**Conference Presenter Bios**

**Alan Berkowitz** is a 2G and former businessman who embarked on a second career has an educator.  He earned Master’s degrees from Gratz College in Holocaust & Genocide Studies and the University of Connecticut in Curriculum & Instruction.   He conducts workshops for educators that assist them in constructing their units on the Holocaust; presents to students on the experiences of his family during the Shoah; and is called on by the Anti-Defamation League, Voices of Hope and schools across the state to work with students that have been involved in antisemitic incidents.  Alan is a founding member and former Vice President of Voices of Hope; a Dodd Research Center for Human Rights Impact Fellow, and the author of: The Spanish Blue Division and the Holocaust.

**Lois Berkowitz** is the daughter of a Holocaust survivor from Pruzana (Pruzany) formerly of Poland, but which is now part of Belarus. She is a founding member of Voices of Hope and currently serves as the Assistant Secretary. Lois has been involved with Holocaust remembrance in many ways for several years. She lives in West Hartford, CT with her husband (Alan) who is also a child of a survivor. Lois and Alan have two grown children (Ethan and Hannah). She is a licensed Clinical Psychologist who has practiced in Connecticut for over 30 years.

**Louise Bobrow** is a practicing registered nurse, having graduated from Columbia Univ. School of Nursing in NYC and has spent most of her career in public health. She is an interviewer for Steven Spielberg's Shoah Foundation and has conducted more than 500 survivor/liberator interviews throughout the United States since its inception in 1994.  She also owned an audio/video production company called Memoirs by Louise, Inc. that specialized in film/book biographies and interviewed such famous people as Barbara Walters, NY City Mayors David Dinkins and Ed Koch, Hiliary Clinton, Henry Kissinger and Michael Douglas   She also authored a book called, History in the Making:The Easiest Way to Preserve Your Family Histories which is still available from Amazon. She appeared twice on the nationwide NBC Today Show in 1993 and 1996.

**Devorah Donnell, MD** is the granddaughter of Holocaust survivors from Poland.  As a 3G, she grew up aware of her family's experiences and the lessons were instilled from an early age.  Her grandfather survived Majdanek concentration camp, and her grandmother survived Auschwitz concentration camp, managing to remain together with her 3 sisters throughout the Holocaust.  Devorah is a Family Medicine physician who is passionate about primary care advocacy, leadership and community organizing, and her Jewish heritage.  Devorah has served on the JewGood board, completed 3GNY WEDU Training, and enjoys spending time with her adorable nieces and nephew.

**K. Heidi Fishman, MA, EdD** is an author, Holocaust educator, and retired psychologist. While Heidi always knew her mother and grandparents were Holocaust survivors, she didn’t start researching their story until she retired. Five years of investigation led to the multi-award winning *Tutti’s* Promise (2017, MB Publishing, Bethesda) which, while fictionalized for the purpose of allowing conversations among characters, follows the Lichtensterns’ true story from May 10, 1940, in Amsterdam through two Nazi camps, liberation, and resettlement; the book contains a significant number of original documents.Fishman speaks to schools and community groups to teach about the perils of prejudice and bigotry. She is on the board of the Vermont Holocaust Memorial and a member of the International Committee of the Ładoś Group.Heidi likes to travel, discover new places, and meet new people, but mostly you can find her at home in Vermont with her husband, an aging border terrier, and many projects at various stages of completion.

**Daphne Geismar** is an award-winning author, designer, and educator who integrates art, history, and narrative to bring past and current events to life. Geismar designs books for major museums and publishers such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art; Museum of Modern Art, NY; and Yale University Press. She teaches design at a number of universities and develops programs to teach Holocaust curriculum at secondary schools. Geismar is currently a fellow at the Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies at Yale University.

**Paul Goldstein** Six years ago Paul was asked to speak to his synagogue about how he learned of his parents’ experiences in Nazi-occupied Poland; how they cheated death in the Warsaw Ghetto; lead a revolt in the Treblinka Concentration camp; fought with the Partisans and on the Russian front; and how their lessons of life, death, and survival impacted his own approach to life.  He was so moved by the impact his story had on the members of his congregation and on him, personally, that since then he has spoken to over 10,000 children and adults in 4 different states as a personal tribute to those who survived and those who died.

**Jacquie Herz** was born in London, shortly after the end of World War II, to a family of Jewish refugees who fled Hitler’s Europe. When she was eight, her parents divorced and her mother left London to go and live with her own parents, who had already immigrated to New York. So, coming to America to be with her mother was her childhood’s life-long dream! And because letter-writing was the only way to communicate with her mother at the time, writing became an integral and necessary part of her life from that very early age on. Her debut novel, *Circumference of Silence—*published in July 2021 by Black Rose Writing—draws on her family’s memories as Jews in Europe under Hitler and their refugee experiences, first in London during the second world war and, later on, in New York. She has also been published in the Metropolitan Diary and the Connecticut Section of the *New York Times.* She is a member of the Women’s Fiction Writers Association and the Women’s National Book Association.

