For the 40th year, ADL’s Mountain States Region will host its Governor’s Holocaust Remembrance Program, one of the largest such events in the United States. The 2021 program will be offered virtually on Zoom on Thursday, April 8 — Yom Ha’Shoah — at 5:30 pm. Information and registration: adl.org/GHRP2021.

Email us at mountainstates@adl.org to add your organization to our list of community partners.

The annual program allows people of all faiths to come together to honor Holocaust survivors, remember those who perished, educate the community about this horrible crime against humanity and translate those lessons into contemporary action.

This year’s featured speaker is Holocaust Survivor Judith Altmann. Judy was born in Jasina, Czechoslovakia in 1924. Jasina was invaded by the Nazis in 1939 and in 1944, Judy was arrested and, along with her entire family, taken to Auschwitz. Out of 24 family members, only she and her niece and nephew survived. Judy was selected by Dr. Mengele for forced labor where, despite a catastrophic injury, she remained until March 1945. Judy survived the 150-mile “death march” that ended in the Bergen Belsen concentration camp. Sick with typhus, Judy was barely alive when she was liberated by the British Army in 1945. After living for a short time in Sweden, Judy immigrated to the United States in 1948. Judy is a member of the Holocaust & Human Rights Education Speakers Bureau and is Vice President of the Holocaust Child Survivors of Connecticut.

Holocaust Survivor Judith Altman speaks to students at The Human Rights Institute for High School Student Leaders in 2016. Photo credit: Will Landin
It’s Time to Celebrate our Schools and No Place for Hate
April 22, 2021

SAVE THE DATE! Join the ADL Mountain States Region on April 22, 2021 at 5 pm MT for a virtual celebration as our 2020-2021 No Place for Hate (NPFH) schools receive their banners and No Place for Hate designations. Educators, students and families have worked hard with remarkable creativity through a year of constant change in order to continue their commitment to creating welcoming, safe and inclusive school communities. We are excited to bring together art, music and poetry while showcasing NPFH excellence. Registration coming soon; visit mountainstates.adl.org to learn more.

Here are some of the voices of our incredible school communities reflecting on the NPFH experience:

"As a parent and teacher, I want my child to learn about kindness, about inclusion, and about how everyone is unique. She has been able to learn these through our activities in NPFH. Being a part of NPFH has been an amazing experience, and to see my daughter grow as a caring person has been rewarding." — Parent and Teacher; Elementary School, Douglas County School District

"No Place for Hate is important to our high school community, especially while facing the challenges that a national pandemic brings to education, because now, more than ever, people need to feel safe, connected, accepted and respected." — Assistant Principal, Aurora Public Schools

"I believe that No Place for Hate is important for the entire community including those in NPFH. NPFH spreads the message that schools and other activities don’t tolerate bullying. It also helps spread other messages about helping people and teaching people to feel good about themselves and who they are (including those in NPFH). Since I joined NPFH, I have felt better about myself and it has taught me that helping people and having compassion only have a positive impact on the community." — 7th grade student, Boulder Valley School District

Words to Action
Empowers Students to Stand Up to Antisemitism and Bias

With antisemitism and anti-Israel bias at the highest levels in recent years, ADL is responding by equipping students with constructive and effective tools to stand up to these challenges in high schools, on college campuses, at summer camps, synagogues and more with its signature Words to Action program. The pandemic has not slowed down this critical initiative, which has moved to a virtual space for the current program year with dozens of trainings empowering students to stand up for themselves and act as allies for others.

To learn more about Words to Action, to schedule a training or to offer financial support for the program, please contact ADL Senior Associate Director Sue Parker Gerson at mountainstates@adl.org.

Action Alert: ADL’S Protect Plan
https://www.adl.org/protectplan

In response to the insurrection at the U.S. Capitol and the increasing threat of domestic terrorism, ADL has just announced PROTECT, a comprehensive plan to address this ever-present danger while protecting the civil liberties of all Americans. Together, the actions in this plan should significantly help prevent and counter domestic terrorism — more so than any one policy or law.

Learn more: https://www.adl.org/protectplan

Sign the petition now!
On March 2, Wyoming lawmakers introduced a bill to address bias-motivated crimes in the state. The introduction comes after several months of work by ADL and coalition partners to advance a bias-motivated crimes law, commonly referred to as a hate crime law.

Wyoming is one of three remaining states with no laws against bias-motivated crimes on its books. Last summer, after Georgia passed a hate crimes law, a group of businesses and advocacy groups, including ADL, began meeting to chart a course forward in Wyoming. The Freedom From Hate Coalition, which is leading the efforts, now has 30 members in addition to ADL.

