

The Jewish Foundation for the Righteous

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TEACHERS FROM 5 STATES JOIN JEWISH FOUNDATION FOR THE RIGHTEOUS INTENSIVE EUROPEAN HOLOCAUST EDUCATION PROGRAM

NEW YORK – The Jewish Foundation for the Righteous (JFR) has selected 14 middle and high school teachers and Holocaust center personnel from five U.S. states to participate in its 2026 European Study Program in Poland. Through lectures and visits to actual Holocaust sites, these educators gain a more profound understanding of the complex and tragic history of the Holocaust.

The program is a high-level, intensive and immersive educational experience that includes visits to concentration camps, ghetto sites and Holocaust memorials. Noted historian Robert Jan van Pelt, one of the world's leading experts on the Holocaust, served as the accompanying scholar for the program.

The immersive program began in Warsaw, where the group toured the Jewish Historical Institute (Żydowski Instytut Historyczny, ZIH), met with Poland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs Secretary of State Dr. Władysław Teofil Bartoszewski, and visited both the Jewish and Catholic cemeteries, including the gravesite of Irena Sendler. They also visited the Footbridge of Memory memorial, the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, the Rapoport Monument and the Żegota and Jan Karski memorials. They walked through the former Warsaw Ghetto, touring Mila 18, the Umschlagplatz.

The group then traveled to Tykocin, home to one of Poland's few remaining intact shtetls, before visiting nearby Łopuchowo Forest, the site of the mass grave of Tykocin's Jewish community and continuing to Treblinka.

The trip also included visits to Chełmno nad Nerem, the Kulmhof extermination camp, Rzuchów Forest, Łódź, the Radegast Station Museum, the Marek Edelman Dialogue Center, and

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Survivor's Park, Auschwitz I and Auschwitz II-Birkenau. Additional stops included Harmęże, home to Marian Kołodziej's *Labyrinth*; Budy, the site where SS female guards massacred French Jewish women; Himmler's carp ponds; and Kraków, where the group toured the Kazimierz neighborhood, the Galicia Jewish Museum's and the Podgórze neighborhood, the site of the former ghetto and its chair memorial.

Throughout the program, participants connected and reflected on how to bring their experiences back to their students.

“As we continue to move further away from the Holocaust, it is more important to empower our educators to better teach their students about the Holocaust,” said JFR Executive Vice President Stanlee Stahl. “By visiting the places where these complex events occurred, educators are better able to connect to what they are teaching, making them more effective teachers.”

“The program is designed to help educators learn the Holocaust experientially so they can present it in a more meaningful and insightful way to their students and colleagues when they return to their schools,” she added.

The 2026 European Study Lerner Fellows include:

- Angie Thompson of Alma Bryant High School in Irvington, Alabama
- Maureen Carter - Josh, Maureen retired and is not living in Sanford, FL where she plans on volunteering with the local Holocaust center
- Mary Ellen Richichi of Independence Middle School in Jupiter, Florida
- Krystal Lamb of Dr. Joaquin Garcia High School in Lake Worth, Florida
- Charles Hagy, Jr. of The Benjamin School in North Palm Beach, Florida
- Kelly Warsaw of inSIGHT Through Education in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida
- Julie Gates of Logger's Run Middle School in Boca Raton, Florida
- Sheri Crowley of Polo Park Middle School in Wellington, Florida
- Bradd Weinberg of School District of Palm Beach County in West Palm Beach, Florida
- Micaela McNiff of School District of Palm Beach County in West Palm Beach, Florida
- Charles Dickens of The Florida Holocaust Museum in St. Petersburg, Florida
- Julie Klein of Fenwick High School in Oak Park, Illinois
- Nicole Kepner of Branchburg Central Middle School in Branchburg, New Jersey
- Stacy Steele of , Stacy was severely injured in a student fight at her and she changed schools – I emailed her for the name of her new school South Carolina

The JFR continues its work of providing monthly financial assistance to aged and needy Righteous Gentiles living in 10 countries. Since its founding, the JFR has provided more than \$46.5 million to aged and needy rescuers. Its Holocaust teacher education program has become a standard for teaching the history of the Holocaust and educating teachers and students about the significance of the Righteous as moral and ethical exemplars. For more information, visit <https://www.jfr.org/>.