



# YEAR IN REVIEW



**Westchester Jewish Council**

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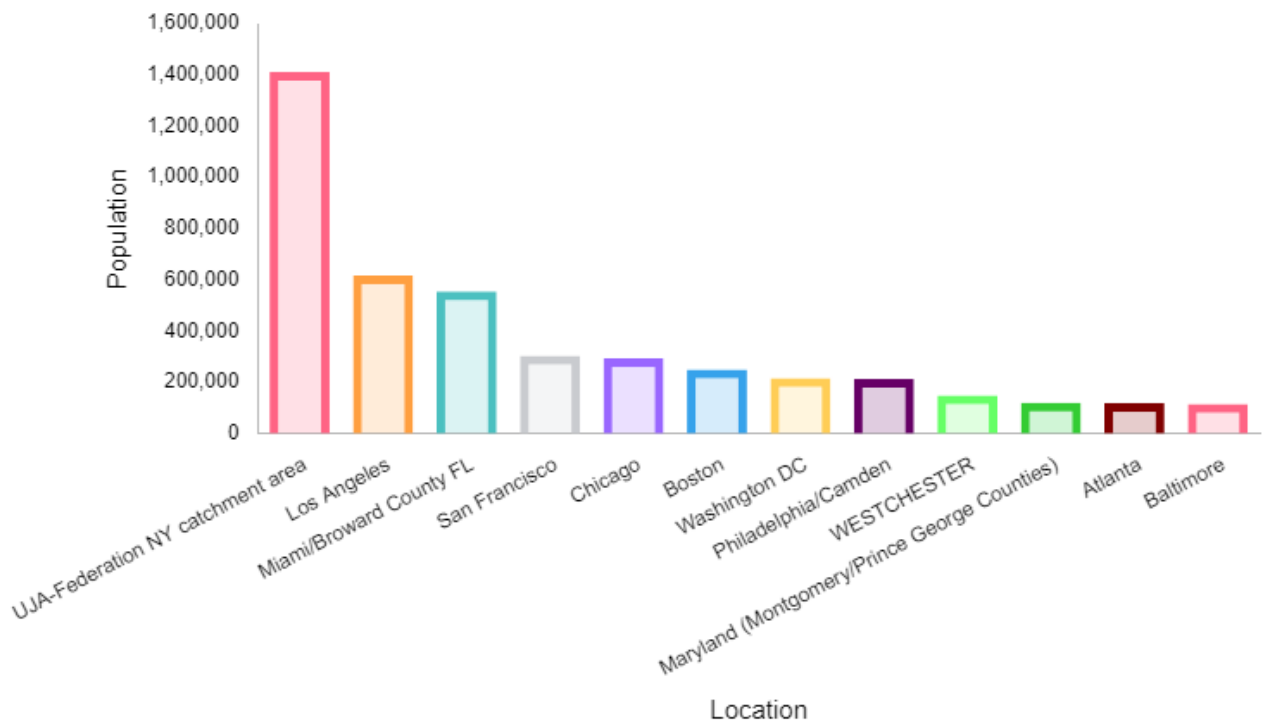
A Council overview from July 2022 through June 2023

**The Westchester Jewish Council (founded in 1975 as the Westchester Jewish Conference, an independent 501c3 not-for-profit organization) is a central convening, communicating, coordinating, and connecting body for the county's Jewish community, representing over 130 Jewish organizations and serving 160,000 Jews.**

**The Westchester Jewish Council connects Jews and Jewish organizations to:**

- each other**
- Israel**
- our elected and public officials**
- other ethnic and faith-based groups**

**Estimated Jewish Populations (by city and environs)**



## BIENNIAL AFTERNOON OF JEWISH MUSIC & JOY

Westchester Reform Temple was transformed into a vibrant hub of music and unity, with over 400 registrants joining us for this incredible community musical experience. Kol Hazzanim/The Cantors of Westchester's mesmerizing performance turned this event into an afternoon filled with pure joy and was a testament to the power of music to unite and uplift.



## COMMUNITY CONNECTION, CONNECT-ORY AND DIGITAL MEDIA

Our weekly e-newsletter, Community Connection, was distributed to over 8,000 subscribers across Westchester and beyond. Each issue focused on community events, relevant news stories, and links to various resources in the community. The Council's website provided a constant source of community news and resources and housed the Jewish Community Calendar which listed a multitude of events hosted by our member organizations. In addition, the Council Facebook group and page ([www.facebook.com/wjcouncil](http://www.facebook.com/wjcouncil)), and Council Instagram (@wjcouncil) reached over 3,000 individuals.

