter's story about Lydia that soon after she heard the story, she bought a replica of that charm for Walter. When she came to hear Walter speak again a few years later, she presented him with the replica. Walter, touched by the teacher's thoughtfulness, carries the charm with him in his wallet today. It is a physical testament to how much his story moves the people who hear it.

To give a sense of the generational impact of Walter's work, consider this story: about 17 years ago, a high school sophomore named Kasey Baker heard Walter speak at Congregation Beth HaTephila in Asheville. Walter has spoken at that synagogue many times, even though he is a member of Temple Beth Israel.

Baker recalled that after Walter told his story, "it left me with a real impression even at that age. His story always stuck with me -- it was such a different world from one I could imagine."

Baker, now a Professor of political science at Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College, has invited Walter to speak to his classes several times. He also wrote most of the Wikipedia page about Walter. One of Baker's students became very moved by Walter's lecture and the research she did about him. She ended up going to Columbia University to research building peace efforts in the Middle East. Another of Baker's students said that Walter inspired her to go to the Holocaust Museum in DC with her family.

At age 15, Baker was aware of the Holocaust, but "it is so different to hear someone say, 'I was in this camp; I was in that camp -- actually being there.'"

At the end of a 2018 talk in front of perhaps 200 students at UNC-Asheville (available on YouTube and definitely worth watching), Walter was asked, "how do you keep that optimism, that youthful enthusiasm? How do you do that, given the kind of experiences you have had?"

Without missing a beat, Walter responded, with a chuckle, “what makes you think I’m such an optimist?” The audience laughed. The student clarified her question: After what you have been through, “how can you believe that people can act empathetically to other people?”

Walter explained “I’m a secular humanist -- I’m not a religious person, but I find beautiful texts in the bible. The one he cited was “This too shall pass.” Walter explained the Nazis are made of the same DNA as him and the people in the audience. There is a battle within each of us between good and evil. You make what you can of your life.

Walter went on to note that “If I spoke up in Nazi Germany as I have here [against ICE’s policy of family separation], I’d be sent to a concentration camp the next day.”

“America doesn’t need to be made great, because America has been great. We can make it better. We can make any situation better, but that depends on us.”

To keep our country great, “we have to inform ourselves,” Ziffer said. “We can’t just be pathetically sitting on our butts doing nothing. I mean, politics is important.”

Some years ago, when Walter’s synagogue was going through a rabbinical transition (Walter and Gail have seen six rabbis lead the congregation), some members speculated that Walter would be a wonderful interim replacement. Walter considered it, but ultimately did not pursue becoming a rabbi at his synagogue.

The meaning of the Hebrew word “rabbi” is “teacher.” So even without the formal title from his synagogue, Walter Ziffer has been a rabbi -- a teacher -- for nearly all of his adult life. He continues to teach and study and be a wonderful influence on the people he interacts with in Asheville.

The rabbi has spoken -- pay attention to your world and work to make it a better place. That’s what “Rabbi Walter” has done for most of his adult life, and Western North Carolina is a better place because of him.

If you have any opportunity to hear Walter speak, you should do so. His next speaking engagement is scheduled for the West Asheville Library on October 14, at 7 p.m. A curated list of speeches Walter has delivered is available [here](#).

*Walter invites people who have any questions about his story to email him at [waziff@aol.com](mailto:waziff@aol.com) -- he does not promise a prompt response, but he does promise to respond.*



Walter, delivering the commencement address at Mars Hill University in 2017.

Steve Goldberg enjoys learning from Holocaust survivors. Steve is taking a break from a 20-year teaching career to tell the story of Holocaust survivor Abe Piasek, a much beloved and sought-after speaker who passed away at the age of 91 in January 2020. Details are available at [www.MyFriendAbe.com](http://www.MyFriendAbe.com)



# ***Balm in Gilead: The Black Soldiers Who Sheltered Dachau Survivors***

*By John L. Withers II*

My father's favorite wartime story, repeated often throughout his long life, told of the remarkable friendship between his fellow Black soldiers and two young Holocaust survivors—a seemingly chance encounter that turned out to be so much more.

In the spring of 1945, as the war ended, an all-Black U.S. Army truck company—including my father, Lieutenant John L. Withers of Greensboro, North Carolina—rushed emergency supplies to an unknown German town. Though long victims of harsh racial abuse in Jim Crow-era America, the soldiers were shocked at the horrors they witnessed when the “town” proved to be the Dachau concentration camp shortly after its liberation. They were further shocked, days later, when two destitute young Jews, former Dachau inmates, appeared at their encampment and pleaded for help. Sheltering non-military personnel was forbidden, but the soldiers, moved by their plight and with my father's endorsement, took the boys in nonetheless.



Lieutenant John L. Withers, c. 1946



Salomon, a soldier named Dave, and Pee Wee, 1945

For nearly a year, the soldiers hid the young men—whom they fondly christened “Salomon” and “Pee Wee” when their actual Polish names proved unpronounceable—from the prying eyes of inspectors and Military Police, either in their bivouacs or, while on convoy, in the cargo bays of the trucks. They taught the kids the work of the unit, from peeling potatoes in the kitchen to repairing and driving all manner of military vehicles. The boys learned English, albeit with a distinctly Black accent; engaged in the troop's ceaseless rambunctious pranks; and even became moderately adept at baseball. By the time the unit prepared to demobilize in 1946, the frail scarecrows of a year earlier were on their feet again and ready to face life anew.

Their closest companion was Lieutenant Withers. Raised in segregated North Carolina, my father was acutely sensitive to the young men's plight. In time, he became something of their surrogate parent. They would visit him in the evenings after work, at times to seek clarity for certain oddities in African American ways, or to ask about the mythic land of America where one day perhaps they could make a new start, or simply to find good

company. But my father sensed that, subconsciously, they were seeking something else: for reasons again to trust in this thing called life, which had thus far treated them so cruelly. It was up to him, my dad realized, to restore in them the belief that, however horrid their pasts, the future yet held hope. Although he lost contact on his return to Greensboro, my father's memory of his friends never faded. What, he often wondered, had become of them? Would he ever see them again?

Nearly fifty years later, when my father, then in his eighties, contracted cancer and took to ruminating on what his life had meant, I resolved to turn his story into a book—largely in the hope of convincing him of his generosity of heart and his enduring compassion towards his fellows. The research proved

onerous, not least because I was well launched into a career in the U.S. diplomatic service. The search took longer than anticipated. It carried me to sites where my father and his men had served (including the lovely German village of Staffelstein, where much of the story took place), to archives scattered from St. Louis to Warsaw to Tel Aviv, to military historians, veterans associations, and Holocaust survivor groups. There were many moments of confusion along the way, not to mention frustration and despair. But, in the end, with the help of many generous people, my efforts succeeded. On a warm afternoon in April 2001, my phone rang—and one Martin Weigen, the man once known as Pee Wee, was on the other end of the line.

Martin and my father reunited a few weeks later in Weigen's home in Hartford, Connecticut, where he had eventually moved after the war. It was fifty-five years since they had last seen each other, but they resumed as though no interval had passed. Through Martin, I learned that Salomon had passed away in Israel some years earlier, but he provided information allowing me to contact Salomon's surviving family. Neither of the two men had ever spoken much about their Holocaust experiences, but slowly that history emerged to take its place in their families' legacies.

