



IMPACT REPORT

For the program year ending June 2025

For 50 years, we have connected, convened, and helped to safeguard Westchester's Jewish communities and strengthened relationships among Jews and our member organizations, all of Westchester to Israel, Jews and our member organizations to our elected officials, and Jews and our member organizations to other ethnic and faith-based individuals and organizations, as well as to the community at large.

WWW.WJCOUNCIL.ORG

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50 YEARS OF COMMUNITY 50 YEARS OF CONNECTION

Our mission remains rooted in four key pillars. We deepened our connections with elected officials at every level, expanding our reach and building new relationships to advocate effectively for our community. We strengthened ties with other ethnic and faith groups, working together to combat hate and foster understanding. Our connection to Israel remained strong through community gatherings and educational programs, and we continued to support one another through Israel's ongoing war with those who seek its destruction and call for the release of the hostages still trapped in Gaza. Underpinning all that work, we continued to bring Westchester's Jewish community together—through roundtables, learning events, and celebrations that foster belonging, unity and joyous Judaism.

The Westchester Jewish Council (founded in 1975 as the Westchester Jewish Conference, an independent 501c3 not-for-profit organization) is a central convening, coordinating, and connecting body for the county's Jewish community, representing over 120 Jewish organizations and serving the 150,000 Jewish residents of the Westchester area.

Strengthened by our four key pillars

1. Building relationships in our Jewish community
2. Strengthening our connection to Israel
3. Establishing connections with elected officials
4. Maintaining ties with other ethnic and faith groups

Our Impact At A Glance

2,500 Joyous Judaism attendees at our Annual Jewish Music & Arts Festival, Afternoon of Music and Joy and other programs

23 Roundtables hosted for leaders in the Jewish community

19 Interfaith events with partners including Thanksgiving Diversity Breakfast and MLK observances

12 Community rallies & information sessions supporting Israel post-October 7th

11 Community-wide events uniting against antisemitism/Jew hatred

8 Security briefings shared with member organizations and law enforcement

6 Leadership trips & receptions connecting elected officials and clergy with Israel and community

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Dear Friends,

As we mark the Westchester Jewish Council's 50th anniversary, I am filled with gratitude for all we have accomplished together during this remarkable year. This was a year of change—a year when we recognized the shifting needs and priorities of our community and began taking deliberate steps to ensure the Council remains a vital, responsive force for good in Westchester.

We undertook a comprehensive strategic review, engaging with stakeholders across our network and laying the groundwork for a bold new vision. This process has not only helped us reflect on our legacy but also positioned us to adapt and thrive in a rapidly changing world.

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These achievements were made possible by the dedication of our Board, the commitment of our member organizations, the unwavering support of our staff, and our partnership with and generous contributions from UJA-Federation of New York. Our fundraising efforts reached new heights, ensuring we have the resources to pursue our goals with confidence and creativity.

As we look ahead, we do so with momentum and a renewed sense of purpose. The Council's journey of transformation is just beginning, and I am excited to work with our Board, staff, member organizations and the broader community to meet the challenges and opportunities of the coming year. Together, let's continue to connect, adapt, and strengthen our community—today and for the next 50 years.

Thank you for your partnership and your trust.

Michael Mittelman
President, Westchester Jewish Council

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Biennial Westchester Afternoon of Music

This year, we had an unprecedented number of Cantors/Hazzanim participating in the Council's **Biennial Westchester Afternoon of Music**. It was a wonderful afternoon filled with musical performances by Kol Hazzanim - the Cantors of Westchester, as music helped us celebrate and gather joyously together.



Combating Antisemitism



We continued to **host public school leadership gatherings** to address antisemitism and other forms of hate throughout the year. Led by the Council's Tami Arnowitz, along with a group of Jewish community professionals and local educators, the gatherings were designed to equip educators with the essential tools and resources needed to navigate the complexities of current events and history in the classroom. This collaborative experience focused on exploring various curriculum options while providing practical strategies for addressing misinformation and enhancing media literacy among students.

In December, Governor Kathy Hochul's office hosted the Annual Convening on Antisemitism at the Center for Jewish History in New York City. The program brought together government officials, community leaders, and organizational representatives to address the rise in antisemitism and explore strategies for combating hate. We were honored to participate in this important gathering.

The Council, in partnership with AJC Westchester/Fairfield and UJA-Federation, hosted a screening of the film, *October 8th*, for non-Jewish community members, faith leaders and elected officials.