Wyoming’s bias-motivated crimes bill is sponsored by Representative Patrick Sweeney, a Republican from Casper. There are 13 additional co-sponsors of the bi-partisan legislation. The bill would apply to offenders who target victims because of their actual or perceived race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, sex, gender, gender identity or expression, or physical, intellectual or developmental disability. The bill also requires that law enforcement share reports on hate crimes and receive training on bias-motivated crimes. A hearing before the Wyoming House Judiciary Committee is expected before the end of the legislative session.

In addition to the bias-motivated crimes bill in Wyoming, ADL is also actively monitoring and working on legislation in New Mexico and Colorado. In New Mexico, ADL is closely monitoring legislation to ensure access to abortion and to reform policing in the state. In Colorado, ADL is working on a host of bills related to reproductive health care, immigration and non-discrimination.

Freedom From Hate Coalition Partners in Wyoming (As of March 8, 2021)

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American Airlines, Inc.
Anti-Defamation League Mountain States Region
AT&T
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Bicycle Station (Cheyenne, Wyo.)
Cody Country Chamber of Commerce
Cody Country Chamber of Commerce
Cody High School Youth For Justice
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Swire Coca-Cola, USA
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The Coca-Cola Company
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The Home Depot
Toyota Motor North America
Toyota Motor North America
Union Pacific Railroad
Union Pacific Railroad
United Parcel Service (UPS)
United Parcel Service (UPS)
Walmart, Inc.
Walmart, Inc.
Wyoming Business Alliance
Wyoming Business Alliance
Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence
and Sexual Assault
and Sexual Assault
Wyoming Equality
Wyoming Equality

Wyoming is one of three remaining states with no laws against bias-motivated crimes on its books.

Wyoming State Capitol, Cheyenne, WY.
Photo credit: www.wyoleg.gov.

2020 Milestones

1,100 law enforcement professionals from 47 regional agencies participated in ADL trainings, helping them to fight extremism and build trust with the communities they serve.

81,000 students in 94 schools in Colorado, Wyoming and New Mexico engaged in No Place for Hate®, ADL’s anti-bias and anti-bullying initiative.

Over 1,000 community members joined ADL online during Holocaust Remembrance Week, including the virtual Governor’s Holocaust Remembrance Program.

More than 300 requests for assistance — twice the prior number — from individuals and institutions targeted by antisemitism, racism, homophobia and other acts of hate were responded to by ADL.

Over 1,000 students across the region were empowered by ADL’s Words to Action program to respond to antisemitism, anti-Israel bias and other forms of bigotry.

23 partner organizations participate in the Hate Free Colorado coalition led by ADL, responding collaboratively to incidents of hate and promoting the safety of vulnerable communities.
ADL Celebrates 80 Years in the Mountain States Region

In 1941, a dedicated group of community leaders — led by Col. Melvin Schlesinger and including such notables as Lou Isaacson, A.B. Hirschfeld, Max Goldberg, and Emmett Heitler — started a regional office of the Anti-Defamation League in Denver. Some say it was the first regional office ever organized outside of Chicago, where ADL was founded in 1913, and New York, where ADL is headquartered.

Throughout ADL’s entire 80 years in the Mountain States Region, ADL has had the same mission, “to stop the defamation of the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment to all.” Since its earliest days, ADL has spoken out against those that preach hate, whether they be the early radio preachers that broadcasted virulent antisemitism on a weekly basis even as the horrors of the Holocaust were becoming known, or those that still preach hate in the dark recesses of the world wide web.

ADL’s work in the region began shortly after the Ku Klux Klan had been a powerhouse in local politics. In Colorado, it controlled the statehouse and the Governor’s Mansion. Today, ADL monitors and analyzes new groups of extremists, from the Proud Boys and Three Percenters to QAnon and Oath Keepers.

Throughout its existence, ADL has been a champion of civil rights. It drafted and supported laws that banned discrimination in employment and housing, advocated against restrictive property covenants that prohibited Jews and people of color from buying houses in certain neighborhoods and marched from Selma to Montgomery for voting rights. The struggle for civil rights has never ended, as ADL continues to support laws that ban discrimination, opposes laws that attempt to restrict someone because of their identity, and marches in support of voting rights.

While ADL once worked to end quotas that limited the admission of Jews into the country and into colleges and universities, today, it opposes discriminatory limits on immigration and advocates for fair tuition for undocumented students.

Throughout it all, ADL has strongly supported the separation of church and state. Decade after decade ADL has supported a woman’s right to choose, religious accommodations for those that need them, and the rights of Jews, Muslims, Sikhs, and members of other minority religions.

At the heart of ADL’s work are its outstanding education programs. Nearly four decades ago, ADL launched the award-winning A World of Difference® Institute. Today, it is central to the anti-bias and anti-bullying work ADL does in over 90 schools participating in ADL’s No Place For Hate® initiative in Colorado, New Mexico and Wyoming. In addition, in the Mountain States Region, ADL empowers over 1,000 Jewish students and their allies each year to counter antisemitism and virulent anti-Israel activities through its Words to Action Program.

