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# Reinforcing Our Resolve: Memphis Jewish Federation at ADL’s ‘Never Is Now’ Conference



Memphis Jewish Federation’s delegation at the ADL’s “Never Is Now” conference in New York City on March 3-4.

**By Sara First, Community Relations Manager, Jewish Community Partners**

“My name is Gal, and I am Jewish.” This powerful declaration from Israeli actress Gal Gadot set the tone for ADL’s “Never Is Now” conference in New York City on March 3-4, where a delegation from Memphis Jewish Federation joined more than 4,000 leaders to confront rising antisemitism. Actor David Schwimmer echoed this sentiment, urging celebrities and influencers to use their platforms against hate, emphasizing that “Now is not the time to disappear.” Their courage to speak openly about Jewish identity reflects the spirit our Federation strives to bring to its work in Memphis.

The Memphis representatives – in-

cluding Community Relations Council Co-chair Jill Notowich, Council Member Amy Israel-Pregulman, John Pregulman, Community Relations Manager Sara First and Executive Vice President Bluma Zuckerbrot-Finkelstein – returned with reinforced strategies and new tactical ideas to enhance the many initiatives already underway in our community.

**Confronting Troubling Trends with Action**

The conference opened with sobering statistics presented by ADL CEO Jonathan Greenblatt, who reported a 24% increase in antisemitism in recent years. Most concerning, younger generations are showing higher rates of antisemitic attitudes than their parents for the first time since 1964.

“Scolding won’t work against the shameless,” Greenblatt emphasized,

describing ADL’s strategic and comprehensive approach, which focuses on relationship building, education, legal advocacy, research initiatives, media strategies and economic measures.

The conference also focused on continuing to advocate and refine crucial federal legislation, including the need to protect and expand the Nonprofit Security Grant Program, the Holocaust Education and Antisemitism Lessons (HEAL) Act, and the Antisemitism Awareness Act – all critical tools that could benefit Memphis Jewish institutions.

For the Memphis delegation, these insights reinforced our existing frameworks while offering complementary tactics to enhance our ongoing work building bridges throughout Memphis.

**Education and Advocacy: Building on Existing Efforts**

The conference highlighted alarming statistics about K-12 education, including a more than 100% increase in school antisemitism incidents since 2022. The six best practices the ADL recommends include: clearly and consistently defining antisemitism; educating students, teachers and community members about antisemitism; communicating and enforcing all policies and protocols; ensuring that schools do not teach problematic content; speaking out and taking action when antisemitism takes place; and ensuring a welcoming and inclusive environment for Jewish students.

One of the most critical insights reinforced at the conference was the need to approach schools, organizations and institutions with a spirit of collaboration and partnership. Our most effective approach remains positioning ourselves as

partners who want to help these organizations improve and succeed in creating inclusive environments. This collaborative approach opens doors and creates the foundation for lasting change.

Federation is developing new programming to complement its work with local educators and its ongoing educational programming, in which Jewish Memphians share personal stories about their faith, culture and experiences in Memphis. The first cohort of community members has been trained and will soon start presenting in educational, civic and interfaith spaces.

**University, Business and Policy Leadership on Antisemitism**

Vanderbilt University Chancellor Andrew Martin and University of Michigan President Santa Ono delivered powerful statements about universities’ responsibility to protect Jewish students. Both emphasized that ensuring Jewish students’ safety aligns perfectly with universities’ educational missions. These are principles reflected in Federation’s good working relationship with the administrations of the University of Memphis and Rhodes College, and recent investments in strengthening and expanding the Hillels of Memphis.

Among the conference highlights was United Arab Emirates Ambassador Yousef Al Otaiba’s acceptance of the Abraham Award for his role in the historic Abraham Accords. His work establishing initiatives like the Manara Center and Abrahamic Family House in the UAE showcases successful coalition-building across different communities.

(See ADL Page 3)

# Nosh, Network and Give Back: Young Jewish Memphis Celebrates at Upcoming BGS Soiree on April 3



Jana Weiskopf (left) & Jenny Cook (right), Ben Gurion Society Co-Chairs

**By Jana Weiskopf & Jenny Cook, Ben Gurion Society Co-Chairs**

Ready to indulge in delicious Italian cuisine, wine and conversation amongst fun, passionate young Jewish Memphians who love their community?

If so, we have just the event for you. Federation is hosting the second annual Ben Gurion Society (BGS) Soiree: A Taste of Tuscany, an Italian feast, on April 3 from 6:30-9 p.m.

BGS is a national donor recognition group for emerging philanthropists aged 50 and under who give \$1,000 or more to Federation’s Annual Community Campaign. By being part of BGS, you gain access to exclusive events and unique opportunities to meet, network and connect with like-minded peers

who want to sustain a vibrant Memphis Jewish community.

A gift to the Annual Campaign plays a vital role in supporting the needs of our local and global Jewish community. Each year, grants from the Campaign support agencies and programs focused on social services, Jewish identity and Jewish engagement including our Jewish day schools, Jewish overnight camp scholarships, leadership development and community security.

We both grew up in Memphis, so, for us, being part of BGS means we are giving back to the community that raised us. As co-chairs of BGS this year, we know our members feel the impact of the generations of Jewish Memphians who gave before us to create the strong and

(See Society Page 3)



My Teen Israel Experience



Yonina Lichter and her friends posing after their paint night.

By Yonina Lichter

Yonina Lichter, daughter of Rabbi Ian and Katie Lichter, is a junior at the Goldie Margolin High School for Girls. Memphis Jewish Federation’s Lemsky Endowment Fund provided her with a Teen Israel Experience grant to offset the costs of her Mach Hach Ba’Aretz Israel program. All rising juniors and seniors are eligible for grants of up to \$3,000 to attend a recognized teen summer or semester program in Israel. Teen Israel Experience applications for Summer 2025 are open and can be accessed at Lemsky Endowment Fund | Jewish Community Partners (jcpmemphis.org)

Thanks to the generous support of the Memphis Jewish Federation’s Lemsky Endowment Fund, I had the incredible opportunity to go on the Mach Hach Ba’Aretz trip to Israel last summer. We traveled throughout Israel, exploring its history and culture.