CommUNITY Connection, Community Calendar and Social Media

Reaching more than 12,000 subscribers, our weekly newsletter, Community Connection, made a significant impact in Westchester and beyond. Each issue was curated with a focus on community events, relevant news stories and valuable resources. Our Council's website, www.wjcouncil.org, served as a hub for community news and resources, hosting the Jewish community calendar which listed numerous events by member organizations. The Council's active presence on Facebook (www.facebook.com/wjcouncil) and Instagram (@wjcouncil) engaged over 4,000 individuals, showcasing a multi-channel approach in connecting with our diverse audience



50 YEARS OF COMMUNITY 50 YEARS OF CONNECTION

Connecting to Israel

The Westchester Jewish Council has remained steadfast in its mission to foster support for Israel and to promote unity and communication within the community. During difficult times, such as the aftermath of the October 7th terror attack, the Council played a vital role in promoting solidarity with Israel and its people. We commemorated the tragedy of October 7th, along with UJA, AJC Westchester/Fairfield, and the Jewish Agency for Israel, at our **"We Remember-We Stand in Unity"** community event. Joining us at the event were more than 60 elected officials (including Governor Hochul and her team) and the dedicated clergy of all faiths who showed their support by attending this event and so many other events over the last year.



The Westchester Jewish Council, represented by Council COO Pam Goldstein, attended a meaningful commemoration of October 7th hosted by the **Consul General of Israel in NY/Ambassador Ofir Akunis**.



In the spring, over 600 people gathered at Congregation Kol Ami for the **"Let My People Go"** gathering to hear the poignant stories of families whose loved ones had been held hostage for 18 months. We partnered with AJC Westchester/Fairfield, UJA, and JAFI to bring this important program to the community. Representatives from The Hostages and Missing Families Forum joined us to share their difficult accounts.

We continued our collaboration with the **Jewish Agency for Israel's (JAFI) Westchester Community Shlichah, Hila Madar Itzkovitz**, and the young emissaries to develop Israel programming, including the Council's Israel Roundtable, Yom Hazikaron and Yom Ha'atzmaut commemorations, and participation in the annual Celebrate Israel Parade. We are honored to collaborate with JAFI and to connect with the shinshinim as they enrich our community through their meaningful work.

Our monthly virtual **Israel Connection Series**, which featured presentations on Israeli culture, society, and contemporary issues, including antisemitism, continued throughout the year. Highlights included "Yom HaShoah 2025: The Current Struggles of Holocaust Survivors in Israel by Latet" and "Healing the Wounds of War: Stories from the Rehabilitation Hospital at Israel's Soroka Medical Center".

These programs engaged community members in record numbers to build connections, explore important issues, and foster dialogue around Israel.

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50 YEARS OF COMMUNITY 50 YEARS OF CONNECTION

Funding and “Fun-Raising”

The Westchester Jewish Council receives funding from various sources, with the majority of its revenue coming from donations by community members and local foundations. The Council is particularly grateful for the generous grants from UJA-Federation. Additionally, membership dues from our member organizations and programming fees contribute to our revenue. Most donations are made in support of our primary fundraising event, the **Annual Gala**, held each winter. This past year's gala was a great success, with more than 500 guests attending and raising a record amount of funds for the Council's annual operating budget.



Government Relations

The Council is a trusted liaison to Westchester's elected and public officials, backed by decades of experience and broad expertise. The County government, in turn, relies on the Council as a resource for communicating with the Jewish community of Westchester. Throughout the year, the Council engages “**across the aisle**,” working with elected officials from all political parties and at every level of government.



We marked **Jewish-American Heritage Month** with a ceremony honoring Council member organizations, Temple Shaaray Tefila and the Community Security Services (CSS), together with the Westchester County Board of Legislators and AJC Westchester/Fairfield.

The **Annual Legislative Breakfast**, in partnership with UJA, featured an impressive guest list of local and state elected officials. Among the speakers were Governor Kathy Hochul, U.S. Representatives George Latimer and Mike Lawler, NY State Senator and Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, and County Executive Ken Jenkins. Additionally, we paid tribute to the Honorable Nita Lowey, z”l.

Jewish Community Learning

We continued our exclusive partnership with the **Jewish Studies Program at SUNY Purchase College** offering community members the chance to attend lectures throughout the year led by distinguished instructors offering studies of diverse topics including “Christian Supremacy: Reckoning with the Roots of Antisemitism and Racism”, “Jews and Blacks Repair the World: the Remarkable Life of Julius Rosenwald”, and “Once We Were Slaves: The Extraordinary Journey of a Multi-Racial Family”.

