



ST. LOUIS
KAPLAN FELDMAN
HOLOCAUST MUSEUM
In honor of the survivors and the memory of the victims

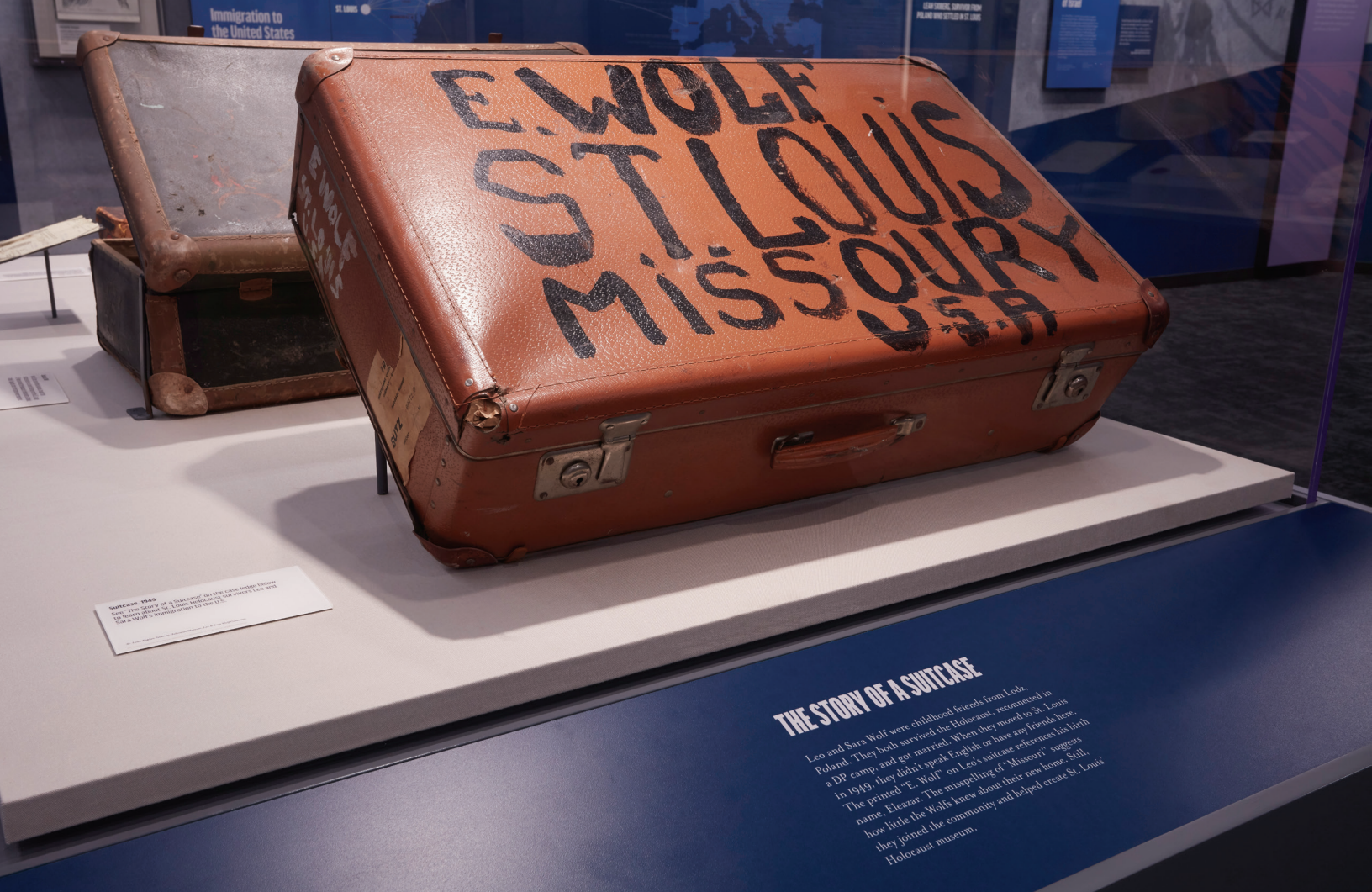
*...whoever listens to a witness,
becomes a witness.*

ELIE WIESEL, HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR

**St. Louis Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum
2022 Retrospective**

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The Museum is dedicated in honor of the survivors
and the memory of the victims.

