

Annual Report  
West Virginia Commission on Holocaust Education  
For fiscal year 2006-2007



Presented to:  
The Honorable Joe Manchin III, Governor  
State of West Virginia  
The Honorable Members, West Virginia Senate  
The Honorable Members, West Virginia House of  
Delegates

June 30, 2007

**Legislative history:**

On April 8, 2003, via provisions of **House Bill 2879**, the commission was “renewed” until July 2009. Funding as a legislative budget line item, in spite of the legislative committee’s recommendation, was not provided. Through the years Dr. Levy, as the executive director and chairperson, donated her services and did NOT receive a salary. The continuation of such a donation of time after Dr. Levy retires, is unrealistic. In 2005 Dr. Levy the chairperson and executive director requested that Governor Joe Manchin III appoint Dr. Mary E. Haas to be the chairperson for the commission so that Dr. Levy might reduce her workload to executive director and chair emerita. This arrangement has been effective for the last two years.

After ten years of struggling to maintain a program without the assurance of an annual income, the commission was pleased to receive a line item in the budget of \$15,000 beginning with the fiscal year 2007-2008. This budget allocation means that the commission will not have to spend time searching for money for the rent and phone. The WVCHE still in need of additional funds for a secretary so that the office can maintain regular hours so that scholars, teachers, and the public can make use of the extensive library of resources on the Holocaust. A modest budget for a full program is attached as an appendix and is estimated to total \$112,000. The commission will be searching for additional funds. The budget suggests a modest salary and benefits for an executive director.

Thank you for providing the WVCHE as a line item in the budget. We will use the funds wisely to continue our important work in service for the state. As is evident in this year’s annual report, we worked in several areas of the state this past year in cooperation with schools and civic groups to educate the public and remember and honor those who died and those who liberated the camps. We are in need of more funds to have the complete program we would like to provide each year as indicated in the proposed appended budget.

## Exhibits:

In 2006 at three locations:

Perhaps the most famous family affected by the Holocaust is that of Anne Frank. The release of her diary was one of the first ways youth learned the impact of National Socialism on Jewish families. Through Anne Frank's story, people often feel motivated to look at their own attitudes toward people. The Anne Frank exhibit was displayed in Athens during the fall of 2006. We were happy to work with the Greenbrier Valley Theatre in Lewisburg last fall to help them display this exhibit when they presented the play *The Diary of Anne Frank*. The WVCHE seeks to work with theatre groups throughout the state to present additional plays about the Holocaust and the heroes who worked to defend children and individuals

To coincide with the 62<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the disappearance of Raoul Wallenberg the commission opened on January 17, 2007 in Morgantown an exhibit that included Wallenberg and others who worked with him in to save



the Jews of Budapest from death.

The *Visas for Life: The Righteous and Honorable Diplomats* exhibit, prepared in cooperation with the families of the diplomats, included some pictures from the families' private photo

collections. The exhibit tells the story of the diplomats within the context of the background of the Holocaust and the failure of many of the Allied countries to help refugees escape the Nazi onslaught.

This exhibit honoring diplomatic rescuers is significant for many reasons. According to Yad Vashem, "by documenting the presence of rescuers in every Nazi occupied country, it proves that helping was possible. These diplomatic rescuers proved that totalitarian authority can and should be opposed, and that resistance is always possible, not only by organized groups, but by individuals acting on their own."



People viewing this exhibit indicated that they had never heard of most of these people and their efforts to save the victims of the Holocaust. The encouraging exhibit added to their knowledge of the Nazi

attempts to eliminate people and provided respect for a wide range of individuals who did the right thing in a time of great danger.

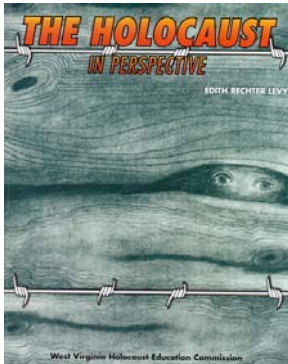
### Future Plans:

The WVCHE plans to locate and present exhibits in several locations through the state for public viewing and to encourage teachers and parents to bring students to these exhibits by providing teachers with background information and lesson plans designed to reinforce the lessons of the exhibits.

