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Contact: Karen Goodman Minter
Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center
847-967-4823 office / 847-946-6069 cell
Karen.minter@ilhmec.org

BEYOND SWASTIKA AND JIM CROW: JEWISH REFUGEE SCHOLARS AT BLACK COLLEGES

REMARKABLE STORY OF JEWISH REFUGEE SCHOLARS AND THEIR STUDENTS AT HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES TOLD IN NEW EXHIBITION

Opens February 4 at *Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center*

SKOKIE, IL – By the time World War II began on September 1, 1939, Germany had purged itself of its Jewish professors, scientists, and scholars. Some of these academics, deprived of their livelihoods by the Nazis, found refuge in the United States. But in this new world, they faced an uncertain future.

A few dozen refugee scholars unexpectedly found positions in historically black colleges in the American South. There, as recent escapees from persecution in Nazi Germany, they came face to face with the absurdities of a rigidly segregated Jim Crow society. In their new positions, they met, taught, and interacted with students who had grown up in, and struggled with, this racist environment.

Beyond Swastika and Jim Crow explores the unlikely coming together of these two groups, each the object of exclusion and hatred, and examines the ongoing encounter between them as they navigated the challenges of life in the segregated South. Through historical objects, photographs, texts, and artworks such as *The Gleaners* by John Biggers, visitors are invited to learn the stories of two disenfranchised groups brought together in search of opportunity and freedom.

The Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center plans to host a variety of special programs and events in conjunction with this compelling exhibition. Included in these programs are *Racial Laws: Nuremberg and Jim Crow* on February 13; a special family storytelling event with Nancy Shapiro-Pikely on March 6; the showing of *From Swastika to Jim Crow*, followed by a conversation with former student and noted Chicagoan Gwendolyn DuBose Rogers on March 13; and *Jim Crow in the North: A Panel Discussion on Restrictive Housing Practices in Chicago and the North Shore* on May 22.

To register for these events and to learn about other upcoming events at the Museum visit www.ilholocaustmuseum.org or call 847-967-4889.

Beyond Swastika and Jim Crow: Jewish Refugee Scholars at Black Colleges was created and is circulated by the Museum of Jewish Heritage – A Living Memorial to the Holocaust. This exhibition is made possible through major funding from the Leon Levy Foundation. Additional support provided by the Helen Bader Foundation; The Lupin Foundation; The Blanche and

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Irving Laurie Foundation; public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency; the Alpern Family Foundation; and the Charles and Mildred Schnurmacher Foundation.

Likely the last international institution of its kind built with the active participation of Holocaust survivors, the Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center is the largest facility in the Midwest dedicated to preserving the memories of those lost in the Holocaust and to teaching current generations to fight hatred, indifference and genocide in today's world. The Museum is located at 9603 Woods Drive, Skokie. The Museum is open Monday through Friday: 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.; Thursday evenings: 5:00- 8:00 p.m.; and Saturdays and Sundays: 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

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