It was in once more reviving these friendships of bygone days that my father achieved contentment. He never again questioned the value of his past. Indeed, a few days before he died in the autumn of 2007, he voiced what might have been his own epitaph. "I have," he told my mother, "achieved everything I wanted in my life." Not long thereafter, he passed on so quietly that the nurse, seated at his bedside, did not realize he had gone.

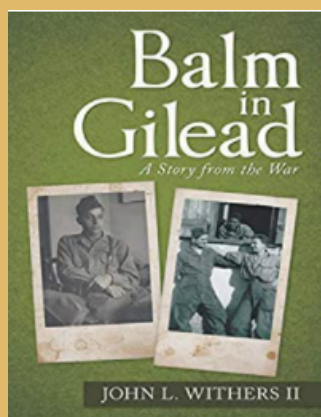
My book, *Balm in Gilead: A Story from the War*, seeks to ensure that my father's story endures. Although he brushed aside the actions of his men and himself as merely giving "a couple of hard-luck kids a break," I believe that the episode teaches more. Resurrecting this unique tale, I discovered, reflected a larger quest, beyond for the history itself, and rather for a deeper understanding of that essential humanity, transcending differences of race, custom, and creed, that forever sealed these men in each other's hearts. Beyond a moving ode to friendship, the story of Salomon, Pee Wee, and Lieutenant Withers perhaps contains parables that hold lessons for today.



Martin Weigen ("Pee Wee") and John Withers meet again, April 2001



The Weigen and Withers families at the April 2001 reunion



*Anyone seeking further information on the story or on Balm in Gilead: A Story from the War, please visit my website, [www.johnlwithersii.com](http://www.johnlwithersii.com).*



## Reflections from North Carolina Teachers Who Attended the 2021 United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's Belfer National Conferences for Educators



**Suzanne Blackstock: Belfer I**

**Suzanne Blackstock** hails from the Outer Banks of North Carolina, where she has taught 8th grade social studies since 2004. In addition to teaching, Suzanne loves to spend time with her husband, three grown children, two grandchildren, her dog Jack, and her granddog, Zoey.

I first heard about the annual Belfer Conference years ago when I attended the Appalachian State summer Holocaust conference, and it's been on my "to do" list ever since. When I saw that Belfer would be virtual this summer I immediately registered. Although the conference was held virtually, it was still a top-notch event, and it reinforced to me that the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum is a vital resource in telling the history of the Holocaust, providing educational resources, and engaging with the world in current times.

Several conference sessions dealt with the USHMM's leading role in telling the story of the Holocaust. Museum historians presented on "Why the Jews?," focusing on the historical context going back hundreds of years for why the Nazis chose the Jews for persecution.

Another presentation, entitled "Nazi Ideology," argued that the Holocaust was the direct result of ideas. Hitler and his top officials held fundamental beliefs that underscored the persecution of non-Aryans in general, and the Jews in particular. Those beliefs transcended even the economic, political, and military goals of the Nazis. Yet another session transported us to the museum for a tour of the exhibit, "Americans and the



**Casey Voss: Belfer I**

**Casey** have been in education for 15 years, both in high school English and in special education K-12. She is currently an English teacher in Stokes County at South Stokes High School

This summer I had the opportunity to attend the Belfer One Conference virtually through the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. As a Holocaust educator, I had heard of the Belfer program but had not had the opportunity to apply for its previous in-person conferences. However, because the program was offered virtually this year, I was able to participate. It was an incredible experience!

As I mentioned, I am a Holocaust educator, and I have attended Holocaust education professional development in the past, both through the North Carolina Council on the Holocaust and through the North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching (NCCAT). As a result of attending other programming, I was already familiar with some of the introductory lessons provided at Belfer, such as how to safely teach the Holocaust. However, it was beneficial to get a refresher on the USHMM's recommendations, and I enjoyed hearing from museum coordinators and directors. The conference began with discussion of the museum's film, "The Path to Nazi Genocide," which was recommended to view prior to the first day. It's a film I have used in teaching the Holocaust, and it is provided on the museum's website. As a Belfer participant, I also received a DVD copy of the film. The conference also provided an anchor activity for teaching World War II and the events leading up to it, which is known to many Holocaust educators as "the timeline activity." I

Holocaust.” Throughout all these sessions, participants were able to ask questions and deepen their own knowledge of Holocaust history.

The Belfer Conference also underscored to me the USHMM’s commitment to providing top quality educational materials. Before the conference even started, I received a package of free books to add to my Holocaust book collection! Many sessions highlighted the educational resources available to educators on the Museum website. Beginning with the Guidelines for Teaching About the Holocaust and the foundational film Path to Nazi Genocide, museum staff and teaching fellows shared the many resources available for free use in classrooms. One of the sessions detailed the Timeline Activity, and a copy of the activity cards arrived in my mailbox shortly after the end of Belfer. The museum also has new digital content, designed to be used by remote teachers, or in face-to-face classrooms with digital access. I plan to return to ushmm.org frequently for educational resources.

Finally, Belfer highlighted for me the museum’s ongoing commitment to engaging with today’s world to address ongoing antisemitism, extremism, and genocides. One of the more moving presentations was by Dr. Arie Kruglanski, a Holocaust survivor and researcher of what attracts people to extremist ideologies. Kruglanski outlined his “3 Ns” (Need, Narrative, and Network) that intersect and provide a framework for analyzing not only historical Nazism, but also modern extremist groups. Pushing back on our hyper-partisan society, Dr. Kruglanski suggests the way to deal with people who hold extremist beliefs is to recognize that people come from a place of pain and suffering, and to engage with them to try to reach common ground. Echoing this advice, and speaking from personal experience, was the conference keynoter, Derek Black. Mr. Black was raised in a White Nationalist family, and it was only after having personal, non-threatening interactions with Jewish classmates in college that he began to question his upbringing and his worldview. Those interactions caused Black to eventually denounce White Nationalism and today he speaks out about its harm. The Belfer Conference also provided a space for local and state Holocaust groups to gather (virtually) and network with one another.

The Belfer Conference has long been a goal of mine, and I’m glad I had the opportunity to attend this virtual conference. I highly recommend the conference, even if it remains a virtual event, and I hope to attend the Belfer II Conference next summer. Please feel free to contact me with any questions about these resources or about the conference in general.

had learned of this activity in a previous training, but again, I was able to be refreshed in its instructions and strategy. In addition, USHMM sent Belter One participants all of the cards/materials needed for the timeline activity! I am very excited to use the official cards in my classroom this year when I teach my Holocaust unit.

The content of the Belfer conference this year was, in my opinion, a good combination of information of both the Holocaust and other social justice issues. In regards to Holocaust-specific information, I could tell that the museum coordinators thought of many questions that educators might receive from students while teaching the Holocaust in their own classrooms. As a result, many of the Holocaust sessions directly addressed topics about which students frequently ask, such as, “Why didn’t the Jews just leave Europe?” or “Why didn’t the Jews fight back against the Nazis?” These types of questions have no simple answers, and I appreciated that the sessions and information provided addressed the complexity of answering these kinds of questions when they come from students.

