



Strategic Plan

2020-2024

HOLOCAUST EDUCATION RESOURCE COUNCIL (HERC)

a registered 501(c)3 Nonprofit Organization

P.O. Box 16282 | Tallahassee, Florida 32317

<https://holocaustresources.org/>

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MISSION

The **Holocaust Education Resource Council (HERC)** provides instructional guidance, support and resources for educators who teach the history of the Holocaust and educational programs for the community at large.

APPROACH

Consistent with Florida's statutory mandate **“to teach efficiently and faithfully” the history of the Holocaust** (Section 1003.42, Florida Statutes), HERC focuses on providing educators and members of the community with **books** and other **material teaching resources, pedagogical tools** and **public programs** for examining and understanding how and why the Holocaust happened. Through its support of educator workshops, film screenings, book talks, exhibitions, and lectures by esteemed experts, teachers, students, and adult audiences will learn the history of the Holocaust and how the Holocaust is a warning; that the unthinkable is possible; and that human nature makes all of us susceptible to the abuse of power, a belief in the inferiority of “the other”; and the ability to justify any behavior—including inaction.

ORGANIZATIONAL PRIORITIES

- Secure a combination of recurring and endowed financial resources to increase compensation for the executive director and add professional staff equivalent to one full-time employee focused on educational programming and fiscal management.
- Secure and sustain partnerships with key local and regional school district(s) and educational institution(s) through Letters of Agreement, Memoranda of Understanding, and/or other contractual agreements for educational and programming support services, technology and communications management services, and access to dedicated office and teaching facilities.
- Secure and sustain partnerships with local and regional businesses and professional service providers to offset expenses associated with educational programs and special events while amplifying message of community commitment to HERC's mission.
- Establish and grow an income-generating endowment to support acquisition and distribution of teaching resources to educators.
- Grow and diversify the board of directors by seeking motivated volunteers from the education, legal, business, technology, nonprofit and governmental sectors.
- Grow and diversify audiences for teachers' workshops, community events and public programs by partnering with other civic organizations; developing incentives for participation; and expanding digital outreach, communication and marketing capabilities.

PROGRAMMING PRIORITIES

- Secure the future of the field of Holocaust studies in Florida by advocating for increased governmental and private support for Holocaust education programs.
- Through a combination of teacher workshops for professional educators and compelling public programs, stimulate conversations on the lessons and legacies of the Holocaust.
- Expand HERC's service area to include school districts in Leon, Gadsden, Jefferson, Wakulla, Franklin, Liberty, Bay, and Gulf counties.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Mission

The **Holocaust Education Resource Council (HERC)** provides instructional guidance, support and resources for educators who teach the history of the Holocaust and educational programs for the community at large.

Statutory Mandate

Section 1003.42, Florida Statutes

Required instruction. [...]

(2) Members of the instructional staff of the public schools, subject to the rules of the State Board of Education and the district school board, shall teach efficiently and faithfully, using the books and materials required that meet the highest standards for professionalism and historical accuracy, following the prescribed courses of study, and employing approved methods of instruction, the following: [...]

(g) The history of the Holocaust (1933-1945), the systematic, planned annihilation of European Jews and other groups by Nazi Germany, a watershed event in the history of humanity, to be taught in a manner that leads to an investigation of human behavior, an understanding of the ramifications of prejudice, racism, and stereotyping, and an examination of what it means to be a responsible and respectful person, for the purposes of encouraging tolerance of diversity in a pluralistic society and for nurturing and protecting democratic values and institutions.

Why Teach Holocaust History?

The history of the Holocaust provides one of the most effective, and most extensively documented, subjects for a pedagogical examination of basic moral issues. A structured inquiry into Holocaust history yields critical lessons for an investigation of human behavior. A study of the Holocaust also addresses one of the central tenets of education in the United States, which is to examine what it means to be a responsible citizen.

Through study of the Holocaust, students come to realize that democratic institutions and values are not automatically sustained, but need to be appreciated, nurtured and protected; silence and indifference to the suffering of others, or to the infringement of civil rights in any society, can—however unintentionally—perpetuate the problems; and the Holocaust was not an accident in history—it occurred because individuals, organizations and governments made choices that not only legalized discrimination but also allowed prejudice, hatred and, ultimately, mass murder to occur.¹

Organizational Overview

¹ *Teaching about the Holocaust, A Resource Book for Educators*, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, D.C. (1994).

At present, HERC is led by one full-time **executive director**, together with a **volunteer board of directors**, with support provided by numerous other **volunteers** (including college and university student interns, primary- and secondary-level school teachers, and members of the community) who dedicate their time, skills, material and financial resources to program planning, educational and fundraising event planning, development of educational tools and curricula, advocacy for Holocaust education, development of promotional media and marketing content, and related community service.

