As we start a new year, we have a moment to reflect on the previous one.

Last year, the Alliance Board voted to reaffirm our leadership of Christyne Davidian and Yehoyada Mbangukira as Co-Presidents. After serving as interim Co-Presidents of the Alliance, we will continue to sustain the activities of the Alliance and share the responsibilities of the Presidency. The successful interim of a Co-Presidency has helped the Alliance continue its work.

The 2022 Lecture Series had another successful year experiencing robust attendance even though it used a virtual format due to the restrictions brought on by the pandemic. The reception of the virtual series is a testament to the value of our speakers and the experiences they bring.

Sadly, the Alliance lost two very dear members and friends, Professor Emerita Myrna Goodman, Ph.D. and Michael “Mac” McCaffry. We share our deep sorrow in losing Myrna and Mac as they were integral members of the Alliance and the Sonoma County community for so long. We are at the same time filled with gratitude for their contributions and we shall miss them greatly. More is included in the newsletter regarding their legacy.

2023 marks the 40th anniversary of the Holocaust and Genocide Lecture Series and a commemoration will be held on campus in the Fall 2023. Information will be provided to the community later this year.

Your continued support of the Alliance and its mission is deeply appreciated, and it sustains our efforts and strengthens our learning community.

Most sincerely,
Christyne Davidian and
Yehoyada Mbangukira

Alliance Mission Statement

Our Mission
Honor the experience and preserve the memory of the innocent victims, survivors, and rescuers impacted by the tragedy of genocide.
Support Holocaust and genocide education in conjunction with the Center for the Study of the Holocaust and Genocide at Sonoma State University.

Our Work
Attract, collaborate, and coordinate with scholars, survivors, and experts. Outreach to our community, schools, and survivor groups. Seek funding and support methods to preserve memory.

Our Vision
Inspire a “never again” moral stance that focuses on our common humanity. Promote personal action and proactive prevention awareness of the causes of intolerance, genocide, and denial.

Coming this Fall 2023

Commemoration of the 40th Anniversary of the Holocaust and Genocide Lecture Series with the community sponsored by the Alliance, Center, and School of Social Sciences at SSU.
SPECIAL IN MEMORIAM
Director of the Center of the Study of the Holocaust and Genocide
Professor Myrna Lea Goodman
May 4, 1942 - January 5, 2023

As we begin the 40th year of the Holocaust & Genocide lecture series, we mourn the loss and commemorate the legacy of a very dear friend. Professor Myrna Goodman was one of those most responsible for the growth and development of genocide studies at SSU. Up to her last days, Myrna was a constant supporter and advocate for the lecture series, the Center, and the work of the Alliance. It’s hard to imagine going forward without Myrna’s calm and wise presence. Her influence and guidance will always sustain us.

Myrna was born in Chicago on May 4th, 1942. Her grandparents were Jewish immigrants from Ukraine. The influence of that culture would mark her entire life. Myrna came to Sonoma in the late 1970s and earned her B.A. in Sociology from SSU in 1988. She was a student assistant in the Center of the Study of the Holocaust from 1987-1988.

Myrna’s success in academia and abiding interest in Holocaust research led her to pursue graduate studies at UC Davis, where she earned a Ph.D. in Sociology in 2002. The focus of Myrna’s dissertation was rescue and resistance in Denmark during WWII. Myrna’s knowledge of the Danes’ determination to save as many Jewish lives as possible contributed to many of our presentations over the years. Myrna admired the Danes and was a great fan of the Danish concept of hygge, with its emphasis on comfort, togetherness, and gratitude for the simple pleasures that bring you joy. Her home in Sonoma was filled with an atmosphere of “hygge”.

