



**For Immediate Release**

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***Arizona Jewish Historical Society earns Museum Association of Arizona's Institutional Award of Excellence***

The Arizona Jewish Historical Society is the recipient of this year's Museum Association of Arizona's (MAA), Institutional Award of Excellence. Each year, the MAA's Annual Professional Recognition Awards Program acknowledges and promotes excellence in museum operations by recognizing outstanding achievement by member organization and individuals.

Additionally, the Institutional Award of Excellence recognizes a museum that has exhibited leadership qualities by achieving excellence in its work, including in the areas of collection, preservation, research, interpretation, and education. MAA Executive Director, Janice Klein writes, "The educational work done by the AZJHS stands out among museums across the state. The Awards Committee was impressed by AZJHS' ability to quickly pivot to online programming and exhibits during the pandemic, as well as the broad focus and collaboration nature of AZJHS programs."

"We are humbled to receive this award from the Museum Association of Arizona, and we are grateful to our members and supporters who helped us during this difficult time of transition. We look forward to maintaining our online presence as we also shift back to live programs and exhibits," says Dr. Lawrence Bell, Executive Director of AZJHS. The AZJHS hosts a variety of different live seminar programs, book discussions, documentary films, virtual/in-person exhibitions, and Holocaust education programs. A key focus of the AZJHS is to provide free educational programs for students throughout Arizona. These opportunities include field trips to the museum, guided tours with experienced docents, lectures and classes on site as well as curricula and other resources for teachers.

The Holocaust education programs are a part of a larger campaign by the AZJHS to create a permanent Holocaust education center on its current campus. This new Center for Hope, Humanity and Holocaust Education will provide an inclusive and collaborative space to inspire new ideas, encourage open dialogue and promote hope, human dignity and respect. Using world, national and local history and the lessons of the Holocaust as the core focus of exhibitions and programming, the center will be a place where people of all backgrounds, faiths and cultures are welcomed, engaged and educated.

The new center will feature a digital resource library comprised of local archival material, first-hand video testimony, memoirs and art as an interpretive tool to teach about the Holocaust, WWII and the experiences of survivors, Righteous Gentiles and Liberators. This free, on-line tool will be available to students, teachers and other audiences throughout Arizona and on a national level.



If you would like to participate in this program or future programs as a part of this series, please contact AZJHS Education Coordinator, Tony Fusco at [afusco@azjhs.org](mailto:afusco@azjhs.org)

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**About Arizona Jewish Historical Society**

The Arizona Jewish Historical Society (AZJHS) is situated on the restored site of the original Temple Beth Israel building (built in 1921), now known as the Cutler-Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center.

The AZJHS sponsors public exhibitions, documentary film series, book discussions, lectures and seminar and hosts a series of programs pertaining to Jewish history and culture, including the Holocaust. It also offers genealogy research, has a large community archive as well as event space and gardens for private functions.

Recognized as a Phoenix Point of Pride, AZJHS is dedicated to preserving and celebrating the rich heritage of Arizona's Jewish communities, educating the public about Jewish contributions to Arizona and American life, and promoting awareness of our state's diverse history through arts, culture, and educational programs.