HERC derives its financial resources from a combination of funds raised through individual and group **memberships**, special **ticketed events** (Remembrance Dinner [annual]; concerts and guest speakers [periodic]) individual and corporate **cash donations** and **event sponsorships**; and **reimbursements** received from the State of Florida for expenses associated with specific Holocaust-education-related programs for educators, students and community audiences.

Less than \$1.00 is allotted for each student annually in the State of Florida for education of the Holocaust. It is nearly impossible for students to grasp the material and understand its relevance without adequate curricula, teacher training and supplies. It is imperative that future generations recognize the danger of prejudice and hate and instead approach others with respect and acceptance.

HERC is funded almost entirely by private donors and depends on support from the community to promote tolerance, social justice and civic responsibility.

Strategic Choices and Investments

As with all organizations, HERC faces the reality of **limitations** on what it can accomplish. HERC must make **strategic choices**. There are always more opportunities and needs than resources. If HERC is to fulfill its mission, it requires strategic focus to ensure that the quality and power of its message and attendant teacher training and educational programs remain the highest priority. Although a compelling case can always be made for a wide variety of important endeavors, not every worthwhile Holocaust program can be HERC's program.

The question is not what is needed or advocated but **what must be done by HERC**; what must be done immediately; and what must be done both in the near term and more distant future to ensure that HERC maximizes its ability to have a substantial and positive impact in the community.

This strategic plan aims to set achievable organizational goals for the period of 2020 through 2024 by focusing on choices and investments that will advance HERC's mission through enhanced commitment to the goals, objectives and activities that the organization undertakes with support from specific community and governmental partners.

Observations and Assessments

The plan is based, in part, on the following **observations and assessments of the current state of the organization** and the discipline of Holocaust education in the Florida and the United States.

- HERC's current mission accurately reflects the organization's goals, objectives and activities. The executive director, members of the board of directors and volunteers are committed to providing instructional guidance, support and resources for educators who teach the history of the Holocaust and educational programs for the community.
- HERC's existing financial assets, current and projected revenue levels and budget are stable but insufficient to undertake any meaningful change in the organization's mission or the nature of its programs or activities during the period addressed in this plan.
- HERC is overly reliant on a single executive director to perform multiple professional, educational, fundraising and advocacy functions.
- HERC is overly reliant on the revenues generated from one marquee fundraising event (the annual Remembrance Dinner), the proceeds from which make up a significant majority of the total funds available each year for administrative expenses and programming costs.
- HERC's current executive director is an esteemed member of a community of dedicated Holocaust educators and program administrators, both in Florida and the United States, whose time and energy is divided between many worthy Holocaust education-related projects.
- HERC lacks a viable succession plan for its executive director.
- The level of compensation for HERC's current executive director is inadequate and uncompetitive. The quality and quantity of work that she performs warrants a significant pay increase. The board could not hire a qualified successor executive director for the level of compensation currently paid.
- HERC's current board of directors comprises volunteers from the community whose service is an extension of their enthusiasm for HERC's mission. Although board members dedicate time, expertise, material and financial resources, they are not able to provide continuous (i.e., daily/hourly) professional support equivalent to that which one or more additional full-time employees would provide.
- HERC's board consists primarily of educators (active and retired) and persons from legal and governmental professions. The board lacks diversity in age, ethnicity and vocational practices.
- Florida is one of only 10 states that mandate that the history of the Holocaust be taught in schools. Government-based funding for this mandate is not adequate. The very limited level of state and federal funding for Holocaust education-related

organizations and public programs is not expected to increase significantly during the period addressed in this plan.

- Expanding the organization requires disciplined financial management, substantial attention to development, and strong Board and executive leadership. HERC benefits greatly from its affiliation with Tallahassee Community College (TCC), which provides a range of support services, including:
 - Access to a suite of office spaces with utilities on the campus of TCC at no charge.
 - Access to classroom and meeting spaces on an as-needed basis on the campus of TCC at no charge.
 - Media and marketing support through TCC's communications office (i.e., announcement of joint-TCC and HERC-sponsored teacher workshops, educational events, and public programs).
- HERC benefits greatly from the long-term relationships that the executive director has developed with numerous partner organizations, teacher groups and associations and other constituencies from the education and governmental sectors, which have contributed to HERC's reputation as a leader in Holocaust education in Florida.
- Among the teacher-focused and classroom-based educational programs central to HERC's mission are:
 - Workshops and other professional development opportunities for teachers to learn about the Holocaust and how to teach about it;
 - Distribution of resources to teachers, schools and curriculum developers, including guidelines, books, articles, worksheets, images, videos and digital media.
- Among the public programs and events central to HERC's mission are:
 - Public lectures, cultural presentations, film screenings, concerts, exhibitions and other special events focusing on Holocaust education-related content.
 - Fundraising activities aimed at reaching individual and corporate audiences interested in making financial contributions to support Holocaust education.
 - Maintenance of a website, social media accounts, e-mail distribution lists, electronic newsletter and other web-based communications tools for distributing Holocaust education-related information and information about HERC and its programs.
- Any new initiatives must be supported by reallocating resources (funds, paid staff, and volunteer staff) from existing programs and developing new resources.