Following Prof. John Steiner’s retirement, Myrna took on the roles of Academic Coordinator of the lecture series and Director of the Center for the Study of the Holocaust & Genocide. She would guide those two cornerstones of SSU’s genocide studies for over a decade. During this time leading scholars and activists, as well as survivors and witnesses of genocides around the world came to share their insight and remarkable experience with the students and community of Sonoma State. Our speakers in the lecture series included Jan Karski, Yehuda Bauer, Michael Berenbaum, Phillip Zimbardo, John Roth, Carol Rittner, Carl Wilkens, James Waller, Christopher Browning, Richard Hovannisian, Stephan Astourian, and Peter Hayes. Myrna’s persistence in strengthening and expanding the lecture series has made it a globally recognized bastion of genocide education.

Of many accomplishments over her long career at Sonoma State, I believe Myrna was most proud of her role in bringing a sapling from the Anne Frank Tree to Sonoma State and participating in the massive effort that would produce the Holocaust Memorial Grove. Many were involved in this remarkable project that demanded exceptional dedication, skill, and persistence. Myrna devoted an enormous amount of time to the success of the Grove project. The dedication of the Holocaust Memorial Grove on May 29th, 2009, and subsequent planting of the Anne Frank sapling were momentous events at our university.

It’s very difficult to contemplate the lecture series without Myrna. It’s our task to preserve and enhance what Myrna helped to build. We will miss her unfailing kindness, enormous patience, gentle sense of humor, and ability to make everyone feel included. We cherish her memory and take comfort in the privilege and joy of knowing her.

Diane L. Parness, Ph.D.
Newly appointed Director, Center for the Study of the Holocaust and Genocide

Academic Director, Holocaust & Genocide Lecture Series
Professor, Department of Political Science

Report from the Lecture Series Academic Coordinator

Most of us appreciate that online presentations can be highly effective and stimulating. Our 39th Holocaust & Genocide lecture series, Persecution as A Political Weapon: Genocide Through the Ages, strongly supports this view. Our lectures were very well attended, and many more visitors contributed to lively and productive Q&A sessions. Our speakers were very skilled practitioners of online presentations and offered dramatic visual support for their lectures. Students found the series enlightening and were eager to participate in our group discussions.

We were delighted to welcome back the Victor family. Rena, Susan, and Micah Victor Lesch again offered us a unique and compelling portrait of how the Holocaust has affected three generations of a remarkable family.

Dawn Anahid MacKeen presented another amazing and moving account drawn from her book, The Hundred Year Walk: An Armenian Odyssey. Several viewers commented on how her family’s story was so riveting.

Prof. Kitty Miller’s work on Persecution & the Formulas of Genocide inspired the theme for the series. Her lecture offered a valuable perspective on this topic.

Prof. Elisa von Joeden-Forgey gave one of several outstanding lectures offered by the faculty of Keene State College. Dr. von Joeden-Forgey spoke of Prevention’s Missing Link: Genocide as A Gendered Crime. This was a masterful treatment of a perspective that inspired vigorous discussion in our sections.

Journalist Mariam Ibrahim introduced her view of the Palestinian situation. Controversial by nature, this topic was welcomed by students as a basis for further discussion and critical debate.

We were very pleased to welcome back two of our favorite presenters from past series: Carl Wilkens and Arn-Chorn Pond. Both have a gift for crafting compelling presentations. Carl was our choice for the Robert Harris Memorial Lecture. His topic, Rwanda’s Pathway Back to Trust, conveyed his unique experience of the Genocide Against the Tutsi in Rwanda to a new generation of students. Arn Chorn-Pond visited us from Phnom Penh (another advantage of an online series) to discuss his dramatic narrative of How Music Saved My Life—A Story of the Cambodian Genocide. Both presentations were hallmarks of the series.

Ellen Kennedy returned to offer an excellent analysis of the Rohingya crisis in Myanmar. Just as she did last year with the Uyghur crisis in Xinjiang, Dr. Kennedy fashioned a comprehensive picture of a very complex situation that suggests a modern genocide.

We were grateful to bring back some of the stalwarts of our lecture series whose work has formed the foundation for our essential curriculum. These speakers include Prof. James Waller, Her Excellency Mathilde Mukantabana, Ambassador from Rwanda to the United States, Irfan Mirza, Prof. Ashley Greene, Prof. Sergio La Porta, Prof. Alex Alvarez, and Prof. Stephen Bittner.

