

**30th Annual Federal Inter-Agency Holocaust Remembrance
Program - Days of Remembrance for the Victims of the Holocaust
“Rays of Hope” – April 18, 2023**

The 30th Annual Federal Inter-Agency Holocaust Remembrance Program, “Rays of Hope,” will be held on **Tuesday, April 18, 2023**, from **11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. (EDT)**. This year’s program occurs on Holocaust Remembrance Day (Yom Hashoah). All federal employees are encouraged to visit the [Federal Inter-Agency Holocaust Remembrance Program website](#) for additional information and also to view the program broadcast from the Department of Justice. Sign language interpreting will be provided. Requests for reasonable accommodation may be submitted to lesley.brown@eoc.gov.

The program will feature two Holocaust survivors, **Peter Gorog** and **Manny Mandel**, both of the Washington, D.C. area and volunteers at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. **Eli Rosenbaum**, Counselor for War Crimes Accountability and Director of Human Rights Enforcement Strategy and Policy, U.S. Department of Justice, will moderate the program. **Dereck J. Hogan**, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, who oversees the Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues at the U.S. Department of State, will provide remarks.

The Federal Inter-Agency Holocaust Remembrance Program started at the Department of Education in 1994. Comprised of dozens of federal agencies, its mission is to educate federal employees, students, and the public about the Holocaust through the stories of survivors, who show what can happen if prejudice, hate, and intolerance against any individual or group of people goes unchallenged.

Peter Gorog was born in Budapest in 1941. His father aspired to be a lawyer but could not attend law school because he was Jewish. Instead, Peter’s father was conscripted into a forced labor battalion in the Hungarian armed service, where he later died. His mother supported the family with her hat-making business until German forces invaded Hungary in March, 1944. They were

forced to find refuge with a family friend until a neighbor denounced them. After being arrested and jailed, Peter's mother escaped and they moved into an apartment building, protected by the Swiss embassy. In October 1944, the Hungarian government began a reign of terror against the Jews in Budapest. Peter and his mother moved to the Budapest ghetto and spent most of their time in the basement during frequent air raids. After weeks of fierce fighting, the Budapest ghetto was liberated by the Soviet Army in January 1945.

Peter grew up in Communist Hungary and participated in the design of the first Hungarian-made computer. He defected to the United States in 1980 and spent his career working for the federal government as a contractor, including at the Department of Justice, where he supported the FBI's Image Restoration Project. Peter also worked at the Department of Defense, the Nation Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and for NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center, where he worked on the James Webb Space Telescope.

Manny Mandel was born in 1936 and grew up in Hungary. The impact of the Holocaust came later in the war years, through unexpected deportation to Bergen Belsen and family separation. In 1945, Manny and his mother immigrated to Palestine, where they were reunited with Manny's father. They then moved to the United States, settling in Philadelphia, where Manny attended the University of Pennsylvania. He was a practicing psychotherapist in Maryland until his retirement in 2014.

The Holocaust (also called the Shoah) was the systematic, state-sponsored murder of six million Jews by Nazi Germany and its collaborators during World War II. It was part of the "Final Solution" – the Nazi plan to annihilate more than nine million Jews in Europe. The Nazis murdered millions of others as well. In 1980, Congress expressed its intent that Holocaust remembrance should be observed "throughout the United States" each year.