### **Educating WV Youth and Teachers:**

In 2006 there were multiple programs:

A major charge for the WVCHE is to distribute the textbook, THE HOLOCAUST IN PERSPECTIVE by Dr. Levy, and its teachers guide to schools in West Virginia to aid teacher's of the Holocaust and how to apply the information and lessons from the Holocaust to prevent genocides. The major portion of a grant went to this task. A total of 403 textbooks and 23



teacher's manuals were distributed at no costs to schools whose teachers indicated that they would use the books with their classes and share the books between classes in the same school. Two presentations were made at the Summer Social Studies Institute for West Virginia teachers June 18-21, 2007 where 100 copies of THE HOLOCAUST IN PERSPECTIVE and its Instructor's Manual were distributed to teacher along with a certificate for a reduced price those who will purchase boxes of the

book for their students to use in class.

On July 26, 2006 Chairperson, Dr. Haas presented two sessions to social studies teachers attending the 2006 Summer Social Studies Institute concerning electronic resources about genocide including the present day genocide in the Darfur region of the Sudan

From June 25-29 teachers gathered at Concord University in Athens and Fairmont State University in Fairmont to attend an intensive workshops on the Holocaust coordinated and led by Dr. Edith Rechter Levy. Content specialists, survivors, a liberator, experienced teachers, and a survivor from Rwanda spoke. Teachers viewed films and examined lessons and instructional resources. Their comments include:

- *“I know now that not only is it important to teach the Holocaust for historical facts but it opens up so much more. Teaching this allows you to talk about tolerance/intolerance of all races, colors, and creeds.”*

- *“The materials were wonderful. Dr. Levy’s book is well written for the middle school level, but in reality can be used as a high school level because of its history specific content.”*
- *“The Holocaust in Perspective will be an invaluable resource for my unit involving Night.”*



The online Holocaust Education course for teachers and teacher candidates by Dr. Haas through the College of Human Resources and Education at West Virginia University was offered in the summer of 2007 with its largest enrollment. The course also addresses the needs of teachers and future teachers to the need for Holocaust and genocide education as an integral part of the education of K-12 youth. Attending such workshops and teaching their classes about the Holocaust are required for teachers to be eligible to apply to attend teacher workshops at the USHMM.

Future Plans:

The WVCHE will continue to work with the WV Department of Education to distribute high quality educational materials and make teachers aware of resources and lessons for teaching the Holocaust and genocide to school age youth throughout the state. The online course at WVU will be offered each summer. Teacher workshops will be provided for teachers as funding becomes available.

**Arts and writing contest:**

The annual arts and writing contest is open to all interested students in schools and home schooled in grades 5-12. Entries must present the Holocaust through a perspective that illustrates their understanding of this year’s theme.

The theme for the 2006-2007 year was Courage to Act: Young Heroes of the Holocaust. Young was defined as childhood through young adult not to exceed 25. Entries are in three categories: prose, poetry, and works of art. Teachers from



the education council carefully examined the entries and judged them using the criteria for representing the theme, expressing personal understandings, and being historically accurate. Winners were selected near the end of the school year and the awards will be presented in October.

### Future Plans:

The Arts and Writing contest will continue to be an activity that supports teachers and students by providing a forum for rewarding efforts to teach and learn about the Holocaust. This is a costly program and improving it will require additional funds. Our improvement goals include providing resources and lesson ideas to help teachers approach the theme of the year and to provide short yearly workshop to assist teachers on the theme. We hope future exhibits might coincide with the yearly themes and travel throughout the state. We plan to provide a prize for an overall outstanding entry each year and recognition of one outstanding teacher each year with a trip to the USHMM. This will be added when additional funding is obtained.

