

# Holocaust Memorial Center Announces Largest Gift in 37-Year History

By **Danny Schwartz** - 12/14/2021 11:00 AM



*Holocaust Memorial Center Farmington Hills (Dave Parker/Wikimedia)*

The donation represents the lead gift toward the Holocaust Memorial Center’s \$100 million Comprehensive Campaign.

The Holocaust Memorial Center Zekelman Family Campus announced a donation in the amount of \$15 million from the Zekelman family and Zekelman Industries.

The gift is the single largest charitable donation received in the Holocaust Memorial Center’s 37-year history.

The donation represents the lead gift toward the Holocaust Memorial Center’s \$100 million Comprehensive Campaign. The financial commitment is part of the ongoing support from the Zekelman family and Zekelman Industries, bringing their total funding of the Holocaust Memorial Center to \$25 million.

The Comprehensive Campaign was launched to establish a permanent endowment fund to keep the Holocaust Memorial Center vital and sustainable far into the future. The donation will enable the institution to maintain its facilities at the highest standard, boost operational funding and expand special events, traveling exhibits and educational offerings.

“We’ve always been impressed by the positive and lasting impact the Holocaust Memorial Center has had on millions of lives. It’s truly inspiring. With antisemitism and hate crimes on the rise, we feel a sense of urgency to help organizations, like the Holocaust Memorial Center, that are passionately working to combat it,” said Barry Zekelman, chairman and CEO of Zekelman Industries, via press release.

“We’re hopeful that this generosity is going to inspire others to support the Holocaust Memorial Center and the important work we do in fighting against antisemitism and hatred by teaching about the Holocaust,” said Rabbi Eli Mayerfeld, CEO, Holocaust Memorial Center.

“This gift really sets us on a path for the future because it means we can plan in a way knowing there will be funding available far into the future for all the activities the center would like to present,” he added.

Rabbi Mayerfeld says the gift is especially meaningful in the face of the rise in antisemitism.

“We’ve seen a rise in antisemitic violent acts, hate and bigotry, locally, nationally and globally as well, so the work the Zekelman gift allows us to do is more important now than ever.”

HMC is in the planning stages of an update to their core exhibit, focused on the history of the Holocaust.

“Twenty years ago, when the museum was built, there were many survivors here in the community who could tell their stories,” Rabbi Mayerfeld said. “Today, there are fewer and fewer, and so the exhibit needs to be able to lift up those voices and tell those stories when people aren’t necessarily going to be able to hear them firsthand anymore.”

Part of that renovation will be using the almost 1,000 video and audio recordings of local survivors to educate and inform.

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