



ZOA REPORT

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ZIONIST ORGANIZATION OF AMERICA



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In memory of the 1,200
innocent men, women, children
and babies viciously murdered
on October 7, 2023, in the
largest massacre of the Jewish
people since the Holocaust.

And in prayer for the safe return of
all hostages currently held captive
in Gaza.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Morton A. Klein
ZOA National President

Dear Friends,

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for your continued support for ZOA during these difficult times for Israel and the Jewish people.

Since October 7, 2023, ZOA's truth-telling role has been more vital than ever. During this critical time, we have been combating a tsunami of terrible policy prescriptions and vicious lies about Israel, Jews and Zionism that fuel attacks on Jews and endanger the Jewish state. Telling the truth about Israel's rights and humanity, and about its enemies' depravity and utter disregard for human life, is one of our most important weapons today.

Many key facts are rarely mentioned in the media. But ZOA makes sure to bring these facts to the public's attention. For instance, the media almost never discusses the plight of Israelis displaced by Hamas' and Hezbollah's attacks. But during my frequent appearances on Newsmax and other media outlets, and during my lectures throughout the U.S., I have discussed the suffering of over 200,000 displaced Israelis in northern and southern Israel who still cannot go back to their homes and are living in tents and hotels and crowding into other people's homes. I have highlighted the fact that northern and southern Israel will not be habitable if Israel does not defeat Hamas and Hezbollah.

Other crucial facts that we have brought to the public's attention on Newsmax and in other media appearances, in lectures throughout the country, and at events such as our May 2024 pro-Israel rally in Times Square in New York City, include:

- The fact that there is no Israeli "occupation" of Gaza – not a single Jew has lived in Gaza since 2005 – and that chants to "Free Palestine" are a lie;
- Wikipedia's failure to call Hamas "antisemitic" even though the Hamas charter calls for the murder of every Jew and for Israel's destruction;
- That the Hamas Nazis plan to kill every Christian after killing every Jew: Hamas co-founder Mahmoud al-Zahar recently warned that Hamas' Islamist army will conquer all of the earth and rule a world in which there will be "no Zionism, no treacherous Christianity";
- That President Biden's demands that Israel not go into Hamas' stronghold in Rafah, and that Israel should leave Gaza altogether, enable Hamas' survival and impede obtaining the hostages' release;
- That the Biden administration strengthened the Iranian regime by failing to enforce sanctions and paying Iran billions of dollars, which in turn enable Iran to fund Hamas;
- That we need to oppose the establishment of a Palestinian Arab state, which will be run by terrorist leaders and endanger Israel and the entire Middle East;
- Hamas' murder and torture of hostages;
- The complicity of UNRWA, Fatah terrorists (the Palestinian Authority's main party)

and Gazan civilians in the October 7 massacre; and the complicity of Gazan civilians in imprisoning and beating hostages;

- The absurdity of demanding a ceasefire against the Hamas terrorist regime;
- That the Biden administration was hostile to Israel from its first day in office and appointed numerous hostile-to-Israel officials to important posts affecting Israel;
- That “genocide” charges against Israel are a total fabrication: Israel takes extraordinary measures to protect Gazan civilians, and the lowest number of Gazan civilians have been killed compared to combatants in the history of modern urban warfare;
- That campus anti-Israel riots and encampments are professionally organized and funded by foundations such as the Tides Foundation, George Soros’ Open Society Foundations, and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, and they use outside professional organizers;
- That Columbia University and other universities are violating Title VI of the Civil Rights Act’s requirement to provide a safe environment for Jewish students, by failing to bring in the police and national guard to dispel violent riots calling for a global intifada – the murder of every Jew;
- The monstrous record of Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi (who died in a helicopter crash in May 2024);
- That Iranian missiles are labeled with “Death to America, Death to Israel”;
- Antisemitism on social media;
- The blatant falsehoods and procedural defects in International Criminal Court (ICC) and International Court of Justice (ICJ) proceedings that attempt to criminalize and sanction Israeli leaders for defending the Israeli people from terrorists;
- Wikipedia’s reliance on extreme Jew-haters such as Rashida Tlaib as its “commentators” on Israel; and more.

Mort Klein on Mike Huckabee’s show on November 16, 2023



In addition to our television, radio, podcast and in-person appearances and events, ZOA's daily press releases, analyses, articles and op-eds continue to counter the flood of anti-Israel and anti-Jewish lies and policies.

In addition to our television, radio, podcast and in-person appearances and events, ZOA's daily press releases, analyses, articles and op-eds continue to counter the flood of anti-Israel and anti-Jewish lies and policies. ZOA responded in depth, with the facts, when, for instance, major newspapers such as *The New York Times* and *Foreign Policy* published lengthy screeds promoting scores of anti-Israel lies, and when Biden's Ambassador to the United Nations promoted a long series of antisemitic, anti-Israel falsehoods during her recent UN Security Council address. We have also repeatedly debunked lies that Israel is deliberately starving Gazans, with the facts about the over 500,000 tons of humanitarian goods that Israel has supplied to the Gazan population. And much more.

Furthermore, the ZOA courageously speaks up about important issues that too few others have responded to. For instance, both the mainstream/leftist press and the Biden administration have been attempting to delegitimize Israel by libelously casting, highlighting and sanctioning Jews as terrorists – while ignoring the hundreds of terror attacks perpetrated by Palestinian Arab terrorists from Judea and Samaria every month, and ignoring the Palestinian Authority's constant incitement and \$400 million of annual “pay-to-slay” payments to terrorists to murder Jews.

ZOA has been countering this head on. We have been providing analyses and publishing the facts and data, such as the large number of Palestinian Arab terrorist groups operating in Judea/Samaria; the huge numbers of their attacks on innocent Jews; these attacks' increased deadliness (43 Jews murdered in 2023, not counting the October 7 massacre); and Iran's role, including smuggling arms into Judea/Samaria. The real situation on the ground is the worst since the Second Intifada.

ZOA's work on college campuses – and also in the K-12 schools – is more critical than ever now. ZOA Campus has hired additional campus professionals to meet these expanded, extraordinary needs.

ZOA's Center for Law and Justice has been pursuing claims for civil rights violations on multiple campuses, including claims against Rutgers University, Duke University, and Fairfax County Public Schools in Virginia, one of the largest public school districts in the U.S. Partnering with outside counsel, we filed a lawsuit against the Cherry Hill public school district, on behalf of a high school student who was threatened and assaulted after he documented other students' open support for Hamas days after the October 7 massacre. ZOA's detailed complaint against the Montgomery County Public Schools in Maryland was a major basis of the congressional (House Committee on Education and the Workforce) investigation into antisemitism in K-12 schools and on college campuses.



In addition, ZOA is pushing for more action from top government officials to investigate, arrest and prosecute those who are perpetrating Jew-hatred and violence on college campuses. ZOA's letter to Attorney General Merrick Garland, Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Kristin Clarke and FBI Director Christopher Wray in the spring of 2024 documented numerous shocking examples of antisemitic violence and activities on campuses throughout the country; listed organizations reportedly organizing, funding and inciting these activities; and requested urgent, immediate investigation, arrest and prosecution of organized hate groups, leaders, funders and actors inciting and perpetrating the nationwide violence and hatred against Jewish students on college campuses. ZOA continues to follow up with all these efforts.

ZOA's Government Relations Department is also instrumental in educating and providing truthful information to members of Congress on the wide range of issues facing Israel and American Jews. It is gratifying that members of the House of Representatives have been initiating and passing numerous bills and resolutions – consistent with ZOA's stands – to stop funding Hamas-collaborator UNRWA, to condemn the unlawful anti-Israel ICC proceedings, to condemn an anti-Israel UN resolution falsely accusing Israel of harming children, and to oppose the dangerous establishment of a Palestinian Arab state. We continue to seek Senate action on bills that the House has passed. ZOA has hired an additional professional to expand our vital Government Relations work.

The ZOA Coalition delegation has also been helping to spread the truth by introducing and obtaining passage of important resolutions in the World Zionist Congress – the parliament of the Jewish people – including resolutions supporting threatened university students; condemning the Palestinian Authority's pay-to-slay payments to terrorists to murder Jews; opposing the Palestinian Authority as the governing authority in Gaza; condemning and calling for dismantling UNRWA; and condemning the International Red Cross for failing to visit and assist the hostages taken by Hamas into Gaza.

Thank you again for supporting us and making ZOA's vital work possible.

With love and prayers for all our friends, and for Israel's and America's safety and well-being,

Morton A. Klein
ZOA National President 🇺🇸



Alan D. Jay
ZOA National Executive Director

In this ZOA Report, you will read about how much of ZOA's work this past year has been framed by Hamas' barbaric October 7 crimes committed against Israel, the Jewish people and all humanity.

I am fortunate – blessed, I like to think – for having been gifted a positive nature. I am a glass-half-full kind of guy. But my hopeful spirit was eviscerated on October 7, 2023. Since that day, the simple, benign “how are you?” triggers emotional conflict. I want to say I’m fine, but how can we be fine when Israeli Jews live under constant, imminent, life-threatening danger, when innocent hostages remain in the custody of demonic Hamas terrorists, when the level of unabashed antisemitism, unprecedented in our time, is soaring beyond our worst communal memory and imagination? In this ZOA Report, you will read about how much of ZOA’s work this past year has been framed by Hamas’ barbaric October 7 crimes committed against Israel, the Jewish people and all humanity.

You will read about how ZOA’s Washington, D.C.-based Government Relations Department, under the direction of Dan Pollak, has spent countless hours educating members of Congress and their staffs about issues concerning Israel and the Jewish people. Dan details his department’s efforts to secure adequate and appropriate military funding for Israel, defund the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), oppose any ceasefire proposals, emphasize Iran’s central role in the destabilization of the Middle East, fight antisemitism in the United States, and more.

ZOA’s Center for Law and Justice, under the direction of Susan Tuchman, Esq., has been barraged with case after case of

antisemitism in our schools – not only on college campuses but also in K-12 schools. Susan details her work which includes a successful challenge outside the academic arena: An organization that disingenuously collected donations under the guise of supporting ill and struggling actors gave hundreds of thousands of dollars to aid the people of Gaza after the Hamas massacre – but no aid to Israelis. Read Susan’s article to learn more about the incredibly positive outcome that we achieved.

We have all seen the news about unbridled and often violent antisemitism on college campuses. Students feel unsafe, and in many instances, they are unsafe. ZOA Campus, under the direction of Jonathan Ginsburg and staffed by ZOA campus coordinators around the country, stepped up to meet the challenge of refuting the lies promoted by haters of Israel and the Jewish people. Our ZOA Campus professionals provide Jewish and other Zionist students with the tools they need to effectively respond to the lies and to feel and be safe on campus. In his article, Jonathan describes many of the hundreds of programs that ZOA Campus has sponsored, largely through our robust ZOA Campus Fellowship program. If you know a student who would like to be a ZOA Campus Fellow, please encourage them to apply at campus.zoa.org. We will train them to be effective advocates for Israel and we pay them a generous stipend – all-in-all a wonderful and empowering opportunity.

Our Award Dinner provided our guests with a meaningful evening during which we honored and heard from some of the most deserving awardees and speakers.

We do have a lot of good to report. On December 3, 2023, the ZOA hosted our annual **2024 Justice Louis D. Brandeis Award Dinner**. In deference to the then recent October 7 attack, we adopted a theme for the evening: **Speak Out For Israel. Show Your Unwavering Support. We Will Not Let Our Enemies Win!** Held at the luxurious New York Marriott Marquis in Times Square and emceed by TV personality Rita Cosby, our Award Dinner provided our guests with a meaningful evening during which we honored and heard from some of the most deserving awardees and speakers.

Speaker of the House Mike Johnson received the **Dr. Miriam and Sheldon G. Adelson Defender of Israel Award**. Speaker Johnson was introduced via video by philanthropist Dr. Miriam Adelson who, invoking the memory of her beloved husband, Sheldon, welcomed Speaker Johnson to the ZOA family. Speaker Johnson was then introduced in person by U.S. Rep. Elise Stefanik. In his remarks, Speaker Johnson said that “we must continue to boldly declare our support for Israel and the Jewish people across the world.” Rep. Stefanik said that “the world must know that the United States stands with Israel today, tomorrow and forever.” These amazing public servants left no doubt about their unswerving support for Israel and their enduring commitment to fight antisemitism.

U.S. Senator Eric Schmitt, a native Missourian and a loyal friend of Israel, received the **Steven Sass Righteous Friend of Zion Award**. Senator Schmitt opened his remarks by telling the audience that a fellow Missourian, U.S. President Harry Truman, was the first national world leader to recognize Israel’s independence in 1948. Senator Schmitt said that “Israel deserves the ability to do what they need to do to eradicate Hamas once and for all.”

Former U.S. Rep. Lee Zeldin received the **Myron Zimmerman Award for Pro-Israel Activism**. He told the crowd that “being a friend of ZOA is nothing that I will ever apologize for. . . . When you have an ask to make me step forward and prove my friendship, I’ll be happy to be first in line to say ‘Yes!’”

ZOA was blessed this year to present two **Justice Louis D. Brandeis Awards** at our Award Dinner. One was presented to Melanie and Gerald Shreiber. Gerald is the founder of the food industry giant, J&J Snack Foods. Melanie and Gerald are magnificent philanthropists. ZOA is fortunate to be among the beneficiaries of their generosity and Melanie recently joined the ZOA’s National Board of Directors.

The other **Justice Louis D. Brandeis Award** was conferred upon Ed Lewis, Esq., an ardent Zionist and a prominent real estate attorney who endows a chair at the University of Southern California Law School. We are thankful not only for Mr. Lewis’ generosity but also for his enthusiastic promotion of ZOA and for his commitment to help build ZOA’s footprint on the west coast.