One of the most meaningful moments of my trip was visiting the Kotel. On one of our first days in Israel, we danced and sang all the way there. It was an amazing experience to be at the Kotel with all of Mach Hach and to be able to daven there. I also got to spend time with friends from other buses that I didn’t see often over the summer, which made it even more special.

One of the most special experiences was making a BBQ for soldiers and their families who had just returned from Gaza. We grilled food, set up ta-

bles and played with the kids. Seeing how happy and appreciative they were made it so meaningful.

Being in Israel during a war was definitely scary at times, but it also made the experience even more meaningful. At Har Herzl (Israel’s national cemetery), we heard from a woman whose husband was killed on October 7. Listening to her speak was incredibly powerful – she had so much strength and emunah (faith) in Hashem. Every morning at davening, our bus leader would share a quote from a fallen soldier, encouraging us to think about how it applied to our own lives. These quotes helped us feel connected to the soldiers and reminded us of what was happening around us.

At the end of every Shabbat, we would go to a lookout near where we were staying, sing songs, and listen to a d’var Torah. The first week, we were in Jerusalem and sang the prayer Acheinu. As we sang, other people nearby joined in, and even though we didn’t know them, we were all Jews, and that was all that mattered. That collective singing was incredibly meaningful.

I’m so grateful to the Memphis Jewish Federation’s Lemsky Endowment Fund for helping make this trip possible. I will never forget my time in Israel – traveling, making meaningful connections with Jewish people from all over the world, and forming lifelong friendships. **HW**

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3/20/2025

Memphis Candlelighting Time

Erev Shabbat, Fri. March 21, 2025 / 21 Adar, 5785 .....6:54 p.m.  
Havdalah, Sat. March 22, 2025 / 22 Adar, 5785 ..... 7:51 p.m.

Weekly Torah Portion: Vayakhel

YU Maccabees Head to NCAA DIII Men’s Basketball Tournament for First Time Since 2022

By Philissa Cramer

March 3, 2025 – (JTA) – It’s another March Madness run for the Yeshiva University Maccabees, which clinched the Skyline Conference championship last Sunday night to head to the national men’s basketball tournament.

The 81-78 win against the Farmingdale State Rams means that the Orthodox university is returning to the NCAA Division III men’s basketball tournament for the first time since 2022. That year,

the team fell in the first round of play to Johns Hopkins, following a season that notched a record 50-game winning streak and captivated Jewish basketball fans.

Mayim Bialik, the Jewish actor, is producing a documentary about the 2022 team, whose star, Ryan Turell, now plays professional basketball in Israel after a stint in the NBA’s G League in Detroit.

The team’s current star is Zevi Samet, a junior from the heavily Orthodox town of Monsey, New York, who is also the Skyline Conference’s Player of the Year. Samet posted the game-winning three-pointer with just 16 seconds to spare last Sunday.

“Solid run... Onto the @ncaadiii tournament,” coach Elliot Steinmetz posted on Instagram that Sunday. “Thanks to those who have continued to support us.” He posted photographs showing the team wearing orange practice shirts in honor of the Bibas brothers killed in captivity in Gaza; fans holding Israeli flags in the stands; and a victory dinner at a kosher restaurant on Long Island.

The DIII men’s basketball tournament begins March 20 in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The Maccabees have played in the tournament only twice before, making it to the third round in 2020 before play was canceled because of the COVID-19 pandemic. **HW**



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ADL...  
(Continued From Page 1)

The conference also featured noteworthy perspectives from Congresswoman Elise Stefanik, a panel discussion on building relationships and combating online hate between KIND Bars Founder Daniel Lubetzky and CNN’s Van Jones, and insights from U.S. Senators James Lankford (R-OK) and Jacky Rosen (D-NV) about bipartisan efforts to address antisemitism.

**The Power of Personal Narrative: Social Media Influencers Lead the Way**

Social media influencers played a prominent role throughout the conference. Hosted by influencers Hen Mazzig and Montana Tucker, the event honored 25 social media personalities for their courage in speaking out against antisemitism on their platforms.

Their work emphasized a crucial approach that resonated with our delegation: the importance of affirming Jewish values and identity in social media rather than focusing primarily on Jewish victimhood. This strategy aligns perfectly with our belief in confronting

antisemitism by being open, honest and proud of sharing our Jewish faith, culture and identity.

**Moving Forward: Reinforcing and Expanding Our Approach**

The Memphis Jewish Federation delegation returned with a renewed sense of purpose and practical additions to our existing antisemitism response framework. The conference reinforced the effectiveness of a multi-channel approach while providing specific tools to enhance our work.

“My hope is that we continue to tailor the mentioned strategies to the unique needs of Memphis by proactive steps to raise awareness, educate and advocate against antisemitism and other forms of hate while fostering a more inclusive and compassionate environment,” said Notowich.

As Memphis Jewish Federation and the Community Relations Council implement these insights in Memphis, we remain committed to addressing immediate concerns and building the long-term relationships that create lasting change in our community. **HW**

Society...  
(Continued From Page 1)

vibrant Jewish community we have today. Financially supporting Federation’s Annual Campaign was important to our parents, grandparents, great-grandparents and the generations before them. It is so meaningful for both of us to be able to continue our family’s legacy.

In addition, now that we both have children of our own, contributing to Federation is even more of a priority. We give for our children’s future, and for the sake of their children and their children’s children – because they deserve to grow up in the same type of vibrant Jewish community that had such a positive impact on both of us.