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50 YEARS OF COMMUNITY 50 YEARS OF CONNECTION

Interfaith Relations

The **3rd Multifaith Clergy Trip**, organized by the Council with special funding from UJA, took place in November. The dedicated group of 15 participants immersed themselves in the rich history and vibrant culture of Jerusalem, Southern Israel, and Tel Aviv.



The annual Westchester **Thanksgiving Diversity Breakfast** brought together more than 500 people from diverse 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.

In the spring, the Council partnered with Jewish and Christian faith leaders in a program titled “**What's Love Got to Do With It**” in which participants explored the topic of love reflected through the Song of Songs and the holidays of Passover and Easter.

The 30th Julian Y. Bernstein Distinguished Service Awards (DSA)

In early May, the Westchester Jewish Council honored **24 dedicated volunteer leaders** from our member organizations with this special award. Julian Y. Bernstein was a former Council board member who was a visionary communal leader. 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.



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50 YEARS OF COMMUNITY 50 YEARS OF CONNECTION

New Member Organizations

We welcomed three new member organizations—**Elluminate**, **HonestReporting**, and **Mem Global (formerly Moishe House)**. With more than 120 member organizations, the Council stands as a strong testament to the collective unity of our community.

Roundtables

The Westchester Jewish Council continues to strengthen community and inspire collaboration through its dynamic Roundtable Initiative. This year, more than **20 roundtables** brought together a wide spectrum of leaders—security volunteers, synagogue professionals and lay leaders, clergy, greening advocates, Israel activists, interfaith and intergroup partners, Mosaic (LGBTQ) of Westchester, youth professionals, and more. Each gathering provided a vital space for building relationships, exchanging ideas, and sharing best practices.



The Roundtables have become a cornerstone of connection in Westchester's Jewish community, ensuring that leaders learn from one another and work together to create a stronger, more vibrant future.

Security



The Westchester Jewish Council, serving as a community-first responder and resource, has been instrumental in fostering communication and sharing best security practices among member organizations, local law enforcement and the FBI. This past year, post October 7th, we received tremendous support from local law enforcement. Our unique "**Emergency Communication System**" has proven its effectiveness by promptly disseminating crucial information to numerous trained

professionals and volunteer leaders within the Westchester Jewish community. Collaborating closely with key partners, including William Hayes from the Community Security Initiative (**CSI**), Community Security Service (**CSS**), Security Community Network (**SCN**) and 43 police departments, we remain dedicated to enhancing security measures and ensuring the safety of our community members.

In September, we hosted our annual **High Holyday Security Briefing**, which was attended by local law enforcement, CSI and CSS leaders, and security liaisons from our member organizations.



50 YEARS OF COMMUNITY 50 YEARS OF CONNECTION

Yom HaShoah/Holocaust Remembrance

In partnership with the **Holocaust and Human Rights Education Center**, this event in late April not only honored the memory of those who died in the Holocaust, but also served as a powerful symbol of unity and understanding within our community. The program brings together hundreds of individuals to commemorate our shared history and values and includes our annual procession of rescued Torahs. We were deeply honored to welcome esteemed guests, including featured speaker Arlette Baker, County Executive Ken Jenkins, Congressman George Latimer, Rabbi Leora Frankel, President of the Westchester Board of Rabbis, and Reverend Erwin Lee Trollinger.



Westchester Jewish Music & Arts Festival



The **48th Annual Westchester Jewish Music & Arts Festival** was held in cooperation with the Westchester County Parks as part of their cultural heritage celebrations at Kensico Dam Plaza and attracted **over 2,500 people**.

The featured performer was **Six13**, along with special guests Ohh-Lam Collective, Elijah and the Not-For-Prophets, The Levins, and Kol Hazzanim Kumsitz, plus festival favorites including Ned Gelfars, Israeli Dancing with Leng and a WonderSpark Puppet show sponsored by PJ Library.

Westchester Leadership Reception

We were honored to convene an unprecedented number of leaders from our member organizations alongside elected officials at this year's **Annual Leadership Reception**. The event fostered a spirit of collaboration and mutual commitment, reinforcing our shared dedication to strengthening community bonds. Council board member Stu Seltzer ushered in the new year with the powerful and inspiring sound of the shofar.