The program at the Award Dinner became appropriately somber when Miri Ben Ami took the stage. Ms. Ben Ami is the mother of Yosef-Haim Ohana, who was taken captive by Hamas terrorists at the Nova music festival and remains a hostage today. Ms. Ben Ami shared stories about her son and gave us a glimpse into the agony that the hostages and their families are enduring. We continue to pray for the immediate release of Yosef-Haim and all those held in captivity by Hamas.



On May 13, 2024, the ZOA, together with the World Values Network (WVN), hosted a **Support for Israel Rally, Yom HaZikaron Memorial & Yom Ha'atzmaut Outdoor Concert** in Times Square in New York City. Hundreds attended. ZOA President Morton Klein energized the crowd with a powerful analysis of the dangers in Israel – whose very existence is threatened by Hamas, Hezbollah, her neighbors and Iran and its other proxies – and the dangers here in the United States, where the enemies of Israel and the Jewish people are openly promoting antisemitism. Mr. Klein made it clear that now is the time for every Jew to learn the facts, recognize the dangers, and stand up and be proud Jews and Zionists. Renowned law professor, Zionist, author, and all-around international powerhouse, Alan Dershowitz, also addressed the crowd, imparting his unique and compelling insights into Israel, Hamas, the Middle East and antisemitism.

We also heard from Nissim Louk whose daughter Shani was taken hostage by Hamas terrorists on October 7. Nissim displayed immense courage when he spoke that night, impressing us with his pragmatic optimism. Sadly, just days after the rally, IDF soldiers found Shani's body. May Shani's family, and the families of all the murdered hostages and the families of all the fallen IDF soldiers, be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem. May Shani's death, the death of all those who were murdered on October 7, and the death of all the brave IDF soldiers be avenged and may the enemies of Israel and the Jewish people be defeated completely.



The evening was emceed by WVN founder and executive director Rabbi Shmuley Boteach and seamlessly transitioned from a meaningful Israel and Jewish advocacy rally to a star-studded Yom Ha'atzmaut concert, featuring Israeli music sensation Gad Elbaz and Laivy Miller, son of megastar Matisyahu. We celebrated well into the night and we thank the amazing NYPD for keeping us safe!

On June 2, 2024, the ZOA was once again proud to host an exceptionally large contingent of proud Zionist marchers at the Israel Day on Fifth Parade, formerly the Israel Day Parade. Led by ZOA National President Morton Klein, ZOA activists proudly and loudly declared our support for Israel, demanded the release of the Hamas-held hostages and showed our commitment to Israel and the Jewish people. So dedicated are ZOA Zionists that one of our marchers set off to walk the parade with the help of a walker. When she realized it was too much for her, other marchers took turns escorting her, making sure she was able to complete the parade with the rest of the group!

Please read on to learn more about the ZOA and the breadth of our work. And feel free to call or email me with any thoughts, questions, or comments.

L'hitraot,

Alan D. Jay
ZOA National Executive Director

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SEN. ERIC
SCHMITT



FORMER REP.
LEE ZELDIN



REP. ELISE
STEFANIK



DR. MIRIAM
ADELSON



DR. KIRON
SKINNER

SPEAKER MIKE JOHNSON



ZIONIST ORGANIZATION OF AMERICA



MORTON KLEIN
ZOA NATIONAL PRESIDENT



RITA COSBY
EMCEE

Speaker of the House Mike Johnson Headlines ZOA's "Speak Out for Israel" Award Dinner

Also Featured: U.S. Sen. Eric Schmitt, Former U.S. Rep. Lee Zeldin, U.S. Rep. Elise Stefanik, Dr. Miriam Adelson, Dr. Kiron Skinner

The ZOA held its star-studded **Speak Out for Israel Award Dinner** on December 3, 2023, at the New York Marriott Marquis. Eminent speakers and the enthusiastic crowd sent a strong message of solidarity with Israel and the Jewish people.

At the outset of the evening's program, **Rita Cosby**, an award-winning broadcaster and the Mistress of Ceremonies for the evening, told the crowd: "Tonight is about standing up and speaking out." Ms. Cosby thanked ZOA and its **National President Morton Klein** for all the work they are doing "*to change generations.*" She also commended the many students from Columbia University, NYU and other schools who attended the ZOA dinner.

Speaker of the House Mike Johnson received the Dr. Miriam and Sheldon G. Adelson Defender of Israel Award after he was introduced to the cheering crowd by **U.S. Rep. Elise Stefanik** and philanthropist and great friend of the ZOA, **Dr. Miriam Adelson**. Rita Cosby and others lauded Speaker Johnson for his first acts as Speaker: passing a pro-Israel House resolution, H. Res. 771,

with overwhelming bipartisan support; and passing H.R. 6126, a bipartisan \$14.3 billion stand-alone emergency aid bill for Israel.

Speaker Johnson spoke about the horrors and heartbreak of Hamas' atrocities on October 7, 2023, and about the shameful, unprecedented level of attacks that American Jews and Jewish students are enduring. He condemned "members of Congress who routinely use the rhetoric of genocidal terrorists, giving them legitimacy." Speaker Johnson made it clear: "We know 'from the river to the sea' is an explicit call for genocide of the Jewish people." And he called for a bold response: "We must meet them with force when necessary, and it is necessary right now." Speaker Johnson assured the crowd that "we will stand with Israel until this is resolved, until every hostage is returned and the threats against Israel cease to exist."

U.S. Senator Eric Schmitt, a great Zionist from Missouri, was presented with the Steven Sass Righteous Friend of Zion Award by Morton Klein. Mort praised Senator Schmitt for demanding that sanctions on

Iran be enforced; joining ZOA in opposing the appointment of Iran-deal-promoter Jack Lew as U.S. ambassador to Israel; emphasizing that aid to Israel should not be linked to \$62 billion in aid to Ukraine; and cosponsoring every major piece of pro-Israel legislation.

Senator Schmitt emphasized the critical importance of supporting Israel as it battles the terrorist group Hamas: "Hamas' mission statement is to murder every Jew. Israel has every right to completely and utterly eradicate Hamas, and the U.S. has to give them the diplomatic and other support they need to do it. . . . Israel needs our support now more than ever. We will work to assure Israel gets everything it needs."

Former U.S. Rep. Lee Zeldin was presented with the Myron Zimmerman Award for Pro-Israel Activism and was introduced and warmly praised for his great work in Congress by philanthropist and ZOA National Board member **Myron Zimmerman**. Rep. Zeldin declared: "I'm proud to be here as a friend and ally of Israel. My great grandfather was a rabbi who worked with ZOA gener-

ations ago.” He noted: “The real test of friendship is when times are tough” –and a true friend does whatever he possibly can do to aid Israel and to make sure that action is taken when students are threatened. Rep. Zeldin praised ZOA for being the “tip of the spear” and thanked the crowd for supporting ZOA.

Attorney **Edward Lewis** was presented with the Justice Louis D. Brandeis Award by Morton Klein who praised Mr. Lewis for, among other things, inspiring members of Congress to support Israel. Commending ZOA and seeking to inspire the crowd, Mr. Lewis said: “There is no other organization like ZOA. I’m so humbled to be here this evening. We are under attack. In my lifetime, I’ve never seen antisemitism higher than it is now. . . . Mort Klein does amazing things; each one of you does amazing things. Now is the time to say, ‘I am Jewish and proud of it.’ It’s not going to get easier. . . . Speak up. Be proud. Be ZOA.”

Philanthropists and pro-Israel activists **Melanie and Professor Gerald Shreiber**

were also presented with the Justice Louis D. Brandeis Award. Melanie Shreiber described how her husband grew up enduring antisemitic epithets, yet developed an enormous sense of Jewish pride. Mrs. Shreiber praised ZOA for providing her with resources to advocate effectively for Israel and stated: “For Jews and lovers of Zion, this is a heart-rending time. For those who abandoned us, shame on you. For those who stood with us, bless you. We are a light that can never be dimmed. We are so grateful for this award and will cherish it forever.” Professor Shreiber declared: “I am proud to be a Jew. I am proud to be an American. I am proud to be a Jew in America.”

Emcee Rita Cosby gave shout-outs to some of the dinner’s eminent attendees, including Israel’s Acting Consul General in New York **Aviv Ezra**; New

York Assemblyman **Simcha Eisenstein**; Newsmax CEO **Chris Ruddy**; ZOA’s 2022 Sass awardee **Ali Meli**; former U.S. Ambassador to Iceland **Dr. Jeffrey Gunter**; Nassau County Executive **Bruce Blakeman**; Tikva Fund Chairman **Roger Hertog**; Fox News political analyst **Lisa Daftari**; Major real estate developer **Bart Blatstein**; prominent PR executive **Arthur Schwartz**; **Joey Borgen**, who survived a vicious antisemitic attack by an Arab gang in Manhattan and courageously testified against his attackers; and the **ZOA activists** who showed up to support Joey Borgen at multiple court hearings.

ZOA National Board Chair **Rubin Margules** movingly introduced **Miriam Ben Ami**, the mother of Yosef-Haim Ohana, who is being held hostage by Hamas terrorists in Gaza. Chairman Margules noted ZOA’s campaign demanding that the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) visit the hostages and “be more than an Uber driver.” He noted that the U.S. government

gives the ICRC \$640 million, a third of its budget. Chairman Margules asked: “Where is the outrage, the demand for humanitarian rights for our people? Israel deserves better. You can feel the love and support from all of us. You have a partner in ZOA.”

Miri Ben Ami proclaimed: “We must do everything to insure this never happens to another mother. G-d bless America and the Jewish State of Israel.”

Dr. Kiron Skinner, former Director of Policy Planning at the U.S. State Department, who introduced ZOA National President Morton Klein, immediately declared: “I am African American and a Zionist.” Dr. Skinner praised ZOA as “a leading voice in combating antisemitism globally” and praised Mort Klein, noting that the *Wall Street*

**“Now is the time to say,
‘I am Jewish and proud
of it.’ It’s not going to get
easier. . . . Speak up. Be
proud. Be ZOA.”**

**— Brandeis Award recipient
Edward Lewis**

Journal called him an outsize figure; that Mort received the World Zionist Organization award for outstanding leadership in Zionism; and that with Dr. Skinner, Mort exposed and wrote about the antisemitism of “the Squad” in Congress. “When the history is written, to reestablish the Black-Jewish alliance for justice,” Dr. Skinner said, “Mort will be on page one. Mort Klein, my friend, my brother and fellow Zionist.”

Morton Klein began by saying: “In the Passover Haggadah, we read in every generation they rise against us, but we survive.” After describing the past history of expulsions, massacres and genocides of the Jewish people, Mort proclaimed, to huge applause: “We will overcome this latest tragedy again. Israel can never again give away any of our land. No more concessions.”

Mort noted the many Biden administration policies that have energized Israel haters, including the administration’s attacks on Israel’s domestic policies, such as judicial reform; the funding of anti-Israeli-government protests; the reinstatement of and increased funding to the Palestinian Arabs and to UNRWA; and the appointment of officials who are hostile to Israel.

Mort also pointed out that this Arab/Islamic war against the Jews is not about land. It is a religious war against non-Muslims.

Countries, especially the U.S., need to stop funding the radical Islamic world, and stop talking about handcuffing Israel. We need to stop funding UNRWA and the Palestinian Authority.

Mort blamed Israeli, Jewish and rabbinic leaders in part for failing to refute the lie that Israel is illegally occupying land. Israel gave away all of Gaza and 40% of Judea/Samaria to Palestinian Authority control. The majority of people living in Jerusalem since at least the mid-1800s (the time of the first census) were Jewish. “We Jews didn’t come to Israel as colonists or seeking a new continent. We came home,” Mort said.

Mort closed with the Mark Twain quote praising the tiny Jewish population for their incredible contributions to the world, and for managing the crisis that Israel is facing “with their hands tied behind their backs.” Mort implored: “We must be strong. Truth, justice and G-d are on the side of the Jewish people.” 🇺🇸



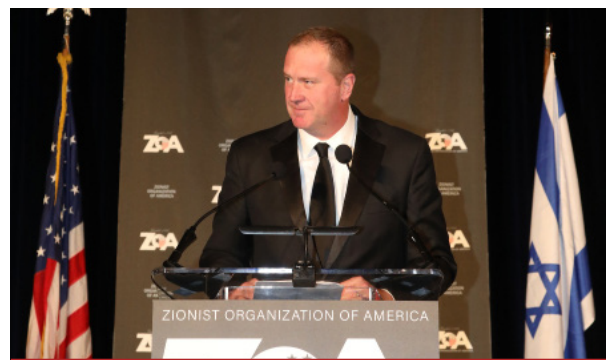
ZOA National President Morton Klein



Rita Cosby, U.S. Rep. Elise Stefanik, and Morton Klein present the Dr. Miriam & Sheldon G. Adelson Defender of Israel Award to Speaker of the House Mike Johnson



Speaker Mike Johnson



U.S. Sen. Eric Schmitt



Students enjoying the gala, thanks to the generosity of ZOA Florida advisory board member Allen Hamaoui



Edward Lewis, Esq., recipient of the Justice Louis D. Brandeis Award



Rita Cosby, Morton Klein, ZOA National Board member Myron Zimmerman, and former U.S. Rep. Lee Zeldin



Rita Cosby, Morton Klein, and Dr. Kiron Skinner



Lital Slonim of the Nachala Movement, Morton Klein, and ZOA National Board Chair Rubin Margules



Former U.S. Rep. Lee Zeldin



ZOA National Board Vice Chair Michael Orbach and Eli Verschleiser



Singing Hatikvah



Melanie & Professor Gerald Shreiber, recipients of the Justice Louis D. Brandeis Award



Melanie Shreiber and Prof. Gerald Shreiber



Dr. Kiron Skinner and Morton Klein



Rabbi Akiva and Abigail Eisenstadt



Rita Cosby; Edward Lewis, Esq., recipient of the Justice Louis D. Brandeis Award; and Morton Klein



Rubin Margules, Morton Klein, and Speaker of the House Mike Johnson



Liz Berney, Esq., ZOA's Director of Research & Special Projects, and her Klezmer group, Kol B'Yachad



ZOA National Board member Myron Zimmerman



ZOA National Board Chair Rubin Margules



ZOA National Board Vice Chair Michael Orbach



ZOA National Board member Bart Blatstein & U.S. Sen. Eric Schmitt



Steven Sass



Ezra Friedlander and Dan Pollak, Director of ZOA's Government Relations Department



Speaker of the House Mike Johnson



Sam Levine and ZOA Michigan Executive Director Kobi Erez



Former U.S. Ambassador to Iceland Dr. Jeffrey Gunter and Heather Wilson



Rubin Margules, Rita Cosby and ZOA Director of Operations Nancy Hollander



ZOA National President Morton Klein



ZOA National Board member Dr. Rosaline Barron, Mort Klein, and U.S. Sen. Eric Schmitt



Miriam Ben Ami, the mother of Yosef-Haim Ohana, a hostage of Hamas in Gaza



Ali Meli, ZOA's 2022 Sass Award recipient



Dr. Kiron Skinner



College students enjoying the gala, thanks to the MZ Foundation's generous support



ZOA National Board member Dr. Arthur Kook and Morton Klein



Dr. Michael Olen, Rita Klein, and ZOA National Board member Bart Blatstein



U.S. Rep. Elise Stefanik

CENTER FOR LAW & JUSTICE



Susan B. Tuchman, Esq.
Director, Center for Law & Justice

In March 2024, Broadway Cares announced grants to four organizations that provide on-the-ground support in Israel to civilians affected by trauma, assault and mental health emergencies.