As part of steering into other social justice content, the keynote speaker of the conference, Derek Black, is a former white nationalist who has since departed from the ideas of his upbringing and now uses his experience to teach others. Listening to him speak about his journey and how he came out of the belief system in which he was raised was a pertinent story to hear as an educator. I received a complimentary copy of the book about Black’s experience, “Rising Out of Hatred: The Awakening of a Former White Nationalist,” by Eli Saslow as part of the resources sent to Belfer participants. As I attended the various sessions throughout the conference, I was aware of how socially relevant the topics still are today in our national and international social and political climate. I am grateful for the professional development that was provided by this conference and the staff of USHMM. I look forward to using the resources and information I was given, and I hope to attend future Belfer conferences.



# How German Physicians Became Nazi Murderers

## Part II: What Happened to the Hippocratic Oath and Medical Ethics?

*This article is the second of a three-part series by Beverly Maurice. To read Part I, view our [May 2020 newsletter](#).*

In Part I of this article, we looked at the background of the societal times of pre-Nazi Germany and found eugenics played a huge role in Hitler's ideology of forming a perfect Aryan race. In Part II, we going to explore medical science of the same period and tie that in with the eugenics background.

Most of us have heard of the Hippocratic Oath that medical students take at their graduation however what we may not know is that Hippocrates may not have fully composed this and that it has been rewritten not only over the years for physicians but also for nurses and midwives as well. Dr. Howard Markel, a University of Michigan medical historian who has written an article on the oath notes "the first recorded administration of the Hippocratic Oath in a medical school setting appears to have taken place at the University of Wittenberg in Germany in 1508, though it didn't become a standard part of medical school graduation ceremonies until 1804 in Montpellier, France." (Bell, 2004). While the oath may, at times, be rather lengthy in its word count its intent to these freshly minted medical professionals is clear; put your patient first, maintain confidentiality, conduct yourself with honor, and avoid criminal medical misconduct amongst, first, and foremost.



While in medical school, the students would have drilled into them the ethics of beneficence, meaning do good, giving benefit to, and non-maleficence, meaning not causing harm to. These two terms in the fields of science and medicine come up almost constantly. These two principles should certainly help guide medical professionals when it comes down to making the most difficult ethical decisions and those that are very moral and clear-cut as well.

In the decades before the Holocaust, Germany's medical schools were setting the standards worldwide. Germany and Austria were setting the gold standard for medical ethics and bringing home half of the Nobel prizes for medical sciences. In the field of public health, Germany was urging women to do self-breast examinations for early cancer detection and recommending pregnant women to avoid smoking and alcohol. Another public health recommendation was that smoking should be barred from public spaces. Great idea but this one, as evidenced below, is starting to fall in line with the Nazi propaganda. Can you spot where in the advertisement to the left?



Yes, that cigar band featuring a Black person – "a degenerate" a term pulled from the concept of eugenics.


As mentioned in Part I, Germany was very closely following the United States' eugenics and forced sterilizations. By 1939, Germany had developed a child euthanasia program run by the infamous liar (per the Nuremberg Trials) Dr. Karl Brandt. This was the first mass murder preceding the final solution by two years.

## KARL BRANDT'S DESCRIPTION OF CHILD "EUTHANASIA"

*"...[Hitler] had given me the task, to discuss with the doctors in whose care the child was [...] to tell the doctors, in his name, that they could carry out euthanasia. [...] And it should be done in such a way that the parents could not [...] have the impression that they themselves were responsible for the death of the child. [...] The doctors were of the opinion that preserving the life of such a child was not actually justified."*


*Karl Brandt at the Nuremberg Doctors Trial*





## CHILD "EUTHANASIA" PROGRAM, 1939

- Infants and children (<3, initially)
  - "Idiocy"
  - Down syndrome
  - Microcephaly
  - Hydrocephaly
  - Malformations
  - Paralysis and spasticity
- Parents typically deceived
- Killed by injection of phenol
- Deaths recorded as pneumonia
- Brain samples taken



Dr. Karl Brandt

As shown above, the children were under the age of three, the parents were usually lied to, told their child was being hospitalized for a beneficial treatment but then unfortunately and sadly "died of pneumonia". From there the program was expanded to include children up to the age of seventeen. Typically, the children were starved to death before they were injected with phenol. These places were now known to insiders as "Children's Killing Wards". Quickly, headquartered in Berlin, and given the name, "Operation T4" based on the Berlin location, it moved onto adult euthanasia. This took on a slightly different look, however. This time forms were sent made up to look like more of a census taking type form, but it was a registration form for killing camps or gas chambers – the precursors to the actual gas chambers. It was in Operation T4 hospitals when actions became altogether covert, illegal and records were falsified. When the "patients" came in they started removing their teeth that had any gold dental work.

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## THE T4 ("EUTHANASIA") PROGRAM

Hartheim 'Euthanasia' Center




"the needle belongs in the hand of the doctor."  
 Victor Brack

Hadamar psychiatric hospital




"It is unbearable to me that the flower of our youth must lose their lives at the front while that feeble-minded and asocial element can have a secure existence in the asylum"  
 Dr. Hermann Pfannmüller

The ultimate decision to gas the Jews emerged from the fact that the technical apparatus already existed in the hospitals that were used to kill the mentally and physically ill in Germany in the "euthanasia" program.  
 Robert Proctor



Sernberg 'Euthanasia' Center



Auschwitz

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In the summer of 1941, Hitler ordered a halt to the six Operation T4 sites and, in turn, allowed it to spread across all of Germany to be enforced by local authorities. At the same time, Hitler also passed Forced Sterilization Laws. This caused three ill repercussions that started the downward spiral. First, it required all doctors, dentists, nurses, and midwives to report to the local authorities any man, woman, or child falling on the long list of hereditarily undesirables. Second, all directors of hospitals, mental institutions, and workhouses also had to make the same reports. And, finally, worst of all, anyone could denounce another citizen, neighbor or even family member. In this third case, there were "Hereditary Health Courts" set up to hold (questionable) hearings for this last group.

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## "HEREDITARY HEALTH COURTS"

Wie stehen nicht allein



"We are not alone"

- The American historian and journalist Lothrop Stoddard visited the Health Courts in 1939 and reported that the Nazi's were "weeding out the worst strains in the Germanic stock in a scientific and truly humanitarian way".

Between 1939 and 1941, with the growing number of hereditary euthanasia cases there is a small but growing number of doctors starting to become inured to killing. Let us keep this in mind for Part III of this article. Let us also think about how much pride the medical community in Germany is now taking in their new technology and efficacy in cleaning up the German race, is this hardening their hearts?

*Beverly is originally from NY and has lived in NC for almost 34 years. A former certified therapeutic recreation therapist and a developmental therapist, Beverly is now a bioethicist, the ritual chair for the Southern Seaboard region of Hadassah, co-chair of Iredell Clergy for Healing and Justice, lay clergy, and president of Congregation Emanuel (the 2nd oldest synagogue) of Statesville. Beverly has three married children, two grandsons and two dogs, all of whom she loves dearly.*



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# In Memory of Rosemary Horowitz

from The Center for Judaic, Holocaust, and Peace Studies at  
Appalachian State University"

With the greatest sorrow, the Center for Judaic, Holocaust and Peace Studies announces the passing of its former director Dr. Rosemary Horowitz z"l. (*The z"l is a Jewish honorific for the dead. It means "may their name be for a blessing."*) A member of Appalachian State's faculty for more than a quarter century, Dr. Horowitz was highly-committed Holocaust educator and English professor – greatly admired by her students and colleagues alike – an accomplished scholar, patron of the arts, and a fierce opponent of antisemitism and any form of hostility against Israel. Dr. Horowitz dedicated her first major work, her 1995 study of Yisker Bikher, "to the six million"—a dedication that powerfully captured one of the central commitments of her life and career.