Whether you’re new to the city or a Memphis native, the BGS Soiree is a must-attend event. Along with the rest of the committee – Lisa Barden, Andrea Cohen, Ira Lipsey, Jaclyn Marshall, Joey Notowich, Farryl Silver, Alyssa Wilson and Demi Yaffe – we hope to see you there!

Register today at [jcmmemphis.org/bgssoiree](http://jcmmemphis.org/bgssoiree) before space runs out.

If you know a young Jewish Memphian who is interested in learning more about BGS, visit [jcmmemphis.org/young-leadership/ben-gurion-society](http://jcmmemphis.org/young-leadership/ben-gurion-society) or call the Federation office at 901-767-7100. **HW**

**The MJCC Larisa and Ben Baer Senior Adult Club Happenings**

**Lunch is Monday–Friday at 11:30 a.m. All programs start at 12:15 p.m. Monthly Luncheon is at noon.**

**Monday, March 24  
Mid-South Hobbies Special Art Project**

We recently had a field trip to the Mid-South Hobbies location on Summer Ave. They always bring a really cool project for the group to do that is a lot of fun. Their teachers make it very enjoyable. This project is free. No experience is necessary, and if the project is not finished, everyone takes supplies to finish at their own home. Come have a nice lunch and bring home something that you made yourself. Reservations are needed by the Friday before so we have enough projects and food for everyone.

**Wednesday, March 26  
Speaker: Tim Flesner with Mid-South Home Helpers  
Topic: Understanding and Overcoming Fragilities**

Tim is always an entertaining speaker and opens up the floor to questions during his talks. This is a topic that many seniors wrestle with for themselves, their spouse or other friends and loved ones. Come hear some answers to questions that you might have been thinking about.

**Monday, March 31  
Team Trivia Pursuit**

Last time we tied and had to go extra rounds to crown the winning team! Besides the usual group of players, we are expecting one of the current City Council people to join us on one of the teams.

Everyone is invited to join whether you have played before or not. The questions are asked from the Trivial Pursuit regular edition and the Boomer edition. One of our best players in one of the games said before we started, that she never got the answers right. Then she answered about 4 or 5 questions right for her team! Come join us and see how much you know.



**Rabbi Abe Schacter-Gampel**

**Wednesday, April 2  
Rabbi Talk with Rabbi Abe Schacter-Gampel  
Topic: Preparing for Passover**

Rabbi Abe always brings a unique twist to all his talks and is very entertaining. Since Passover this year is unusual as it starts on a Saturday night, this should be a more-interesting-than-usual talk. Please make reservations at the MJCC front desk as Rabbi Abe’s talk always draw a good crowd. Hope to see you there!

Please join us Monday through Friday for a delicious kosher lunch from the kitchens at Memphis Jewish Home & Rehab. The cost is only \$2 for seniors. Reservations are required the day before by 1 p.m. by contacting Steve Kaplan, Adult Services Coordinator, at 901-259-9220 or [stevekaplan@jccmemphis.org](mailto:stevekaplan@jccmemphis.org) or by calling the front desk at 901-761-0810. Steve works Monday thru Thursday 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. **HW**

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CULTURE

Ranking Plants from Jewish to Antisemitic



Design by Avital Dayanim

By Evelyn Frick

FEBRUARY 13, 2025 - This originally appeared on Hey Alma, reprinted with permission.

The Jewish people have a sacred connection to nature. On Sukkot, it’s a mitzvah to shake the lulav and etrog and sleep under the stars in your sukkah. The pomegranate, with its 613 seeds, is seen as a tangible connection to the 613 commandments and is also a symbol of love and fertility in Jewish culture. And I’d be remiss not to mention Tu Bishvat, the birthday of the trees, which Jews celebrate every year on the 15th of the Hebrew month Shevat.

But despite our people’s connection to all that sprouts and grows from the earth, there are definitely some plants out there that are less Jew-friendly than others.

In honor of Tu Bishvat, [I ranked] plants that are either Jewish, antisemitic or somewhere in between. Am I a botanist, or do I have any sort of scientific or horticultural qualifications with which to render these judgments? Not exactly. I have a degree in English literature, and my partner is in charge of watering the plants in our household. But what I lack in cold hard facts, I make up for in chutzpah and a login to Hey Alma’s

website.

Here we goooooo:

Wandering Jew Plant (Tradescantia fluminensis)

Let’s start out with an obvious one: antisemitic.

Tree of Life (עץ הַחַיִּים)

Jewish, duh.

Pine Tree (Pinus)

You might be surprised to learn that pine trees are Jewish! (They converted.)

Venus Flytrap (Dionaea muscipula)

Follow me here with some mathematical equations utilizing the transitive property:

Venus = Roman Goddess of Love

Ancient Rome = Empire that caused the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE

Destruction of the Temple in 70 CE = antisemitic

Cactus (Cactacea)

A plant that has a robust, protective outer shell? That’s Jewish.

Crab Apple Tree (Malus)

Not antisemitic, but definitely not kosher either.

Weeping Willow (Salix babylonica)

You might think a weeping willow is Jewish because of its name evoking a fragile, potentially anxious mental state. How stereotypical of you. The weeping willow is Jewish, because willow

branches are part of the lulav.

Those leaves they beat you with at the schvitz

Ashkenazi Jewish

Redwood Tree (Sequoioideae)

You mean the tree that Idina Menzel climbs on Broadway? Jewish.

Alder Buckthorn (Frangula alnus)

Deep, Henry Ford-levels of antisemitic.

Truffula Tree (Truffula Loraxica)

Not Jewish, but Italian. They’re used to the confusion.