*Keep the memory alive...
It is our responsibility to do it...*

ALFRED BURGER, SURVIVOR FROM
AUSTRIA WHO SETTLED IN ST. LOUIS

Letter to the community:



Carol Staenberg

On May 2, 2023, we commemorated the six-month milestone of our grand opening. This remarkable institution, which fills us with immense pride, was born decades ago from the passion, tireless efforts, and unwavering commitment of our local survivors and the wider community.

For over 25 years, the St. Louis Holocaust Museum and Learning Center welcomed thousands of visitors annually, ensuring that our community never forgets the solemn vow of “never again.” Through an array of public programs, guided exhibitions, and compelling survivor testimonies, the Museum has become an essential pillar in our community. We are grateful to the Jewish Federation of St. Louis for founding the Museum and nurturing it for over 25 years.

Recognizing that our mission had outgrown the physical confines of the Museum space, we embarked on a journey to expand and renovate our beloved institution several years ago. Through the remarkable success of a \$25 million capital campaign, the renamed St. Louis Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum reopened its doors on November 2, 2022, unveiling a space that exceeds expectations. As of early 2023, the Museum is now its own 501c3 nonprofit institution.

The response we have received is extraordinary, but this is not just a destination. It's a site of remembrance. Each day, we witness the profound impact it has on our visitors, inspired by the stories and courage of our survivors, who generously shared their experiences with us. Without them, this Museum would not exist. They are the invaluable teachers whose voices guide every individual who steps foot into this establishment, enabling thousands of visitors to engage with their narratives and learn from their collective history. We are especially inspired by the thousands of students, and grateful to the dedicated educators, who have visited us in our first six months.

We extend our deepest gratitude to every person who played a role in making this exceptional place a reality. It is your unwavering support, dedication, and generosity that have brought us to this momentous point.

With heartfelt appreciation,

Carol Staenberg

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Dr. Frances Levine

Interim Executive Director

St. Louis Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum Staff & Board of Directors

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Jillian Howell

Our First Six Months

Thank you to each and every person who engaged with the St. Louis Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum in our first six months.



IN THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF OPENING, WE...

Welcomed over
23,000 total visitors

Engaged with over
10,000 students
from around the region

Coordinated tours for nearly
200 school groups

Reached over
1.7 million individuals
on social media.

Recruited over
700 new members
including our
Guardians of Remembrance Society

Appeared in media outlets like...

St. Louis Post-Dispatch, KSDK,
KMOV, Fox2, Nine PBS,
St. Louis Jewish Light, KMOX, and more.

Identified over
100 new names
of survivors for the Survivors Gallery.

Our Museum's Educational Approach

By Helen Turner, Director of Education

Opened on November 2, 2022, the St. Louis Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum was driven by an essential mission, to use the history and lessons of the Holocaust to reject hatred, promote understanding, and inspire change.

How will we accomplish this?

- We envisioned a transformative educational experience that would utilize sound pedagogical approaches driven by the most current trends and developments in Holocaust education, focusing on individual choices and behaviors within the context of the Holocaust.
- By utilizing the testimonies of St. Louis Holocaust Survivors, the Museum weaves personal histories throughout the narration the Holocaust, creating a deep personalization of the numbers, dates and statistics that can often feel overwhelming in Holocaust education.
- The permanent Holocaust exhibition offers a chronological narrative of the Holocaust while also allowing visitors the opportunity to explore the complicated choices of those who perpetrated, stood by and stood up during the Holocaust.



- The Museum uses methodology of "safely in and safely out" which invites visitors to engage in hard conversations whilst also ensuring that they exit the exhibition through messages of resilience from Survivor.
- The Museum has also just opened our unique experiential education program-based Impact lab. The Lab seeks to empower visitors to explore historical moments and moments they themselves may be confronted with and encourages them to act as Active Ally's to stand up and speak out against injustice.



How We Engage with Students

By Haley Stodart, Associate Director of Education

Since the Museum's grand opening, we have welcomed thousands of students through our doors to experience the Museum. These students come from a variety of districts, ages, and backgrounds.