Dr. Horowitz was born to Holocaust survivors and spent the first decades of her life mainly in the Northeastern United States. She earned a BA in English and Education from Brooklyn College in the mid-1970s and subsequently worked as a writer, editor, and trainer and board member for several organizations. She returned to school and was bestowed a Doctor of Education degree from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst in 1995. Her remarkable thesis, which she wrote under the direction of renowned Teaching and Learning Professor David Bloome, examined the "Literacy and Cultural Transmission in the Reading, Writing, and Rewriting of Yisker Bikher." In the course of her career, Dr. Horowitz became one of the foremost experts on Yisker Bikher, speaking and publishing widely on the topic.

Dr. Horowitz joined the faculty at Appalachian State University in 1995. From the beginning, she engaged in and promoted Holocaust studies and education at her chosen academic home. In 1998, she was part of organizing one of Appalachian's most memorable convocations that featured Elie Wiesel, a prominent Nobel Peace Prize recipient, Humanities professor, and Holocaust survivor, as the main speaker. Since its inception in 2002, Dr. Horowitz had been active in Appalachian's Center for Judaic, Holocaust, and Peace Studies. In 2006, she became the Center's co-director, a position she held until 2013. Over the years, Dr. Horowitz made immeasurable contributions and helped build the Center. Her critically important work reached from grant writing—securing, among others, the support of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany—to co-leading and expanding the acclaimed annual Martin and Doris Rosen Summer Symposium on Remembering the Holocaust to introducing and committing countless students, faculty, and community members to the work of the Center. In recognition of this work, she was named the interim Leon Levine Distinguished Professor of Judaic, Holocaust, and Peace Studies in 2012—the first scholar to hold the newly-established position. She helped to recruit both Dr. Simon Sibelman, who led the Center from 2013 until 2015 and Dr. Thomas Pegelow Kaplan, the current Center director. Her involvement never wavered. She served on every Center board and committee until shortly before her passing.

A devoted teacher, Dr. Horowitz was held in the highest esteem by her students at Appalachian State. In acknowledgment of her love and patronage of the arts, two former students recently named an



innovative new art vending machine at Boone's popular Espresso News coffee shop "Rosemary." Over the years, she served as the academic advisor to several student groups, including AEPi, Appalachian's first Jewish fraternity. Asked to help, she never hesitated and raised, among others, thousands of dollars in grants for Appalachian's Hillel and AEPi chapters, including their "Two Days Against Hate" events in 2019 that countered the rising antisemitism and anti-Israel sentiments throughout the United States—two struggles Prof. Horowitz remained committed to throughout her life.

All the while, Dr. Horowitz's numerous contributions and activities were never limited to the Appalachian State campus. To name but a few, she worked with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., and was a long-time supporter of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in New York City. In 2015, she endowed The Horowitz Family Summer Internship at YIVO, which continues to enable young scholars to work at this leading academic center for East European and Russian Jewish Studies. For several years, Dr. Horowitz also served on the NC Council on the Holocaust in Raleigh, NC. She was one of the pillars of the Jewish Community in Boone, playing a key role on the board and in the Sisterhood of the local Temple of the High Country and working with the Havurah for many years.

All along, Dr. Horowitz remained a devoted researcher and scholar. In addition to her revised dissertation, she published the edited collection *Elie Wiesel and the Art of Storytelling* (McFarland Press, 2006), which explored Wiesel's roots in Jewish storytelling traditions along with the impact of religious, folk and secular sources, his Yiddish background and Holocaust experience. In 2011, she edited *Memorial Books of Eastern European Jewry: Essays on the History and Meanings of Yizker Volumes* (McFarland Press, 2011), returning to her key field of research, in which she continued to publish numerous important articles and chapters, including "Reading and Writing during the Holocaust as Described in Yizker Books" in Jonathan Rose's collection *The Holocaust and the Book*, which appeared in several languages. In 2015, Dr. Horowitz, who was also a long-time affiliated faculty member of Appalachian's Gender, Women's and Sexuality Studies Program, published what was to be her final edited collection entitled *Women Writers of Yiddish Literature* (McFarland Press), which Choice "highly recommended." Dr. Horowitz had just signed another book contract and was engaged in various projects, research and writing until the end, ranging from a study of Jewishness in the works of the French filmmaker Jean Pierre Melville to an analysis of gender in Uri Orlev's and Kathy Kacer's literature about the Holocaust for children, and an essay about incorporating yizker books in the classroom.

Dr. Horowitz was a regular speaker and contributor at the key scholarly conferences in the field from the annual meetings of the Association for Jewish Studies to the Holocaust Educational Foundation's Lessons and Legacies conferences. She also frequently traveled, worked and spoke abroad, especially in Israel, for instance at the Future of Holocaust Testimonies conferences in Akko. In 2019, she was part of the org committee of Future of Holocaust Testimonies V, which the Center under its current director co-organized.

Rennie Brantz, the mayor of Boone and her fellow former co-director at the Center, recalled how "instrumental Rosemary was. . . in the creation and development of Appalachian's Center for Judaic, Holocaust, and Peace Studies. Her scholarship, commitment, and academic leadership shaped the character and quality of the Center. She will always be an important part of our Center community." The words of Appalachian State Prof. emerita Zohara Boyd, a Holocaust child survivor and another influential former Center director who worked closely with her, offer a beautifully fitting summary, "Rosemary was a brilliant and dedicated scholar, wonderful friend, person of good humor, kindness, and no pretensions. Appalachian is poorer for her loss, and her friends are bereft." The sense of loss of course extends far, far beyond the NC mountains.



The Center for Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Education of North Carolina (the Center) was formed in 2010 by two daughters of Holocaust survivors. Deborah Long and Sharon Halperin were motivated to locate Holocaust survivors and World War II liberators living in their communities to provide eyewitness testimonies to students and educators.

Knowing they were in a race against time, they worked quickly to find survivors and liberators. An article in the August 25, 2010 Chapel Hill News provided the publicity they needed to meet a number of survivors and liberators in their communities. At an initial meeting in late 2010, eight survivors and one liberator came together to discuss the formation of a Holocaust speakers bureau.

Realizing most of these individuals were not seasoned public speakers Deborah, Sharon and a group of committed 2Gs (children of survivors) worked with them to practice their talks and helped them prepare PowerPoint presentations incorporating personal photographs, maps and documents.

In April 2011, they began to see the fruits of their labor. Not only were survivors and liberators invited to speak in schools and organizations, record crowds were also attending programs. A standing-room only gathering of 230 community members, four mayors, and one state representative came to an event at the Varsity Theatre in downtown Chapel Hill to honor local survivors and liberators.

Over the ensuing years it became clear that our aging survivors needed assistance delivering their stories. Repeated speaking engagements were taking a physical and mental toll. The Center hired professional filmmakers and produced documentary shorts (less than 30 minutes) to capture the stories of the survivors while facilitating teachers who have a limited amount of time to teach the Holocaust. Working with the staff at Carolina K-12 (<https://humanities.unc.edu/ck12/>) lesson plans were developed to complement the films. The lesson plans meet NC essential standards and contain classroom activities, PowerPoint presentations and more. The films and lesson plans can be found on the Center's website ([www.holocaustspeakersbureau.org](http://www.holocaustspeakersbureau.org)).