For our 40th annual series, we look forward to welcoming back many outstanding speakers. We will introduce to the series Prof. David Biale (When Did Nazi Germany Decide to Commit Genocide Against the Jews?), Elizabeth Rosner (Legacies of Trauma and Resilience: How the Past Lives Inside the Present), Prof. Kristina Hook (The Ukrainian Holodomor and the Russia-Ukraine War Today: Understanding Past and Present Questions of Genocide), and His Excellency Johnston Busingye (The Gacaca Courts of Rwanda).

As always, we are grateful for your support of this important and unique lecture series. We hope you will join us as we begin our fifth decade.

Professor Diane L. Parness
Lecture Series Academic Coordinator
The schedule for the 2023 Lecture Series can be found at: https://holocaust.sonoma.edu/lectures
We mourned the passing of our beloved Holocaust survivor Alfred Batzdorff last year on April 2, 2022. Al spoke about this story of survival together with his wife Susanne to hundreds of students in the local Sonoma County middle and high schools through the Alliance Education Committee for years. We would often see Al and Susanne attending many of the SSU Holocaust and Genocide lectures as our community guests. They participated astutely in the lecture Q&As.

Al was born in Germany where he lived until November 1938 when he was put on the first Kindertransport that arrived in England on December 2, 1938. He eventually immigrated to the United States in June 1940, became an engineer in New York where he married his wife, Susanne Biberstein. They raised a family of 3 sons and eventually retired to Santa Rosa in 1982 close to family. Al attributes his survival during the persecution to Jews and non-Jews alike who, at great risk, extended themselves. He lived by the deep conviction to always keep his wits about him and to never give up.

The Education Committee focuses on the importance of sharing the stories of Holocaust and genocide survivors and descendants so that the memories and their history will live on. In today’s environment, it is more important than ever that people understand the horrors of genocide and acknowledge the atrocities of the past so that they will stand against it in the future. In 2022, the Alliance Education Committee was able to return to the classroom. Our speakers entered 68 classes and spoke to 2033 people. Even though some presentations are still virtual, it was a joy to see others return in-person. Our speakers shared their stories throughout Sonoma County middle schools, high schools, college classes and in community centers. One presentation even reached 307 highschoolers at Windsor High School. Several teachers reported that their presentations were a powerful way to learn history and they could see the impact it had on the students. In relation to a presentation from Sanders Feldhorn, one teacher said “His family's story was terrifying and poignant. And his ability to connect the history with modern concerns about Anti-Semitism, intolerance, and racism made an impact on students.”

The Alliance currently has 16 active speakers including one Holocaust survivor, Holocaust descendants, and a third generation Armenian Genocide descendant. We also continue to work collaboratively with Jewish Family and Children’s Services Holocaust Center in San Francisco. Due to our dedicated members, we were able to offer a variety of formats: live and pre-recorded Zoom, YouTube and live in the classroom. It is an honor and a privilege to serve as the Chair of the Alliance Education Committee and I look forward to scheduling our speakers into even more classrooms this year!

Rachel Sibley
Teacher, Roseland Collegiate Prep, Santa Rosa
Chair, Alliance Education Committee

If you are interested in learning more about the Alliance, our work supporting the SSU Holocaust and Genocide Lecture Series, and our speaker programs in the local county schools, please email us at alliance@sonoma.edu.
2023 Holocaust and Genocide Commemorations and Events

The Annual Sonoma County Yom HaShoah Commemoration will be held on Sunday, April 16, 2023, from 2-3:30 PM via Zoom. The theme of this year's commemoration will be “Step by Step . . . towards . . . Never Again!” Peter Krohn, a local Holocaust survivor, will be sharing his experiences, followed by the words and voices of local students and their teachers about the impact of hearing in-person testimonies in their schools. The commemoration will highlight the work currently being done in our community to carry forward the lessons of the Holocaust, especially considering the recent rise of anti-Semitism. There will be musical performances, as well as candle lighting by Jewish and other Holocaust survivors and those targeted by genocide.

