A MESSAGE FROM NATIONAL CAMPAIGN CO-CHAIR HOWARD UNGER

Taking a Hard Look at What’s at Stake

Dear friends, in the span of 10 months, I participated in two Museum delegations: to Rwanda to mark the 20th anniversary of the Rwandan genocide and then to Poland to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. Standing in a death camp my father survived, I kept thinking how many more anniversaries will need to be commemorated before the world not just learns but acts on the lessons of the Holocaust?

One of its great lessons for us today is that technological progress is not the same as moral progress. I can be anywhere in the world, and on my cell phone, look at digital copies of the documents that Museum researchers recently sent me. Pages and pages of documentation meticulously track my father’s struggle to survive numerous ghettos, camps, and a death march before being liberated from Dachau—the only member of his family who survived. It’s obscene that even with this evidence—proof that I can hold in my hands—deniers are exploiting the very same technology to spread their lies.

The challenge is how do we put the truth into the hands of new generations no matter where they live on this planet—especially those susceptible to propaganda and hate? And, of course, the bigger questions: What’s at stake if we don’t? What’s the cost over time to the very legitimacy of the Holocaust?

We must never let the world forget what was allowed to happen to Europe’s Jews—or cease doing whatever we can to prevent future genocides. That’s why our support of this campaign is so crucial.

Using new technologies, the Museum is building a permanent platform that will take the stories of the Holocaust and subsequent genocides to every corner of the globe to inspire people to act. It will be a game-changer, and given today’s challenges, that’s exactly what we need.

Howard Unger
“Through the prism of this history, and the way the Museum makes it part of your DNA, it creates a foundation for great citizenship and concern for the world,” explained Andrew Cohn. “The Museum not only does a great job of humanizing what could be viewed as the worst brutality humankind has ever perpetrated but puts it into a context relevant to today’s issues.”

Amy Cohn recently returned from a Museum trip to Austria and Hungary. “Visiting countries where these atrocities occurred, I was struck by the enormous differences in how they view their past,” observed Amy.

“In Hungary, it was very clear that they were trying to rewrite their history. We saw the opposition in Austria, where there seemed to be a deep-seated responsibility to make sure that Holocaust history is being taught truthfully, and they look to the Museum for guidance,” Amy continued. “In both countries, the influence of and high regard for the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum was evident. This speaks volumes about the bigger role this institution has to play.”

The Colhns have recently become members of the Leadership Circle—the Museum’s society recognizing annual gifts of $10,000 and above. They chose to make an unrestricted gift. “There is an evolution within any organization,” explained Andrew. “Our job is to enable the institution’s responsive—to let the professionals do what they need to do. The level of excellence that the Museum performs at is something I’ve never seen in an organization.”

“We had no family directly affected by the Holocaust. Originally we got involved with the Museum following the lead of our dear friends Bill and Susan Levine,” said Amy. “We had no idea what an important part of our lives it would become.” Amy has recently assumed the leadership of the Museum’s Annual Fund to share her passion for the Museum with others. “The more I immerse myself and gain a deeper understanding of what the Museum needs, what it is doing, I want to get the message out there.”

Like all Holocaust survivors, William Konar never ceased to be amazed that a Museum dedicated to the story of his past would stand forever on America’s National Mall.

One of the Museum’s earliest leaders and most generous supporters, there was little he wouldn’t do to advance the Museum’s mission. “My father was humble. He only agreed to do the interview for Fortune magazine because he thought it was an article about the Museum,” explained his son Howard Konar. “He never really discussed his past with us, so when the article was published, it was the first time we learned the details of his survival.”

Born in Budim, Poland, William was only 15 years old when the Germans occupied the city. By war’s end, he had lost most of his family, and in 1946, at age 16, William arrived in the United States. He went to Rochester, New York, and never left. From there, he raised his family, built two successful businesses, and became a national leader in business and philanthropy.

“It took tremendous will and intelligence to conquer all odds to rebuild a successful life, like my father did,” continued Howard. In 1990, following in his father’s footsteps, Howard was appointed to the Museum’s governing Council.

Howard’s passion is education, and he and education in everything the Museum does. That’s why in 2002 the family created the William Konar Fund to provide ongoing endowment and annual support for the Museum’s educational mission. “We make our annual gift unrestricted because we understand the benefit of unrestricted funds—it’s the lifeblood of the Museum,” said Howard.

Howard currently serves as chair of the Council’s Education Committee at what Sarah Ogilvie, the Museum’s chief program officer, defines as a pivotal moment for the Museum and Holocaust education.

“The tremendous change in how young people learn and how people consume information requires reimagining how people learn and how people consume information,” explained Ogilvie. “It requires developing new models that maintain excellence in teaching while exponentially increasing our reach. We are fortunate to have in Howard a partner who understands the challenges and opportunities ahead.”