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COUNCIL LEADERSHIP

As of July 1, 2025



President
Michael Mittelman



Senior Vice President
Marc Klee



**Vice President for
Jewish Community Building**
Arlene Kleinberg



**Vice President for
Israel Matters**
Stu Seltzer



**Vice President for
Government Relations**
Adeena Rosen



**Vice President for
Community Relations**
Ellen Reinheimer



**Secretary and Vice President
for Communications**
Michele Gregson



Treasurer
Jack Zinn



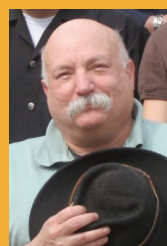
Audit Chair
Karen Rosenfeld



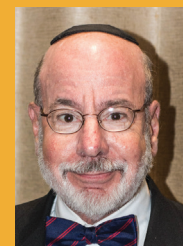
At Large
Michael Scheffler



At Large
William H. Schrag



Past President
Lester J. Millman



Past President
Irwin S. Davison



Past President
Debra Abrahams
Weiner



Past President
Ronald E. Burton



Past President
Paul Warhit



Past President
Lisa Roberts

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 Roberts, William H. Schrag

Honorary Directors: David A. Alpert, Andrew Benerofe, Froma Benerofe, Martine Fleishman, Robert Friedland, Harriet Schleifer

Professional Staff: Chief Executive Officer, Elliot Forchheimer, Chief Operating Officer, Pam Goldstein, Project Director, Donna Bartell, Communications/Operations Manager, Lori Kurlander, Financial Administrator, Margo Lampert, Government Relations Manager, Rika Levin, Special Projects Manager, Helene Schonbrun, Consultant, Tami Arnowitz



COUNCIL BOARD MEMBERS



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WESTCHESTER JEWISH COUNCIL MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Academy for Jewish Religion
ACHI - American Communities Helping Israel
Adamah
AIPAC - American Israel Public Affairs Committee
AJC Westchester/Fairfield
American Friends of Latet
American Friends of Magen David Adom
American Friends of Sheba Medical Center
American Friends of Soroka Medical Center
American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC)
American Zionist Movement (AZM)
Anti-Defamation League (ADL)
Areyvut
BBYO Hudson Valley Region
Bet Am Shalom Synagogue
Bet Torah
Beth El Synagogue Center
Birthright Israel Foundation
The Blue Card
Camp Zeke
Chabad Center for Jewish Life of the Rivertowns
Chabad of Bedford
Chabad of Larchmont and Mamaroneck
Chabad of White Plains
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 Tifereth Israel (KTI)
Congregation Kol Ami
Congregation Shir Shalom
Congregation Sons of Israel - Briarcliff
Conservative Synagogue Adath Israel of Riverdale (CSAIR)
DOROT
Dror Israel
Elluminate
First Hebrew Congregation
Fleetwood Synagogue
Friends of the Israel Defense Forces
Gesher Campus Care
Greenburgh Hebrew Center
Hadar
Hadassah - Westchester Region
Hebrew Congregation of Somers
Hebrew Free Loan Society
Hebrew Institute of White Plains
Hillels of Westchester
Holocaust & Human Rights Education Center
HonestReporting
Israel Bonds (Development Corporation for Israel)
J Street
JCCA
Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI)
Jewish Broadcasting Service (JBS)
Jewish Community Center of Harrison
Jewish Community Center of Mid-Westchester
The Jewish Education Project
Jewish National Fund of Westchester & Southern CT
Justice Brandeis Westchester Law Society
Kol Hazzanim: Westchester Community of Cantors
Kol Rinah, The Jewish Chorale of Westchester
Larchmont Temple
The Leffell School
Magen David Sephardic Synagogue
Mem Global
Mishkan Ha'am
Mount Kisco Hebrew Congregation
Moving Traditions
National Council of Jewish Women, New York Section
New York Medical College
Northeast Lincoln Park Shaarei Simcha
Pelham Jewish Center
PJ Library
Plaza Jewish Community Chapel
Pleasantville Community Synagogue
RiverSpring Health
Rosh Pinah Chavurah of the Rivertowns
Sanctuary NY
SAR Academy
Sarah Neuman Center for Rehabilitation and Nursing
Scarsdale Synagogue - Temples Tremont and Emanu-El
Shaarei Tikvah
Shalom Yisrael, Inc.
Shames JCC on the Hudson
Sinai Free Synagogue
StandWithUs
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 Shalom
Touro College of Dental Medicine at NY Medical College
Tzofim North America
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 Community for Humanistic Judaism
Westchester Day School
Westchester Jewish Center
Westchester Jewish Community Services (WJCS)
Westchester Reform Temple
Westchester Torah Academy
Woodlands Community Temple
Young Israel of Harrison
Young Israel of New Rochelle
Young Israel of Scarsdale
Young Israel of White Plains

(As of September 2025)

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