ZOA Campaign Leads to \$400,000 in Grants to Relieve Israeli Suffering After Hamas Massacre

If you're a Broadway theater fan, then you're probably familiar with "Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS," a non-profit, grant-making organization that helps mitigate the suffering of individuals affected by HIV/AIDS and other life-threatening illnesses. Donations to Broadway Cares are typically solicited at the end of a Broadway show: A cast member makes a compelling pitch about helping people in need in the theater community and encourages audience members to leave their donations in collection buckets stationed at the theater's exits.

After the Hamas massacre in Israel on October 7, 2023, Broadway Cares announced that it had made two grants totaling \$400,000.00 to organizations that provide aid in Gaza. There was no indication that grants were forthcoming to provide aid in Israel, so the ZOA immediately swung into action. We urged Broadway Cares to make equally generous grants to aid Israelis who were enduring massive suffering and devastation as a result of Hamas' terrorist attack.

Broadway Cares' executive director responded promptly and respectfully. But the organization's initial reaction was deeply troubling.



(credit: Broadway Cares' website)

Broadway Cares identified the two organizations that received the grants – Doctors of the World and the International Rescue Committee – and assured us that both organizations provided support and assistance to Israelis, too. But that was implausible. The website for Doctors of the World identified the places in the Middle East in which the organization does its work. "Palestine" was among them. Israel was not. Likewise, the website for the International Rescue Committee identified the countries in the Middle East in which this group operates. Israel was not listed. After Hamas' brutal massacre, the IRC issued a press release about it, and did not even condemn the massacre.

The ZOA pressed Broadway Cares to take two steps. First, make similarly generous grants to organizations that are helping and supporting Israelis after the unimaginable loss and damage they suffered and continue to endure after the Hamas attack. We provided Broadway Cares with suggestions, which included Israeli hospitals, emergency service providers, and mental health resources that provide grief and trauma counseling and support.

Second, we demanded transparency from Broadway Cares in its solicitations for donations, so that there is full disclosure to Broadway theater audiences about where their donations may be directed. Telling audiences that their donations were going toward helping people battling HIV/AIDS and other serious health issues was misleading and inaccurate. Jewish and non-Jewish theatergoers should not be deceived to financially back causes they do not in fact support.

In March 2024, Broadway Cares announced a total of \$400,000.00 in grants to four organizations that provide on-the-ground support in Israel to civilians affected by trauma, assault and mental health emergencies. Broadway Cares also agreed to more openness and transparency. It is providing each Broadway show's representatives with updated guidance containing key points to be included in their Broadway Care appeals, so that theater audiences will be more accurately informed about where their donations may go.

ZOA's Title VI Complaint Against Montgomery County Public Schools Bolsters Fight Against Antisemitism in K-12 Schools

In April 2024, the ZOA filed a complaint under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act against Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), Maryland's largest school district, where antisemitism has been a longstanding problem that district officials have failed to effectively address. The complaint was filed with the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights with the support of members of the MCPS community, including students, parents and teachers.

The ZOA documented years of antisemitic harassment and intimidation endured by Jewish students and staff, including, but not limited to:

- Ethnic slurs, such as "Jewish f—k," "Jew-boy" and Hey, Jew"; "Heil Hitler" salutes; and Jewish "jokes" from peers.
- Repeated vandalism of school property with swastikas throughout the district. In December 2022, a high school's entrance sign was defaced with the words, "Jews Not Welcome."

- Student "pro-Palestinian" walkouts at MCPS high schools after the Hamas massacre that disrupted school operations and caused many Jewish students to stay away from school out of fear for their safety. School officials tolerated the walkouts and remained silent, even after student protesters legitimized and encouraged violence and terrorism against Jews and Israelis and called for Israel's destruction.
- The organizers of one "pro-Palestinian" walkout posted on social media that "There is no country called Israel" and "Israel' is a group of Zionist Jewish

The entrance sign at one high school was defaced with the words, "Jews Not Welcome."



A student speaks with MCPS board of education president Karla Sylvestre, after a May 8, 2024, congressional hearing on antisemitism

ZOA's complaint alleges that immediately after the Hamas attack, several students showed up at school wearing keffiyehs, waving Palestinian Arab flags, and shouting "Free Palestine," signaling their support for Hamas and its genocidal goal to kill Jews and eliminate Israel.

people from all over the world & dont [sic] have a state." The organizers also openly called for Israel's elimination, posting, "We want liberation, we want our lands back. All of PALESTINE. From the river to the sea." School officials failed to condemn the conduct, they allowed the walkout to proceed and disrupt classes, and they later commended the protesters for "demonstrating peacefully."

- At another high school walkout, a faculty member overheard a student say, "We should bring Hitler back," and another student say, "Kill the Jews." After the principal was alerted to these threatening antisemitic comments, she refused to notify the community, publicly condemn the comments, or thoroughly pursue identifying and punishing the perpe-

trators. Instead, the principal praised the protesters for their "fantastic job." And MCPS retaliated against the faculty member who reported the antisemitism, by making false accusations against her and baselessly sanctioning her.

OCR is seeking information from MCPS regarding the specific incidents alleged in the ZOA's complaint in the context of an already ongoing investigation into the district's conduct. The ZOA's complaint against MCPS was a critical resource for the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, which has been investigating antisemitism on college campuses and in K-12 schools. The ZOA's complaint was the basis for a significant part of the Committee's pre-hearing briefing materials.

ZOA Files Suit Against Cherry Hill Public Schools for Failing to Protect a Jewish Student and Encouraging a Hostile Antisemitic Environment

In June 2023, the ZOA filed a lawsuit in federal court on behalf of a Jewish high school student (L.B.) and his parents against Cherry Hill Public Schools (CHPS), which serves over 10,000 students in New Jersey. The complaint alleges that immediately after the Hamas attack in Israel on October 7, 2023, several students showed up at the high school wearing keffiyehs, waving Palestinian Arab flags, and shouting "Free Palestine," signaling their support for Hamas and its genocidal goal to kill Jews and eliminate Israel. L.B. documented their conduct by posting videos of them on social media, which was his right and which did not

violate CHPS policies, as CHPS officials acknowledged to the student and his parents.

District officials knew that a group of students threatened to jump L.B. because of his social media posts but took no steps to protect him. Instead, they ignored the threat and blamed L.B. for instigating it. When students acted on their threat, assaulting L.B. in the school cafeteria as he was eating lunch with friends, CHPS punished L.B. without cause and without due process and ignored the continuing threats that L.B. endured.



L.B. and his parents implored CHPS to take corrective measures, but they refused to do so. They are now seeking declaratory and injunctive relief from the court to ensure that CHPS finally lives up to its legal obligation to eliminate the hostile environment that L.B. has been subjected to, which

must include rescinding all the baseless and wrongly punitive actions taken against L.B.; and compensatory damages for the harm that L.B. and his family have suffered.

The ZOA is proud to partner with the law firm of Meister Seelig & Fein PLLC to secure justice for L.B. and his family.

Education and Advocacy in the Community

After the Hamas massacre, ZOA assisted the Vice Mayor of Hallandale Beach, Florida in crafting a proposed resolution – which the city adopted – reflecting the city’s support for Israel and its right to defend itself. The ZOA also prepared an ordinance expanding the definition of antisemitism that the police use in enforcing the city’s laws. The city adopted the resolution in December 2023, and it took effect immediately.

Arranged by ZOA’s Florida regional director Allison Zur, Susan Tuchman, director of ZOA’s Center for Law and Justice, spoke at several Florida venues in December 2023 about the ZOA’s pioneering work in fighting antisemitism in schools and on college campuses: an evening program at Congregation Ohev Shalom, Orlando’s first synagogue; an informal morning meeting

graciously hosted by ZOA Florida advisory board member Dr. Dan Layish and Staci Layish at Dr. Layish’s medical office in Orlando; a parlor meeting in Hollywood generously hosted by ZOA Florida advisory board members Yitz and Shelly Tuchman; and a morning program graciously hosted by ZOA Florida advisory board members Paul and Marian Kruss at their fabulous restaurant in Aventura, Mo’s Bagels & Deli.

In May 2024, Susan gave an emergency briefing to college students, parents and community members about legal tools and resources for fighting campus antisemitism. The briefing was sponsored by Students Supporting Israel (SSI), an international pro-Israel campus movement with over 200 chapters. 🇺🇸



Allison Zur, Susan Tuchman, and ZOA Florida Board members Marian and Paul Kruss at Mo’s Bagels after Susan’s presentation



Susan’s program on antisemitism at Orlando’s Congregation Ohev Shalom

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS



Dan Pollak
Director, Government Relations

Unanswered Question: American Policies are Helping Iran in the War Against the West – WHY?

As the ZOA's Director of Government Relations, I have the privilege of speaking to ZOA supporters around the country in both small and large groups. When the topic is Iran, someone invariably asks: Why does American policy end up helping the biggest enemy of the United States and Israel in the region?

ZOA members are generally familiar with the many ways that the Biden administration has made life easier for the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and its allies. The U.S. has eliminated sanctions on oil sales, allowed Iran to continue to develop a nuclear weapon without consequences, failed to designate Iranian allies as terrorists and, in the case of Lebanon, actually provided military equipment to the Lebanese Armed Forces, which are de facto allies of Hezbollah, the Iranian proxy terrorist group.

The answer to the question of why American policy helps Iran is quite complex. When ZOA approaches members of Congress from either political party to lobby on legislation, what we want and what the lawmaker wants are usually not too different. Everyone wants America and her allies to be more secure, and nearly every member of Congress claims to want Israel to prosper. In fact, though, there are very divergent policies about how to deal with Iran and its terrorist allies.



Demonstrators at a protest in Tehran against the U.S. and Israel (Photo: atta kenare/Agence France-Presse/Getty Images)

Appeasement Versus Strength

When Barack Obama entered the White House in 2009, his team came in with an ideological blueprint for changing the Middle East, which the ZOA opposed vociferously. The set of ideas seems even more ridiculous now, but at the time, its advocates were quite serious about implementing the plan.

After failed wars in Iraq and eventually in Afghanistan, the plan was essentially to disengage from Middle East conflict by reaching an accommodation with Iran, frankly at the expense of the Sunni powers in the region – especially Saudi Arabia – and, of course, Israel. Those countries would still be friends of the U.S., but they would have to come to terms with the fact that America would also be friends with a powerful Iran which would dominate the region.

In fact, American efforts to appease Iran by ending sanctions, allowing its economy to prosper, and normalizing future relations by entering into the Iran nuclear deal failed to bring about the desired result. The Iranians still did everything they could to impede the foreign policy objectives of the West, and still considered the United States “The Great Satan.” They paid their crowds to shout “Death to America” at every opportunity. They were still an enemy of the United States.

When Donald Trump became president in 2017, he implemented a new campaign of “maximum pressure” on Iran. Iran’s economy nearly collapsed, no significant oil revenue came in, and the Sunni world was excited about containing Iran, leading directly to the accomplishment of the Abraham Accords.

The election of Joe Biden to the presidency heralded the end of all efforts to challenge Iran through muscular means. The people that President Biden installed in key foreign policy positions were the same

individuals whose policy had failed during the Obama era. (See zoa.org/biden-appointments-watch/.) These policymakers, and President Biden himself, were politically unable to admit that their former approach had failed. Worse, they continued essentially the same old policies even though there was no longer any rational expectation that the results expected in 2015 could possibly come about.

Our policy toward Iran has now morphed into a series of short-term tactical goals with no strategic thinking even attempted. In order to minimize inflation, we are trying to keep energy prices low, by allowing Iran to pump oil, even though that strengthens Iran (and Russia and China) in the long run. We are trying to keep our European allies happy by allowing them to do business with Iran. The aspirations of the Iranian people are simply ignored relative to the status quo policies which allow the brutal repression inside Iran to continue indefinitely.

ZOA supporters are probably fatigued with hearing about how close Iran is to a nuclear weapon, but things have only gotten worse. If the Hamas massacre on October 7 had never happened, then Israel would have been forced to consider kinetic action against Iran to prevent it from building a whole series of nuclear weapons. Iran has now enriched enough uranium to assemble three nuclear weapons within about two months, according to international nuclear observers.

By the time you read this, Israel and Hezbollah may well be at war as a result of American refusal to make it clear to the Iranians that the United States and Israel stand together against the common threat from Iran. Relentless American pressure on Israel to ease up on Hamas has created the expectation that weapons which Israel will need to fight Hezbollah and Iran will not be delivered.