Sensitive Plant (Mimosa pudica)

Once again, you’re probably thinking this plant is Jewish because of its anxious-sounding name... this time you’re right! Jewish.

Giving Tree (ArborusShelSilversteinicus)

Jewish.

Rose of Sharon (Hibiscus syriacus)

Sharon? You mean the name of every Temple Sisterhood President ever? Jewish.

Dandelion (Taraxacum officinale)

When it has the bright yellow (some might say blonde) florets, it’s antisemitic. When it has the puffy seedhead, a la Larry David’s haircut in the ’90s, it’s Jewish.

Money Tree (Pachira aquatica)

Inconclusive. HW

Hamas Signals Readiness to Release Hostage, Four Bodies

By JNS Staff

(JNS) – Hamas said last Friday that it was prepared to release Edan Alexander, 21, in an effort to jump-start stalled ceasefire negotiations.

The terrorist group said in a press statement that it was responding to a proposal from mediators to resume negotiations, and agreed to “release the Zionist soldier Edan Alexander, who holds American citizenship, in addition to the bodies of four other dual nationals.”

It said it would make the release without ceremony. Hamas has been criticized by Israel and the U.S. for making

propaganda spectacles of the prisoner releases.

The Trump administration’s special envoy Steve Witkoff told press on March 6 that the U.S. wants Hamas to free Alexander as a show of goodwill.

Alexander, 20, from Tenaflly, N.J., is the only one of five American hostages in Gaza believed to still be alive.

“Edan Alexander is very important to us – as all the hostages are – but Edan Alexander is an American, and he’s injured, so he’s a top priority for us,” Witkoff said.

“We feel that Hamas has not been forthright with us, and it’s time for them to be forthright with us,” Witkoff said. “Edan Alexander would be a very important show.”

Israel’s Channel 12 revealed on March 6 that former captives told Alexander’s family that he had been held in a tunnel for more than 500 days. He appeared severely malnourished and had been tortured and kept in chains for a long time, they said.

Alexander, who served in the IDF’s Golani Brigade, was kidnapped in uni-

form from a post near Kibbutz Nirim on Oct. 7, 2023.

He is scheduled to be released in the second phase of negotiations, which Hamas is eager to start. According to the group’s last Friday statement, it affirmed its “full readiness to start negotiations and reach a comprehensive agreement on the issues of the second phase, calling for the occupation to implement its obligations in full.”

The second phase calls for a permanent ceasefire and the return of the remaining hostages by Hamas. Israel estimates 59 hostages are still in Gaza, of whom 35 are believed to be dead.

Israel wanted to extend the first phase and not enter the second. Hamas rejected that plan.

Both sides have agreed to a bridging proposal from the U.S. whereby the ceasefire would be extended through the holidays of Ramadan and Passover.

Ramadan runs until March 29, while Passover begins on April 12 and ends on April 19.

Israel is reportedly planning to resume its war against Hamas at the end of that period. It has halted the flow of aid into the Gaza Strip.

Israel’s government has also approved a call-up of up to 400,000 IDF reservists. HW

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# In Meeting with Irish Leader, Trump Disparages Chuck Schumer as ‘Not Jewish Anymore’

By Ben Sales

(JTA) – President Donald Trump falsely said that Sen. Chuck Schumer is no longer Jewish and called him a “Palestinian” while speaking to reporters last Wednesday.

Last Wednesday’s remarks were the latest instance in which Trump has used “Palestinian” as an epithet to refer to Schumer, whom he once also falsely called “a proud member of Hamas.” Generally, Trump has opted for such language to disparage Democrats whom he sees as inadequately supportive of Israel.

In this case, by contrast, Trump made the comments alongside Irish leader Micheál Martin while talking about corporate tax rates. After saying that the American public would blame Democrats for high taxes, Trump launched into an aside on the New York senator, his top adversary in Congress who last Wednesday was opposing a Republican-drafted funding bill. (The setting was ironic for the comments as the Irish government is staunchly pro-Palestinian.)

“And Schumer is a Palestinian as far as I’m concerned,” Trump said. “You know, he’s become a Palestinian. He used to be Jewish. He’s not Jewish anymore. He’s a Palestinian.”

Schumer, the New York Democrat and Senate minority leader, has spoken frequently about his Jewish identity throughout his political career. He is soon to release a book about fighting antisemitism.

A spokesperson for Schumer did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Both Trump’s supporters and opponents have shared clips of the remark online, and it has drawn criticism from some liberal Jewish organizations.

“Trump’s attack on Schumer is antisemitic and racist,” said Jonathan Jacoby, who leads the Nexus Project, an antisemitism watchdog. “He’s policing Jewish identity, invoking the dual loyalty trope, and implying Palestinians are evil. This is dangerous incitement. Jewish groups must say it clearly: the President is spreading hate and weaponizing antisemitism.”

New Jewish Narrative, meanwhile, called the remark “absurd and offensive.”

The group added, “Schumer is Jewish, regardless of his views on Israel-Palestine or anything else. And ‘Palestinian’ is not a slur. To use it as such is pure racism.”

The Anti-Defamation League also condemned the comments, saying in a statement, “A President has many powers, but none of them include deciding who is and isn’t Jewish. Doing so, and using “Palestinian” as a slur, are both beneath any @POTUS. Instead of weaponizing people’s identity, use the power of the bully pulpit to bring the American people together.”