## COMBATING ANTISEMITISM AND HATE

The annual Westchester Thanksgiving Diversity Breakfast brought together more than 500 people from various faith and ethnic communities for a morning of community building and unity. Led by AJC Westchester/Fairfield and a coalition of organizations, the event was a true celebration of diversity.

We held our 2nd annual "Gather Against Hate" event with our partners in Westchester County government. The event was held indoors due to inclement weather, and with so many of our elected officials and clergy in attendance, it was a great success.





## CONNECTING TO ISRAEL

The Council is proud to reaffirm its commitment to deepen and strengthen the long-standing relationship between Westchester and the State of Israel.

We continued to work with our Westchester community Shlichah (emissary), Shachar, to create Israel programming including our Israel Connection Series and the Israel Roundtable, and to participate in the Celebrate Israel Parade. These events brought together community members who are Israel supporters and those who are interested in building relationships, discussing programming and any other matters related to Israel. We also celebrated Israel's 75th Anniversary with the Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI) throughout the spring with festivals in both northern and southern Westchester. We attended the annual JAFI Shlichim conference, where Shachar showcased her remarkable work. The conference was a gathering of passionate shlichim, dedicated support members, and enthusiastic volunteers from across the country.



## GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

With decades of experience, the Council continues to be a trusted liaison to Westchester's elected and public officials. Working with our officials, we attended and hosted various events, including Governor Hochul's press conference on housing and economic development, held at The Elisabeth Haub School of Law at Pace University, and the UJA & Westchester Jewish Council Annual Westchester Legislative Breakfast which boasted an impressive lineup of guest speakers including Congressman Michael Lawler and County Executive George Latimer.



## INTERFAITH AND INTERGROUP RELATIONS

This initiative creates and strengthens understanding, respect and unity among different faith and ethnic communities.

Westchester clergy members from various faiths embarked on a Multi-faith Civil Rights Journey to Alabama.

This initiative which was funded and coordinated by the UJA & Westchester Jewish Council, provided an opportunity for the clergy to deepen their understanding of civil rights and social justice. We also hosted a multi-faith clergy event featuring the renowned Dr. George Bonanno in which he explored the powerful ways to help process grief and discover the resilience to move forward after experiencing loss.



## JEWISH LITERACY INITIATIVE

The Westchester Jewish Literacy Initiative continued with programming throughout the year. We held free community-wide lectures with esteemed guests Yossi Klein Halevi, who discussed his book The Dreamers, and Professor Eliyahu Stern who spoke about "The Enlightenment". We also had the privilege of hosting Professor Steven Fine, who presented on Yochi Brandes' The Orchard. The event, which drew nearly 200 attendees, was a resounding success.

## JULIAN Y. BERNSTEIN DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARDS (DSA)

In May, the Westchester Jewish Council honored 20 deserving volunteer leaders from our member organizations with the Annual Julian Y. Bernstein Distinguished Service Award (DSA). Julian Y. Bernstein was a former Council board member who was a visionary communal leader. Julian believed that doing tzedakah was just as important as giving tzedakah. In tribute to his passion and devotion to the Jewish community, we honored those who follow in his footsteps. Member organizations were invited to nominate a volunteer from within their organization whose dedication and leadership have enriched our Westchester community.



## NEW MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

We welcomed several new member organizations last year, including American Friends of ALYN, Club Z, Congregation Sons of Adath Israel of Riverdale, Jewish Agency for Israel and Westchester Torah Academy.



## ROUNDTABLES



The Council continued to promote community building and knowledge sharing through its signature Roundtables initiative. Over 20 Roundtables were organized this year for a diverse range of leaders including security volunteers, synagogue lay and professional leadership, clergy, marketing professionals and volunteers, Israel activists, interfaith/intergroup volunteers, Mosaic of Westchester (a group that enriches our Jewish community through LGBTQ+ inclusion), youth professionals and volunteers and more. These Roundtables provided an excellent platform for lay and professional leaders to come together, build bonds and share best practices.

## SECURITY

The Council, as a Westchester Jewish community first responder, facilitated communications and the sharing of best practices of security among member organizations and government offices such as FBI and the Department of Homeland Security. Our “Emergency Communication System” allowed us to instantly communicate vital information to hundreds of trained Westchester Jewish professionals and volunteer leaders from our member organizations. We continued to partner with William Hayes from the Community Security Initiative (CSI) as well as partner with Community Security Service (CSS) and Security Community Network (SCN).