Dan Pollak speaking at a ZOA program in Florida

It has become commonplace to believe that political considerations (especially with Arab-American voters in Michigan) are the real cause of the change in American policy supporting Israel's war with Hamas. In fact, it is far easier to explain the change by viewing the conflict as a war with Iran that the Biden administration has not been fighting effectively since President Biden took office. The 2022 maritime agreement between Hezbollah and Israel was effectively imposed by the United States, and it does not look like it will survive if Israel and Hezbollah go to war, except that the territorial concessions Israel was forced into will never be undone.

ZOA Fights for Policies in the World as It Actually Exists

ZOA is the only major American Jewish organization opposing the establishment of a Palestinian Arab state as a matter of principle right now. ZOA is fighting to prevent the terrorist organization Fatah, which runs the Palestinian Authority (PA), from having a role after the war in Gaza is concluded. ZOA completely rejects any cease-fire in Gaza without the elimination of the Nazis of Hamas and the release of all the hostages. The common thread in these positions is acceptance of the actual realities in the region in place of wishful thinking.

Sometimes another question people have about ZOA is why we choose to be so blunt in our public pronouncements. The answer to this is closely related to the errors that policymakers have made in the past in failing to be robust enough in actions against Iran. If the world is seen as it actually exists, then there is not much question about the correct policies to pursue. It is only by engaging in wishful thinking that one can imagine that Iran can be appeased, or that the PA can be a responsible partner for peace.

Education and Advocacy

As your registered lobbyist in Washington, D.C., I educate members of both political parties and their staffs on the U.S.-Israel relationship and how to make it stronger for both countries. I advocate for and against specific legislation. Right now, our priorities include smooth delivery of military aid to Israel, legislation to enshrine the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism in U.S. law, and preventing pressure on Israel to establish a new Arab state that would be linked to terrorism. I reach out to other Jewish organizations to work towards common goals, especially fighting antisemitism. Working closely with our Center for Law and Justice, more and more of our work is concerned with antisemitism in schools at all levels. A special effort is underway to work closely with Christian groups, because Christian Zionism is a huge factor in congressional support for Israel.

I have always been involved in getting ZOA's message out through social media. I recently added a couple of Newsmax interviews to my list of public appearances. 🇺🇸

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ZOA CAMPUS



Jonathan Ginsburg

Managing Director, ZOA Campus

Since the Hamas massacre on October 7, 2023, ZOA Campus has mobilized and strengthened the Jewish and pro-Israel communities on college campuses across the country. Despite the surge in campus antisemitism and open support for Hamas, Hezbollah, and other genocidal terror organizations, ZOA Campus and its network of student and professional activists have risen to the occasion to stand up in defense of Israel and the Jewish people.

New Additions to ZOA Campus

In January, Ariana Hoblin joined as the new Southeast Campus Coordinator, based in South Florida. A recent graduate of Florida Atlantic University and former student leader with Students Supporting Israel (SSI), Ariana has rapidly expanded ZOA's outreach in Florida and the southeast region.

ZOA Campus also welcomed back Or Taylor as the Associate Director and West Coast Campus Coordinator. Or previously served as ZOA Campus Associate Director and Mid-Atlantic Coordinator from 2016 to 2020. He went on to obtain a master's degree in security policy at George Washington University, earned a commission as a U.S. Army officer and served in various leadership roles. As a proud Jewish American, Or has brought his passion for defending Israel and combating antisemitism back to ZOA Campus.

ZOA Campus also excitedly welcomed Wyatt Cirbo as its new Midwest Campus Coordinator, based in Chicago. Wyatt is a native of Denver, Colorado and a former ZOA Campus summer intern. He recently graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he studied political science and Jewish studies and served as the student Israel chair at UW Hillel. Wyatt also previously worked as a Middle East analyst at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies. Wyatt is proud to support ZOA's mission to educate students about Israel and build their support for the Jewish state.

ARIANA HOBLIN

Southeast Region



OR TAYLOR

ZOA Campus Associate Dir.

West Coast Region



WYATT CIRBO

Midwest Region



Events and Programs

More than any other academic year, ZOA Campus events in 2023-24 had even higher stakes and bolder goals. Our educational and interactive programs aimed to educate and empower the wider community about Israel and its defensive and just war against Hamas in Gaza, and Hezbollah and its Iranian proxies in Lebanon and throughout the Middle East.

Immediately after the October 7 massacre, ZOA Campus mobilized its student network to stand in solidarity with Israel and to raise awareness about the Israeli hostages taken captive into Gaza by Hamas terrorists. In early fall, ZOA Campus co-sponsored vigils and marches for the innocent victims of October 7 in collaboration with Maroons for Israel at the University of Chicago, Hillel at Virginia Tech, Binghamton Hillel, and the Student Alliance for Israel at UMass Amherst.

The most meaningful events of the 2023-24 academic year were the ZOA Campus events in partnership with Hillel and Chabad chapters in which IDF soldiers and survivors from the Nova music festival shared their harrowing testimonies with a wide audience of college students. For example, at the University of Maryland - College Park, Lee Sasi shared the horrors she endured at the music festival and her subsequent escape. The campus department co-hosted other similarly powerful speaking events at the University of Texas - Austin, Queens College, Pace University, and the University of Miami.

At UC Berkeley, in partnership with Berkeley Chabad, ZOA Campus sponsored Yadin Gellman, a survivor and hero from October 7, who immediately joined his IDF reserve unit and participated in the rescue of Israeli civilians from Kibbutz Be'eri. Yadin spoke about the injuries he sustained that

day while battling Hamas terrorists and the heroism and sacrifice of the soldiers in his unit who fought in defense of Israel. Yadin was an inspiring symbol of strength and resolve for the students who heard him speak.

In February 2024, ZOA Campus participated in the two-day Israel Day event at the Florida State Capitol, celebrating the state of Israel and the U.S.-Israel relationship. Ariana Hoblin, ZOA's Southeast Campus Coordinator, tabled at the event and shared information and resources about the essential work that ZOA is doing to defend Israel and fight antisemitism. The Israel Day event coincided with the Florida legislature's vote to codify in the law the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism, strengthening the fight against antisemitism.

During the 2023-24 academic year, ZOA Campus co-sponsored several Krav Maga workshops at Baruch College, Northeastern University, and Nova Southeastern University. At these workshops, students learned about the Zionist roots of Krav Maga and the necessity of knowing how to defend oneself in a variety of settings.



Lee Sasi, a survivor of Hamas' attack at the Nova music festival, speaks at the University of Maryland-College Park

With Israel's legitimacy under assault within academia and in numerous international institutions, ZOA Campus sponsored legal scholar Eugene Kontorovich for a speaking event at the University of Miami in partnership with Canes for Israel, CAMERA, and SSI. ZOA also co-hosted Dr. Eric Mandel, founder and director of the Middle East Political and Information Network, at Florida Atlantic University for an eye-opening lecture about Islamic extremism in the Middle East and the strategic and geopolitical challenges facing Israel. Additionally, ZOA's own Akiba Covitz spoke about the true meaning of Zionism and Israel's legal rights under international law at the University of Chicago Law School, Rutgers Law School, and UC San Diego Law School.

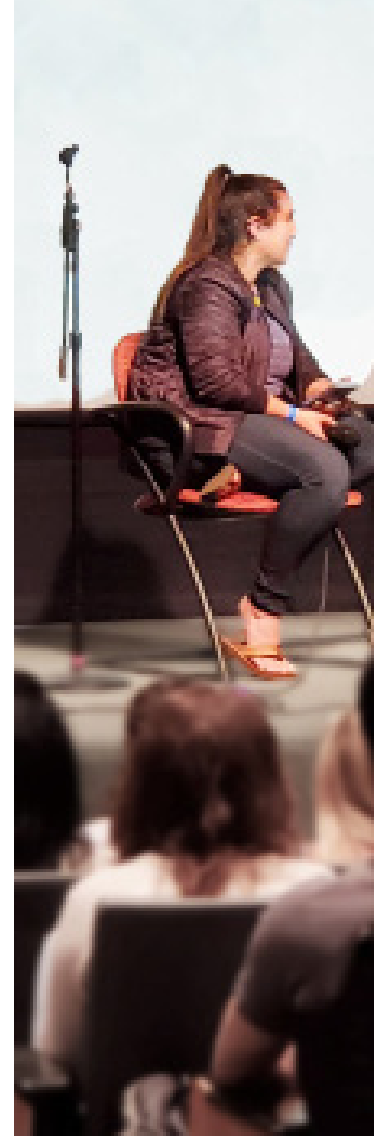
At Northeastern University, in partnership with Huskies for Israel, ZOA Campus hosted Shay Rubenstein, an expert in Israel advocacy and public diplomacy. Rubenstein focused on how to effectively defend Israel both in the classroom and in social settings.

In one of the premier events of the academic year, Mosab Hassan Yousef, known as the Son of Hamas and the Green Prince, gave an impassioned lecture at the University of San Diego in partnership with

ZOA Campus, Tritons for Israel and UC San Diego Hillel. Hassan Yousef, the son of one of the founders of the Hamas terror organization and a former intelligence operative, gave an eye-opening talk about the reality of Hamas' antisemitic and genocidal ambitions against Israel and about wider Middle Eastern geopolitics.

In the lead up to this year's Super Bowl, ZOA Campus partnered in a special ACTathon event for Boston-area Jewish teens at Gillette Stadium. Organized through Robert Kraft's philanthropy and the Israeli American Council, this event brought together students from the Jewish community to raise awareness about antisemitism in society and in sports through new, creative social media campaigns.

Recognizing the importance, particularly this year, of showing their love and support for Israel, hundreds of Zionist students turned out on dozens of campuses to celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut. ZOA Campus co-sponsored events and festivities at Emory University, UMass Amherst, UC Davis, Tulane University, Baruch College, UC San Diego, Cal Poly SLO, Florida Atlantic University, and other schools.



Mosab Hassan Yousef at the University of San Diego



Dr. Eric Mandel speaks to students at Florida Atlantic University



Combating Antisemitism and Support for Terrorism

ZOA Campus Fellows led the defeat of an anti-Israel “ceasefire” resolution at Florida International University and the successful passage of the IHRA definition of antisemitism at the University of Miami. We worked closely with ZOA’s Center for Law and Justice to aid students facing antisemitism and pressure university administrators to address rising antisemitism and open support for Hamas on their campuses.

ZOA Campus worked with student leaders and the Jewish community at Florida Atlantic University to compel the resignation of antisemitic professor Nicole Morse, a rabid Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP) supporter and anti-Israel and Hamas-sympathizing propagandist, who had been spreading lies and hate in her teaching role.

During the surge of antisemitic student encampments in April 2024, we rallied our network of ZOA Campus Fellows and students. At Northeastern University’s encampment, our students proudly displayed Israeli flags and distributed materials supplied by ZOA. We organized counter-protests at Florida Atlantic University, Florida International University, and other institutions, demonstrating the Jewish community’s resilience.



ZOA’s Campus Fellow and students from Huskies for Israel table at Northeastern University

GET INVOLVED!

ZOA Campus Fellowship

This year's outstanding class of over 30 ZOA Campus Fellows hailed from such schools as Rutgers University, Princeton University, UMass Amherst, UC Berkeley, UC Davis, University of Miami, CCNY, and Northeastern University. Our Fellows coordinated programs that educated students and empowered them to be proud advocates for Israel, and helped them combat antisemitism in their communities.

ZOA's Summer Internship Program

ZOA Campus hosted four outstanding student leaders in our 2024 summer internship program, from New York University, Boston University, Rutgers University, and UC Santa Barbara. Our interns helped create educational infographics and material for campus and social media use and participated in advocacy training sessions led by ZOA Campus staff.

Expanding our Presence on Social Media

Our Social Media and Digital Content Coordinator continued to deliver real-time updates and breaking news stories. We focused on debunking anti-Israel and pro-Hamas propaganda on social media by creating flyers, infographics, and fact sheets for both social media use and campus tabling.

Since October 7, ZOA Campus' social media engagement has surged over 70%. In collaboration with organizations such as SSI, End Jew Hatred, and prominent pro-Israel activists and influencers, we are expanding our reach and bringing valuable content to a broader audience. We have developed and disseminated resources to equip students with the necessary information to counteract false narratives and advocate effectively for themselves and for Israel. 🇺🇸



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ZOA at the 2024 Israel Day Parade on 5th Avenue, NYC





ZOA Rally in Times Square Energizes Israel Supporters

The ZOA thanks all our friends for joining our successful “ZOA/World Values Support for Israel Rally, Yom HaZikaron Memorial and Yom HaAtzmaut Concert” in Times Square on Monday, May 13, 2023. Over 700 people attended, and CBS News, Newsmax TV, and local media outlets provided significant coverage of the rally.

The rally featured keynote speaker ZOA National President Morton A. Klein; Master of Ceremonies, World Values Network Rabbi Shmuley Boteach;

Harvard Law Professor Emeritus Alan Dershowitz; Lady Anya Gillinson; Nissim Louk (father of October 7 victim Shani Louk); superstar musicians Gad Elbaz and Matisyahu’s son Laivy Miller; and others. An enthusiastic crowd demonstrated their love and support for Israel and all her people, and their concern for the Biden administration’s troubling and dangerous policies toward Israel in these difficult times.

ZOA thanks the New York City Police Department for making sure that everyone stayed safe and secure. 🇺🇸



Rabbi Shmuley Boteach, Prof. Alan Dershowitz, Morton Klein



Lady Anya Gillinson, Mort Klein



Musical performance by Gad Elbaz



Musical performance by Laivy Miller

ZOA AROUND THE COUNTRY



For Jews around the world, this has been a year of overwhelming pain and suffering. Our anguish has been compounded not only by the world's seeming indifference to the mass slaughter of innocent Jewish men, women and children in Israel, but also by the frightening realization that Jew-hatred is a continuing and skyrocketing problem around the world.

Yet the Jewish people remain strong and resilient. We have rallied together and stayed steadfast in our support for our ancestral homeland, Israel.