But Trump’s comments also drew some praise. David Friedman, Trump’s former ambassador to Israel, tweeted the remark and wrote, “Metaphorically speaking, I couldn’t have said it better.” **HW**



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BBQ brisket	\$30/lb	(Specify breast or thigh + leg)	
Chicken tenders	\$22/lb	Grilled chicken fillets	\$19/lb
Ground beef eggplant lasagna	\$45/pan	Basil lemon salmon (1/2-lb fillet)	\$13/pc

### SIDES (9" x 13" pan, feeds approx. 15)

Roasted broccoli	\$28/pan	Sweet potato souffle	\$34/pan
Roasted cauliflower	\$28/pan	Yellow squash souffle	\$34/pan
Roasted mushrooms	\$18/pan	Roasted sweet potatoes & beets	\$28/pan
Yukon Gold & sweet potato, twice-baked	\$9/ea	Potato kugel	\$34/pan
Stuffed peppers with farfel	\$10/ea	Butternut squash kugel	\$34/pan
Broccolini with grape tomatoes, baked	\$32/pan	Matzah apple kugel	\$34/pan

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# Trump Guts Department of Education, Slashing Office Handling Antisemitism Complaints

By Philissa Cramer

(JTA) – Acting on decades of Republican ambitions, the Trump administration is dramatically scaling back the federal education department, including its civil rights office – which has gone into high gear addressing antisemitism allegations at colleges and public schools.

Staffing at the Office of Civil Rights, which handles complaints filed under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, is among the casualties of the administration’s mass firings. According to Chalkbeat, an education news site, half of the 12 regional civil rights offices are being eliminated. The New York Times reports that only “a skeleton crew” remains in major offices in New York City, Boston and San Francisco.

The Office of Civil Rights handles discrimination claims against schools and has been a central source of recourse for Jewish and pro-Israel students who believed their rights were infringed upon by pro-Palestinian campus protests since Oct. 7, 2023. The office has opened dozens of Israel-related civil rights investigations since then, including several since President Donald Trump’s inauguration, amid vows by both the Biden and Trump administrations to protect Jewish students on campus.

Just [last] week, the office sent letters to 60 colleges and universities warning them that they could face consequences if they did not fulfill their responsibility to protect Jewish students.

Critics of the civil rights office have charged that its investigations take too long and result in inadequate changes. As Trump prepared to take over, watchdogs said they expected that the Department of Justice could be a likely new home for campus civil rights issues including Title VI if the education department shrank or closed. Trump’s attorney general, Pam Bondi, has vowed a hard-line approach against campus pro-Palestinian protesters.

The education department’s announcement of the overhaul said it would “continue to deliver on all statutory programs that fall under the agency’s purview” but did not mention the

civil rights office. The department administers federal funding for schools serving students from low-income families and for students with special needs. (The vast majority of funding for public schools comes from local and state budgets.) It also manages federal student loans for college students.

Republicans have long argued that

the department, elevated to the Cabinet level by Congress in 1980, represents an inappropriate assertion of federal power in a matter of local authority. As culture wars have deepened in the decades since, conservatives have pilloried the department, which does not decide what is taught locally, as advancing progressive ideas in schools.

The New York Times reported that a draft executive order that would fully dismantle the department was circulating in Washington last week. Its only clear instruction to Education Secretary Linda McMahon, the newspaper reported, was to “terminate any remaining diversity, equity and inclusion programs.” **HW**




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# Tariffs: How They Work and Potential Economic Effects

*Provided by Mike Stein, Managing Director - Investments, Wells Fargo Advisors*  
*Questions for Mike? You can reach him at 901.761.8151 or Michael.Stein@WellsFargoAdvisors.com • fa.wellsfargoadvisors.com/michael-stein*

On February 1, 2025, President Trump authorized an additional 25% tariff on all goods entering the United States from Canada and Mexico (except for a lower 10% tariff on energy resources from Canada) and an additional 10% tariff on all goods from China. Nine days later, Trump authorized a 25% tariff on steel and aluminum, which strengthened and elevated tariffs levied by the first Trump administration in 2018.<sup>1</sup> These were the opening salvos in what promises to be a period of aggressive moves that is likely to shake up the global trade environment.

A tariff is a tax on a particular class of imported goods or services that is typically designed to help protect domestic industries from foreign competition. However, the Trump administration is also using tariffs as leverage for other goals. The tariffs on Mexico and Canada – our two largest trading partners – were put on hold until early March after both countries promised major initiatives to secure their U.S. borders against the flow of fentanyl and illegal immigrants.<sup>2</sup> Despite these efforts, Trump said in late February that the tariffs would go forward; however, negotiations continued.<sup>3</sup>

On the other hand, China – which exports some of the chemicals used to manufacture fentanyl – responded by raising its tariffs on selected U.S. exports by 10% to 15%.<sup>4</sup>

**Background**

Although the U.S. Constitution specifically grants Congress the power to levy tariffs (also called duties), Congress has delegated much of that authority to the President over the last 90 years. This has led to numerous trade agreements that have created a low-tariff, rules-based global trading structure, with tariffs ap-

plied on selected products. Over the past 70 years, tariffs have seldom accounted for more than 2% of federal revenue and were just 1.57% in FY 2024. Prior to the recent actions, about 70% of all foreign goods entered the United States duty-free.<sup>5</sup>

**Who pays for tariffs?**

Tariffs are collected by U.S. Customs and Border Protection at U.S. ports of entry. The tariff is paid by the U.S. company or individual who imports the goods. Put simply, if a U.S. company imports \$1 million of foreign steel with a 25% tariff, that steel costs the company an additional \$250,000 for a total of \$1.25 million.

The U.S. company might then absorb all or part of the additional cost or pass it to consumers who buy products made from the steel. Alternately, the foreign steel exporter might lower its prices in order to maintain access to the U.S. market, in which case the U.S. company would still pay the 25% tariff, but the total price would not rise by the full 25% over the pre-tariff price.

The other factor in this equation, which is the traditional purpose of tariffs, is that the U.S. importer might buy steel from a U.S. manufacturer, thus avoiding the extra tax. The questions then are: 1) Will the U.S. manufacturer raise its price because it no longer has to compete with cheaper foreign imports? 2) Will there be enough U.S.-manufactured steel to meet demand?