The program is free, but registration is required by noon on April 13th to obtain the Zoom link.

There will be a Memorial Book listing the names of those who died in the Shoah or a survivor who is no longer with us, remembered by members of our community. Names submitted by April 1st will be included in the 2023 Memorial book. To register for the commemoration and receive the Zoom link, submit names for the 2023 Memorial Book, make a donation, access the recording of the 2022 commemoration or view the 2022 Memorial Book, please go to: https://www.jccsoco.org/main/yom-hashoah-commemoration/. Questions can be sent to socoyomhashoah2023@gmail.com.


The Rwandan Community of Northern California, TRCC, will observe the 29th Commemoration of the Genocide Against The Tutsi in Rwanda, Kwibuka29 this year. Details will be forthcoming. For the final date and additional information contact: Roger Remera 415-215-1556 or email rogeremera@gmail.com.
2022 Donations

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to the following donors who make it possible to continue the work of our Alliance founders:

**Adele Zygelbaum Endowment (C0396)**
Herb D. Brodie (in memory of Paul Zygelbaum)
Geoff L. Perel

**Alexandre Kimenyi Memorial Education Fund for the Genocide Against the Tutsi in Rwanda (C0410)**
Cheiya Rawlins (in memory of Alexandre Kimenyi)
Mathilde Mukanatabana (in memory of Alexandre Kimenyi)
Myrna L. Goodman (in honor of Yehoyada Mbangukira)
Todd W. Cereghino

**Alliance for the Study of the Holocaust and Genocide (C0119)**
Carrie O. Wong (for the Lecture Series and in honor of Rwandan Genocide Education & Cambodian Genocide Education)
Daniel G. Mason
The McBride Group, LLC (in honor of James McBride)
Annie M. Springer
David Salm Fund of Schwab Charitable
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Samuel Friend
Jamie Blumenthal
David S. Furman
Michaela Grobbel
Suzanne M. Roberts (in memory of Lillian Judd)
Judith Hyman (in memory of Al Batzdorff)
Suzanne Blau
Ruth K. Nash (in memory of Paul Benko)
Jackson O’Neil
Myrna L. Goodman (in memory of Alfred Batzdorff)
Myrna L. Goodman (in honor of Arline Thomas)
Hugh Harris (in memory of Robert L. Harris)
Yeho Mbangukira (to underwrite the Robert L. Harris Memorial Lecture by Carl Wilkens)
Christyne Davidian (to underwrite the Robert L. Harris Memorial Lecture by Carl Wilkens)
Medtronic Foundation Matching Funds for Christyne Davidian (to underwrite the Robert L. Harris Memorial Lecture by Carl Wilkens)
Gerald W. Lapinski
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Jean B. Chan
Donald S. Glickman (in memory of Ann and Henry Tausk)
Karim Wandrei (in memory of all those who have died in the Ukraine-Russia war)
Alfred R. Snyder
Mary K. Praetzellis (in memory of Jeffrey Dickemam)
Sally Givotine
Victor Garlin (in memory of Professor Eli Katz)
Bruce J. Dzieza (in memory of Sol Dzieza)
Enola Nelson
Renee C. Powell (in memory of Martha & Herbert Punitzer)
Christine Hunsicker (in honor of Myrna Goodman)
Jim A. McBride
First Congregational United Church of Christ
Mark Weidhae (in memory of the victims of the Liberian Civil Wars)
Arnie S. Herskovic (in memory of Esther Herskovic)
Jeremy Pride (in memory of Michael "Mac" McCaffry)
Arlene R. Houghton (in memory of Michael "Mac" McCaffry)
Vin D. Hoagland (in memory of Michael "Mac" McCaffry)
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Clarice Stasz (in memory of Michael "Mac" McCaffry)