We've been overwhelmed by the demand for quality Holocaust education for students. Some of these students come from around three hours away, while others come from the St. Louis community.

When students visit the Museum, they have the option to engage in a variety of educational experiences. The most common experiences chosen are the guided tour and speaker engagements, but all experiences have been received positively and are continuing to grow in popularity and request.

The engagement we've had with students since opening has been incredible—we look forward to continuing to empower the next generation by sharing with them the history of the Holocaust and its important lessons.



Making the Museum Accessible

By Zach Turner, Manager of Volunteers & Visitor Services

It is the goal of the Museum to ensure that everyone can visit and learn about the Holocaust and the issues surrounding bias and discrimination that still plague our world. To do that, the Museum needs to be accessible for all people and all learning styles. While part of the equation, accessibility is not limited to those with visible disabilities, but also those with invisible disabilities such as low vision, hearing impairment, and sensory needs.

The Museum has partnered with KultureCity, a national leader in making venues accessible for those with sensory processing needs and invisible disabilities. These needs can be a result of PTSD, dementia, autism, and much more.

This means our staff and all volunteers have been trained in what it means

to be inclusive and how to handle situations involving individuals with sensory needs. We are also searchable on KultureCity's website and app as a sensory safe environment complete with social story describing what visitors should expect when visiting. We also have KultureCity Sensory Bags at our Welcome Desk available for checkout. These bags contain noise cancelling headphones, emotion cards, fidget tools, a weighted lap pad, and a lanyard with a QR code for KultureCity's app.

This partnership and future similar partnerships allow the Museum to try to live up to our ideals that this Museum is for everyone. We continue to strive for ways to make our museum more accessible to people with all different needs and different ways of learning.





A Message from the Museum Volunteers

We often are asked,

“Why volunteer at the St. Louis Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum?”

The simplest answer is: to use the lessons of the past to make the future a kinder, safer, more just world for everyone.

Through the lens of the Holocaust, volunteers educate visitors about the impact of unchecked hatred and bigotry and about the power each of us has to make a positive difference. The rise in antisemitism and violence against other groups makes that mission more important than ever.

We are fortunate to have outstanding professionals to guide us, especially Helen Turner, Haley Stodart, and Zach Turner, who train volunteers to use our expanded new Museum.

The staff's deep knowledge, passion, and energy are invaluable. But they would be the first to acknowledge that volunteers make it possible to open our doors every day.

Incredibly, dozens of people freely give their time to our cause. They include Holocaust survivors and their relatives, who bring history to life by sharing their own experiences or those of loved ones.

Some volunteers act as tour guides, others welcome guests, sell tickets, and serve as gallery attendants to answer questions.

Many look forward to the opening of our Impact Lab, a unique experience that will allow visitors the space to reflect on the intense history of the Holocaust and how its lessons apply to their lives.

Public response to our larger, updated Museum has affirmed its place as a valuable community asset. We are welcoming a larger number of visitors representing a broader range of ages and backgrounds than was the case at the Museum it replaced, which opened in 1995.

Thousands of students have already visited, or are scheduled to arrive in coming months.

And a larger cadre of volunteers is attracted to the Museum's mission to teach the causes of the Holocaust in ways that motivate guests to stand up to injustices in their own lives.

So many of those connected to the Museum find the time they spend here personally rewarding and believe they are making a positive difference. It's because they gain as much as they give that so many volunteers have spent years—in some cases decades—with the organization.

A successful Museum requires many people in a variety of capacities—donors, staff, visitors, and community supporters. Each component is vital.

But volunteers have a unique role. For many visitors, they are the face of the Museum, the people who are seen by the public and who are counted on to provide an engaging, educational, and empowering experience.

If you are interested in joining our volunteer team, we would love to welcome you.

Sincerely,

Hal Sitrin
Chair, Volunteer
Advisory Council

Nancy Keyser
Vice-Chair, Voluntary
Advisory Council

Why This Museum Matters

By Dr. Peter Hayes

Americans have learned a lot about each other in the last few years, and much of what we have learned has been alarming. We are not quite the great, harmonious melting pot that we sometimes imagine we are. We don't all share the Statue of Liberty's invitation to "give us your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free." Old prejudices die hard.