- Choices and investments in any expanded staffing, programs, events, infrastructure, technology or communication capabilities must be driven by:
 - **Impact** – How many individuals (teachers, students, community audience members) will be served? Is the investment clearly tied to HERC’s mission to provide and promote Holocaust education?
 - **Stewardship** – What secures HERC’s legacy and its impact for future generations?
 - **Timeliness** – What must be done now that cannot be missed or deferred? What is HERC uniquely positioned to do?

Strategic Goals and Plan

HERC has identified eight areas in which to focus its strategic efforts from 2020 through 2024:

- **Financial Stability and Growth**
- **Executive Leadership and Compensation**
- **Organizational Structure and Staffing**
- **Board Leadership**
- **Organizational Affiliation with TCC**
- **Community Partnerships**
- **Marketing and Communications**
- **Measuring Success**

HERC is not, at present, undertaking any planning or project development process that would significantly alter the organization’s commitment to providing instructional guidance, support and resources for educators who teach the history of the Holocaust and educational programs for the community at large.

HERC’s overarching strategic goals are to make the organization stable and sustainable: (1) by developing the financial resources needed to compensate its executive director at a level commensurate with the diverse leadership and managerial responsibilities of that position; (2) by growing the staff by at least one full-time-equivalent with duties in educational programming and administrative and operational support; and (3) by establishing enduring partnerships with local educational institutions and civic and business organizations to multiply the value and impact of HERC’s programs to diverse teacher and community audiences.

Financial Stability and Growth

- By July 2020 develop and adopt a **Fundraising and Development Plan** under the direction of a committee consisting of the executive director and members of the board of directors with the goal of increasing annual revenues obtained

through individual donations, corporate fundraising, grant writing and state reimbursements to \$150,000 per year by 2022 and \$200,000 per year by 2024.

- By October 2020 develop and implement a system for **tracking and accounting for in-kind contributions** that HERC receives from individuals and key public partners, including contributions of office space, infrastructure, utilities, education program support and marketing support provided by Tallahassee Community College.
- By January 2020 establish an **endowment** from which income would be generated to support HERC's administrative and programming expenses, and initiate a campaign to grow this endowment to \$200,000 by 2024.

Executive Leadership and Compensation

- By July 2020 complete a comprehensive **Executive Director Duties and Responsibilities Assessment** detailing the scope of activities routinely and periodically performed by the executive director; total work time dedicated to HERC on a weekly and monthly basis; and the skills, training and expertise needed to effectively perform the job.
- By September 2020 complete a **market analysis** for nonprofit program directors whose duties, activities and budgetary responsibilities are comparable to those of HERC's executive director. Establish a **target salary** for HERC's executive director.
- By October 2020 develop a **Professional Evaluation and Compensation Enhancement Schedule** under which the executive director will be evaluated based on key performance measures and receive periodic salary increases in specified amounts keyed to performance benchmarks.
- Commencing in January 2021 implement a **step-up process** for annual salary increases to bring the executive director up to the target salary by January 2024.

Organizational Structure and Staffing

- By July 2020 develop a comprehensive **Operations Coordinator Responsibilities Report** detailing the scope of administrative, fiscal, data management and communications-related activities that could be performed by a dedicated operations coordinator. Include in this report an estimated hourly wage needed to recruit and retain a qualified candidate for this position.
- By July 2020 develop a comprehensive **Educational Programs Coordinator Responsibilities Report** detailing the scope of educational content development, teaching, community outreach and constituent services-related activities that could be performed by a dedicated educational programs coordinator. Included in this report will be an estimated hourly wage needed to recruit and retain a qualified candidate for this position.
- By September 2020 develop an electronic **HERC Volunteer Handbook** accessible on the HERC website containing detailed information about the

organization, community partners and routine contacts, and specifying recurring projects, tasks and activities that could be undertaken by one or more community volunteers working under the supervision of the executive director. This handbook should be updated annually.