**Lessons from round one**

There have been numerous studies of the 2018–19 tariffs, which were not as restrictive as the new program but offer some possible answers to these questions. Almost all of the steel and aluminum tariff costs were passed directly to U.S. companies in the form of prices

that rose by about 22% and 8% respectively. However, many foreign producers received exemptions from the tariffs, and U.S. steel and aluminum production – which represented more than two-thirds of the U.S. market before the tariffs – grew moderately to meet demand, rising by an annual average of \$2.8 billion over the period from 2018 to 2021. Even so, companies that had depended on cheaper imported metal struggled, and overall production of goods that use steel and aluminum decreased by an annual average of \$3.4 billion.<sup>6</sup>

U.S. importers also bore near the full cost of the broader tariffs on Chinese goods but generally passed only part of the costs to consumers.<sup>7</sup> However, a separate tariff on washing machines added \$86 to the retail price of a washing machine and \$92 to the price of a dryer, ultimately costing consumers over \$1.5 billion.<sup>8</sup> Broadly, a 2024 analysis found that the 2018–19 tariffs (many continued by the Biden administration), combined with retaliatory tariffs by other countries, reduced U.S. gross domestic product by a little more than 0.2% and cost about 169,000 full-time jobs.<sup>9</sup>

**Reciprocal tariffs and de minimis suspension**

Trump has also ordered a study of reciprocal tariffs, which would set tariffs based dollar-for-dollar on the tariffs each country charges on U.S. goods, as well as nontariff trade barriers. As with most issues related to tariffs, there are differing opinions on this. At best, reciprocal tariffs could lead to negotiating lower tariffs and removing barriers that prevent U.S. businesses from operating in a foreign country. At worst, they could lead to a global trade war, with ever-increasing tariffs and barriers.<sup>10</sup>

Along with the 10% tariff on Chinese goods, Trump excluded China from the *de minimis* provision of U.S. customs law that exempts goods valued at less than \$800. This would make cheap goods from Chinese online retailers, which are often shipped directly to consumers, subject to existing tariffs plus the new 10% tariff. The exclusion was suspended on February 7 to give the U.S. Postal Service and Customs and Border Protection time to develop a plan to collect the tariffs.<sup>11</sup> It’s unclear how this change will affect consumer prices, but processing could slow delivery times.<sup>12</sup>

**Inflation**

Most economists believe that tariffs cause inflation, and President Trump admitted there might be short-term price increases. The potential for tariff-driven inflation is of particular concern in the current economy; two recent surveys show a significant decline in consumer confidence due to inflation fears.<sup>13–14</sup> The full economic impact will depend on how the tariff program plays out – how much is intended as a negotiating tool and how much turns into long-term policy. For now, it would be wise to maintain a steady course and keep an eye on further developments.

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(See **Tariffs** Page 9)



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Tariffs...

(Continued From Page 8)

- 1) The White House, Feb. 1 and 11, 2025
- 2) CBS News, Feb. 3, 2025
- 3) AP News, Feb. 24, 2025
- 4) AP News, Feb. 4, 2025
- 5) Congressional Research Service, Jan. 31, 2025
- 6) U.S. International Trade Commission, May 2023
- 7) National Bureau of Economic Research, Oct. 2019
- 8) University of Chicago, Apr. 2019
- 9) Tax Foundation, Feb. 13, 2025
- 10, 13) The Wall Street Journal, Feb. 13, 2025
- 11) CNBC, Feb. 7, 2025
- 12) AP News, Feb. 5, 2025
- 14) CNN Business, Feb. 25, 2025

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Mahmoud Khalil will Remain in ICE Detention as Trump Administration Makes Case for Deporting Him



Demonstrators gather outside the Federal Courthouse in New York City to show support for Palestinian activist Mahmoud Khalil and to demand his release from ICE detention on March 12, 2025. Credit: Mostafa Bassim/Anadolu via Getty Images

By Ben Sales

(JTA) – Mahmoud Khalil, the Palestinian activist arrested at Columbia University, will remain in the United States and in ICE custody following a brief, highly anticipated court hearing last Wednesday.

The arrest of Khalil, a permanent U.S. resident who led anti-Israel protests at Columbia, has drawn national attention. Critics of the arrest have expressed alarm over the threatened deportation of a green card holder based on his activism, saying it threatens free speech rights. The Trump administration and its defenders argue that he supported terrorism and thus violated the terms of his residency in the country.

That debate created a charged atmosphere outside the federal courtroom in downtown Manhattan last Wednesday morning, where a crowd protesting for Khalil’s release – and on behalf of Palestinians – gathered ahead of the hearing. The actress Susan Sarandon, an outspoken progressive activist, was among those who came to support Khalil.

“Lift the siege on Gaza now,” the protesters chanted, some waving large Palestinian flags. “We want justice, you say how – free Mahmoud Khalil now.”

Presiding over the 30-minute hearing in a crowded courtroom was Justice Jesse Furman, a federal district judge who had halted Khalil’s deportation earlier in the week. Furman allowed Khalil’s lawyers to speak with him twice last week; previously, they had not been able to speak with their client confidentially. Khalil was not present for the hearing.

Lawyers for the government are seeking to move the case out of New York, and Furman ordered the sides to file paperwork arguing that point in the coming days. The government lawyers can file their final reply on that question by Monday at midnight. Furman also ordered the case unsealed due to the amount of attention it has received, ac-

cording to The New York Post.

Furman is an observant Jew, and he and his family have faced online threats from Laura Loomer, a Jewish far-right activist, since that decision was issued.

Outside the courtroom, a member of Khalil’s legal team read a statement from his wife, who is eight months pregnant.

