

Forward

JEWISH. INDEPENDENT. NONPROFIT.



2025 IMPACT REPORT

**"YOUR THOUGHTFUL
EXAMINATION OF TOUGH
ISSUES MAKES THE *FORWARD*
A CRUCIAL VOICE IN
ELEVATING JEWISH
COMMUNITY DISCOURSE."**

– *FORWARD* READER

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PUBLISHER & CEO AND BOARD CHAIR

The issues affecting American Jews continue to dominate international headlines. In 2025, the *Forward* covered the second Trump administration; a fragile ceasefire in the Middle East and returning hostages; deadly antisemitic incidents in Washington, DC, Boulder, CO, Bondi Beach, Australia; a historic New York City mayoral race and much more.

This much is clear: The news isn't slowing down, and neither are we.

No matter how frenzied the news cycle, the *Forward* remains committed to its founding principle: **to serve the American Jewish community with courage, accountability and integrity.**

We uphold this promise through trustworthy, rigorous news reporting; a diverse opinion section that honors all perspectives and promotes respectful debate; and devoted coverage of Jewish thought, culture and celebration. That commitment also includes completely free access to all of our content since the bold move to take down our paywall in 2023.

This work is made possible by the support of dedicated readers who share our passion for independent Jewish journalism. **Together we are writing the next chapter in the American Jewish story.**

Thank you for your generous support.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rachel Fishman Feddersen".

Rachel Fishman Feddersen
Publisher & CEO



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joel F. Brown".

Joel F. Brown
Chair, Board of Directors

Meet the *Forward's* new editor-in-chief: Alyssa Katz

[Alyssa Katz](#) joined the *Forward* in January 2026 as its next editor-in-chief. Katz is an award-winning journalist who came to the *Forward* THE CITY, where she was most recently the executive editor. Prior to joining THE CITY, she served in editorial roles at the *New York Daily News*, *The Village Voice* and other publications.



“I am thrilled and inspired to be joining the *Forward* to provide editorial leadership at this critical moment. In a world that continues to test Jewish safety, identity and values, the *Forward* celebrates what makes us who we are while taking a critical journalistic eye to our challenges.”

— **Alyssa Katz**
Editor-in-Chief



2025 BY THE NUMBERS

19.1 M
unique visitors

34 M
page views

50
U.S. states

1,508
stories published

100 M
total reach
on all platforms and media

MOST READ STORY



No Jews allowed: White supremacists are building a segregated community in Arkansas, but is it legal?

MOST SHARED STORY



Who was Horst Wessel, and why are people comparing Charlie Kirk to him?

2025 IMPACT REPORTING THAT DEFINED THE YEAR



Trump's first year and its **impact** on American Jews

The *Forward* dug into the eventful first year of Trump's second term. We examined his appointments, forecasting what Secretary of State Marco Rubio and other personnel would mean for American Jews and Israel. When the president's administration was roiled by failed nominations of those who praised antisemitic figures or had a self-proclaimed "Nazi streak," the *Forward* broke the story.

The *Forward* highlighted the gratitude and criticism Trump received after the initial 2025 attack on Iran's nuclear facilities. We considered how Jews fleeing Europe might have fared under Trump's anti-immigration policies.



The year in **politics**

The *Forward's* coverage of the historic New York City mayoral race kicked off with Senior Political Reporter **Jacob Kornbluh's** exclusive interview with Zohran Mamdani — the first the future mayor gave to a Jewish media outlet. The *Forward* probed the divide in the Jewish community revealed by the race, with multiple perspectives on his candidacy and analysis of how Mamdani became New York's next mayor, with Jews divided between fierce opposition and fiery support.

Jacob also scored exclusive interviews with Pennsylvania governor Josh Shapiro on his refusal to abandon support of Israel, and accompanied outgoing NYC mayor Eric Adams on his final trip to Israel.

Ceasefire in Gaza and the return of the **hostages**

Following a year of false starts and multiple proposals from the Trump administration — including one that would have the United States take over Gaza and develop it into a "Riviera of the Middle East" — the *Forward* heralded the October deal between Israel and Hamas that ended two years of war and included hostage release deal as part of phased peace plan. The *Forward* considered why Trump may succeed with a Gaza peace plan where Biden failed and how Hamas made a remarkable offer — because Trump laid a remarkable trap.

After the hostage return, Trump heralded "the historic dawn of a new Middle East" in a speech at the Knesset. The fragile peace and the fate of Gaza are among the top stories we're watching in 2026.