## SECURITY (CONT.)

The Council's annual "High Holiday Security Briefing" was held in September. This program was especially beneficial to our member synagogues. We were honored to have so many speakers and guests who attended and participated, including Jeffrey Kapelus, Security Chair, Westchester Jewish Council,



County Executive George Latimer, Westchester County Executive; Hon. Mimi Rocah, Westchester County District Attorney; Chief Dan McKenna, Chief Criminal Investigator at Westchester County District Attorney's Office; Chief Kevin Sylvester, Chief of Ossining Police Department and President of the Police Chiefs Association; Mitch Silber, Executive Director, CSI; Crystal Collins, Director of Policy & Programs Faith Based Initiatives and Urban Affairs for the Westchester County Executive; and Tejash V. Sanchala, Executive Director of the Westchester County Human Rights Commission.

## YOM HASHOAH/HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE

This countywide remembrance program, presented in partnership with the Holocaust and Human Rights Education Center, was held in April 2023 and included our annual rescued Torah procession. With hundreds of people in attendance, it was an honor to have esteemed guests, including Rev. Doris Dalton, Chair of the Westchester County Human Rights Commission, Rabbi Dr. Aliza Erber, County Executive George Latimer, representatives from the Westchester Board of Rabbis and Kol Hazzanim, and the Somers Holocaust Commission student winners.



## WESTCHESTER LEADERSHIP RECEPTION

We held our Sixth Annual Leadership Reception in September 2022. This event provided an opportunity for Council member organization leaders and elected officials to gather with each other and share plans and ideas for the coming year. Over 130 leaders from our member organizations gathered in the JCC Mid-Westchester's outdoor pavilion to hear inspiring words from dignitaries from the county and Israel including County Executive George Latimer, NY State Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Israel Deputy Consul General Israel Nitzan and so many more.



## HISTORY AND FUNDING

The Westchester Jewish Council, founded in 1975, has prospered under the visionary leadership of our past Presidents (in order of service): Rabbi Amiel Wohl (z"l), Clarice Pressner (z"l), Hon. Samuel G. Fredman (z"l), Hon. Sam Eisenberg (z"l), Samuel Stein (z"l), Saul Singer (z"l), Donald Landis (z"l), Lester J. Millman, Irwin S. Davison, Debra Abrahams Weiner, Ronald E. Burton, Paul Warhit, Lisa T. Roberts and currently William H. Schrag.

Funding for the Westchester Jewish Council comes from a variety of sources. Sixty percent (60%) of our revenue comes from donations from individuals and foundations. Most of these donations are made in support of our sole fundraising event –our Gala- held each winter. Twenty percent (20%) comes from a generous grant from UJA. Fifteen percent (15%) comes from membership dues from our 130 member/partner organizations and five percent (5%) comes from programming. We thank you for your financial support which is so important to our mission. As an IRS-recognized 501c3 organization, all donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.



## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



**William H. Schrag**  
President



**Betsy Bernstein**  
Vice President



**David Eppinger**  
Vice President



**Marc Klee**  
Vice President



**Jeff Kohn**  
Vice President



**Jack Zinn**  
Treasurer



**Harold Aspis**  
Audit Chair



**Michael Mittelman**  
Secretary



**Arlene Kleinberg**  
Associate Secretary



**Lisa T. Roberts**  
At Large



**Debra Abrahams Weiner**  
At Large



**Bruce Wexler**  
At Large

### Honorary Directors:

**David A. Alpert, Froma & Andrew Benerofe, Donald Fleishaker,  
Martine Fleishman, Robert Friedland, Hon. Nita Lowey,  
Harriet Schleifer, Bob Schloss**

### Professional Staff

**Tami Arnowitz  
Donna Bartell  
Elliot Forchheimer  
Pam Goldstein  
Lori Kurlander  
Margo Lampert  
Helene Schonbrun**