In addition to arranging speaking opportunities for survivors and their descendants, the Center organizes community events. Theatrical performances, films, panel discussions and an annual Holocaust remembrance program are some of the activities sponsored by the Center. All events are free and open to the public.

The Center is currently working on expanding its website resources related to other genocides and refugees. Please explore the website often to learn about seminars, workshops, volunteer opportunities and programs. Check out our Classroom Resources tab which includes material on topics like resistance, heroes and Kristallnacht.

As students return to school, remember that our speakers look forward to spending time in your classrooms when everyone is vaccinated. Until then, we will continue to provide talks on Zoom. In addition to classroom talks, speakers are also happy to participate in one-on-one or small group interviews with students. There is never a charge for our speakers. Invite one of our speakers to your classroom and prepare for a life changing experience!

Please contact Sharon Halperin, Director of the Center, with questions about inviting a speaker or navigating our resources at [sharonhalperin88@gmail.com](mailto:sharonhalperin88@gmail.com).



The Mark Schonwetter Holocaust Education Foundation (MSHEF) mission is to expand and support Holocaust Education for students by providing the funds necessary for educators to teach about the lessons learned from the past and how they relate to today. The foundation was founded in 2019 by Mark Schonwetter and his two daughters, Ann Arnold and Isabella Fiske. Over the last few years, Mark and his daughters Ann and Isabella have been sharing his story of survival with adults of all ages as well as students all over the Northeast. In 2016, Ann put her father's story in writing and published her first book, *Together: A Journey for Survival*. Through Ann & Isabella's travels and speaking engagements they discovered one of the biggest obstacles that schools face with Holocaust Education is budget restraints. Their vision is to inspire students to create a world where all people are treated equally and with kindness and respect. Mark still speaks regularly to students throughout the country virtually. To learn more about how to schedule Mark to speak to your class email [mshefoundation@gmail.com](mailto:mshefoundation@gmail.com).

The foundation awards grants to schools (maximum amount \$1,000 per grant). Their next grant cycle opens in August and closes at the beginning of October. Michael Abramson from the NC Council on the Holocaust had this to say about the grant program "Thanks to the Mark Schonwetter Holocaust Education Foundation... books were sent to Yancey County North Carolina. Yancey County, NC, is quite poor and rural. The 88 Club, a notorious Nazi Youth group, actively recruits members from Yancey County. Two classes in the middle school can simultaneously read the book! Your foundation is pushing back against pro-Nazi youth groups and is reaching into Yancey County, NC!!!!"

The foundation is also launching a webinar series. These informational webinars are collaborations between the MSHEF and a guest organization. Teachers will have the opportunity to learn about programs available to them and how they can afford to bring them into their classroom. The first webinar is September 22nd. Sign up [here](#). To learn about other resources, visit [www.mshefoundation.org/resources](http://www.mshefoundation.org/resources).

Additionally, in the month of November, they will be hosting the Journey For The Living Challenge. Walk (run or ride) 15 miles in the month of November and raise money and awareness for Holocaust Education. Mark Schonwetter, along with his mother and younger sister walked 15 miles to escape their hometown in Poland to go to a ghetto where they thought they would be safe. This is an excellent opportunity for schools to create teams with their students and build awareness while promoting fitness. Registration is free and opens September 1.

To learn more about the foundation visit [www.mshefoundation.org](http://www.mshefoundation.org) and watch our About Us on YouTube.



Left to Right: Ann Arnold,  
Mark Schonwetter, Isabella Fiske,  
& Luba Schonwetter

# Regional Directors and Program Planning Committee Mentees

## Region 1: Northeast

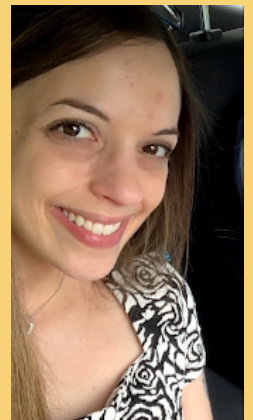


**Lauren Piner, Regional Director:** My name is Lauren Piner, and I am the Director for Northeast Region 1. I am a member of the North Carolina Council on the Holocaust and recently finished my 10th year teaching World History, and Holocaust and Genocide Studies at South Central High School in Pitt County. I grew up in New Bern and obtained my BA in History and MAT in History Education from East Carolina University. Beyond my work with the NC Holocaust Council, I am passionate about bringing the world to my students through my work as a US Department of State Teachers for Global Classroom Fellow and traveling as often as I can!

My email is as follows if you need to get in contact with me. Thank you!  
pinerl@pitt.k12.nc.us

**Melanie Diorio, Program Planning Committee (Mentee):** My name is Melanie Diorio, and I am a high school English teacher in the Wake County Public School System. I have been a teacher for ten years, and I am looking forward to continuing to work with the NC Council on the Holocaust. In 2019, I attended the Belfer National Conference for Holocaust Educators in-person in Washington, D.C., and in the summer of 2021, I attended Belfer II virtually for Belfer alumni. Currently while teaching full-time, I am working toward a Master's in Arts degree in Holocaust and Genocide Studies.

My email is as follows if you need to get in contact with me. Thank you! mdiorio@wcpss.net



## County Coordinators for Region 1

(Alphabetical by county)

### Beaufort Co

Monica Burns  
mburns@beaufort.k12.nc.us

### Currituck Co

Valerie A. Person  
vperson@currituck.k12.nc.us

### Dare Co

Suzanne Blackstock  
blackstocksu@daretolearn.org

### Gates Co

Savannah Blystone  
blystonesw@gatescountyschools.net

### Martin Co

Krystal Most  
kmost@martin.k12.nc.us

### Pitt Co

Jennifer Boleyn  
boleynj@pitt.k12.nc.us

### Tyrell Co

William Ziegler  
wziegle@tycomail.net

### Coordinators still needed for the following counties in Region 1:

Bertie, Camden, Chowan, Halifax, Hyde, Northampton, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Washington

## Region 2: Southeast



**Lee Holder, Regional Director/ County Coordinator/USHMM MTF:** Hello all! My name is Lee Holder and I am the Director for Region Two and I am the County Coordinator for Lenoir County. I recently retired after 32 years as a LCPS classroom social studies teacher. I have the honor of being on the North Carolina Council of the Holocaust and of being a 2005 USHMM Teacher Fellow. I am very excited about working with teachers in my county and region on Holocaust Education. We have many exciting programs planned for the 2021/22 school year. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions. I can be reached at [historyhawk308@gmail.com](mailto:historyhawk308@gmail.com).

**Lindsay Jones, Program Planning Committee (Mentee)/ County Coordinator:** My name is Lindsay Jones, and I am the County Coordinator for Nash County. I also serve on the Program Planning Committee for the NC Council of the Holocaust. I have been working in education for 15 years. I am currently a media specialist and Journalism teacher with a background in the English classroom. I have attended several workshops offered by the Council and have had the opportunity to attend the Washington, D.C. bus trip in conjunction with NCCAT, the NC Council of the Holocaust, and the US Holocaust Memorial Museum. This summer I was also able to attend two sessions of the Belfer National Conference for Educators. All of these experiences have fueled my passion for teaching the Holocaust and ensuring Holocaust Education remains a central part of our schools' English and Social Studies (and beyond!) curriculum. I look forward to working with teachers in my county and region on how they can utilize the resources the NC Council of the Holocaust offers in order to enrich and enhance their units of study in Holocaust Education. You can contact me at [ltjones@ncpschools.net](mailto:ltjones@ncpschools.net).