Sometimes they even kill, even here—in Pittsburgh and Poway.

They will continue to do so if Americans harken to the call for Only Feel-Good History that is making the rounds. For a history in which no one might come to feel responsible or guilty for or even uncomfortable about the deeds of their ancestors. The story of the Holocaust

is the very opposite of Feel-Good History. Teaching about it plumbs the depths of what human beings will do to each other in the name of a group's perceived needs or claims. Not just Germans. Although they instigated the Holocaust, they found many eager collaborators virtually wherever they went. What happened in Europe between 1933 and 1945, primarily to Jews, is a universal warning against self-delusion, exclusion, and dehumanization. A wise society will pay attention.

Sixty years ago, Hannah Arendt wrote that "The Holocaust was an attack on human diversity as such." She was right. In consequence, teaching about the Holocaust must be a defense of human diversity as such. Not just the diversity of different groups and cultures, though their rights to coexistence deserve defense, but also of individuals. One of the strengths of this Museum's way of performing that work lies in its foregrounding of survivors' stories in all their varied forms. This serves to remind us that history may happen to groups, but it is felt by people.

America is a special place, but what makes it special requires constant reassertion and support. Holocaust museums, especially the St. Louis Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum located in the center of the American heartland, play a vital role in highlighting that fact. By showing us how the Nazi assault on humanity gathered strength, what hatreds and lies propelled it, how we in the U.S. both failed and aided the victims, and what an awful toll the Holocaust exacted, this museum and its peers around the country help us to realize that the struggle to preserve human decency is never ending and that Change Begins With Us.

When I spoke this past January at the Museum, I was returning to a city I last visited in late 2017, when the Holocaust Museum and Learning Center was a small office down the street from the present site. The marvelous new building and the programming it will make possible are considerable achievements. Congratulations to all of you who made it happen!

Peter Hayes is a historian and author of *Why: Explaining the Holocaust*.



What is Next?

By Helen Turner, Director of Education

Where are We Now?

As the Museum settles into our new space, we seek to engage new audiences, discuss the latest in Holocaust education, and deep dive into previously hidden histories. For our Spring calendar, the Museum focused on building bridges to new communities and maintaining ties to our history as the Holocaust Museum and Learning Center.

Our March programming featured film screenings, book talks, and collaborations including topics such as:

- The Namibian genocide of 1904

- The Catholic Church's response to the Holocaust
- Contemporary Polish-Jewish Memory

With Holocaust survivors and victims as our central focus, we commemorated Yom HaShoah on April 16 with our traditional program focusing on voices of resistance, in honor of the 75th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.

The Museum could not do the work we do without our incredible partnerships.

This year we partnered with Maryville University to bring Isabell Wilkerson, author of

"Caste" to our region, and with the Holocaust Educational Foundation of Northwestern University and Washington University to host an academic conference in April, which brought historian Dr. Doris Bergen and 19 regional scholars to the Museum.

What's Next?

As we look towards the Summer and Fall of 2023 the Museum will engage with dynamic programming highlighted our latest space, The Impact Lab. The Impact Lab is an experiential space where visitors discuss bias and stereotypes, culminating in how these ideas can lead

to genocidal acts through the spiral of hate. The core piece of the Lab will empower visitors to stand up and speak out against injustice and gives them a physical space in which to practice their actions, big and small.

As part of this programming, the Museum will engage in programs discussing modern issues, such as

- The persecution of the Uyghurs in China
- LGBTQ+ rights
- Contemporary racism and bigotry

We believe that a visit to the Museum, whether for a tour or a program, is a transformative experience. One that challenges and changes visitors through our exhibitions and discussions. This is more than a museum of history, it is a museum of active change, and that change begins with us.



Empowering the Next Generation

The Capital Campaign for the St. Louis Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum

\$1,000,000+

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St. Louis Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum
36 Millstone Campus Drive
St. Louis, MO 63146

314-442-3711
STLHolocaustMuseum.org

Hours:
Wednesday–Sunday,
10 am–4:30 pm

Summer hours:
Wednesday–Monday,
10 am–4:30 pm.