### **Remembrance:**

Governor Joe Manchin III issued a proclamation designating the week of April 15 -22, 2007 as Days of Remembrance of the victims of the Holocaust throughout the state. Students at WVU annually remembered victims of the Holocaust in conjunctions with a program from Yad Vashem and B'nai B'rith "Unto Each Person there is a Name." For 24 hours members of Hillel gather to hear and read the names and ages of victims of the Holocaust and offer



prayers. Inter-faith services to remember those who died in the Holocaust were conducted in Morgantown, Huntington, and Beckley for Yom HaShoah.

### Future Remembrance Plans:

WVCHE will encourage more communities in the state to have services or other programs that remember the Holocaust especially at Kristalnacht November 9-11, the United Nations' designated day of remembrance January 27, and Jewish day of remembrance Yom HaShoah. In 2008 the date of Yom HaShoah is May 1 and the WVCHE will provide those interested with sample services and resources to assist them in preparing remembrance services. Some remembrance services may also have guest speakers, films, or special music. Because there are multiple ways to honor to people, WVCHE hopes to obtain funding for remembrance services by artists using their unique talents to honor the lives and sufferings of those who died during the Holocaust. Such programs will require additional funding.

***Respectfully Submitted for the present members of the West Virginia Commission on Holocaust Education:***

- Mary Elizabeth Haas, Chairperson, *Morgantown*
- Lowell E. Johnson, Vice Chairman, West Virginia State Board of Education President, *Lewisburg*
- Edith Rechter Levy, Chairperson Emerita, *Morgantown*
- Harry Finkelman, *Princeton* (citizen)
- Barbara Fish, West Virginia State Board of Education Vice President, *Parkersburg*
- The Honorable Delegate Ron Fragale, Member of the House, *Clarksburg*
- The Honorable Senator Jon Blair Hunter, Member of the Senate, *Monongalia County*
- Theresa McAbee (educator), Lewis County
- Reverend Julia Morrison, Secretary (citizen)
- Brian O'Connell, (educator), *Charleston*
- Regina Scotchie, Social Studies coordinator (West Virginia Department of Education), *Charleston*
- Paul Sheridan, (Senior Assistant Attorney General), *Charleston*

Appendix:

**West Virginia Commission on Holocaust Education**  
**Revised Minimal Budget May 22, 2007**  
 (based on past expenses)

**A. Essential operating**

Office and Library

Rent	\$6,000
Insurance	700
Dues (AHO)	250
Telephone/Fax	2,000
Computer supplies/Internet	500
Postage/shipping	1,500
Miscellaneous supplies	2,000
Printing/Photo copying	<u>1,500</u>
	\$14,450
Miscellaneous 10%	<u>1,445</u>
	<i>\$15,895</i>

Salaries

Executive Director – part time	\$25,000
Fringe benefits	5,000
Staff – part –time	22,000
Secretary @ \$11.00 hour	
Librarian	
Grant Writer (may receive % of grant)	
Legal Representation, CPA	
	<i>\$52,000</i>

**B. Educational programs**

1. Classroom focus:

a. Teacher Workshops (Possible partial Grant funding)

- 1) Daylong- Arts & Writing, Special Topics @\$1,500 each
- 2) Week or 2 weeks intensive training (range- \$57,000)

b. Arts and Writing contest (Possible Partial Donation ) 3,500

Includes: promotion and prizes, speaker

c. One Teacher travel award (per year \$2,000)

d. Supplies for free distribution to teachers &

Lending Trunks of materials (shipping/insurance) 10,000

There will be an additional cost for creating trunks

2. Schools and General Public

- |   |        |
|---|--------|
| a. Exhibits (rental, transportation, insurance, security) | 12,000 |
| b. Library purchases (texts, DVDs, etc)                   | 2,000  |
| c. Plays, musicals, stage performances                    | 5,000  |
| d. Commemorative programs (speakers/films)                | 5,000  |
| e. Speakers (fees and travel)                             | 7,000  |

minimal programming costs \$44,500

**TOTAL** Conservative estimate per year excluding grants \$112,395