As a new generation of community leaders champions the mission of ADL in its unending fight against antisemitism and all forms of bias and hate, ADL has never been more relevant.
Message from the Chair and the Director
How do you measure a year?

It has felt much longer than the 525,600 minutes that made up the past year. It was just over a year ago that we cursed the pandemic that caused us to stay home, close schools and hoard toilet paper. When we were brave enough to venture out of our front doors to get groceries, stop by offices or even just to take a walk, we had to cover our faces. Fear was everywhere.

We not only feared the very air we breathed and shared with our neighbors, but we saw our neighbors stoked to fear Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders by incendiary claims of a “China flu.” Inappropriate comparisons of our Governors to Nazis because of restrictions they imposed to save lives magnified fears of government. The deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Elijah McClain and countless others forced many of us to finally contemplate the justifiable fear of hundreds of years of systemic racism. Conspiracy theories about Jews, from invoking the name of George Soros in the way antisemites made allegations about the Rothschilds in earlier times to serious speculation about Jewish space lasers, caused a fear of increasing antisemitism. And, baseless claims about a “stolen” election caused a mob to be in so much fear about the future of the Republic that they breached the US Capitol for the first time since the War of 1812.

As it has done for 80 years in the Mountain States Region and for 108 years in the country, ADL spoke out about these and so many other abominations that occurred over the past year. We loudly condemned the racism, antisemitism and hate that marked the past year. To counter the rampant fear they caused, we shared facts and exposed conspiracy theories and myths for the lies that they are. Through it all, ADL has shown strength.

We look forward to a new year when the virus of hate can be eradicated.

Elisa Moran, Regional Board Chair
Scott Levin, Regional Director

Mountain States Spotlight
with Jessica Markowitz

The ADL Mountain States region is pleased to welcome its newest team member, Development Assistant Jessica Markowitz.

As a former intern for several nonprofits, including the American Jewish Committee and a grassroots organization based out of Seattle focusing on women’s empowerment in Rwanda, Jessica has focused her career on fundraising and community development. A native of Seattle and a graduate of New York University, Jessica served as a JDC Entwine Global Jewish Service Corps Fellow, supporting the local Jewish community and building programming for young Jewish adults. Jessica worked at the Jewish Community Center in Budapest alongside the development director to meet their marketing and fundraising goals. After finishing her fellowship, she worked as a consultant with a firm focused on nonprofit strategy and fundraising where she continued pursuing her interests in philanthropy and development.

When asked why she was excited to join the team, Jessica said, “After a crazy year for the entire world, I decided I needed to commit myself to an organization that is working to create a better world. ADL is doing the real work – the work that we all should be doing to make this world a better, safer, and just place.”

To read a full interview with Jessica, please visit mountainstates.adl.org. Welcome to Colorado, Jessica!

“ADL is doing the real work – the work that we all should be doing to make this world a better, safer, and just place.”
—Jessica Markowitz

Elisa Moran
Scott Levin
Jessica Markowitz
Thank you for standing with us in 2020!

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Thank you!
Get Involved with ADL

We invite you to get involved with the ADL Mountain States Region!

Connect with us in three ways:
Sign up to receive our monthly electronic newsletter: mountainstates.adl.org/newsletter/
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ADL – Anti-Defamation League (Mountain States)
Connect with us on Twitter: @ADLMtnStates
Alert ADL to antisemitic incidents and other hate crimes at: www.adl.org/reportincident
Sign up for Action Alerts from ADL at: www.adl.org/take-action
Volunteer: Write to us online at mountainstates.adl.org/contact/
Donate: Visit mountainstates.adl.org or return the enclosed envelope. Thank you!

Student Art Shows Hope, Strength and Resiliency through Pandemic

Although this school year has looked very different for many students in our region, ADL’s No Place for Hate Student Art Contest received a greater number of submissions than the year before. More than 140 pieces of art were submitted as students shared their hopes, their compassion, their strength and most importantly a desire to create a community that understands that diversity is a strength.

The submissions represented a dozen public, charter and independent schools from Colorado and New Mexico in nine school districts. Students responded to one of the following prompts when creating their artwork: “What does it look like when... A) We build community? B) We find common ground? C) Diversity is a Strength? D) We take action against hate? or E) We are Different, Together?” The winning art included pieces that were cross-stitched, multi-media, digital, drawn, painted and much more. Twelve judges had the incredibly difficult task of selecting the winners, and all were struck by the in-depth descriptions that accompanied this year’s art.

We encourage you to enjoy the winning works at this link: https://mountainstates.adl.org/adls-student-art-contest-for-npfh-schools/

ADL congratulates all educators, students and families for their beautiful artwork and commitment to imagine a world without hate.

“One Tree, Many Branches,” First place Middle School winner: Sabina C., 6th Grade, Albuquerque Academy (Albuquerque, New Mexico)