The Konar family recently made a $5 million gift to the new Collections and Conservation Center. “Being involved, I see the enormous impact of how the Museum uses its collection to educate, which is the critical foundation of expanding its global digital impact,” explained Howard. “There was no hesitation on the part of anyone in our family to make this gift in my father’s honor in recognition of this project’s importance.”

“The city’s naming the street, open to the sky, a great memorial to him. He was passionate in his love for this country and the freedom it represents.”
The Holocaust was a global event, and we must be able to tell the story from every perspective. Despite what we’ve collected so far, the majority of materials are still out there. That’s why the Museum is accelerating its efforts to collect the evidence while we still can, in an effort spanning 6 continents. Building the collection of record to ensure the relevance of the Holocaust for posterity is like a three-legged stool—it requires constant balancing of acquisition, access, and preservation.

Preserving Holocaust memory in our interconnected world demands expanded access to the evidence. Without a fully accessible collection of record, there are significant barriers to global awareness and understanding. Holocaust education and research will become stagnant. "Our institution is unique in that our goal is to remove all barriers to access," explained Grunberger. "Just one example is our participation in a European-sponsored online portal dedicated to advancing research on the Holocaust." The portal provides access to some 80 Holocaust-related collection entries from 1,000 organizations worldwide. More than half of the entries—53 percent—were contributed by the Museum.

"Digitizing is key for the preservation of and universal access to the content of the collection of record on the Holocaust—the crucial foundation of the digital-learning platform the Museum is building to engage a 21st-century global audience. Digitizing the bulk of the collection will put the content of the Museum in the hands of everyone. And because we have the Collections Search user base, which has now grown to over 200,000 individuals, the Museum will be able to tell the story from every perspective."

Why is digitizing the Museum’s vast collection a priority for you?

"The Museum and I share the same goal: to protect the evidence of the Holocaust. For me, the priority has been what’s most at risk and how do we protect it. If you have a solid object that is only in one place and something happens, it is gone. A digital record can be duplicated in multiple places, so you have much more security. Plus, you don’t have to be where the object is to access it; you can be anywhere in the world. Putting it out there is a reason to preserve the evidence of the Holocaust."

"The priority is to digitize the evidence of the Holocaust. For me, the priority has been what’s most at risk and how do we protect it. Our institution is unique in that our goal is to remove all barriers to access. This informs our work as we take on the task of hunting down the evidence. And with our collection expected to double in size over the next decade, it requires more skilled technicians to properly process the acquisitions and additional experts to preserve fragile deteriorating objects, to catalog the collections so they are searchable, and to digitize for preservation and accessibility."

"When the coronavirus pandemic hit, just when we thought we were out of the woods, the collections were being threatened by the virus. That’s why urgent action is needed to digitize the collection immediately."

"Digitizing is a time- and cost-intensive process. Currently, less than 20 percent of the collection is available digitally. Collections Search user accesses the Museum’s vast collection of record to ensure the relevance of the Holocaust for posterity is like a three-legged stool—it requires constant balancing of acquisition, access, and preservation."

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RAISING FUNDS FOR THE COLLECTIONS CENTER
Mid-Atlantic Next Gen Board Event

“Looking at these photos, I’m flooded with memories of another part of my life. I’m donating these fragments of my family’s history to the Museum because I want what happened to my family to be remembered forever in the hope that it never happens again.”

Marlyse Kennedy, Holocaust survivor

...to assure the Collection’s evidence of the Holocaust, will permanently house the planning. Because this Center many months of intensive activity underway after so many months of intensive planning. Because this Center will permanently house the evidence of the Holocaust, the project requires extremely complex systems to assure the Collection’s preservation and security.”

Michael Zik, Museum architect

RAISED OVER $80,000 FOR THE CENTER.

It was an honor to have Marlyse in our home to share the stories of these precious objects. It put the importance of this project into a very personal context. We could not be more proud that our sons stepped forward to contribute.”

Lori and Martin Weinstein, Next Gen Board Co-Chairs

ABOVE: Construction of the new world-class Collections and Conservation Center got underway this summer. The Center is scheduled to open in 2017.

RIGHT AND BELOW: During the September event, Marlyse donated her family treasures, including the photo of her father, who was a judge in Germany prior to the war, drawn with other members of the court and the Iron Cross he was awarded in the mid-1930s for his WWI service.

For more information on how you can join this historic effort, please call Allison Lurey, campaign director, at 202-488-5420, e-mail alurey@ushmm.org, or visit ushmm.org/shapellcenter.

**Gifts are not tax-deductible.”

**Current contribution is $200,000 gift to the Endowment Fund for the Robert G. Spiro, MD, Society: Lessons of the Holocaust Program.