**Jeff Israel** is a native of Connecticut and grew up in Hartford where he attended local schools. He majored in television at Grahm Junior College in Boston, Massachusetts and majored in Communications and Theater at Western Kentucky University. Jeff worked in the television industry for over forty years. He started his television career at WTIC TV channel 3 in Hartford, and in 1979, he helped launch the ESP Network, now known as ESPN. Traveling the world, Jeff covered every major sporting event as a photographer. While at ESPN, Jeff covered major sports stories for SportsCenter and other ESPN branded shows. Jeff is the recipient of five Emmys for his work on event coverage and studio shows. Before retiring from ESPN, he came off the road to serve in Studio Operation and Engineering. Jeff lives in Bristol, CT with his wife, Pat. He has two sons, Jonathan and Matt. Jeff is a member of the Temple Sinai Board of Directors and is a former president. Both of Jeff’s parents are survivors of the Holocaust, and he is active in telling his family’s Holocaust story. Jeff is a docent at the Museum of Jewish Civilization at the Maurice Greenberg Center for Judaic Studies and serves as the Director of Visual Production on the Voices of Hope Board. Jeff is a member of the Bristol Interfaith Coalition. He also serves on the Mayor’s Diversity Counsel in Bristol, CT.

**Adele R. Jacobs** is the daughter of Fred and Regina Jacobs, two survivors of Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen concentration camps. She has her BA from Smith College and her JD from Benjamin N. Cardozo Law School and is licensed to practice law in Connecticut and New York State and Federal courts. She is in private practice as a trial attorney in Bridgeport, Connecticut at Jacobs & Wallace PLLC, and lives with her husband, Michael Liebowitz, in Fairfield. She has twin sons, Jake and Stephen.  Adele is currently the First Vice President of Voices of Hope, has proudly chaired and spoken at several Holocaust Commemorations and other venues across the state. She also started the Daffodil Project in Fairfield, with the goal of planting daffodils in memory of the 1.5 million children murdered in the Shoah, with the first garden to be planted at First Church Congregational in Fairfield.  She is passionate and outspoken about the Shoah, and the importance of remembrance.

**Jared Kafer** is a 3G and lives in Stamford, CT. His maternal grandfather, Leon Zeeberg, was a holocaust survivor from Pilvishkai, Lithuinia. Leon spent much of his time during the war hiding in the forest with Lithuanian farmers, often relying on his trade as a tailor to evade the Nazis. Jared’s grandpa’s miraculous and courageous story was a central tenant of his family’s Jewish identity, and was part of his inspiration to participate on the March of the Living trip in high school. He continued on participate as a leader in his university’s Hillel and other Jewish organizations as a young adult, driven by a strong cultural connection to his family’s history. Jared works as a Pediatric Anesthesiologist in Westchester, NY and lives with his wife and two daughters in Stamford, CT.

**Sharone Kornman** is the daughter of 2 survivors, Irene (Bienstock) Frisch from Drogobycz, and Eugene Frisch from Kolomya, both formerly Poland, now Western Ukraine. She has been involved in Holocaust remembrance since 1990. Sharone is a founding member of Voices of Hope and currently serves as SEcretary. She lives in West Hartford and practices law in Hartford. She is the proud wife of a very supportive non-2G (Paul) and mom of three 3Gs (Jacob, Izzy and Joey).

**Barry A. Kosmin,**internationally known expert in social survey research, Jewish sociology and demography, was the Founding Director of the North American Jewish Data Bank 1986-96 New York City University. He directed the 1990 U.S. National Jewish Population Survey; the 1998 National Survey of South African Jews and the JDC Surveys of European Jewish Community Leaders 2008- 2016. He has held executive positions with the Institute for Jewish Policy Research, London; the Board of Deputies of British Jews and the Council of Jewish Federations, New York. His academic positions have included the University of Southampton; Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Oxford University, where he was a Senior Research Fellow, Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy. In his wider academic work, Dr. Kosmin was Principal Investigator of the American Religious Identification Survey (ARIS) series 1990-2015 and Founding Director of the Institute for the Study of Secularism in Society and Culture at Trinity College, Hartford, 2005-2019; he was Research Professor of Public Policy and Law.  His books include *One Nation under God: Religion in Contemporary American Society*, 1993; Book of the Month Club; *Religion in a Free Market: Religious and Non-Religious Americans.* Dr Kosmin's awards include the 2019 Lifetime American Humanist Award, which has included honorees, Gloria Steinem, Kurt Vonnegut and Eli Wiesel. In 2021, he was honored with the Sklare Award of the Association for the Social Scientific Study of Jewry.