ZOA's regional directors work every day to fight antisemitism, stand up for Israel, and educate their communities about the critical importance of the U.S.-Israel relationship.



KOBI EREZ

ZOA Michigan
Executive
Director

MICHIGAN

ZOA Michigan's Billboards Condemn Jew-Hatred and Support Israel – and Get National Attention

On April 22, 2024, following a wave of harassment and intimidation endured by Jewish students at the University of Michigan, ZOA Michigan sponsored a billboard on US-23 near the university that proclaimed, “Stop Jewish Hatred on Campus.” This billboard echoed two similar billboards that ZOA Michigan sponsored earlier in April on the I-275 highway, west of Dearborn, bearing messages of solidarity with Israel.

ZOA Michigan sponsored the billboard near the University of Michigan in response to the worsening situation for Jewish students on that campus following the Hamas terrorist attack in Israel on October 7, 2023. Students made numerous complaints to ZOA Michigan expressing fear for their safety. Their fears were exacerbated by pro-Hamas demonstrations on the campus calling for Israel's elimination and the genocide of Jews, often punctuated by Nazi symbols and slogans.

The university showed appalling indifference to the antisemitic harassment and intimidation that Jewish students were being subjected to and instead rewarded it. University senior Salma Hamamy, president of the anti-Israel group that calls itself “Students Allied for Freedom and Equality” (SAFE), posted on her Instagram, “Until my last breath, I will utter death to every single individual who supports the Zionist state. Death and more. Death and worse.” Hamamy was arrested in November 2023 during an anti-Israel sit-in at the office of the university's president, Santa Ono, and was part of a stand-off with riot police near Detroit at a campaign event for President Joe Biden in February 2024. She was also among the protesters who set up a tent encampment on the campus.

“We put up the billboard to get the university’s attention. It’s time for enforcement. There must be serious consequences for those breaking the law and inciting antisemitism.”

– ZOA Michigan President Sheldon Freilich

The University of Michigan disgracefully honored Hamamy and SAFE by giving them the 2024 Martin Luther King Jr. Spirit Award. This award is supposedly bestowed on those who “best exemplify” Dr. King’s “leadership and extraordinary vision.” But as the university should have appreciated, Hamamy and SAFE do not fall in that category, since they do not exemplify Dr. King’s belief in nonviolence or his understanding that anti-Zionism is antisemitism.

Sheldon Freilich, ZOA Michigan president, explained why ZOA Michigan sponsored the billboard: “The university was failing to respond to concerned students, parents, and alumni who contacted U of M, urging that it take action to stop violations of the university’s own code of conduct and infractions of the law. We put up the billboard to get their attention. It’s time for

enforcement. There must be serious consequences for those breaking the law and inciting antisemitism.”

From April 8 to April 29, 2024, as part of ZOA Michigan’s billboard campaign, drivers on the I-275 highway also saw billboards declaring solidarity with Israel. These billboards featured messages such as “Our Votes Count” and “Terrorism Isn’t Just Israel’s Problem,” and they asserted that “Americans Stand With Israel.”

Freilich explained: “Despite the extremist rhetoric coming out of Dearborn, most Americans realize that Israel is fighting not only for its own survival but is on the front lines of the war against global terrorism. We expect our government representatives to show unequivocal support for Israel as it faces down the growing existential threat from Iran.”



Kobi Erez (right) at U of M

“This rally sends the message to the entire university community that there is strong support for Israel and that we are proud of our Jewish state.”

– ZOA Michigan Executive Director Kobi Erez

ZOA Michigan Proudly Participates in Pro-Israel Rally at the University of Michigan

In April 2024, ZOA Michigan joined more than 100 University of Michigan students and community members at a university rally, to mark six months since the Hamas massacre and to demand that university officials finally effectively address the intimidation of Jewish students. Attendees displayed Israeli flags and posters with photos of the hostages held in Gaza.

ZOA Michigan Executive Director Kobi Erez said, “Students have shared with us how upsetting it is to have to walk through protests almost every week on this campus. This rally shows that pro-Israel students will not be intimidated by violent protesters. And it sends the message to the entire university community that there is strong support for Israel at U of M and that we are proud of our Jewish state.”

ZOA Michigan Boosts Israel’s Hasbara Outreach at Multicultural Fair

ZOA Michigan played a pivotal role in boosting Israel’s Hasbara outreach campaign at the 19th annual Schoolcraft Community College Multicultural Fair, held in Livonia. The event attracted some 1,500 students and area residents, who explored the cultures, traditions, and histories of dozens of countries, including Israel.

ZOA Michigan spearheaded the effort to represent Israel at the fair, enlisting the help of area Israel advocates and long-time ZOA supporters, including Andre Douville, Dr. Eugene Greenstein, Rachel Baker, Sheldon Freilich, Ed Kohl, and Sue Kahn. The booths about Israel drew hundreds of people eager to learn more about the Jewish nation beyond the biased and often unfavorable media headlines.

The booths featured brochures and handouts such as Israel Pocket Facts and 3,000 Year History of Israel. Over 200 Israel tabletop flags were distributed along with popular grab-and-go Israeli cuisine, which proved to be a big hit.

A second booth, highlighting organizations supporting Israel, was managed by Tim Munger from the Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry. The response to these booths was overwhelmingly positive and impactful. A U.S. military veteran expressed to Munger, “I stand with Israel and I’m so glad you are here!” Many visitors were surprised to learn about Israel’s small size, countering the often-skewed media portrayal of Israel as a military and geographic giant.

The booths about Israel at the fair presented a crucial opportunity to counter misinformation and build support for Israel. ZOA Michigan intends to participate in the next multicultural fair, consistent with our commitment to educate the public about Israel and inspire support for the Jewish state, particularly at this time of growing antisemitism.

Vision for Victory: Strategic Insights on Gaza Unveiled at Bais Chabad Event

In March 2024, over 120 people attended a program sponsored by ZOA Michigan at Bais Chabad in West Bloomfield. The program featured a keynote address by ZOA Michigan's Executive Director, Kobi Erez, who detailed the consequences of the "land for peace" strategy and Israel's disengagement from Gaza, which he linked to the Hamas massacre on October 7, 2023.

Empowering Our Community: ZOA Michigan's Self-Defense Seminar

Given the surge in antisemitism and in safety fears among American Jews, ZOA Michigan proudly hosted a self-defense seminar on June 17, 2024. Peter Warshawsky, a brown belt in Brazilian jiu-jitsu and a competitive boxer, led the seminar, sharing his expertise with 40 enthusiastic participants. Warshawsky introduced the Ten Commandments of Self-Defense, covering essential topics such as conflict avoidance, protective postures, and techniques to disorient attackers.

This seminar was a testament to ZOA's unwavering commitment to ensuring the safety and security of Jewish Americans. As the ancient saying goes,

אם אין אָני לִי, מִי לִי
*If I am not for myself,
who will be for me?*

Honoring Our Fallen IDF Heroes: Welcoming Their Families to Michigan

In July 2024, ZOA Michigan welcomed Revital Shamir and Neora Swid, both of whom lost their husbands, Moti and Bchor, on October 7, 2023. These brave men gave their lives to protect their land and people.

Revital and her two children (ages 5 years and 5 months) and Neora with her three little girls (ages 8, 5, and 3) joined us for 10 days of an all-expenses-paid respite in Michigan. At a community event co-sponsored by ZOA Michigan and Bais Chabad of West Bloomfield, we heard their moving stories of courage and resilience. We also honored the memories and heroism of Moti, Bchor and fallen IDF soldier Ilay Zisser, brother of Lior Zisser-Yogev, the community's Shlichah through the Jewish Federation of Detroit. 🇺🇸



Revital Shamir (center-left) with Kobi Erez at the Bais Chabad event

GREATER PHILADELPHIA



**STEVE
FELDMAN**

Greater
Philadelphia
ZOA Executive
Director

Before October 7, 2023, Greater Philadelphia ZOA was fully engaged in various educational, advocacy and outreach initiatives and activities. But the massacre, rape and wounding of thousands of Israelis by Palestinian Arabs on October 7, 2023 – and the unprecedented Jew-hatred and anti-Jewish/anti-Zionist activity in the Greater Philadelphia region that sprung from these atrocities – created unprecedented challenges that needed Greater Philadelphia ZOA's expertise, experience and creativity. We met those challenges and came out fighting each time while also engaging in our trademark pro-active advocacy for Israel and the Jewish people.

Philadelphia has been the hub of some of the most aggressive and relentless Jew-hatred and anti-Jewish "activism" from Arab, Islamist and yes, Jewish groups and individuals. There are protests and demonstrations somewhere in our region almost daily; teach-ins for students and faculty; "pro-Palestinian" walkouts by high school students; social media and news media incitement; antisemitic graffiti and other vandalism; and even public burnings of American and Israeli flags.

To the Rescue!

Greater Philadelphia ZOA created a new concept and advocacy tool that we unveiled in January 2024: our "Information Ambulance," which we send throughout the region to "rescue the truth" from propagandists and Jew-haters who lie and demonize the Jewish people and the Jewish state as they attempt to indoctrinate the public against Jews and Israel.

The Ambulance – a mobile ad truck

bearing our ZOA logo and contact information and displaying a series of alternating messages that we created and update periodically – has innovatively brought facts and rational thinking to the public at prominent locations and events throughout the region. Our Information Ambulance has traveled to university campuses, Independence Mall, shopping centers, supermarkets, the areas outside the offices of anti-Jewish organizations, the areas outside the offices of media outlets, and the areas at or adjacent to key commercial and tourist areas. Our Ambulance has also traveled to anti-Israel marches and events, and even to the site of the National Education Association's national convention in Philadelphia where anti-Israel resolutions were under consideration.

Here are some of the messages that our Information Ambulance has brought to campuses and many other venues in our region:

"Not a single Palestinian in Gaza would have died had Hamas not attacked Israel on Oct. 7";

"Teachers must teach facts and not anti-Jewish lies. Contact your local school board";

"Israel: Homeland of the Jewish People for 3,400 years! There is no 'occupation'";

"'Genocide'? Israel saves countless Palestinian lives every single day."

Our Information Ambulance has been popular and met with enthusiasm. We have received calls and emails requesting that our Ambulance travel to other areas outside of Greater Philadelphia to broaden our impact on the public.

Showing Our Appreciation

Greater Philadelphia ZOA honored a number of individuals for their leadership and advocacy on behalf of the Jewish people and Israel, especially since the October 7 massacre and the meteoric increase in Jew-hatred. Our “Night of Appreciation” event took place on September 18, 2024.

Our honorees were Judith M. Krupnick, businesswoman and philanthropist, who received our Pillar of the Community Award; U.S. Senator John Fetterman (D-PA), who was given our Defender of

Israel Award; Rabbi Ira Flax of Har Zion Temple, who received the Guardian of Zion Award; Noah Rubin, a courageous University of Pennsylvania student leader in the campus’ pro-Israel community, who was given the Future Is Now Award; and talk-radio program hosts Dom Giordano and Rich Zeoli, who received the Ben Hecht Award for Outstanding Journalism.

Each year, our Night of Appreciation is among the most popular and highly anticipated Zionist events in the region.

Fighting the Information War Against Israel

Just 10 days after the Hamas-led massacre in Israel, the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, one of our region’s largest and most influential news outlets, published one of the most vicious and misleading cartoons in the paper’s history. The cartoon depicted a military boot labeled “Israel” about to step on and crush tiny individuals labeled “Hamas.” The paper’s staff cartoonist did not draw this cartoon; a syndicated cartoonist did. Shamefully, it was this cartoon that the *Inquirer*’s newsroom leadership selected from the plethora of editorial cartoons they could choose from.

Steve Feldman, Greater Philadelphia ZOA’s executive director, immediately contacted the paper’s publisher, editor-in-chief and editorial-page editor, and followed up with a fiery letter not only condemning the newspaper, but also accusing it of fomenting Jew-hatred. The cartoon, Steve noted, was completely inaccurate – Israel’s military is the most humane in the world – and the *Inquirer* had dangerously “painted . . . a target on the head of every Jewish person who lives in the Philadelphia region.”



The Philadelphia Inquirer

No Nuance

By Steve Feldman, executive director, Greater Philadelphia Chapter of ZOA

On Oct. 7, Palestinian Arabs slaughtered at least 1,400 Israelis — mostly Jewish men, women, and children. An additional 4,000 have been injured — many are in critical condition. In the streets of Philadelphia, people are waving PLO flags, calling for genocide against Jews, openly justifying the slaughter of Jews, and praising those who slaughtered Jews. Why would *The Inquirer* pour gasoline on this fire? The editorial cartoon published on Oct. 17 has only one purpose: to foment more Jew hatred. The *Inquirer*, in an overly simplistic fashion, used a cartoon bereft of any nuance to tell its readers that Jews are crushing Arab and Muslim civilians underneath a military boot.

No matter what one may think or feel about what is going on in the Middle East, the fact is:

Israel does the exact opposite of what the published cartoon asserts. There is no nation and no military in the world that goes to the lengths that Israel does — including jeopardizing the lives of its soldiers and its citizens — to issue warnings and alerts to intentionally avoid or minimize civilian casualties.

Time will tell whether the editorial cartoon published will incite someone to act upon their new or amplified Jew hatred. There are a lot of violent, trigger-happy people in this city. Hamas, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and Palestinian Islamic Jihad have placed a target on the head of every Jewish person who lives in Israel. Has *The Inquirer* painted a similar target on the head of every Jewish person who lives in the Philadelphia region?

Editor’s note: *The Inquirer* Editorial Board has issued an apology for the publication of the editorial cartoon on Oct. 17.

Steve Feldman to the Inquirer: Your cartoon “painted . . . a target on the head of every Jewish person who lives in the Philadelphia region.”

The newspaper printed Steve's letter – and gave it uncharacteristic prominence. The *Inquirer* also took the rarest of actions for a newspaper: It published an apology for printing this cartoon.

