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**High-resolution photos available upon request**

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ILLINOIS HOLOCAUST MUSEUM PILOTS INTERACTIVE TECHNOLOGY TO PRESERVE SURVIVOR STORIES FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

Members of the media are invited to experience a live demonstration
Saturday, May 16, 12:00 p.m. & 1:00 p.m.
At Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center

SKOKIE, [April 30, 2015] – Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center is the first world-wide test site for New Dimensions in Testimony (NDT), an interactive educational experience that will allow future generations to “talk” with Holocaust Survivors about their life and experiences. NDT is being pioneered by USC Shoah Foundation, USC Institute for Creative Technologies (ICT) and Conscience Display. Illinois Holocaust Museum will be testing the pilot throughout May and June and will use the learning to inform future recordings of Survivor narratives.

"Illinois Holocaust Museum is committed to providing our Museum visitors and others opportunities to hear directly from Survivors. Currently, we are focused on how we’ll do that for generations to come," said Museum CEO Susan Abrams. “Our Speakers’ Bureau, among the largest in the world, reached over 80,000 students and adults last year. We are thrilled that initiatives such as New Dimensions in Testimony will help the Museum ensure that stories of Survivors will continue to inspire thousands for generations to come."

The Museum has begun testing a two dimensional version of New Dimensions in Testimony featuring Pinchas Gutter, a Holocaust Survivor born in Łódź, Poland. Visitors to the Museum can ask Pinchas any question they would like, and “natural language” technology software retrieves an appropriate response, creating an interactive dialogue, as if he was in the room. USC Shoah Foundation and ICT have compiled more than 2,000 answers from Pinchas, covering a vast range of subjects. The Museum pilot will further help the interactive technology adapt to nuances in phrasing and dialect.

"Initial response has been overwhelmingly positive," said Museum Director of Education Kelley Szany. “Younger audiences in particular, are accustomed to interacting with technology to communicate with people, and accept Pinchas as ‘real.’ It provides a safe environment for kids to ask difficult questions and get answers."

"New Dimensions in Testimony is about creating a relationship with a Survivor that is relevant for future generations. The experience is not about the technology, it’s about the Survivor interaction, and using technology to provide that interaction in the best way possible," said Stephen Smith, executive director of USC Shoah Foundation."

Throughout April and May, school and adult audiences will have the opportunity ask Pinchas questions following a Museum tour and discussion with a local Survivor. The public will have the opportunity to experience question & answer sessions with Pinchas during several Saturdays in May and June: May 2, 9, 16 and 30 and June 6, 13, 20 and 27 from 10:30 a.m. – 2:00 pm.

The Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center is dedicated to preserving the legacy of the Holocaust by honoring the memories of those who were lost and by teaching universal lessons that combat hatred, prejudice and indifference. The Museum fulfills its mission through the exhibition, preservation and interpretation of its collections and through education programs and initiatives that foster the promotion of human rights and the elimination of genocide. The Museum is open Monday through Friday from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.; Thursday evenings until 8:00 p.m.; and Saturdays and Sundays from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Learn more at www.illinoisholocaustmuseum.org.
About USC Shoah Foundation
USC Shoah Foundation — The Institute for Visual History and Education is dedicated to making audio-visual interviews with survivors and other witnesses of the Holocaust and other genocides, a compelling voice for education and action. The Institute’s current collection of more than 53,000 eyewitness testimonies contained within its Visual History Archive preserves history as told by the people who lived it, and lived through it. Housed at the University of Southern California, within the Dana and David Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, the Institute works with partners around the world to advance scholarship and research, to provide resources and online tools for educators, and to disseminate the testimonies for educational purposes.

Funding for New Dimensions in Testimony was provided in part by Pears Foundation and Louis F. Smith.

About ICT:
At the University of Southern California Institute for Creative Technologies (ICT), leaders in artificial intelligence, graphics, virtual reality and narrative advance low-cost immersive techniques and technologies to solve problems facing service members, students and society. Established in 1999, ICT is a DoD-sponsored University Affiliated Research Center (UARC) working in collaboration with the U.S. Army Research Laboratory. UARCs are aligned with prestigious institutions conducting research at the forefront of science and innovation. ICT brings film and game industry artists together with computer and social scientists to study and develop immersive media for military training, health therapies, education and more.

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