



Jewish Federation redoubles efforts to stem hate, step-up security

Lisa Karasic, Contributor

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Imam Saffet A. Catovic, the Muslim chaplain at Drew University, Madison, offers a prayer during the Oct. 30 Interfaith Vigil in Solidarity with the Jewish Community of Pittsburgh conducted at Temple Beth-El in Hillsborough. Paul C. Grzeila, @PaulGrzeila/myc



(Photo: "Courtesy of Harry Glazer")



With heightened concerns about growing anti-Semitic violence, the Jewish Federation in the Heart of New Jersey is increasing community-wide leadership to stem anti-Semitism and secure Jewish facilities, according to Keith Krivitzky, CEO.

In the coming days, the Federation will conduct a leaders' briefing for representatives from all synagogues and other Jewish organizations in Monmouth and Greater Middlesex counties. The purpose is to understand precisely what happened in Pittsburgh and what this local Jewish community must learn and do to enhance security awareness and preparedness. The session will be led by a senior official with Secure Communities Network, an affiliate of the local Federation's parent organization: Jewish Federations of North America.

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READ: [Standing with Pittsburgh: Central Jersey faces bias, hate through community-building, love](#)

From the recent Pittsburgh synagogue attack to the appearance of anti-Semitic graffiti and flyers throughout Monmouth and Greater Middlesex counties in recent months, the Jewish Federation has been helping local Jewish organizations respond. Working with schools, interfaith clergy, and public safety partners, Federation-led, promoted, and supported programs have been educating children and adults — including educators, public safety, and government officials, as well as Jewish communal and interfaith security professionals and volunteers — to reduce hate, anti-Semitism, and bullying.

"Inroads have been made," Krivitzky said. "Productive conversations at Rutgers University about anti-Semitism among educators and administration officials are one of many examples where the Federation's involvement is making an impact. Still more needs to be done."

The Jewish Federation's Security Task Force will increase engagement with security leads from synagogues and other Jewish organizations to enhance awareness and preparedness at Jewish facilities, including planning, exercises, and vulnerability assessments, as well as coordination on grant applications for funding systems, equipment, and personnel. To date, the Federation has helped bring more than \$3 million in security funding from various Federal and state sources, as well as from the Federation, itself — some 80 grants to 50 local Jewish organizations — in three years.

"More training, systems and equipment are needed," according to Amy Keller, the Federation's liaison with its Security Task Force and partners' security contacts.

"In the wake of the Pittsburgh attack, the Federation's close working relationships with public safety and law enforcement bodies are providing the Jewish community with enormous support," Keller said. "These include federal and state Homeland Security authorities, the FBI, Monmouth and Middlesex County Prosecutors' and Sheriffs' offices, the NJ Office of the Attorney General, NJ State Troopers, municipal police departments and school districts, and local, state and federal elected officials."

Through its network of subject matter experts, the Federation is scheduling additional training and awareness programs for community members and professionals, among them:

On Nov. 16, the FBI Newark Office will address adults 55-plus on Recognizing Frauds and Scams. The program, taking place at the Monroe Township Public Library, is open to the public. Pre-registration is required at [jewishheartnj.org/scams](#).

On Nov. 29, Jin Kim, a 23-year veteran of the FBI's New York Division, now retired, and widely recognized as an expert in active shooter preparedness, resiliency, and training, will present the T.A.S.K. program (Threat Adaptation Strategies & Know-How) in both Monmouth and Greater Middlesex counties. Details and locations are now being finalized. Watch [jewishheartnj.org/security](#) for details.

"Making the Jewish community more peaceful and secure takes resources," said Krivitzky.

The Jewish Federation has launched a special fundraising campaign — "Campaign to Combat Anti-Semitism and Enhance Community Security." While emphasizing these types of initiatives already take place and have resulted in improvements across the Jewish community, he said more are needed.

According to Krivitzky, programs and impact donations will fund include: coordination of the Federation's Security Task Force ensuring organizations have a security lead, assessment, and action plan in place, training, tools and communications networks for community leaders to respond in a crisis, partnerships with educators, civic and interfaith leaders to stem hate and enhance responsiveness and facilitation for organizations pursuing security grants.

For more information about the Jewish Federation's security and bias-related work, go to [jewishheartnj.org/centraljersey](#)

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