### County Coordinators for Region 2

(Alphabetical by county)

#### **Brunswick Co**

Denise Marie Copeland  
[denisemariecopeland@gmail.com](mailto:denisemariecopeland@gmail.com)

#### **Carteret Co**

Elaine Hughes  
[elaine.hughes@carteretk12.org](mailto:elaine.hughes@carteretk12.org)

#### **Craven Co**

D. Noel McKelvey  
[darlyn.mckelvey@cravenk12.org](mailto:darlyn.mckelvey@cravenk12.org)

#### **Duplin Co**

Vivian Brown  
[vibrown@duplinschools.net](mailto:vibrown@duplinschools.net)

#### **Greene Co**

Matthew Lococo  
[matthewlococo@greene.k12.nc.us](mailto:matthewlococo@greene.k12.nc.us)

#### **Jones Co**

Thomas Kester  
[thomas.kester@jonesnc.net](mailto:thomas.kester@jonesnc.net)

#### **New Hanover Co**

Britt Rogers  
[britt.rogers@nhcs.net](mailto:britt.rogers@nhcs.net)

#### **Onslow Co**

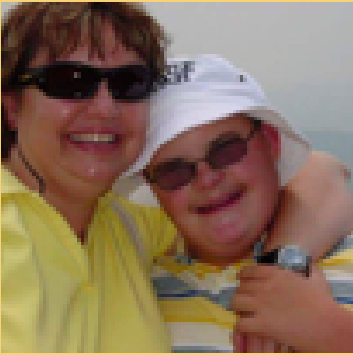
Hannah Hill  
[hannah.hill@onslow.k12.nc.us](mailto:hannah.hill@onslow.k12.nc.us)

#### **Pender Co**

Ereka Botkin  
[ereka\\_botkin@pender.k12.nc.us](mailto:ereka_botkin@pender.k12.nc.us)

**Coordinators still needed for the following counties in Region 2: Pamlico**

# Region 3: North Central



**Juanita Ray, Regional Director/USHMM MTF:** Hello. My name is Juanita Ray, and I am the Regional Director for Region 3 and also serve as the Co-Director for Teacher Workshops for western NC. I am a retired NC public school educator. I retired after 32 years working in Randolph County Schools. I am a member of the NC Council on the Holocaust and a 2012 USHMM Museum Teacher Fellow. I also work as an adjunct instructor of Speech and Theatre at Greensboro College. I am looking forward to all that the Council has planned for this year. If you need to reach me, my email is holocaustncwest@gmail.com.

**Jessie Odom, Program Planning Committee (Mentee):** Hi, Everyone! My name is Jessica Odom, and I am a Mentee on the Program Planning Committee for Region Three, working with Juanita Ray. I have been an English teacher in public schools in Wake and Durham counties for a dozen years. I currently teach AP English: Literature, ESL English IV, and Honors English II. I grew and developed in my own learning in K-12 public school classrooms in Pitt County, and continued studying and learning at NC State. I'm excited to be working with educators in my region on Holocaust Education to engage the curious minds of North Carolina's students. There are fantastic programs already planned and being developed for the 2021-22 school year. Please reach out! You can always contact me at Jessica.Odom@dpsnc.net.



## County Coordinators for Region 3

(Alphabetical by county)

### Chatham Co

Michael Charles  
mcharles@chatham.k12.nc.us

### Durham Co

Corey Barringer  
corey\_barringer@dpsnc.org

### Edgecombe Co

Alyssa Stafford  
astafford@ecps.us

### Franklin Co

Myra Bridgers  
myrabridgers@fcschools.net

### Harnett Co

Natalie Krouskop  
nkrouskop@narnett.k12.nc.us

### Johnston Co

Tyler Daughtry  
tylerdaughtry@johnson.k12.nc.us

### Lee Co

Marty Jeansonne  
mjeansonne.elms@lee.k12.nc.us

### Orange Co

Elen Wilkinson  
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### Person Co

Allison Dacus  
dacusa@person.k12.nc.us

### Vance Co

Tim Hall  
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### Wake Co (1/2)

Bettina Pope (USHMM MTF)  
bpope@wcpss.net

### Wake Co (2/2)

Stephanie Walker  
stwalker@wcpss.net

### Wilson Co

David Pittman  
david.pittman@wilsonschoolsnc.net

**Coordinators still needed for the following counties in  
Region 3: Granville, Warren**

## Region 4: Sandhills



**Karen Klaich, Regional Director/USHMM MTF:** Greetings! My name is Karen Klaich, and I am Co-Director for the Holocaust Council's Teacher Workshop Program and the Chair of the Program Planning Committee. I currently serve as Regional Director for the Sandhills district. I have served on the NC Council on the Holocaust since 2009. I taught middle and high school English, social studies, and foreign language in Pitt County, and in 2019, I retired after thirty-five years in the classroom. I am a Museum Teacher Fellow (MTF-2010) with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and I currently contract with the museum to serve as a mentor to new museum MTFs. I also contract with the museum as an MTF serving with the USHMM's CHEC (Conference of Holocaust Education Centers) program. I planned and coordinated the council's three bus trips for teachers to Washington, DC and the USHMM as well as having planned two bus trips sponsored by NCCAT. I have also trained and worked with other Holocaust groups at NCCAT and with TOLI, and various other groups. We are excited about continuing to build our network of Holocaust educators within NC. We look forward to meeting and working with all of you. Please feel free to drop me a line anytime at [holocaustnceast@gmail.com](mailto:holocaustnceast@gmail.com).

### County Coordinators for Region 4

(Alphabetical by county)

#### **Bladen Co**

Jessica Braxton  
[jnbraxton@bladen.k12.nc.us](mailto:jnbraxton@bladen.k12.nc.us)

#### **Cumberland Co**

Tasha Drain  
[tashadrain@ccs.k12.nc.us](mailto:tashadrain@ccs.k12.nc.us)

#### **Moore Co**

Christina Speiser  
[cspeiser@ncmcs.org](mailto:cspeiser@ncmcs.org)

#### **Richmond Co**

Hans Travis  
[trotsky88@gmail.com](mailto:trotsky88@gmail.com)

#### **Robeson Co**

Trella Williams  
[trellawilliams@robeson.k12.nc.us](mailto:trellawilliams@robeson.k12.nc.us)

#### **Sampson Co**

Cori Boes  
[cboes@sampson.k12.nc.us](mailto:cboes@sampson.k12.nc.us)

**Coordinators still needed for the following counties in  
Region 4: Columbus, Hoke, Montgomery, Scotland**

# Region 5: Piedmont-Triad



**Laurie Schaefer, Regional Director/USHMM MTF:** Hello! My name is Laurie Schaefer, and I am the Regional Director for District 5 and a member of the NC Council on the Holocaust. I have been teaching sophomore English at Mount Tabor High School in Winston-Salem, NC, for 25 years. I am the English Department chair, as well as the school's webmaster and debate team coach. I have trained at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum at the Belfer conference in 1996 and the Museum Teacher Fellows Conference in 2006, and I now contract with the Museum to help run both the Belfer and Museum Teacher Fellow programs. I have led teacher and student tours in Europe to Holocaust sites, am involved with NCCAT's Holocaust Educator program, present at multiple conferences, and have written multiple curriculum pieces for the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, specializing in Nazi propaganda. I have also participated in programs through Discovery and iWitness through the Shoah Foundation and

was one of twenty-five teachers in the world who were chosen to be part of the 70th Anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz program in Poland. I have also consulted with the Museum of the History of the Polish Jews in Warsaw, Poland on their curriculum and programs and has worked with teachers in Poland on Holocaust lessons. I am also the author of one book about teaching entitled No More Free Days. I look forward to working with all of you. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you need anything. My email is [lschaefer@wsfcs.k12.nc.us](mailto:lschaefer@wsfcs.k12.nc.us).

