

Miami Herald

Holocaust stories from Florida added to global Shoah Foundation archives

BY CHRISTINA MAYO
FEBRUARY 18, 2022



Teens join Holocaust survivor Morris Dan, now 96, at the Dania Beach Holocaust Documentation & Education Center's Broward County Student Awareness Day in 2018. Awareness days were virtual during the pandemic. PROVIDED BY HDEC

Hearing history from those who lived through it is one of the best ways we can all learn to be better people.

More than 2,300 testimonies collected by the Holocaust Documentation & Education Center in Dania Beach are now being added to Steven Spielberg's USC Shoah Foundation's Visual History Archive®.

For decades, both groups have had the mission to preserve oral testimonies that document life before, during and after the Holocaust.

HDEC President and CEO Rositta E. Kenigsberg said the VHA will provide a valuable opportunity for use by all researchers and scholars in many disciplines — educators from schools and universities, curators from museums and institutions, and filmmakers — from countries around the world.

“This incredible partnership opportunity for the HDEC was made possible by the extraordinary generosity of The Jim Moran Foundation for which all of us at the HDEC are tremendously grateful,” Kenigsberg said.

“This gift, which funds the integration of the 2,300+ HDEC eyewitness testimonies, will ensure that the HDEC Collection will be preserved and available throughout the world in perpetuity.”

The collection will be digitized, indexed, catalogued, and made available through USC Shoah Foundation’s worldwide network of access points at more than 170 institutions used by more than 100,000 registered educators.

Also, HDEC will be a VHA “full access site” meaning that all USC Shoah Foundation’s 55,000+ testimonies, including the latest 2,300+, will be accessible at the Dania Beach location. Students, teachers, researchers, scholars, visitors, HDEC staff and volunteers can access the content.

HDEC has thousands of artifacts, documents and memorabilia, and the museum at HDEC has an authenticated Holocaust Railcar from Poland, which took victims from the Warsaw Ghetto to the Treblinka extermination camp. The railcar, shipped from Gdynia, Poland, arrived at Port Everglades on Jan. 25, 2007.



This authenticated and restored Holocaust railcar from Poland, which took victims from the Warsaw Ghetto to the Treblinka extermination camp, can be seen at the Holocaust Documentation & Education Center Museum in Dania Beach. Provided by HDEC

Guests can also see a World War II U.S. M-4A3E8 Sherman tank, on permanent loan from the U.S. Army. Added to the museum in 2016, the tank is the type that was involved in the liberation of the Dachau concentration camp.

“The HDEC Oral History Library Collection is one of the world’s most extensive compilations dedicated to Holocaust testimony and its addition to the VHA, and deploying this collection globally within the VHA, will help amplify the collective voice that states ‘Never Again,’” said Kori Street, Finci-Viterbi interim executive director of USC Shoah Foundation.

“Our partnership with the HDEC will save and share the stories of thousands of Holocaust survivors, who themselves name hundreds of relatives, friends and others in their testimonies, many of whom did not survive.

“Together we are bringing all this history to light so researchers, educators and students can use them for learning and building empathy and respect in the world.”

Learn more and plan a visit at www.hdec.org and for more about the USC Shoah Foundation, visit <https://sfi.usc.edu>

Read more at:

<https://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/community/article258448653.html#storylink=cpy>