In recent months, the *Inquirer* published other letters authored by Steve Feldman. Steve was also a guest on multiple talk-radio programs to give his analysis of issues related to the October 7 massacre, and to comment on various anti-Jewish incidents that have plagued our region.

Greater Philadelphia ZOA monitors Israel-related reports by TV and radio stations and we follow up with decision-makers when the reports are inaccurate, misleading or incite hatred of Jews or Israel. In some cases, our follow-up has led decision-makers to make appropriate corrections and changes.

In addition to fighting the information war in the media, Greater Philadelphia ZOA has been among the leaders in our region in addressing Jew-hatred and misinformation/indoctrination about Israel in the field of education. We visited several university campuses multiple times to speak with and support students who were the victims of antisemitic attacks and persecution. We worked with numerous parents of high school and college students to advise them on action steps, strategy and coping mechanisms when their children faced antisemitism and anti-Israelism. We spoke with superintendents and school board members in multiple public school districts in our region about the Jew-hatred in their schools, perpetrated by both students and faculty.

Going on the Offense About Defense

Greater Philadelphia ZOA facilitated a number of self-defense workshops and a class on firearms safety. Our most recent workshops were: "Developing a Personal and Home Protection Plan" and "Stop the Bleed" (a special first-aid technique for a severe bleeding injury); and "Self-Defense Firearm Basics, Legal Use of Force, Violent Encounters and Their Aftermath, Gear and Gadgets – What You Need and Where to Get It." The classes were deliberately small in size to provide personalized instruction to attendees.

Elections

Greater Philadelphia ZOA recently elected officers and new regional board members. Roy Kardon, a longtime ZOA member and regional board member, was elected board chair. Newly elected board members joining re-elected members are Peter S. Friedman, Malka Kantor-Rapkin, Richard Pardys and Philip S. Rosenzweig.

Kevin Ross was re-elected as co-president; joining him in that position is the newly elected Lynne K. Lechter. Other newly elected officers are Bruce Holberg, first-vice president; Pnina Mintz, vice president; and Gerri Richmond, recording secretary. They join re-elected vice-presidents Ruth C. Gleit and Kevin Williams, and treasurer Leonard Getz. 🇺🇸

PITTSBURGH

Americans Gather and March for Israel After the Hamas Massacre

Hamas' brutal massacre in Israel on October 7, 2023, shocked the world. Everything we do, all the events in which we participate, have October 7 in the background. This date marked the "beginning" of the current year.

On November 14, 2023, approximately 300,000 Jews and allies converged on Washington, D.C. for the "Americans March for Israel" rally at the National Mall. ZOA Pittsburgh Executive Director Stuart Pavilack was there, along with Greater Philadelphia Executive Director Steve Feldman and Director of ZOA's Government Relations Department, Dan Pollak. The rally featured an amazing lineup of Jewish leaders, American political leaders, survivors' relatives, and musicians. The three-hour program concluded with a rousing message from Pastor John Hagee, founder and chairman of the 10-million-member Christians United for Israel. Pastor Hagee received the ZOA's Adelson Defender of Israel Award in 2014.



Stuart at the "Americans March for Israel" rally in Washington, D.C.

STUART PAVILACK

ZOA Pittsburgh Executive Director



Menorah lighting at Point Park University (from left): Chabad House on Campus co-directors, Mrs. Sara Weinstein and Rabbi Shmuel Weinstein; Ira M. Frank, ZOA Pittsburgh treasurer and past president; and Point Park University representatives

ZOA Pittsburgh Co-Sponsors Chanukah Celebration at Point Park University

Together with Chabad on Campus, ZOA Pittsburgh sponsored a menorah lighting in celebration of Chanukah at Point Park University. In 1933, Dorothy and L. Herbert Finkelhor, a Jewish couple, founded the Business Training College in downtown Pittsburgh, which eventually became Point Park University.

This may have been the first time in the university's history that it hosted an event to commemorate Chanukah.

ZOA Pittsburgh's Scholarship to Israel Program

ZOA's oldest continuously run program is Pittsburgh's Scholarship to Israel Program. Founded in 1962 by the late Hy Kimel, the program seeks to complement what students learn in their synagogues and homes and nurture their love and support for Israel.

Students hailing from six southwestern Pennsylvania counties, who will be juniors and seniors in the fall, are eligible for one of three \$1,000 scholarships to be used on a structured trip to Israel. Each candidate must complete an application and submit an essay on the topic, "What the State of Israel and Zionism Mean to Me."

This year's scholarship recipients:

**Sima
Reinherz**



In her essay, Sima wrote that Israel is very personal to her: "I never met my great-grandfather, but I know he left Poland in 1935, emigrated to Israel and helped build up the country in its early years." Sima's parents are Ariella and Adam Reinherz.

**Azi
Knoll**



In his essay, Azi also noted his family's connection to Israel: "When Hitler came to power my great-Saba realized that things were going to get worse. . . . He decided to move to Israel, pleaded with his family to do the same. . . . His parents and most of his family were killed by the Nazis." Azi's parents are Rebecca and David Knoll.

**Mandel
Eisenberg**



Mandel Eisenberg wrote, "Israel is my homeland, my history, my people, and most importantly, it is a symbol of hope and inspiration to all the Jewish People." Mandel's parents are Naomi and Nachy Eisenberg.

Sima and Azi will be attending the Mach Hach BaAretz (Make Israel Yours) program run by Bnei Akiva. Mendel will be attending NCSY's "Israel ID" program.

ZOA Pittsburgh thanks our members who have underwritten this program, a favorite of the membership. 🇺🇸

FLORIDA

It's been one year since I joined the incredible ZOA team and I am so excited to be working with the most important Zionist organization that protects the rights and interests of the Jewish people and the State of Israel. Our Florida chapter is expanding! We have eight incredible new Florida advisory board members. We have also formed a ZOA Young Adult Steering Committee of 11 passionate, dedicated young Zionists. This new committee is not only critical to the future of our community, but also provides a place at the ZOA for students once they graduate from college.

ZOA Florida Educates the Community

Unfortunately, instead of gaining worldwide supporters after the brutal massacre of our people on October 7, 2023, a dramatic spike in antisemitism took place. In December 2023, Susan Tuchman, director of ZOA's Center for Law and Justice, joined us for a speaking tour in Orlando, Aventura, and Hollywood. Susan described the ZOA's pioneering legal efforts to fight antisemitism in schools and

on college campuses and protect Jewish students' legal right to a safe and welcoming learning environment. At the Aventura program, Susan connected with parents who expressed concern about the harassment and intimidation that their daughter was being subjected to at Emerson College in Boston. Working directly with this student, Susan ensured that Emerson took steps to protect her.



ALLISON ZUR

ZOA Florida Executive Director



Susan speaking to guests at a ZOA parlor meeting in Hollywood



Susan speaking in Aventura about the war on campus against Israel and Jews



Susan Tuchman, ZOA FL board member Dr. Dan Layish, and Allison Zur

In December 2023, Dan Pollak, Director of our Government Relations Department, came to Sarasota County for a speaking tour and then joined us again in South Florida in May 2024, to speak in Fort Lauderdale, Hollywood, Cooper City, and Aventura. Dan discussed how the relationship between the U.S. and Israel is being sorely tested and how the ZOA is working diligently to maintain the historic U.S.-Israel alliance. Dan also reinforced to our supporters the importance of maintaining good relationships with our political leaders and educating them about the reality of the Arab war against Israel.



Dan Pollak speaking in Sarasota

In August and December 2023, and in January and March 2024, ZOA National President Morton Klein spoke to sold-out audiences in Jacksonville, Fort Lauderdale, Plantation, Palm Beach, and Davie, inspiring attendees not to stay quiet in the face of antisemitism and to be informed, loud, and proud Zionists. Mort also described the critical role that the ZOA plays on college campuses, on Capitol Hill, and in the courts.



Mort Klein at a parlor meeting in West Palm Beach



Dan speaking in Aventura



Mort at a parlor meeting in Plantation



ZOA Florida's 2024 Gala

Our sold-out ZOA Florida Gala in March 2024 had a star-studded list of honorees: U.S. Rep. Elise Stefanik, recipient of the Dr. Miriam & Sheldon G. Adelson Defender of Israel Award; U.S. Rep. Brian Mast, recipient of the Dr. Bob Shillman Zionism Award; Chris Ruddy, the founder and CEO of Newsmax Media Inc., recipient of the Zionist Hero Award; and Dr. Paul Tartell, ZOA National Board Vice Chair and recipient of the Pillar of the Community Award. Global philanthropist Dr. Miriam Adelson was our special guest of honor and introduced Rep. Stefanik. All of our honorees made it clear that there is no place for hatred of Zionists and Jews and that all of us must take steps to ensure the safety of our community.

Simon Falic introduced Chris Ruddy who condemned the lies in the media leading to growing hate against Jews. Mr. Ruddy assured the crowd that he will continue to fight against evil and lies because our freedoms are at stake. Mr. Ruddy also emphasized that Israelis are on the front line in the battle for freedom.

U.S. Rep. Brian Mast, who was introduced by Lewis and Helene Stahl, expressed his steadfast support for Israel. We do not need the “fancy rhymes” that our enemies chant on the streets, Rep. Mast said; we have the truth on our side. He encouraged the crowd to continue to be strong and unrelenting in our fight against terrorism.

After Dr. Adelson's introduction, U.S. Rep. Elise Stefanik made it clear that ZOA's voice is powerful in the halls of Congress and a vital part of the

conversation. ZOA's work truly has a lasting impact for generations to come, Rep. Stefanik said.

After he was introduced by ZOA National Board member Sheryl Silver, Dr. Paul Tartell inspired everyone to keep learning. “Knowledge is power,” he said. Dr. Tartell encouraged the audience to never stop learning the facts and to never stay silent in response to antisemitism and anti-Israelism. He also encouraged the audience to get out and spread the truth and educate others. This is exactly what ZOA is doing and will continue to do, he said.

ZOA National President Mort Klein gave a fiery speech on the Arab war against Israel. He concluded by quoting former U.S. Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr.: “A man must be a part of the actions and passions of his time.” Mort continued by quoting the Midrash in Esther which states, “If you keep silent now, if you refrain from protesting on behalf of your brethren, then woe to you in the day of judgment, for you had the opportunity to act, but did not act.” Mort made a promise that ZOA would continue to act and to fight with all of its heart and soul against the lies and dangers that Israel faces.

All of our honorees and guest speakers had something in common: They are not ashamed to stand up for good and truth, even when they find themselves alone in the crowd. This is how one lights a candle against the darkness of hatred and misinformation.

We are grateful to Lewis and Helene Stahl and to Elgie and Barbara Gibson for co-chairing our gala.

ZOA Florida Leadership

Thanks to the community members supporting the ZOA's work in Florida.

ZOA Florida Advisory Board Members

Richard Cravatts, Dr. Craig Deligdish, Lauren Gross, Allen Hamaoui, Bernard Hasten, Sergio Heumann, Steven Kruh, Marian Kruss, Paul Kruss, Eytan Laor, Dr. Dan Layish, Michael Marcus, Brent Rubin, Isabelle Sherman, Sheryl Silver, Lewis Stahl, Helene Stahl, Yitz Tuchman, Shelly Tuchman, Keith Wasserstrom, Madelyn Zelman

Young Adult Steering Committee Members

Nadav Alkoby, Ziv Baron, Ahuva Cerritelli, Harry Cohen, Tyler Fokshner, Matt Franzblau, Melissa Kelman, Justin Lakritz, Sabrina Muldoon, Tara Stiel, Jordan Weiden

Get Involved

If you are a young adult between the ages of 21 and 45, please join our ZOA Florida Young Adult Steering Committee!

Also, ZOA Florida is putting together three committees: Advocacy Committee; Development Committee; and Gala Committee.

Interested in getting involved and making an impact? Please reach out to Allison: azur@zoa.org.



Upcoming Events

January 12 & 13, 2025: Mort Klein will be speaking in Palm Beach County.

February 10, 2025: Kasim Hafeez will be speaking in Palm Beach County. (Once a radicalized Muslim from Pakistan who dreamed of becoming a terrorist, Kasim is now an outspoken Christian Zionist.) 🇺🇸

Engaging Young Professionals

In a time when it is more crucial than ever to engage the next generation in pro-Israel advocacy, the ZOA launched a groundbreaking Young Professionals initiative in New York City. Our Young Professionals Lunch on September 10, 2023, brought together over 20 passionate young Zionists. They heard powerful presentations by Adela Cojab and Ariella Noveck on the importance of combating antisemitism through activism and media. Adela is a legal advocate, media contributor and social media activist who waged a legal battle against antisemitism at NYU when she was an undergraduate there. Ariella Noveck is a journalist and co-founder of Shield Communications PR and Shield Giving, which are dedicated to supporting university students who are fighting campus antisemitism.

This ZOA event not only provided a platform for insightful discussions but also laid the foundation for building a strong, enduring network of young professionals dedicated to Zionist efforts. Looking forward, we aim to expand these events and cultivate future leaders who will uphold and advance ZOA's mission. 🇺🇸



Adela Cojab describes her battle against antisemitism at NYU



Ariella Noveck describes educating the media world about antisemitism and other Jewish community issues



ZOA's Karen Amouyal and Jackie Shafer with Ariella Noveck and Adela Cojab (center)



ZOA Goes on the Road to Educate about Zionism and Israel

The horrific attacks by the terrorist group Hamas on October 7, 2023, shockingly provoked the expression of relentless lies about Israel and Zionism, particularly on college campuses. The ZOA recognized the crucial importance of educating the public – especially university students – about the legal and historical context of the Arab war against Israel, and the key role of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis (a past ZOA president) in the development of American Zionism and the creation of the State of Israel.