“My husband was kidnapped from our home, and it’s shameful that the United States government continues to hold him because he stood for the rights and lives of his people,” she said, according to video in The New York Post. “His disappearance has devastated our lives.”

Khalil has not been charged with a crime, but last Wednesday, senior administration officials laid out their case for deporting him, claiming that he posed a threat to national security and could therefore be removed from the country under American immigration law because he supports Hamas.

“This is not about free speech, this is about people that don’t have a right to be in the United States to begin with,” Secretary of State Marco Rubio said in a public appearance last Wednesday.

“No one has a right to a student visa, no one has a right to a green card, by the way,” Rubio added. “I think being a supporter of Hamas and coming into our universities and turning them upside down and being complicit in what are clearly crimes of vandalization ... If you told us that’s what you intended to do when you came to America, we would have never let you in. And if you do it once you get in, we’re going to revoke it and kick you out.”

His comments were echoed by Tom Homan, the White House border czar, and Karoline Leavitt, the press secretary. President Donald Trump has said he plans to take similar action against other foreign student activists. **HW**

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OBITUARIES

Stanley Perry Brickman

Stanley “Perry” Brickman, DDS, the first oral and maxillofacial surgeon in Decatur and a beloved leader in the Atlanta Jewish community, passed away in Atlanta on January 26, 2025, at age 92.

Born in Chattanooga, Tenn., on December 23, 1932, his parents, Ida Siskin Brickman and Paul Myer Brickman, gave their son the Hebrew name “Simcha Peretz” in memory of his maternal grandfather. “Simcha” means joy, and throughout his life, he brought bright light and happiness to his wife, children, and grandchildren, modeling integrity, generosity and gratitude.

In retirement, he achieved international recognition for uncovering virulent antisemitism at the Emory School of Dentistry from 1948-1961. His investigative research and Emory’s public apology brought long overdue resolution to more than half of Emory’s Jewish dental students during that time whose career dreams were derailed.

At age 16, he enrolled at Emory University and joined Alpha Epsilon Pi fraternity. As Emory only admitted male students, high school girls often attended fraternity events. Perry’s life changed in his sophomore year when he met 15-year-old Grady High student Shirley Berkowitz at a fraternity football game. They married on June 26, 1955, and enjoyed a beautiful life together for close to 70 years.

One of only four Jewish boys admitted to Emory dental school in 1951 due to restrictive quotas, Brickman was shocked to receive a letter from the Dean the next summer, flunking him without any cause or notice. Despite this reputational blow, Dean James Ginn at the University of Tennessee in Memphis offered Brickman a second chance. He graduated fourth in his 1956 UT dental school class with high honors. Forever grateful, he later established the “Dean James T. Ginn Scholarship” at the UT School of Dentistry.

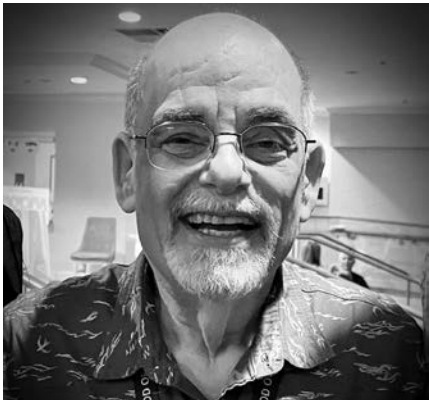
More than 50 years later, the Brickmans attended a 2006 celebration of Emory’s Judaic Studies program and the premier of Dr. Eric Goldstein’s exhibit on Jewish life at the university. They froze in their tracks in front of a trifold display with a bar graph confirming that 65% of the Jewish dental students at Emory from 1948-1958 had been flunked or made to repeat years. This was the first they learned that so many other young students had suffered – no one had spoken out. Determined to uncover the painful and untold stories behind these statistics, Brickman signed up for Apple Store lessons on how to create laptop videos, then meticulously identified, located and interviewed every living victim. After six years of research, he presented Emory with his

heartbreaking documentary, “From Silence to Recognition,” leading to the formal and sincere apology by Emory’s President at an October 10, 2012, standing room only event. Circulated worldwide, this was the #2 article emailed by The New York Times readers for three weeks. Dr. Brickman received the 2012 “Emory University Maker of History” award and the 2016 Emory Medal, the highest Emory alumni award for service and philanthropy. He then continued research to document dental school discrimination on a national scale. His book, “Extracted: Unmasking Rampant Antisemitism in America’s Higher Education,” was published in 2020.

Dr. Brickman enjoyed 42 productive years (1962-2004) at his Decatur oral surgery office, along with partners Drs. Edwin Green, Charles Rosenberg and Harvey Silverman. He was the first dentist to receive the 1992 Dekalb County Medical Society Julius McCurdy Award for outstanding community service by a DeKalb County physician. He was founding member and president of the Georgia Society of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons, president of the Alpha Omega Jewish dental fraternity, chief of Oral Surgery at several Atlanta-area hospitals and a founding member of Northside Hospital, West Paces Ferry Hospital and Decatur Hospital. In 1994, Governor Zell Miller appointed Dr. Brickman to the Georgia State Board of Dentistry where he served for seven years.

Dr. Brickman was a member of Congregation Ohr HaTorah and Beth Jacob and previously a member of Ahavath Achim. The Atlanta Jewish Federation’s 2015 Lifetime Achievement Award honored his community commitment, which included president of the Atlanta Jewish Federation, board member of Marcus Jewish Community Center, Atlanta Jewish Academy (Lifetime Trustee), William Breman Jewish Home, GILEE, Ben Massell Dental Clinic, AEPi (chapter advisor 1965-85) and Jewish Family Services. He received the 2013 Anti-Defamation League’s First Centennial Champion Award and the 2013 State of Israel Bonds Atlanta Community Award.