To date, the Museum has raised $39 million in support of the Collections and Conservation Center. The Center will house the Museum’s Collection of 30,000,000 artifacts, including 6,000,000 photographs and 1,600,000 oral histories. The Center also will be the permanent home of the Holocaust Initiative.

**Recent Gifts**

- **Maltz Family Foundation**
  - Cleveland, OH
  - $1 million gift to the Collections and Conservation Center

- **The Crown Family**
  - Chicago, IL
  - $250,000 gift to the Annual Fund

- **Laurie and Sy Sternberg**
  - Houston, TX
  - $100,000 gift to the Americans and the Holocaust Initiative

- **Alice and Robert* Alt**
  - Philadelphia, PA
  - $300,000 gift to the Annual Fund

- **The Maltz Family Foundation**
  - Cleveland, OH
  - $100,000 gift to the Americans and the Holocaust Initiative

- **Sue and Michael Goldman**
  - Austin, TX
  - $100,000 gift to the Endowment Fund

- **The Crown Family**
  - Chicago, IL
  - $50,000 gift to the Collections and Conservation Center; $75,000 gift to the Bringing the Lessons Home Program

- **Estate of Magda Margolis**
  - New York, NY
  - $250,000 gift to the Annual Fund

- **The Maltz Family Foundation**
  - Cleveland, OH
  - $50,000 gift to the Collections and Conservation Center

- **The Wilf Family Foundation**
  - New York, NY
  - $25,000 gift to the Endowment Fund

- **Schwarz Foundation**
  - New York, NY
  - $50,000 gift to the Endowment Fund for the Robert G. Spiro, MD, Endowment Fund

- **Amy and Andrew Cohn**
  - Scottsdale, AZ
  - $250,000 gift to the Annual Fund

- **The Malkin Family**
  - Chicago, IL
  - $250,000 gift to the Collections and Conservation Center

- **Elon and Michael Perlow**
  - Chicago, IL
  - $100,000 gift to the Annual Fund

- **The Reva and David Logan Foundation**
  - Chicago, IL
  - $150,000 gift to the Law Enforcement and Society: Lessons of the Holocaust Program

- **The Ryna and Malvin Cohen Family Foundation**
  - Cleveland, OH
  - $100,000 gift to the Annual Fund

- **Christine and Todd Fisher**
  - New York, NY
  - $100,000 gift to the Annual Fund

- **The Perlow Family**
  - New York, NY
  - $100,000 gift to the Annual Fund

- **Bill and Sybil Kies**
  - Colorado Springs, CO
  - $100,000 gift to the Annual Fund

- **The Albert B. and Audrey G. Ratner Family Foundation**
  - Cleveland, OH
  - $200,000 gift to the Collections and Conservation Center
The Malkin Family: Passing the Torch

"The first time I heard my grandfather speak so passionately about the Museum...it turned something on in me.”

Clara Malkin was a seventh grader when she visited the Museum for the first time with her grandfather on Chicago’s first Grandparents Mission. “I remember going through Daniel’s Story, writing my thoughts in a little notebook,” explained Clara. Her grandfather, Judd Malkin, one of six original Chicago chairs who led what became the most successful community fundraising campaign to build the Museum, was leading the mission. “My grandpa talked about when the Museum was just a big hole in the ground—and how it had exceeded all his expectations.”

“It was the first time I heard him speak so passionately about the Museum. Honestly, it turned something on in me.” When he was taking her younger cousin on the next mission, Clara asked to go. “On that trip my grandpa got emotional when he stood up to speak and asked me to continue for him. I didn’t have to struggle at all to articulate how important it was to be there. That’s when I realized how important the Museum was to me too. And like him, I wanted to apply my passion to make a difference.”

Today, Clara is a senior at Tulane University with a dual major in political science and Jewish studies. A recent internship at the Museum, in many ways, redefined how she views its impact. “No matter where visitors are on the spectrum of understanding this history when they walk in, it touches them. But what was surprising to me was the Museum’s enormous reach and impact beyond its walls.”

“Elie Wiesel talks about the Museum as a ‘living memorial’—it’s not just about remembering, it’s taking action. I worked in the Some Were Neighbors exhibit. The Holocaust is such a stark example of when evil takes over, anything you can do as an individual is a responsibility.”

Legacy of Light Guardians
Commemorative Publication

DEADLINE FOR INCLUSION: March 1, 2016

Make safeguarding truth your personal legacy through a deferred or outright gift to the Museum’s endowment, and let us recognize your enduring commitment in this beautiful commemorative publication.

LEARN MORE Contact George E. Hellman, JD, Director of Planned Giving and Endowments, at 202.488.6591 or e-mail ghellman@ushmm.org.