**Liz Weide, Program Planning Committee (Mentee):** Hello! My name is Elizabeth (Liz) Weide, and I am the new Program Planning Committee mentee under Laurie Schaefer for Forsyth County. I have been teaching high school social studies for 20+ years in NY and NC, covering most of the required 9-12 courses, but for the past seven years, I have focused on American History. I am very excited about working with teachers in my county and region on Holocaust Education. Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions. I can be contacted at [meweide@wsfcs.k12.nc.us](mailto:meweide@wsfcs.k12.nc.us).



## County Coordinators for Region 5

(Alphabetical by county)

### Alamance Co

Karen Clements  
[karen\\_clements@abss.k12.nc.us](mailto:karen_clements@abss.k12.nc.us)

### Davidson Co

Wendy Curty  
[wendycurty@davidson.k12.nc.us](mailto:wendycurty@davidson.k12.nc.us)

### Davie Co

Erica Spry  
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### Forsyth Co

Hunter Thomas  
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### Guilford Co (1/2)

Ana Matore-Corbett  
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### Guilford Co (2/2)

Julie Skaggs  
[skaggsj@gcsnc.com](mailto:skaggsj@gcsnc.com)

### Hertford Co

John Kilsheimer  
[jkilsheimer@hertford.k12.nc.us](mailto:jkilsheimer@hertford.k12.nc.us)

### Randolph Co

Amy Todd  
[atodd@randolph.k12.nc.us](mailto:atodd@randolph.k12.nc.us)

### Rockingham Co

Valencia Abbott  
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### Stokes Co

Casey Voss  
[casey.voss@stokes.k12.nc.us](mailto:casey.voss@stokes.k12.nc.us)

### Surry Co

Stacey Libbert  
[libberts@surry.k12.nc.us](mailto:libberts@surry.k12.nc.us)

### Yadkin Co

Monica Byrd  
[monica.byrd@yadkin.k12.nc.us](mailto:monica.byrd@yadkin.k12.nc.us)

**Coordinators still needed for the following county in  
Region 5: Caswell**

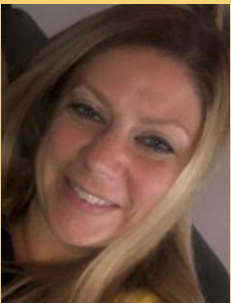
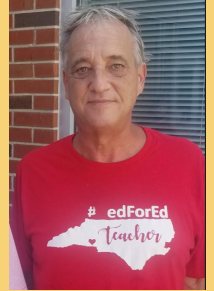


# Region 6: Southwest



**Cheryl Lange, Regional Director:** My name is Cheryl Lange, and I am the Director for Region Six as well as the council's Exhibit Coordinator for the Charlotte Metro area. This is my 22nd year in school, a former English teacher (Cabarrus County) turned Media Coordinator (Rowan-Salisbury). I have received training through the Belfer Conferences (USHMM) and the Charlotte and Jacques Wolff Conference (ADL), as well as other regional conferences and seminars. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions. I can be reached at [cheryl\\_lange136@hotmail.com](mailto:cheryl_lange136@hotmail.com).

**David Noblitt, Program Planning Committee (Mentee)/County Coordinator:** Hi everyone! My name is David Noblitt, and I am serving on the Program Planning Committee as a mentee as well as being the county coordinator for Gaston County. I have taught at Hunter Huss High School for 19 years as a social studies teacher and have taught the elective I created, "Honors History of the Holocaust" for the last six years. I completed the United States Memorial Holocaust Museum Belfer program in 2021. I am excited about working with teachers on Holocaust education in the many exciting programs the North Carolina Council on the Holocaust has planned. Feel free to contact me anytime at [dbnoblitt@gaston.k12.nc.us](mailto:dbnoblitt@gaston.k12.nc.us)



**Kinsi King, Program Planning Committee (Mentee)/County Coordinator (USHMM MTF):** Greetings all! My name is Kinsi King, and this year I am a Program Planning Mentee and County Coordinator for Iredell County. I have been teaching high school English for 14 years. I continue to immerse myself in as much learning and developing as I can in both English and Holocaust education. I have had the great privilege of being a USHMM Teacher Fellow in 2018-2019. I am extremely honored to have the chance to be a part of this important work this year. If there is anything I can do to be of help, please do not hesitate to let me know; working with other teachers and working on lesson planning is such a passion of mine. I can be reached at [carpenterkinsi@yahoo.com](mailto:carpenterkinsi@yahoo.com).

## County Coordinators for Region 6

(Alphabetical by county)

### **Anson Co**

Rhonda Benton  
[benton.rhonda@anson.k12.nc.us](mailto:benton.rhonda@anson.k12.nc.us)

### **Cabarrus Co**

Nadine Dunn  
[nadine.dunn@cabarrus.k12.nc.us](mailto:nadine.dunn@cabarrus.k12.nc.us)

### **Cleveland Co**

Erin Bryant  
[embryant@clevelandcountyschools.org](mailto:embryant@clevelandcountyschools.org)

### **Iredell Co**

Kinsi King (USHMM MTF)  
[carpenterkinsi@yahoo.com](mailto:carpenterkinsi@yahoo.com)

### **Lincoln Co**

Angela Johnson  
[ajohnson2@lincoln.k12.nc.us](mailto:ajohnson2@lincoln.k12.nc.us)

### **Mecklenburg Co (1/2)**

Katherine Rastrick  
[krastrick@yahoo.com](mailto:krastrick@yahoo.com)

### **Mecklenburg Co (2/2)**

*Waiting to receive application*

### **Rowan Co**

Rachel Moysan  
[moysanre@rss.k12.nc.us](mailto:moysanre@rss.k12.nc.us)

### **Stanly Co**

Joleen McIntyre  
[jmhill213@gmail.com](mailto:jmhill213@gmail.com)

### **Union Co**

Kristopher Head  
[kristopher.head@ucps.k12.nc.us](mailto:kristopher.head@ucps.k12.nc.us)

**No coordinators needed in Region 6**

# Region 7: Northwest



**Amy Clark, Regional Director:** Hi everyone! My name is Amy Clark, and I am the Region Seven Regional Director serving our Northwest counties. I retired from McDowell County Schools in 2018 where I worked as a secondary media coordinator, and I currently work part time at McDowell Technical Community College. Presently, I serve as the Western Region Exhibit Coordinator for the council's traveling exhibits, and I have been a council member for a number of years now. I attended the Belfer program at USHMM in 2015 and have previously taught an elective course in Holocaust and Genocide studies at McDowell High. I am honored to work with teachers in my region as we provide support and resources for Holocaust Education. Please feel free to contact me if I can be of assistance to you. My email is [uncgirl1989@gmail.com](mailto:uncgirl1989@gmail.com).