On ZOA's behalf, Akiba J. Covitz, Ph.D., a former professor of political science and associate dean at Harvard Law School, was invited to speak at the following institutions across the U.S.:

- University of Chicago Law School
- University of Chicago Law Students for Israel
- University of Chicago Hillel
- San Diego State University
- Congregation Shearith Israel of New York (the oldest synagogue in North America)
- Temple Israel (Sharon, MA)
- Rutgers Law School
- Jewish Federation of Greater Naples (FL)
- University of San Diego School of Law

The reception to Dr. Covitz's presentations was tremendous and ZOA's broadened reach was significant. Audience members included synagogue presidents, community leaders, undergraduate and graduate students, university faculty, law students, long-time ZOA supporters, as well as those looking for an organization that stands proudly by Israel and proudly for Zionism, especially when both are under constant attack. 🇺🇸



Akiba with attendees at his University of Chicago Law School presentation on February 1, 2024

ZOA PEOPLE

Profile:

Dr. Arthur Kook

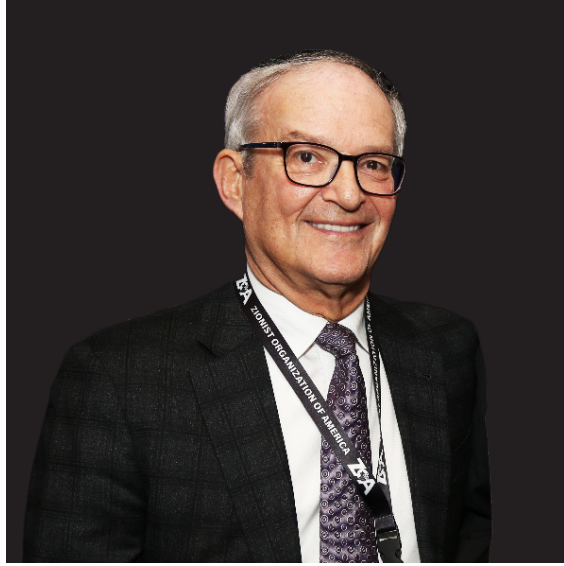
Dr. Arthur Kook, a member of the ZOA's National Board of Directors for more than 20 years, is a plain talker. He does not beat around the bush. He is proudly Jewish and a fierce and vocal supporter of the Jewish state of Israel.

Arthur attributes this to his "very strong Jewish upbringing." He and his brother grew up in New Jersey in a traditional Jewish family. They attended synagogue regularly and Arthur's parents were deeply involved in Jersey City's Jewish community.

"My parents wanted my brother and me to have a strong Jewish education," Arthur said, so he and his brother attended and graduated from what was then called the Yeshiva of Hudson County in Union City. Arthur later sent his own three children to the same yeshiva, which by then had been renamed the Yeshiva of North Jersey and relocated to Bergen County.

"At yeshiva day school, the students were taught to daven, study Torah and love Eretz Yisrael. We sang Hatikvah every day and put money in the pushke [a container to put money in for charity] for Israel," Arthur recalled. "From first grade on," he continued, "I had a strong attachment to Israel. There was a recognition of Eretz Yisrael and how we're all part of it."

After graduating from the yeshiva's high school, Arthur went to Rutgers University. Rutgers had a robust Judaic studies department and Arthur took advantage of it, enrolling in a number of Jewish studies courses, including studying Talmud for two years. He immersed himself in Jewish life at Rutgers. Arthur was part of Hillel and read Torah at Shabbos services. He also taught Talmud Torah at a conservative synagogue.



In his sophomore year at Rutgers, Arthur became observant, which he attributes to his yeshiva education: "Yeshiva had a profound effect on everything I did. One day I put on my yarmulke and that was that. I became observant."

After graduating from Rutgers, Arthur went on to Tufts University School of Dental Medicine in Boston. The program was intense, but he continued to find ways to build on his already strong relationship with his Jewish faith. After reaching out to the Boston rebbe, Arthur was connected with a rabbi who was also a Harvard-educated lawyer named Dovid Rothstein.

The relationship had a profound impact. Arthur regularly spent Shabbos and holidays with Rabbi Rothstein and his family. "The whole experience put me on a path of Jewish learning and Jewish studies and solidified my part in the Jewish world," Arthur explained. He remained close to Rabbi Rothstein even after he returned to New Jersey to practice dentistry and stayed in touch with Rabbi Rothstein's wife after the rabbi's untimely death.

"From first grade on," Arthur recalled, "there was a recognition of Eretz Yisrael and how we're all part of it."

For more than twenty years, Arthur has been active in the ZOA and dedicated to its mission.

In 1977, Arthur started his dental practice in Oakland, New Jersey, where he is still practicing today. He has a general practice with a special focus on cosmetic and restorative dentistry. He and his wife Linda live in Englewood, New Jersey, where they raised their children.

Despite a busy family and professional life, Arthur has always made time for advocating for Israel. He became involved in NORPAC, a nonpartisan political action committee founded and led by volunteers and dedicated to supporting and building relationships with pro-Israel candidates for political office and members of Congress. (Dr. Ben Chouake, a ZOA National Board member, is the national president of NORPAC.) In 1986, Linda and Arthur hosted a NORPAC program featuring Congressman Vin Weber from Minnesota, a staunch supporter of Israel. It was the first of many instances where Linda and Arthur actively gave their time and financial assistance to friends of Israel.

More than 20 years ago, Arthur's dear friend, Stanley Rosenberg z"l, paved the way for Arthur's involvement in the One Israel Fund (an organization dedicated to supporting Jewish life in Judea and Samaria) and in the ZOA. Stanley was a beloved long-time member of the ZOA's National Board of Directors, until his death in 2020. "Stanley and I had a tremendous number of interests in common," Arthur said. "Jewish study, love of Israel. What it means to be a true friend and support Israel. Stanley was very involved in the ZOA and introduced me to Mort Klein. After meeting Mort, I immediately joined

the ZOA's National Board."

Since then, Arthur has been active in the ZOA and dedicated to its mission. In addition to attending the ZOA's annual galas in Manhattan, Arthur is a regular at the ZOA's advocacy missions to Washington, D.C., where ZOA activists meet with lawmakers and their staffers to promote and discuss ZOA issues. Typically, Arthur is a designated group leader at these meetings, because he is knowledgeable about the issues, has experience communicating with lawmakers, and encourages informative and constructive discourse.

In 2020, at Mort Klein's request, Arthur represented the ZOA coalition at the World Zionist Congress (WZC) – the international "parliament of the Jewish people" and the "overall supreme ideological and policy-making body of the Zionist movement" – when it convened in Poland to determine the policies that would be adopted in support of Israel and Jewish communities around the world. Before Mort Klein asked him to attend on the ZOA's behalf, Arthur never imagined himself in Warsaw, Poland – much less delivering a speech there. This was the place where millions of Jews had perished during the Holocaust and where many Poles acquiesced and were even complicit in their massacre.

Despite his misgivings, Arthur felt privileged to be asked to represent the ZOA at the WZC. When he was there, he found the experience "very meaningful. Everyone there was a true Zionist."

Arthur delivered the opening remarks at the WZC, explaining that "today we are at a crossroads. The Jewish community

in America is under attack in ways once thought unimaginable. Politicians and prominent media outlets are either attacking us or standing aside, unwilling to confront the rising tide of antisemitism in America.”

Calling this a “most critical moment for Am Yisrael,” Arthur urged support for the ZOA coalition at the WZC. “The ZOA is at the forefront in promoting love of Israel and defense of the only democracy in the Middle East. It’s at the vanguard of exposing antisemitism in all its forms,” he said.

Arthur also spoke on the ZOA’s behalf at a rally in Queens in 2019, and at another event in Brooklyn’s Brighton Beach, comprised of more than 1000 Russian-speaking people, urging them to support the ZOA slate at the WZC. Arthur immediately connected with the crowd, sharing that “my bubby was from Ukraine, so we have a lot in common.”

Arthur is emphatic that “ZOA is needed more than ever. There is no other organization that focuses on the truth of what’s happening and garners support for Israel in all the right ways.” While noting that the ZOA is often labeled right wing, Arthur does not see it that way: “ZOA is not right wing or left wing. We simply tell the truth.”

Years ago, during his first trip to Israel in 1972, Arthur recalls attending a prominent

rabbi’s lecture in Jerusalem. The rabbi’s sentiments – that Israeli concessions to the Arabs would never bring peace – resonated with Arthur then. They still do. “Those who still support a ‘two-state solution’ are promoting a false narrative,” in Arthur’s view. “All those machinations are not based on a realistic appraisal of the situation. Facts and history show that the Palestinian Arabs have refused numerous attempts at achieving a peaceful resolution of the issues. Under Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush, fantastically generous offers were met with utter rejection and murderous violence.

“My generation has been the recipient of Hashem’s grace and Chesed,” Arthur continued. “We are the first generation in close to 2000 years that has been born into a world with a Jewish state. We should never allow the acknowledgement of this Bracha to go without a daily commitment to act with strength and pride to partner with Am Yisrael in preserving Jewish destiny. It is precisely this resolute powerful responsibility that is the mission and calling card of the ZOA.”

Dr. Arthur Kook is clear-eyed about the Arab war against Israel and is proudly and firmly committed to the safety and security of the Jewish people and the Jewish state of Israel. We are grateful for his commitment to the ZOA and to our mission and appreciate his many years of support and leadership. 🇺🇸

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focuses on the
truth of what’s
happening and
garners support
for Israel in all
the right ways.”**



Elizabeth Berney, Esq.
Director, Research
& Special Projects



ZOA's Leadership at the World Zionist Congress

ZOA supporters can be very proud of the Zionist Organization of America's 127 years of activism at the World Zionist Congress (WZC) – the “parliament of the Jewish people,” established by Theodore Herzl in 1897.

The ZOA (which was then called the “Federation of American Zionists”) was the only American group at the famous First Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland, held in August 1897. The First Zionist Congress adopted the Basel Program, which called for Jewish resettlement in the Land of Israel and stated: “Zionism aims at establishing for the Jewish people a publicly and legally assured home in Palestine.” (“Palestine” was used at that time as a purely geographic term for the region, which was then under Ottoman rule. There was never a Palestinian Arab state. Jews living in the region were referred to as “Palestinians.”) After the 1897 WZC, Herzl wrote: “At Basel, I founded the Jewish State. If I said this out loud today, I would be greeted by universal laughter. In five years perhaps, and certainly in fifty years, everyone will perceive it.” Indeed, 50 years and nine months later, Israel declared its independence.

Sadly, Herzl passed away in 1904 before his vision could be realized. However, in the ensuing years, the early Zionists – including the ZOA – continued to work for the dream of a Jewish state, and they successfully obtained the binding international legal international agreements guaranteeing the Jewish people's rights to the Land of Israel.

Today, the ZOA continues to play a major role at the WZC, which helps guide Israel's national institutions, including the World Zionist Organization (WZO), the Jewish Agency and Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael. The full WZC meets once every five years, and a “mini-Congress,” called the Zionist General Council – or the Va'ad Hapoel (working committee), consisting of a quarter of the full WZC's delegates – meets annually.

The ZOA, together with our ZOA Coalition of friends and allies, has successfully initiated and obtained the passage of numerous important resolutions that have international influence – including resolutions that some thought could not be adopted. For instance, to the surprise of those who thought this was impossible, ZOA initiated and successfully obtained passage of the WZC's anti-BDS resolution in 2015 – which included preventing BDS targeting Judea and Samaria. One of the results of passing this resolution was that radical leftwing groups in the WZC removed their open calls to boycott products produced by Jews in Judea-Samaria and eastern Jerusalem.

As another example, in 2019, ZOA initiated and succeeded in passing a series of resolutions to strengthen worldwide anti-BDS efforts – including the adoption of “buy-cott” programs to encourage purchases of Israeli products; a resolution “calling upon the Israeli Government to apply Israeli sovereignty to the Jordan Valley, and also to act to promote settlement in these areas”; and a resolution requiring WZO entities, and recommending to all of Israel's national institutions, to use the correct terminology for Judea and Samaria – which is critical for defending the Jewish people's rights to the Jewish homeland.

In the most recent WZC Va'ad Hapoel in Jerusalem in February 2024, ZOA and our ZOA Coalition initiated and obtained the overwhelming passage of numerous important resolutions, including resolutions:

- Calling for Diaspora university leadership and governments to protect Jewish and pro-Israel students;
- Publicly condemning the Palestinian Authority (PA)'s "pay-to-slay" payments and terror incitement;
- Opposing allowing the PA/ PLO/ Fatah to govern Gaza;
- Condemning and calling for dismantling UNRWA (the UN organization that teaches Palestinian Arabs to hate and attack Jews, and whose employees participated in the October 7 atrocities);
- Condemning the International Committee of the Red Cross for failing to visit and assist the hostages that Hamas terrorists kidnapped from Israel and took to Gaza;
- Condemning the UN's violations of its charter, anti-Israel bias and refusal to condemn Hamas' October 7 atrocities, including sexual atrocities against women and children;
- Promoting and strengthening Aliyah;
- Calling for urgent Aliyah assistance to Jews facing extreme violence and the danger of extinction in India and other world communities;
- Condemning Iran's role in the October 7 atrocities and calling for holding Iran accountable;
- Condemning the October 7 atrocities and supporting Israel's goals of eradicating the

terrorist groups Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad; assuring that Hamas and PIJ can never attack Jews, Israelis and others again; and bringing home all remaining hostages; and

- Thanking, supporting and sending love and prayers to the brave IDF soldiers and security forces, and their families; displaced Israelis; bereaved families; and the hostages and their families.

At the WZC Va'ad Hapoel this year, we also visited the Jewish communities in the Gaza envelope (the southern region of Israel close to the Gaza border), and Ethiopian absorption centers, to give them strength and take their messages to the United States.

The ZOA has fought, and continues to fight, many battles at the WZC, including working to assure that the resources of Israel's national institutions are deployed for the benefit of all the Jewish people – including to rebuild the communities destroyed by terrorists; help communities in Judea and Samaria, combat antisemitism and enable Aliyah.

Back in 1897, just before the First World Zionist Congress, Theodore Herzl went to the Great Synagogue in Basel to pray for the success of his efforts to reestablish the Jewish state. He was honored with the Fifth Aliyah to bless the Torah reading.

