

Justus & Karin Rosenberg Foundation  
Summer 2016 Internship — Final Report

Rebekah Sabo  
Stockton University  
Master of Arts in Holocaust & Genocide Studies I Class 2019  
Intern I Holocaust Awareness Museum & Education Center

**Overview of Organization:**

The Holocaust Awareness Museum & Education Center, located in Northeast Philadelphia, is considered one of the oldest Holocaust museums in the country. Founded by Holocaust survivor Yaakov Riz, the museum promotes Holocaust education and related lessons about humanity, tolerance, and the consequences of hatred throughout schools in the Delaware Valley.

Its Witness to History Project allows students to hear personal testimonies given by local Holocaust survivors, who speak about their experiences during the Holocaust and the impact it had on their lives. Its Anne Frank Theater Project similarly teaches about the Nazi era and Anne Frank's personal experience in hiding with a performance by professional actors and actresses.

In addition to an impressive educational outreach program, the museum strives to incorporate resources and professional development training for educators. The museum uses its resources to help support educators, both with materials at the museum and with those available online. Although this non-profit organization is relatively small in size, the impact it creates leaves a positive impression on its community.

## **Responsibilities:**

The importance of education was greatly emphasized throughout my internship. I was consistently encouraged to explore, understand, and appreciate the museum's collection, resources, and projects made available to me. As someone who is striving to become an educator, that additional support allowed me to gain new perspectives and ideas for teaching a sensitive subject.

My responsibilities within the office changed daily depending on the needs of the museum and its staff. A couple of major events which took place over the summer included a professional development trip to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington DC and a Summer Music Festival fundraiser. I helped support staff during both of these events – both drawing in a great crowd of community members interested in supporting the museum.

My primary responsibility was as a research assistant for a second generation Holocaust survivor, Marion, who needed help researching her family history. Although both of her parents survived the Holocaust and spoke briefly to Marion about their experiences, their stories lacked many details. With the help of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum survivor resource center and the Center for Jewish History, I found documents collected by the Red Cross after the war from various displaced persons camps, tracking where her parents were during the majority of the war. Unfortunately, there is a period of two years where her parents whereabouts are still unknown. Although my internship has since ended, I am continuing to assist Marion

in additional research regarding her extended family's whereabouts during the Holocaust.

I was also responsible to research and write descriptive paragraphs for donated U.S. newspapers from 1933 through the end of World War II. These newspapers are just one of many artifacts collected and displayed by the museum. This project allowed me additional research experience while also better understanding the American perspective of the rise of Nazi regime.

Finally, the most gratifying part of my internship was working closely with several Holocaust survivors. Hearing their personal testimonies and witnessing their resilience has made a lasting impression. I was also able to connect a Holocaust survivor who I have been working with through Stockton University to the museum. He wishes to begin sharing his experience and educating people about the Holocaust.

### **Personal Reflection:**

I am fortunate and grateful to have been given the opportunity to intern at an organization that emphasizes the importance of education as a way to combat antisemitism and encourage tolerance. I have gained a tremendous amount of insight and resources which will help as I continue my studies. Conducting research over the summer has also given me motivation to begin researching my own family history. I have made connections and have had the opportunity to work with several outstanding individuals this summer, making my experience unforgettable and gratifying.

I have learned numerous things about non-profit organizations and the dedicated work they do to provide the surrounding communities with educational resources. In

particular, the Holocaust survivors I have worked with showed me the importance of personal testimonies and how they need to be preserved to continue educating students on the Holocaust decades from now.

I would like to thank the Justus and Karen Rosenberg Foundation for supporting my work and financially contributing to my internship this summer. My internship has left a lasting impression and has confirmed my decision to study the Holocaust.