**Armenian Genocide Memorial Lecture Fund (C0286)**
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Larisa Geler
Todd W. Cereghino (in honor of Albert Hougassian, Armenian Genocide survivor, Makrouhi Hougassian, wife and Berthe Hougassian, daughter, Yad Vashem Righteous Gentiles Rescuers -Lyon, France, 1942-1944)
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Rose Matassian (in memory of Mariarn and Misk Pilibosian)
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Susan T. Daniel
Karim Wandrei (in memory of Michael "Mac" McCaffry)
Eva Newbrun (in memory of your aunts Ida & Bella)
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Barbara Lesch McCaffry (in memory of Hilde Gattmann, a Holocaust survivor, in memory of Sandy Fichtenberg Benko, in memory of Sybil and Harry Saunders, Holocaust survivors, in memory of Dina Dasberg Angress, a Holocaust survivor, and in memory of Robert “Bob” Rafal, in memory of Alfred Batzdorff)
Bob Messing
Sahib-Amar K. Khalsa (in memory of Sylvia G. Sucher and in memory of Michael “Mac” McCaffry)
Christyne A. Davidian (in memory of Alfred Batzdorff, in memory of Hans Angress, and in memory of Michael "Mac" McCaffry)
Johanna Infante (in memory of My Father Ben Sonies who was taken away Dec 1943 two months before my birth)
Hans Angress)
Medtronic Volunteer Grant for Christyne Davidian
Joanne Mickalani
Medtronic Foundation Matching Funds for Christyne Davidian
Medtronic Volunteer Grant for Christyne Davidian
Jacob Yarrow
Myrna L. Goodman (in honor of Christyne Davidian)
Larisa Geler
Todd W. Cereghino (in honor of Albert Hougassian, Armenian Genocide survivor, Makrouhi Hougassian, wife and Berthe Hougassian, daughter, Yad Vashem Righteous Gentiles Rescuers -Lyon, France, 1942-1944)
David Salm
Rose Matassian (in memory of Mariarn and Misk Pilibosian)
Christine A. Davidian

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Beverly Lesch (in memory of Michael "Mac" McCaffry)
Susan Richter
Arnie S. Herskovic (in memory of Esther Herskovic)
Clarice Stasz (in memory of Michael "Mac" McCaffry)

**Armenian Genocide Memorial Lecture Fund (C0286)**
Carrie O. Wong (in honor of Armenian Genocide Education)
Suzanne M. Roberts (in memory of Hans Angress)
David Salm Fund of Schwab Charitable
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We extend our gratitude to former Board Member Alexia Moreno and Associate Board Member Micah Lesch who have both moved on to new endeavors. We sadly say goodbye to Prof. Myrna Goodman and Michael “Mac” McCaffry who will be deeply missed.
Hans Angress Award for Community Service and Social Justice

The Hans Angress Award for Community Service and Social Justice, launched in 2021, is sponsored by the Alliance for the Study of the Holocaust and Genocide and the Center for the Study of the Holocaust and Genocide at Sonoma State University to honor the memory of Hans Angress, a cherished Holocaust survivor.

This award is presented annually to a student enrolled in “Perspectives on the Holocaust and Genocide” course at Sonoma State University who will be recognized for their scholarly and personal achievements that reflect the ideals and community service exhibited by Hans Angress.

Hans, who was a hidden child during the Holocaust, dedicated his life to being a force of tolerance and kindness which he modeled to thousands of students by sharing his story. This award will honor the life of Hans as a living testament to community service and social justice, echoing the message of “never again.” The annual award will include an honorarium and an award plaque.

To learn more, go to the Hans Angress award page on our website: https://holocaust.sonoma.edu/hans-angress-award

Presenting the plaque to Nicole Bloch, the first Hans Angress awardee, and Christyne Davidian, Alliance Co-President

Past Lecture Archives
Past Lecture Videos can be found on our YouTube Channel. Go to www.sonoma.edu/holocaust, select the Annual Lecture Series page, Search Lecture Archive, then click on the YouTube Channel link.

Follow our Facebook page at Alliance for the Study of the Holocaust and Genocide