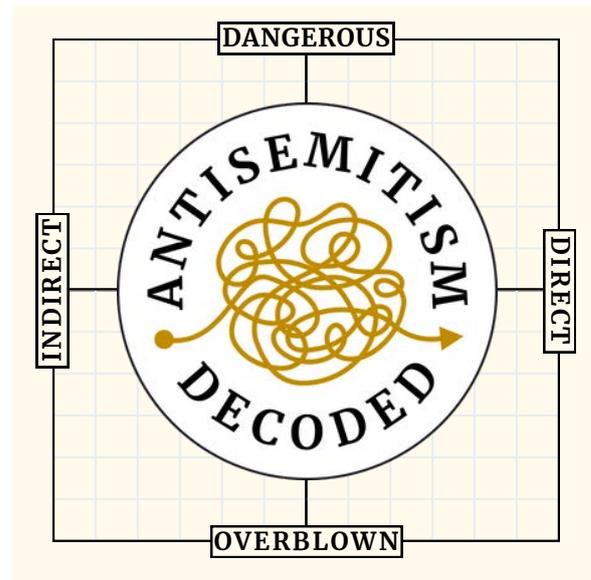


Decoding Antisemitism

Guided by reader feedback, the *Forward* invested further in its coverage of antisemitism with the relaunch of our **Antisemitism Decoded** newsletter, hosted by enterprise reporter **Arno Rosenfeld**, with a new biweekly frequency and deeper analysis of how debates over Jewish safety are shaping American life.

In his continuing coverage of the Heritage Fund and antisemitism initiative Project Esther, Arno exclusively uncovered internal Project Esther documents describing a conspiracy of Jewish “masterminds” seeking to dismantle Western values.

Arno also examined the new administration’s aggressive approach to antisemitism, including contradictions in the Justice Department’s plan to stop antisemitism, and what Trump’s plan to shut down the Education Department might mean for antisemitism investigations.



Arno continued his reporting on college campuses, with a return visit to North Carolina’s Elon University, sharing how the school has created a safe campus for Jewish students even as it avoids the limitations on speech pursued by other universities. The *Forward* also published an open letter from 10 current students: “We are Jewish students from universities Trump is targeting. He’s not protecting us.”

“Holy Ground”: Untold stories of Jewish life

The majority of American Jews live outside of this country’s biggest cities. Senior writer Benjamin Cohen’s Holy Ground series has uncovered inspiring and much-needed stories of life between the coasts — from the cornfields of Illinois, to the prairies of Oklahoma, and to the mountains of Appalachia. These stories reveal where Jewish resilience and reinvention are vibrant, layered and too often overlooked. We are grateful to the **Henry Luce Foundation** for their support of this project.

2025 IMPACT

THE YEAR IN JEWISH CULTURE

The *Forward* culture team reported on the important Jewish cultural moments of the year, including the return of the hit rom-com “Nobody Wants This” and what it gets right — and very wrong — about Judaism; the Oscar-nominated Timothee Chalamet film, “Marty Supreme,” a celebration — and indictment — of chutzpah; the provocative revival of the musical “Show Boat”; and an essay about the ubiquity of a song from the “Wicked” movie sequel.

The *Forward*’s culture reporting also included a deep-dive into the hundredth anniversary of YIVO; a reflection on the Anne Frank exhibition at the Center for Jewish History; and an examination of how the next generation of rabbis is preparing for the age of AI.

The *Forward* marked the passing of Jewish cultural heavyweights, including playwright Tom Stoppard and Rob Reiner. Following Charlie Kirk’s assassination, the *Forward* examined his concerning embrace of what he termed a “Jewish Sabbath.”





THE YEAR IN YIDDISH

Forverts editor Rukhl Schaechter continued to develop innovative — and fun — ways to promote Yiddish language learning and culture.



From *Tidbits*, an exhibit of Jewish manuscripts from Muslim and Christian lands (left); Rukhl Schaechter teaches Monty Pickle the Yiddish Word of the Day (center); Yiddish instructor and *Forverts* contributor Moishele Alfonso (right).

Readers joined Rukhl for a guided tour, in Yiddish, of the Jewish Museum’s exhibit, “The Book of Esther in the Age of Rembrandt,” with sociologist Adina Cimet. And in other artistic endeavors, Rukhl taught children’s character Monty Pickle the Yiddish words for wild animals.

In April, the *Forward* announced the acquisition of domains yiddish.com and yiddish.org, thanks to a generous gift from Elie Hirschfeld and his wife, Sarah Hirschfeld, MD.

The ongoing *Tidbits* feature provides readers with ways to improve their Yiddish comprehension, including two easy news briefs that include text and audio. Unknown words can be highlighted on screen to get their English translation.

The background features a collage of protest signs and newspaper clippings. At the top, a sign reads "KIDNAPED" in large white letters on a red background, with "by HAMMA" written below it. To the right, another sign says "KIDNAPED" in white on a red background, with "by H" below it. Below these, a sign reads "KIDNAPED" in white on a black background, with "by HAMMA" written below it. At the bottom, a sign reads "Bring Them Home NOW." in red and black text, with "#KidnappedFromIsrael" below it. To the right of this sign is a QR code and the text "SCAN TO JOIN THE GLOBAL EFFORTS". Below the QR code, a sign reads "Eitan Le 52 year old Israeli" and "Guy Illouz 26 years old Israeli".

"A STELLAR PUBLICATION THAT FAIRLY AND EFFECTIVELY DELIVERS THE DESPERATELY NEEDED INFORMATION FOR EVERYONE STRUGGLING WITH THE CONTENTIOUS ISSUES CONFRONTING JEWS."

– A FORWARD READER



2025 IMPACT

THE FORWARD IN THE MEDIA

The *Forward's* reporting informed dozens of stories in major media outlets, contributing our insightful Jewish lens to the international news coverage of key issues.