**Deborah Levison** is an author, publicist, and a child of Hungarian survivors. Her life has two parts: Canada, where she attended University of Toronto and the Royal Conservatory of Music, and Connecticut, where she lives with three children, two doodles, and one husband. Her first book, a multi award-winning nonfiction called **THE CRATE**, is the true story of a grisly murder that rocked her family. The crime traumatized her fragile parents, dredging up their memories of the Holocaust – of concentration camps, cattle cars, death marches – and forcing them to confront violence yet again. Evil in the past and evil in the present converge in the narrative. Reviewers called it “gorgeous and poetic,” “heart-wrenching,” and “a brilliant story.” The *Jerusalem Post* wrote: “exquisite.”Since the book’s release, Levison has given over 130 presentations to Holocaust museums, schools, colleges, libraries, synagogues, churches, and other organizations, from the US to Canada to the UK. Her debut novel, **A NEST OF SNAKES**, releases October 11. Visit her website, [www.DebbieLevison.com](http://www.DebbieLevison.com).

**Dr. Robert Mandel** has been a book publisher and editor for over forty years specializing in publishing books by Jewish and Holocaust writers. He is the founder and publisher of Mandel Vilar Press (2014-the Present) recognized today as one of the leading publishers of Jewish writers. Prior to 2014, Dr. Mandel launched numerous successful and long lasting Jewish book series and publishing programs at the following presses:  Senior editor at The State University of New York Press (1979-1982);  Assistant Director. Indiana University Press(1982-1985); Director of Wayne State University Press (1985-1990); Director of Syracuse University Press (1993-2000); Director of University of Wisconsin Press (2000-2006); Director of Texas Tech University Press (2008-2013).

**Avinoam J. Patt**, Ph.D. is the Doris and Simon Konover Chair of Judaic Studies and Director of the Center for Judaic Studies and Contemporary Jewish Life at the University of Connecticut. He is the author of multiple books on Jewish responses to the Holocaust during and after World War II. He is also the creator of the *In Our Own Words Interview Project*, an archive of oral histories recorded with the children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors. Most recently, he is the author of a new book on the early postwar memory of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising *(*[*The Jewish Heroes of Warsaw: The Afterlife of the Revolt*](https://www.wsupress.wayne.edu/books/detail/jewish-heroes-warsaw), published in May 2021) and co-editor of the new volume [*Understanding and Teaching the Holocaust*](https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Furldefense.com%2Fv3%2F__https%3A%2Fgoldbergseries.org%2F__%3B!!Dq0X2DkFhyF93HkjWTBQKhk!DwMNx5W6X6xZBjVLW3yZMYE0wAI2VdWJa9A8xLkQ5GrRY53gan-6KnE92zXF_wM3CuUQBSYlvg%24&data=04%7C01%7C%7C5e25f4bda083494dd89e08d97de70e6b%7C17f1a87e2a254eaab9df9d439034b080%7C0%7C0%7C637679253618799085%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=wlFoL7Ry6aedI81ivi3qS%2BLMxgdyU1jmFa9GLSQUTpI%3D&reserved=0)(University of Wisconsin Press, July 2020). In Spring 2022, he created and facilitated a new one-credit pop-up course at the University of Connecticut, [*Why the Jews: Confronting Antisemitism*](https://provost.uconn.edu/why-the-jews/), which reached over 1600 students in the first semester it was offered.

**Jessica Samuels** is third generation Holocaust survivor. Her maternal grandparents survived Auschwitz and met each other in the Bergen-Belsen displaced persons camp after WW2 ended. They lived in Germany at the Bergen-Belsen displaced persons camp for 2 years during which time Jessica's mother was born. Eventually they moved to Toledo, Ohio and were overjoyed when their family grew to include more children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. Jessica served on the Voices of Hope Board as Treasurer, is a physician and lives in West Hartford with her husband and 2 children.

**Shiri Sandler** is the Managing Director of the Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village in Rwamagana, Rwanda. Previously, Shiri was the U.S. Director of the Auschwitz Jewish Center at the Museum of Jewish Heritage – A Living Memorial to the Holocaust. Shiri directed fundraising, educational programs for North American students, and Board relations for the Center, an affiliate of the Museum’s. While at the Museum, she led immersive programs on dehumanization and genocide for military students, developed new ethics programs for professional school students, and taught about the Darfur genocide. Prior to joining the Museum, she was the Interim Chief of Staff at the Genocide Intervention Network, a Darfur genocide activism organization founded and staffed by students. Shiri received her M.A. in Modern European History from Brown University and her B.A. from Cornell University. Her academic research is on Soviet liberator rape of Jewish concentration camp survivors. Shiri is the granddaughter of Holocaust survivors.

**Jill Sarkozi** is the creator of the Safekeeping Stories of the Holocaust Workshop, which has been helping children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors preserve their family’s story since 2015. She has a degree in finance from Tulane University, a law degree from Tulane Law School, a certificate in Applied Positive Psychology, and has completed the Boston University Genealogical Principles program. She is a member of the Biographers Guild of Greater New York and is on the Board of Larchmont Temple.

**Dr. Sarah Snyder** is the Director of the Holocaust Education Resource and Outreach (HERO) Center at Voices of Hope. She is a Mike Jacobs Fellow in Holocaust Studies and received her PhD from The University of Texas at Dallas in History with a focus in Holocaust Studies. Sarah has taken part in a variety of Holocaust fellowships and workshops and has also had the opportunity to work at various concentration camp museums.