# WJC LEADERSHIP 2023-24



**Jeremy A. Abramson**



**Melissa Baer**



**Larry Bahr**



**Stephanie Balkin**



**Betty Berenson**



**Steven Berkowitz**



**Tracey Bilski**



**Asaf Cohen**



**Hon. Jeffrey A. Cohen  
(Ret.)**



**Lawrence D. Engle**



**Karen Everett**



**Allison Fine**



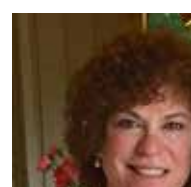
**Robert Fischer**



**Jonathan Flaxer**



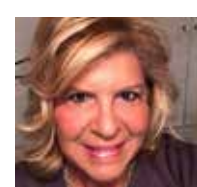
**Aaron Fleishaker**



**Lisa Ginsberg**



**Cantor Ethan  
Goldberg**



**Michele Gregson**



**Bonnie Hagen**



**Rabbi Evan  
Hoffman**



**Michael Kane**



**Jeffrey Kapelus**



**Evan Kingsley**



**Stuart Kolbert**



**Elizabeth Lampert**



**Arnold Linhardt**



**Gabriel Lomas**



**Jessica E. Lorden**



**Mitchell Ostrove**



**Sue Pearson**



**Joan Poulin**



**Jennifer Povman**



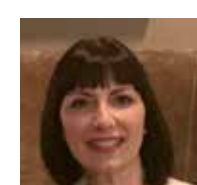
**Ellen Reinheimer**



**Julie Rockowitz**



**Martin Rogowsky**



**Karen Rosenfeld**



**Scott Rothstein**



**Ellen Salant**



**Audrey Samers**



**Michael A. Scheffler**



**Yael Schulman**



**Danny Schultz**



**Stu Seltzer**



**Zev Skolnick**



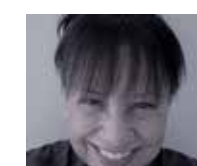
**Lori Sloane**



**Steven Smith**



**Richard Spitz**



**Adrienne Tanner**



**Harold Treiber**



**Maj L. Wickstrom**



**Jamie Schaefer-Wilson**



**Steven L. Young**



**Nancy Zaro**



**Susan Zeitlin**



# WJC FLASHBACK



Gala 2023



Yom HaShoah



Israel Parade



Jewish History & Heritage Program



Westchester Jewish Music & Arts Festival



Interfaith Clergy Gather Against Hate



DSA Committee



Council Staff



High Holiday Security Briefing





# MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS & SYNAGOGUES

(as of September 2023)