Arno Rosenfeld appeared on PBS News Hour for analysis of campus antisemitism and Project Esther, and on New York public radio's Brian Lehrer Show and NPR's Code Switch, as well as Vox's "Today Explained."

Jacob Kornbluh made numerous appearances on NBC, NY1/Spectrum News, Haaretz and other outlets to share his analysis of the New York City mayoral election.

Forward reporting was also cited numerous times by The New York Times, New York Magazine, the New Yorker and Wired.

Photo (above): Arno Rosenfeld on PBS Newshour.

Photo (right): Senior political reporter Jacob Kornbluh was profiled in *The New York Times* in February 2026.



2025 IMPACT

A YEAR OF RECORD RECOGNITION

It was a record year of journalism awards and recognition for the *Forward*. The *Forward* once again garnered the most awards of any Jewish media outlet.

Among the journalists recognized were reporter **Louis Keene**, who won a Jewish Press Association Simon Rockower award and LA Press Club award for his reporting on the LA wildfires and his story on "How a Jewish neighborhood in liberal Los Angeles became a stronghold for Trump." Reporter **Mira Fox**, who won five Simon Rockower awards for culture stories, and opinion editor **Talya Zax** won the *Forward*'s first Poynter Journalism Prize.

Enterprise reporter **Arno Rosenfeld** was given the New York Deadline Club award for his on-the-ground reporting of the wrenching debate over how to rebuild the kibbutz hardest hit on October 7.

Photos: Louis Keeene (above) and Arno Rosenfeld



2025 IMPACT

GENEROUS SUPPORT FROM NEW AND RETURNING DONORS

The *Forward* received major gifts from a generous list of foundations and individual supporters. Below we've highlighted three gifts. (Our full list of 2025 donors will be shared in a mid-year update to this report.)

Long-time *Forward* supporter and Board member Marcy Syms established the **Sy Syms Endowment for Journalistic Excellence**. The \$1 million endowment, to be funded over five years by the Sy Syms Foundation, will support the recruitment, training, and development of early career journalists to benefit both the *Forward* and the broader field of journalism. In announcing the endowment, Marcy said, "Ida B. Wells, investigative journalist, famously said, 'the way to right wrongs is to turn the light of truth upon them.' The *Forward*'s commitment to truth by practicing excellence in journalism, is an essential part of the Jewish American experience. The Sy Syms Foundation is pleased and proud to be a part of securing a future for the next generation of journalists."

The *Forward* received its first gift from the **Henry Luce Foundation**. This generous 2026-27 initiative will expand our collective understanding of religious life in America by reflecting on the wider range of Jewish experiences. The project includes support for the "Holy Ground" reporting and a series of storytelling projects on the unique and universal contemporary challenges Jews face with resilience, through in-depth narrative features, short-form video mini-documentaries, audio narratives and graphic journalism.



Abraham Cahan Legacy Society

The *Forward*'s Abraham Cahan Legacy Society honors our founding editor, Abraham ("Ab") Cahan, whose legacy looms large in journalism and whose vision continues to inspire the *Forward*'s work today.



In 2025, the *Forward* was honored with a generous \$500,000 gift from the estate of former *Forward* Association member **Deborah Waroff**. A writer, journalist and energy sector expert, her career included a stint at the *Financial Times of London* and pieces on culture and foreign affairs for the *Forward*. Deborah was a world traveler and a passionate advocate. She was a firm believer in the power of Jewish journalism and devoted to our mission. We are inspired by her generosity, which will impact the *Forward* for many years to come. May her memory be a blessing.

2025 IMPACT

RECORD YEAR FOR MEMBERSHIP

2023	\$1,481,000
2024	\$1,830,866
2025	\$2,037,932

Gifts under \$5,000 have risen 38% since the 2023 removal of the paywall.

Without you, the *Forward's* stories don't just go unread — they go untold.

Here are just a few examples of your impact.

Investigative Journalism

The *Forward* offers fair and full reporting through a Jewish lens in the highest tradition of public-service journalism, including as a rare source of independent, objective coverage of Jewish institutions and the Jewish community.

Breaking News

The *Forward* is one of the only Jewish news organizations that can send journalists to follow major events as they unfold across the country and around the world, bringing a distinctive Jewish lens to the news and finding important narratives that other media overlook.

Opinion

The *Forward's* opinion section is a vibrant platform for robust, civil debate from all corners of our Jewish communities, including complex politics and Jewish communal debates .

Cultural Journalism

The *Forward's* award-winning coverage provides insights into the richness of Jewish culture, with original, thought-provoking reviews and analysis.

Archive

The *Forward* archive is home to one of the largest and most important collections of photographs and ephemera documenting 20th-century Jewish history, New York immigrant history and Jewish communal life in the U.S.

Yiddish

The Yiddish *Forverts* preserves our publication's rich Yiddish heritage and inspires the next generation by connecting our global community of Yiddish language and culture enthusiasts and academics.



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BALANCED, FACTUAL,
AND NUANCED REPORTING.”**

– A FORWARD READER

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125 Maiden Lane, New York, NY 10038-5015