Herzl wrote later: "I went to the Synagogue on the Sabbath before the Congress. The head of the community called me to come up to the Torah. I was more excited than in all the days of the Congress. The few words of the Hebrew blessing choked in my throat, more than the opening speech and the closing speech and the discussions."

The ZOA and ZOA National President Morton Klein were honored on this momentous occasion for ZOA's 125 years of extensive contributions to the WZC and for ZOA's extraordinary activism under Morton Klein's leadership.

In 2022, the WZC was held again in Basel, in the original hall of the First Zionist Congress, to commemorate the First World Zionist Congress' 125th anniversary. The ZOA and ZOA National President Morton Klein were honored on this momentous occasion for ZOA's 125 years of extensive contributions to the WZC and for ZOA's extraordinary activism under Morton Klein's leadership. ZOA's cherished friend and supporter, philanthropist and distinguished physician Dr. Miriam Adelson; WZO Chair Yaakov Hagoel; and TV anchor Hila Korach presented the award to Mort, following a beautiful speech by Dr. Adelson.

Perhaps most special of all, on the Shabbat just before the 2022 WZC, Mort was given the honor of being called to bless the Torah in the Great Synagogue of Basel where Herzl once stood. Mort was given the Fifth Aliyah – the Herzl Aliyah. He and everyone in the ZOA delegation prayed for blessings for all of Israel.

Today, delegates from the United States are elected once every five years. The next election is coming soon, in 2025. Sign-ups for candidates on the ZOA Coalition slate are happening now, so please contact Liz Berney (Liz@zoa.org) if you are interested in becoming a candidate or a partner on our slate. The ZOA Coalition slate presently includes ZOA and many friends and allies, all running together, including ZOA; Students Supporting Israel; One Israel Fund; End Jew Hatred; Americans Against Antisemitism; The Lawfare Project; NORPAC; American Friends of Likud; World Likud; JCC Watch; Ateret Cohanim; Russian Jewish groups; Persian Jewish groups; Syrian Jewish groups; Young Jewish Conservatives; and others.

Please remember to vote for the ZOA Coalition slate in 2025 so that we can continue our important, influential work at the World Zionist Congress. 🇺🇸



Dr. Miriam Adelson and WZO Chair Yaakov Hagoel with WZO honoree Morton Klein



Dr. Miriam Adelson and Morton Klein

ZOA Proudly Shares Our Employees' Commitment to Israel, In Israel

After Hamas' brutal massacre on October 7, 2023, all of us at the ZOA redoubled our efforts to defend Israel's safety and security and the safety and security of the Jewish people, wherever they live. Several valued members of the ZOA team went above and beyond, traveling to Israel during a time of war, to help, comfort and support the people of Israel and their communities.

We are proud to recognize these special people and to share the stories behind their journeys.

Allison Zur ZOA Florida Regional Director, Young Leadership Director

My family has an annual tradition of visiting Israel over Sukkot, one of our favorite holidays to be there. There are so many tourists, everyone is off from school and work, and there are celebrations all over the country.

What was supposed to be one of the happiest days on the Jewish calendar, Simchat Torah, turned into a nightmare.

On Saturday, October 7, I woke up to my first rocket siren attack in central Israel. You only have about 30 seconds to make it to a bomb shelter, depending on where you are in the country. Grabbing our two- and three-year-olds from their beds, my husband and I ran to the bomb shelter. At that time, we didn't realize how terrible things were going to get and how serious this attack was.

We turned on the Israeli news to see if there were any updates regarding the rockets (it's rare for central Israel to be attacked by rockets), and we soon understood that the entire country was being targeted and that HUNDREDS of terrorists from Gaza had infiltrated the border of Israel.

It wasn't too long before people from kibbutz communities in the south were calling in live to the news stations. They were hiding under their beds, or in their closets, whispering that they needed help. One 12-year-old girl called screaming hysterically that her father was being kidnapped. Israelis couldn't get through to the police station, first responders, or the army. Hamas took all of them out before they moved on to private homes. As a last resort and in a desperate plea for help, innocent civilians who were awakened by absolute terror, called into the news stations as the country – and my family – listened. It felt like living in a horror movie, but it was real. All too real.

It took me two days to work up the courage to leave the home we were staying in with my children and go downstairs to the playground. After about 10 minutes on the playground, there was a rocket attack. I had just over 30 seconds to get one child off of a slide and to



Allison and her husband, Ron Morag

get my other child, who was running around, to a building and run to a staircase; we had no time to get into a bomb shelter. We waited there until we heard the explosion and knew it was safe to leave. A week later, remnants from a rocket fell exactly where I had been with my children. It was big enough to have seriously injured or killed anyone who was in its way.

The urge to volunteer and do something surged in everyone. There were opportunities to volunteer EVERYWHERE – from visiting the injured in the hospital, to buying groceries for displaced families, donating items, helping soldiers get the tactical gear they needed, etc. It felt so good to see the country united and come together. The slogan “together we will win” was plastered all over the place and it brought me so much strength to see how strong and optimistic Israelis were, even during the hardest times.

The most moving part of my trip took place a couple of nights after Hamas' massacre against Israel. Hamas told everyone in the Tel Aviv area that there would be a rocket attack at 8:00 p.m. At 8:00 p.m., I went to the balcony, waiting to hear the siren. At 8:02, I saw every balcony fill up with people around me from neighboring buildings. At 8:05, with no planning at all, we all started singing “Hatikvah,” Israel's national anthem, waving Israeli flags, and turning the buildings' lights on and off. It was the embodiment of the anthem. We, the Jewish people, have eternal hope and an unbreakable spirit. We, the Jewish people, and the sovereign land of Israel, will not be robbed of our faith in our country, in our people, or our faith in our future.

Jackie Shafer

ZOA Communications Manager

During a conversation with some locals on my first trip to Israel, I said, “Oh my god, I love your country.” They replied, “No – it’s your country too! We are Am Yisrael. Family. You are home.”

This same message was conveyed to me each time I returned to Israel, about once a year. Thirteen years later after my first trip, when all the locals greeted me with shock and asked why I had decided to come back to Israel after the Hamas massacre, my answer was simple: “When something happens to family, you go home and help.”

In December 2023, I went to Israel on a 10-day volunteer mission with an organized group that’s sending Jews from all across the Diaspora to work on farms and in distribution centers, which are badly in need of laborers. We would work in the mornings and later were free to go off on our own.

I had the opportunity to visit Kibbutz Be’eri, 40 kilometers from Gaza. One of the residents, who showed me and my two friends around, took us to her parents’ house, where her mother was murdered by a terrorist but successfully saved her husband and grandson. She brought us to many houses and community centers. It looked like a tornado had gone through the kibbutz; some of the houses were completely destroyed while others were in perfect condition. Bicycles and chairs were toppled over throughout the community.

The resident who accompanied us told us stories of many of her friends, family, and neighbors and what happened to them that day, including her sister who had four children on October 6 but only two children on October 8. At the end of our visit, we tried to donate money to the kibbutz but our guide refused to take it, saying they now have all the items they need. When we asked what we could do to help, she came up with one answer: “Please tell at least 10 people what you saw. Because many people are already claiming it didn’t happen.”

I met Daniel and Neria Sharabi, brothers who were at the Nova music festival when Hamas attacked. They immediately jumped into action, with medic training under their belts, and not only survived the attack, but saved about 100 people. These young men have started a non-profit to help other survivors, most urgently with mental health care. There are many people who survived the attack, but the Sharabi brothers have seen that this does not guarantee that they will stay alive for very long; the brothers shared with us that there are survivors who have attempted or committed suicide. I arranged for them to come speak to my group to share their story and how we can help. The feedback I received from my group members was overwhelming, some saying that hearing from the Sharabis was the most meaningful part of their trip.

All of us in the volunteer group



were in our 20’s or 30’s, almost 100 people total. We talked about what it’s like at home, and mostly everyone had the same stories. The world is very bad right now for Jews. We did not feel safe in the various countries we came from and we shocked many Israelis when they learned that we felt much safer in Israel. Israelis used to seem so tough in a way that I thought Americans just can’t understand. But I understand it now. It’s the result of knowing that you are surrounded by people who hate seeing you alive.

Going back to Israel and being with all these other Jews from all over the world made it even clearer what Am Yisrael is. To me, it means the Nation is the People and the People are the Nation. We’re the same, we’re not different. The more hate crimes there are against Jewish people around the world, the stronger the Nation of Israel becomes. This is what I have seen with my own eyes.

Anna Avivi

ZOA Accounting Department

From January 9 to 29, my husband and I volunteered in Israel, driven by a heartfelt desire to actively engage in the Jewish narrative of resilience and unity after the challenging events of October 7. Our time at the moshav Bnei Netzarim became a meaningful endeavor, where we focused on tasks like planting tomatoes and harvesting broccoli. Volunteers from diverse corners of the world, ranging from South Africa to the Czech Republic and Hungary, joined us in this collective effort.

The moshav, still bearing the marks of a missile strike on one of its greenhouses, showcased the enduring spirit of the community. Despite the rebuilding progress, the insects and the lingering smell of rot served as stark reminders of the

challenges the community faced. Our primary responsibility became not just about agricultural work but also the act of contributing to the community's recovery.

Planting tomatoes and securing strings to guide vines upward represented more than a practical approach; it was a quiet determination to be a positive part of the ongoing Jewish story of resilience. Working alongside Thai workers in some greenhouses added layers of cultural exchange and camaraderie.

In addition to our agricultural endeavors, we seized the opportunity to uplift soldiers' spirits. My husband's guitar music and his family's barbecue provided moments of joy for soldiers on leave. The trip, marked by its necessity, carried with

it the hope that our next visit would be in a time of victory and peacetime. Am Israel Chai.



Jonathan Ginsberg

ZOA Campus Managing Director

My recent visit to Israel was a whirlwind of emotions. As soon as I landed at Ben Gurion Airport and swiped my Israeli passport through the automated border control machine, I had a quick look down at the atrium below, which normally would be filled with travelers, but was now practically empty. I could already sense within moments that this would be a very different visit than usual.

Individual cut-out signs of the over 130 Israeli hostages still being held in captivity by Hamas in Gaza

were displayed as I made my way down the walkway and out to the arrival hall. Before stepping onto the platform for the train to Jerusalem, I passed a large blue and white sign above the tracks that read B'yachad Nenatzeach – "Together we will win." Beside me, two female soldiers in uniform chatted, each alternating back and forth between their phones, weapons slung over their shoulders. On the opposite end of the platform, a young man in civilian clothes sat, looking deep in contemplation, an M4 under his arm. Despite the immediate signs that I had arrived in an Israel that was at war, my overriding emotion was that at least I was finally back home.

My family and I had initially booked our tickets before October 7. Ultimately, I decided to make the trip

solo and felt that now more than ever it was important to see family and friends and show my own personal solidarity. Upon ascending the hills of Jerusalem and stepping out into the cool January air, any signs of fatigue from my travels immediately dissipated.

I spent the majority of my trip between Jerusalem and Holon, where my in-laws and most of my family are based. I also had the chance to make it to Tel Aviv to visit with friends. I caught up with old friends from the army and work, including those who have been serving in Miluim (army reserve duty) and had only recently and temporarily returned to their families. Having updated my status with the IDF pertaining to my own reserve service, we reminisced and shared updates about our lives, the



unprecedented times we're living through, and everything in between.

While in Tel Aviv, I had a chance to also meet up with Karen Amouyal, my colleague at ZOA Campus, who is our Social Media and Digital Content Coordinator, based in Israel. We caught up in Sarona Market where Karen shared with me about daily life in Israel over the past three months and the range of emotions

Kobi Erez

ZOA Michigan Regional Director

Sitting on an El Al plane waiting to take off, I realized that, for the first time on my many flights to Israel, I was happy to see not even one empty seat on the plane. Despite the fact that Israel is considered a war zone – in fact, because of it – the Jewish people are more motivated to travel to our beloved land than ever before.

I traveled to Israel to volunteer in patrol units around Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria and to visit several of the Jewish communities ZOA has provided with protective gear and equipment. After the October 7 massacre, volunteer community patrol units were established or expanded as Israelis realized the pressing need to be able to defend their own neighborhoods from attacks.

While visiting some of the communities ZOA has supported, I was humbled by the sheer number of volunteers who took it upon themselves to protect their neighborhoods, even late into the night. I watched some of these incredible citizens finish their patrol shift at 6:00 a.m. and head straight to work.

felt every day. I was inspired by the volunteer work Karen had been doing in the community as well as with soldiers across the country. As I left a cafe in Tel Aviv to head back to Jerusalem and was on my way to one of the newly built light rail stations in the city, I spotted a large, illuminated sign which beamed Kulanu Am Echad – “We are all one people.” Despite the turbulent year,

it resonated deeply with me as a reminder of what is truly binding us all together.

My trip wasn't just a needed reunion with loved ones and friends, but a profound experience that left me in awe of the strength and resilience of the people of Israel and a reminder that we have no other Land and that united we will always persevere.

I had the honor, as sad as it was, to visit a shiva in the city of Efrat for a fallen IDF hero who was killed while fighting in Gaza. Efrat is over the “green line” and is typically

The message I heard over and over during the course of my travels – from community members, soldiers and families in mourning – was a plea to continue, despite our differences, to find unity and persevere until a complete victory over Hamas.

I returned from my trip encouraged and inspired by the strength of the people of Israel. I am confident despite the hard challenges the Jewish people currently face, with the help of God and the spirit of all those who represent the good in the world, we will win. 🇺🇸

Despite the hard challenges the Jewish people currently face, with the help of God and the spirit of all those who represent the good in the world, we will win.

considered a religious community, yet it brought me strength to see Israelis from all walks of life, secular and religious, politically on the right and left, come pay their respects to our fallen soldier and comfort the bereaved family.

Kobi Erez (center) dancing with IDF soldiers





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