

## 5<sup>th</sup> Biennial Holocaust Remembrance Assembly

On May 3, 2019, Upper Merion Area Middle School Upper House students had the opportunity of a lifetime to listen to the eyewitness testimony of Holocaust survivor, David Tuck. Local media covered the 5th Biennial Holocaust Remembrance Assembly, including Fox29. See news coverage: <https://www.fox29.com/news/404862645-video>

The recent shooting at a synagogue outside San Diego and the mass shooting at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh in October are indications that hate crimes against Jews are growing more deadly in the past year. The number of hate incidents directed at Jews quadrupled in K-12 schools from 2015 to 2017, a study by the Anti-Defamation League shows, jumping from 114 to 457 reported incidents. The increase of religious intolerance has been seen across the nation in other religious minority communities such as Islam.

Holocaust education is critical. Frontline recently reported, “Sixty-six percent of millennials could not identify what Auschwitz was, and 22 percent had not heard of or were unfamiliar with the Holocaust, according to a 2018 survey by Claims Conference, a group that negotiates restitution for Holocaust survivors. Additionally, 68 percent of millennials wrongly think Hitler came to power by force.”

Mr. Tuck’s experiences during the Holocaust directly correlate to and enrich the themes explored in the Humanities’ curriculum, examining identity, conflict and tolerance as well as an understanding of the events leading up to World War II.

The Holocaust Awareness Museum of Philadelphia states, “Survivors and liberators as eyewitnesses to the Holocaust are the richest and best way to educate our youth to emphasize the message that racial, ethnic, and religious hatred are social poisons that affect individual people and families and communities.”

Families have the opportunity to purchase Mr. Tuck’s biography as reported by Lisa Marlowe for a suggested contribution of \$5. All proceeds go toward continuing the work of Holocaust education. Reach out to Angela Della Valle at [adellavalle@umasd.org](mailto:adellavalle@umasd.org) to order and for questions. Mr. Tuck has signed a limited number of biographies. Visit the website for the Holocaust Awareness and Education Center of Philadelphia at <http://www.hamec.org/> for more information.