Dr. Brickman is survived by his loving wife, Shirley, his daughters, Lori Freeman (Joe) and Teresa Brickman Finer (Paul), his son, Jeffrey Brickman (Susan), and his six grandchildren, Jason Morse, Jessica Morse (Jake Stoll), Elena Fishkin (Jason), Talia Finer, Joseph Brickman and Anna Finer. He was predeceased by his younger sister, Rita. Graveside services were held on January 28 at Crest Lawn Memorial Park. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Atlanta Jewish Academy, Congregation Ohr HaTorah, or a charity of your choice. **HW**



Richard Cristil Hiller

Richard Cristil Hiller passed away at the age of 78 on Thursday morning, March 6, with his two sons by his side.

He is survived by his wife of 50 years, Susan Young Hiller, sons Nathan and Matthew, brother Roy (Charlene), and numerous other friends and family. He was born, raised and lived in Memphis, Tenn. Richard was a 1965 graduate of East High School and 1987 graduate of Memphis State University. A “jack of all trades,” Richard retired as an electrician with the IBEW Local 474 in 2014.

A lifelong member of Temple Israel congregation, Richard was known to occupy front seats at Friday night services along with his wife. They often attended Torah study on Saturdays and many other frequent activities of the congregation.

Richard’s adult life revolved around his family. He was an ever-faithful husband that was dedicated to the care of his wife. He always ensured her needs were taken care of before his own. Susan’s activities were also Richard’s, and he attended creative writing workshops with her among many other activities.

He was heavily involved in the actives of his sons, which started with Scouting, continuing his involvement in Troop 25 and the Chickasaw Council well after they both earned the rank of Eagle Scout and aged out of scouts. He was the epitome of a “Band Dad,” building things for the band program at Overton High School and faithfully attending concerts and marching contests. When Nathan found a passion for magic, Richard rekindled his enthusiasm too. He joined the International Brotherhood of Magicians (Ring 16) and was active with in-person and virtual meetings locally and nationally. He was also a dedicated member of the Mid South Woodturner’s Guild.

Funeral services were held on Monday, March 10 at the Temple Israel Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you make a donation in Richard’s name to the Southern Poverty Law Center or another organization that fights for civil rights.

To plant trees in memory, please visit the Sympathy Store. **HW**

‘Deep Concern’ about Anti-Israel, Anti-U.S. Art, Chicago Alderman Tell Mayor



“U.S.-Israel War Machine,” on display at the Chicago Cultural Center. Credit: Office of Chicago Alderman Debra Silverstein.

By JNS Staff

(JNS) – More than half of Chicago’s 50 alderman wrote a letter to Brandon Johnson, the city mayor, denouncing a work of art on display at the Chicago Cultural Center that they said is anti-American and anti-Israel.

The work, titled “U.S.-Israel War Machine,” is a sculpture with a painted head, apparently with blood dripping from its mouth, set atop a white T-shirt with long red sleeves culminating in large hands, all set atop a wooden stand, which states “don’t look away,” per a photograph of the work provided by the office of Alderman Debra Silverstein, of the city’s 50th Ward.

The sculpted figure wears a red bow-tie marked “Uncle Sam,” and it pours a bucket marked “tears.”

On the shirt, a tank loaded down with all sorts of missiles (some labeled “money”), other tanks, guns, drones and a helicopter, appears to have two Stars of David on its wheels, set within tracked treads.

Among the other inscriptions on the base is the work’s title, “U.S. Israel war machine.”

In a letter that they sent in January to the mayor, the 27 aldermen – more than half of the Chicago City Council’s 50 representatives – called for the piece to be removed.

They also sought the attendance of Clinée Hedspeth, commissioner of the city’s cultural affairs and special events department, at a special hearing of the city’s special events, cultural affairs and recreation committee “to explain how this artwork was approved and to outline steps that will be taken to prevent similar incidents in the future.”

The aldermen wrote “to express our deep concern and condemnation” of the sculpture, which they said “is extremely offensive to the United States and to Israel and crosses into unprotected hate speech.”

“Such representations normalize anti-American sentiment and promote hatred and bigotry against the Jewish community,” the aldermen wrote.

The 27 Chicago leaders said that they appreciated that Hedspeth took a sign down, “added a warning and removed the death count total, but the puppets are still offensive.”

“As public officials, we respect freedom of speech and artistic expression but not when it crosses into the obscene and promotes hate,” they wrote. “The Chicago Cultural Center is a public space funded by taxpayer dollars, and displays there should reflect the values of our diverse and vibrant city.”

“Artwork that is this divisive should not use public funds without a clear, transparent vetting process,” they added. **HW**

Israeli Troops Return Child Allegedly Sent to Military Post By Hamas



A child who said he was sent by Hamas is greeted by Israeli soldiers at an IDF post in the Gaza Strip on March 11, 2025. Credit: IDF

By JNS Staff

(JNS) – Israeli troops returned a four-year-old Palestinian child to Gaza after he was spotted approaching a military position in a secured area of the Strip, Lt. Col. Avichay Adraee, head of the Arab Media Branch in the IDF Spokesperson’s Unit, tweeted last Wednesday.

The child claimed he had been sent by Hamas operatives, according to Adraee.

Photos shared by Adraee showed IDF forces observing the child before coordinating his safe return.

“Yesterday, IDF forces spotted a four-year-old Palestinian child approaching an

IDF post in the security zone inside the Gaza Strip,” tweeted Adraee. “The forces returned the child to the Strip in coordination with the Government Coordination Unit and the international community.”

The IDF official condemned the incident, accusing Hamas of exploiting civilians for propaganda purposes. “It is clear that the terrorist organization Hamas does not hesitate to use all means and tools to exploit civilians and children in a disgraceful manner in order to promote terrorist activities,” he wrote. **HW**





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