- By October 2020 develop a budget and staff development plan under which one hourly half-time equivalent employee focusing on **Educational Program Coordination** would join HERC in a support role under the executive director.
- By January 2021 hire one hourly half-time equivalent employee focusing on educational program coordination.
- By January 2021 develop a budget and staff development plan under which one half-time equivalent employee focusing on **operations coordination** would join HERC in a support role under the executive director.
- By July 2021 hire one hourly half-time equivalent employee focusing on operations coordination.

Board Leadership

- By July 2020 develop an electronic **HERC Board Handbook** accessible on the HERC website containing detailed information about the organization, community partners and routine contacts, and specifying obligations incumbent upon each board member and recurring projects, tasks and activities that could be undertaken by one or more board members working under the supervision of the executive director. This handbook should be updated annually.
- By August 2020 recruit and add to the board of directors three new members, with the goal of maintaining a board of at least 15 active members.

Organizational Affiliation with TCC

- By February 2020 enter into formal discussions with Tallahassee Community College (TCC) to memorialize the relationship between HERC and TCC through a **Memorandum of Understanding** to address the following:
 - Access to office(s) and ancillary storage and work spaces on the TCC campus;
 - Operational support for HERC including electrical, phone and web utilities, educational programs, and event planning and marketing;
 - Specific commitments to an annual number of workshop and event days on the TCC campus or in ancillary spaces supported by TCC, with distribution of HERC and TCC resources dedicated to each;
 - Organizational branding and promotional coordination through internet and social media-based communications;
 - Access to research and curriculum development support through TCC libraries and other academic services;

- Access to student researchers, work-study students, and/or interns from disciplines associated with Holocaust education.
- By August 2020 complete and execute a Memorandum of Understanding between HERC and TCC.

Community and Educational Partnerships

- Develop and maintain **communication pathways with key community partners** by hosting meetings with teachers, educational administrators, college and university-based scholars, governmental leaders and representatives of nonprofit and for-profit corporations that share a commitment to Holocaust education.
- By January 2021, in consultation with representatives of regional school districts from throughout the Florida Panhandle (including Leon, Gadsden, Jefferson, Madison, Taylor, Wakulla, Franklin, Liberty, Bay and Gulf counties) and peers from other Holocaust education organizations in Florida, develop an **incentive plan** to increase teacher participation in HERC workshops, educational programs, and special events.
- By August 2021, have established expanded **educational training and resource distribution programs** in a geographic target area that encompasses Leon, Gadsden, Jefferson, Wakulla, Franklin, Liberty, Bay, and Gulf counties.
- By June 2021, in consultation with representatives of regional school districts and peers from other Holocaust education organizations in Florida, develop a set of **program assessment rubrics** for soliciting and receiving feedback from teachers, educational administrators, curriculum developers and informed members of the community about the efficacy of HERC workshops, educational programs and special events.
- Develop and maintain a system for **communicating with HERC members** about the importance of their membership and the real results that HERC is realizing through their continued financial support. Implement a **renewal system** that reinforces the value of membership through premiums and HERC-branded merchandise that allows individuals to share with friends their commitment to Holocaust education.
- Establish a meaningful **donor recognition program** through enhanced website-based communications, promotional media spots and other premiums that enhance the public's connection between the donor and HERC's mission.

Marketing and Communications

- Establish within the board of directors a Marketing and Communications Committee tasked with developing a **Marketing and Communications Plan** and Handbook detailing the methods by which HERC develops and distributes content to diverse audiences, including teachers, educational administrators,

college and university-based scholars, governmental leaders, representatives of nonprofit and for-profit corporations, and members of the community.

- Develop **contacts in the local social media and journalism sectors** to enhance HERC's effectiveness in developing content of interest to the local and national media to drive an awareness of the efforts under Florida and HERC in establishing Holocaust education as a cultural guidepost in American education.
- Drive a **coherent and consistent message**, based on HERC's mission, which reflects through the organization's website and social media presence HERC's value as a repository for Holocaust education-related materials.
- By August 2020 establish Twitter, Instagram and other social media accounts for HERC to **build message depth and follower counts**.
- By October 2021 **redesign HERC's logo and website** and roll out a rebranding campaign with membership premiums and marketable HERC-branded merchandise to enhance community awareness of HERC and its mission.

Measuring Success

- Target for schools outreach and teacher training will be **documented training and resource distribution** to at least one educator at 90% of the schools in each district that HERC serves.
- Starting in December 2020, HERC's Executive Director will be evaluated annually according to a performance rubric developed as a component of the **Executive Director Duties and Responsibilities Assessment**.

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"For the survivor who chooses to testify, it is clear: his duty is to bear witness for the dead *and* for the living. He has no right to deprive future generations of a past that belongs to our collective memory. To forget would be not only dangerous but offensive; to forget the dead would be akin to killing them a second time." - Elie Wiesel