**Lori Jones, Program Planning Committee (Mentee)/County Coordinator:** Hi, my name is Lori Jones, and I am the County Coordinator for Mitchell County and a Program Planning Mentee with Amy Clark as my mentor. I've been in the middle school classroom for 23 years but have only taught the Holocaust the last 7 years. I really got interested in Holocaust education when I had the privilege of traveling to the USHMM with the NC Council on the Holocaust in July 2017. I look forward to this opportunity and working with other teachers to further Holocaust Education in my area. Please contact me at [ljones@mhslive.net](mailto:ljones@mhslive.net).



## County Coordinators for Region 7

(Alphabetical by county)

### Alexander Co

Heather Brashear  
[hbrashear@alexander.k12.nc.us](mailto:hbrashear@alexander.k12.nc.us)

### Ashe Co

Marty McKenzie  
[marty.mckenzie@ashe.k12.nc.us](mailto:marty.mckenzie@ashe.k12.nc.us)

### Burke Co

Heidi Galloway  
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### Caldwell Co

Julie Curry  
[jbcurry@caldwellschools.com](mailto:jbcurry@caldwellschools.com)

### Catawba Co

Christi Rykhus  
[crrykhus@gmail.com](mailto:crrykhus@gmail.com)

### McDowell Co

Jessica Ferguson  
[jessica.ferguson@mcdowell.k12.nc.us](mailto:jessica.ferguson@mcdowell.k12.nc.us)

### Watauga Co

Jesse Stollings (USHMM MTF)  
[jesse.stollings.whs@gmail.com](mailto:jesse.stollings.whs@gmail.com)

### Yancey Co

April Woody  
[arwoody@yanceync.net](mailto:arwoody@yanceync.net)

**Coordinators still needed for the following counties in Region 7: Alleghany, Avery, Wilkes**

# Region 8: Western



**Stacie Dotson, Regional Director:** Hey, y'all! Welcome to the 2021-22 school year. Hope y'all are off to a smooth start! My name is Stacie Dotson, and I am the Regional Director for Region 8. After 30 years in the county, I retired from teaching English at Rosman High School in Transylvania County at the end of this past school year. I am and have been involved with NCCAT'S Holocaust Education program since 2005 and have attended USHMM's Belfer Conference in-person and online. I cannot wait to see y'all continue to forge ahead with Holocaust education using the resources provided by the NC Council on the Holocaust and other professional Holocaust Education programs. Let me know if I can help out in any way or if you have any questions! You can reach me via email at [srcdotson@gmail.com](mailto:srcdotson@gmail.com). Here's to a safe, happy, and healthy school year!

**Jared Speight, Program Planning Committee (Mentee):** Hello! My name is Jared Speight, and I'm on the Program Planning Committee for Region Eight. This is my fourteenth year in the classroom (middle and high school Social Studies and English Language Arts) and first year working with the North Carolina Council on the Holocaust. I'm incredibly excited about the opportunity to help plan programs that will enrich classroom instruction on the Holocaust. If you'd like to contact me, my email is [jaredspeight@gmail.com](mailto:jaredspeight@gmail.com)



## County Coordinators for Region 8

(Alphabetical by county)

### **Buncombe Co**

Shelby Lewis  
[shelby.lewis@bcsemail.org](mailto:shelby.lewis@bcsemail.org)

### **Clay Co**

Carla Beck  
[cbeck@hayesvillehs.org](mailto:cbeck@hayesvillehs.org)

### **Haywood Co**

Andrew Burton  
[aburton@haywood.k12.nc.us](mailto:aburton@haywood.k12.nc.us)

### **Henderson Co**

Lori Howard  
[lhoward@hcpsnc.org](mailto:lhoward@hcpsnc.org)

### **Jackson Co**

Laura Allen  
[laura@jcpsmail.org](mailto:laura@jcpsmail.org)

### **Madison Co**

Julie Young  
[julieyoung@abtech.edu](mailto:julieyoung@abtech.edu)

### **Polk Co**

Eric Eaton  
[eeaton@polkschools.org](mailto:eeaton@polkschools.org)

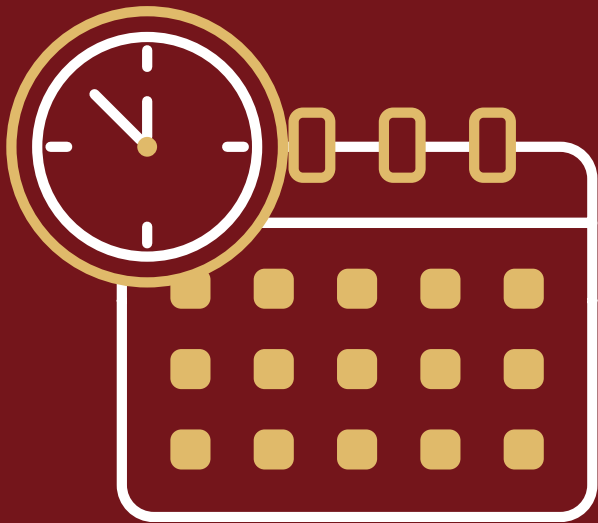
### **Rutherford Co**

Hali McDaniel  
[barnard325@gmail.com](mailto:barnard325@gmail.com)

### **Transylvania Co**

Kelly Muse  
[kmuse@tcsnc.org](mailto:kmuse@tcsnc.org)

**Coordinators still needed for the following counties in  
Region 8: Cherokee, Graham, Macon, Swain**



Please visit our [calendar](#)! We have populated it with events scheduled for September, October, November, and December of this year.

We advise everyone interested in webinars and other online and in-person events to visit the sites listed below (click for links). New opportunities are added every week, so it is important to stay current on these opportunities. *We have listed only 12 of the many state, national, and international organizations committed to education and remembrance of the Holocaust and other Genocides.*

[North Carolina Council on the Holocaust](#)

[Stan Greenspon Center](#)

[USHMM](#)

[USC Shoah Foundation](#)

[Classrooms Without Borders](#)

[Museum of Jewish Heritage](#)

[Houston Holocaust Museum](#)

[ASU Center for Judaic, Holocaust and Peace Studies](#)

[Echoes and Reflections](#)

[Facing History and Ourselves](#)

[UNCC Center for Holocaust, Genocide, & Human Rights Studies](#)

[Carolina Center for Jewish Studies](#)



## **NORTH CAROLINA COUNCIL ON THE HOLOCAUST**

**NORTH CAROLINA DEPT. OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

[www.ncpublicschools.org/holocaust-council](http://www.ncpublicschools.org/holocaust-council)



*Thank you,  
educators!*

THE MEMBERS OF THE NORTH CAROLINA COUNCIL  
ON THE HOLOCAUST NEWSLETTER WOULD LIKE TO  
THANK YOU FOR ALL THAT YOU DO TO SUPPORT  
HOLOCAUST EDUCATION IN THE STATE OF NORTH  
CAROLINA!

### **2021 Newsletter Committee Members**

**Michael Abramson**

**Susan Bach**

**Rhonda Benton**

**Saskia Lascarez Casanova**

**Kathleen Cunningham**

**Steve Goldberg**

**Lee Holder**

**Shelby Lewis**

**Beverly Maurice**

**Lynda Moss**

**Vicki Simmons**

*We would love your feedback on our newsletter!  
Please tell us how we are doing through this form.*