ACADEMY FOR JEWISH RELIGION  
ACHI - AMERICAN COMMUNITIES HELPING ISRAEL  
ADAMAH  
AIPAC - AMERICAN ISRAEL PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE  
AJC WESTCHESTER/FAIRFIELD  
AMERICAN FRIENDS OF ALYN  
AMERICAN FRIENDS OF MAGEN DAVID ADOM  
AMERICAN FRIENDS OF SOROKA MEDICAL CENTER  
AMERICAN JEWISH JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE (JDC)  
AMERICAN ZIONIST MOVEMENT (AZM)  
ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE (ADL)  
AREYVUT  
BBYO WESTCHESTER REGION  
BET AM SHALOM SYNAGOGUE  
BET TORAH  
BETH EL SYNAGOGUE CENTER  
THE BLUE CARD  
BIRTHRIGHT ISRAEL FOUNDATION  
BRONX JEWISH COMMUNITY COUNCIL, INC  
CAMP ZEKE  
CHABAD CENTER FOR JEWISH LIFE OF THE RIVERTOWNS  
CHABAD OF BEDFORD  
CHABAD OF LARCHMONT AND MAMARONECK  
CHAVURAT TIKVAH  
CLUB Z  
COMMUNITY ALLIANCE FOR JEWISH-AFFILIATED CEMETERIES (CAJAC)  
CSS COMMUNITY SECURITY SERVICE  
COMMUNITY SYNAGOGUE OF RYE  
CONGREGATION ANSHE SHOLOM  
CONGREGATION B'NAI YISRAEL  
CONGREGATION EMANU-EL OF WESTCHESTER  
CONGREGATION KNESES TIFEREH ISRAEL (KTI)  
CONGREGATION KOL AMI  
CONGREGATION SHIR SHALOM OF WESTCHESTER AND  
FAIRFIELD COUNTIES  
CONGREGATION SONS OF ISRAEL - BRIARCLIFF  
CONSERVATIVE SYNAGOGUE ADATH ISRAEL OF RIVERDALE (CSAIR)  
DOROT  
FIRST HEBREW CONGREGATION  
FLEETWOOD SYNAGOGUE  
FRIENDS OF ISRAEL SCOUTS - TZOFIM  
FRIENDS OF THE ISRAEL DEFENSE FORCES  
GREENBURGH HEBREW CENTER  
HADAR  
HADASSAH-WESTCHESTER REGION  
HEBREW CONGREGATION OF SOMERS  
HEBREW FREE LOAN SOCIETY  
HEBREW INSTITUTE OF WHITE PLAINS  
HIAS  
HILLELS OF WESTCHESTER  
HOLOCAUST & HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION CENTER  
ISRAEL BONDS (DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION FOR ISRAEL)  
J STREET  
JEWISH AGENCY FOR ISRAEL (JAFI)  
JCCA  
JEWISH BROADCASTING SERVICES (JBS)  
JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER OF HARRISON  
JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER OF MID-WESTCHESTER  
THE JEWISH EDUCATION PROJECT  
JEWISH NATIONAL FUND OF WESTCHESTER & SOUTHERN CT  
THE JEWISH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
JUSTICE BRANDEIS WESTCHESTER LAW SOCIETY  
KESHET  
KOL HAZZANIM: WESTCHESTER COMMUNITY OF CANTORS  
THE LEFFELL SCHOOL  
LINCOLN PARK JEWISH CENTER  
MAGEN DAVID SEPHARDIC SYNAGOGUE  
MISHKAN HA'AM  
MJHS HEALTH SYSTEM  
MOUNT KISCO HEBREW CONGREGATION  
MOVING TRADITIONS  
NEW ISRAEL FUND  
THE NEW JEWISH HOME - SARAH NEUMAN CENTER  
NEW YORK MEDICAL COLLEGE  
NORTHEAST JEWISH CENTER  
PARDES INSTITUTE OF JEWISH STUDIES  
PELHAM JEWISH CENTER  
PJ LIBRARY  
PLAZA JEWISH COMMUNITY CHAPEL  
PLEASANTVILLE COMMUNITY SYNAGOGUE  
RIVERSPRING HEALTH FEATURING THE HEBREW HOME AT  
RIVERDALE  
ROSH PINAH CHAVURAH OF THE RIVERTOWNS  
SANCTUARY NY  
SCARSDALE SYNAGOGUE - TEMPLES TREMONT AND EMANU-EL  
SHAAREI TIKVAH  
SHALOM HARTMAN INSTITUTE OF NORTH AMERICA  
SHALOM YISRAEL, INC.  
SHAMES JCC ON THE HUDSON  
SINAI FREE SYNAGOGUE  
SPROUT WESTCHESTER  
STANDWITHUS  
STARDUST JEWISH FERTILITY FOUNDATION  
STEIN YESHIVA OF LINCOLN PARK  
TAMID WESTCHESTER  
TEMPLE BETH ABRAHAM  
TEMPLE BETH AM  
TEMPLE BETH-EL OF CITY ISLAND  
TEMPLE BETH EL OF NORTHERN WESTCHESTER  
TEMPLE BETH SHALOM - HASTINGS  
TEMPLE BETH SHALOM-MAHOPAC  
TEMPLE ISRAEL CENTER OF WHITE PLAINS  
TEMPLE ISRAEL OF NEW ROCHELLE  
TEMPLE ISRAEL OF NORTHERN WESTCHESTER  
TEMPLE SHAARAY TEFILA OF WESTCHESTER  
TEMPLE SHOLOM  
TOURO COLLEGE OF DENTAL MEDICINE AT NY MEDICAL COLLEGE  
TZAHAL SHALOM OF NORTHERN WESTCHESTER  
UJA-FEDERATION OF NY/WESTCHESTER  
UNION FOR REFORM JUDAISM  
UNITED HEBREW OF NEW ROCHELLE  
UNITED SYNAGOGUE OF CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM - METNY  
WESTCHESTER BOARD OF RABBIS  
WESTCHESTER JEWISH COALITION FOR IMMIGRATION (WJCI)  
WESTCHESTER COMMUNITY FOR HUMANISTIC JUDAISM  
WESTCHESTER DAY SCHOOL  
WESTCHESTER HEBREW HIGH SCHOOL  
WESTCHESTER JEWISH CENTER  
WESTCHESTER JEWISH COMMUNITY SERVICES (WJCS)  
WESTCHESTER REFORM TEMPLE  
WESTCHESTER TORAH ACADEMY  
WESTCHESTER INNOVATORS NETWORK (WATE)  
WOODLANDS COMMUNITY TEMPLE  
THE WORKERS CIRCLE  
YOUNG ISRAEL OF HARRISON  
YOUNG ISRAEL OF NEW ROCHELLE  
YOUNG ISRAEL OF SCARSDALE  
YOUNG ISRAEL OF WHITE PLAINS