



## **New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education Presents Awards to Outstanding Community Advocates**

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**Trenton, NJ** - The New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education has recognized individuals for their advocacy and their efforts to educate the public on the effects of crimes against humanity, prejudice, discrimination and the Holocaust. Executive Director of the commission, Dr. Paul Winkler, said recipients were selected because of their commitment to keeping the message alive within their communities and schools.

"I want to thank the members of the Commission on Holocaust Education for the work that they do to ensure that all New Jerseyans, especially school children, learn about how hate and prejudice can destroy and how holocaust and genocide can spring from the evil of bias and bigotry," acting Education Commissioner Chris Cerf said.

"I also congratulate each of this year's recipients for their advocacy of one of history's most important lessons -- that we need to protect ourselves and our society from allowing the seeds of hatred to take root," acting Commissioner Cerf said.

"These citizens have gone above and beyond in their efforts to teach others about the Holocaust, about prejudice and how we must guard against hate," Dr. Winkler said. "With the passing decades, the world has fewer and fewer survivors of the Holocaust to tell their stories. Our goal is to keep the memory and the lessons of history alive by encouraging young people to examine the past."

The four awards and the honorees are as follows:

**The Late Hela Young** - This award was named in honor of a past commission chair who was a community activist and a supporter of Vietnam Veterans. It is presented to a person, group or organization in recognition for the improvement of human relations among diverse peoples and for the improvement of the human condition specifically related to prejudice reduction. This year's recipient is:

- Terrence Hoben, Emergency Task Force Air Medical Coordinator at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. He was nominated by Peppy Margolis, Director of Cultural Outreach at Raritan Valley Community College. Margolis said she decided to nominate Hoben when she learned about his efforts as a relief worker in Rwanda. "The members of our committee were so impressed with his personal story of hope and healing during genocide. Terrence volunteers his time to educate students about the tragedies of inhumanity. He goes beyond what is expected in teaching about the consequences of discrimination and prejudice. His natural style of communicating engaged the students and he is now a favorite of our presenters".

**The Late Sister Rose Thering** - This award was named after an outspoken Dominican nun whose belief in Jewish Christian brotherhood helped change how the Catholic Church teaches about Judaism. It is awarded to an educator or individual contributing in the field of higher education, specifically in teacher training related to bias, prejudice and discrimination. This year's recipient is:

- Sister Francis Raftery, President of the College of Saint Elizabeth. Nominators Etzion Neur, New Jersey's regional ADL Director and Harriet Sepinwall, Director of the Holocaust/Genocide Resource Center at Saint Elizabeth, both said Sister Francis has always supported and encouraged Holocaust/Genocide education for the students, staff and the schools of New Jersey. This leadership often brought together people of different backgrounds meeting the commitment of Sister Rose.

**Maud Dahme** - This award is named after a survivor of the Holocaust who was hidden as a child. She is a commission member and past president of the New Jersey State Board of Education. It is awarded to a student or a person who has demonstrated moral courage in regard to humanity, prejudice and discrimination. This year's recipients are:

- Diane D'Amico, education editor for the Press of Atlantic City. "Diane is a journalist who has spearheaded the efforts of the Press of Atlantic City to inform residents of Atlantic, Cape May and Cumberland Counties about the legacies of the Holocaust and the importance of honoring our local Holocaust survivors. She is a journalist who is being recognized for her dedication," Gail Rosenthal, Director of the Richard Stockton Holocaust/Genocide Resource Center wrote in her nomination.

- Emari DiGiorgio, professor of writing at Stockton College. “Emari DiGiorgio uses the power of writing to inspire and educate her students to be active participants in reducing prejudice and creating an awareness of injustices all over the world. Every year, she supports a letter writing campaign for her students to write all local and state newspapers about the genocide in Darfur,” Emily Heerema, a former recipient, wrote in her nomination.



Maud Dahme Award:

Holocaust survivor Maud Dahme; Holocaust survivor Cyla Kowenski ; award winner Diane D’Amico; and Holocaust Commission Chair Phil Kirschner



Sister Rose Award:

Dr. Harriet Sepinwall, College of Saint Elizabeth; Sister Francis Raftery, award winner; Sister Kathleen Flanagan, College of Saint Elizabeth; and



Hela Young Award:

Peter Hochman, Hela's husband; Erica Hochman, Hela's daughter; Margit Feldman, Holocaust survivor; Terrence Hoben, award winner; and Phil Kirschner, Holocaust Commission Chair