



Los Gatos
Interfaith
Clergy
Association



PRESS RELEASE

October 4, 2021

Los Gatos Leadership Responds to Antisemitism with United Against Hate Week, November 14-20.

Los Gatos -- The Town of Los Gatos, Jewish Silicon Valley and diverse local partners are planning a series of activities to bring the community together for United Against Hate Week, November 14-20, including a Community Walk Against Hate. Recent antisemitic graffiti in Los Gatos inspired this partnership, and activities will coincide with a national effort convened by Not In Our Town, a national anti-hate organization (<https://unitedagainsthateweek.org/>).

The Los Gatos Police Department received reports of swastika graffiti found in three Los Gatos locations during the Jewish High Holidays in September, targeting the Addison-Penzak Jewish Community Center, as well as Los Gatos Garden Apartments and Blossom Hill Pavilion. The hate symbols have been removed, and Los Gatos Police are investigating the incidents, which were also reported to the Anti-Defamation League and Secure Communities Network.

Los Gatos Mayor Marico Sayoc condemned this spate of hate graffiti, and acknowledged the painful impact on Jewish community members. "There is no place in Los Gatos for hate motivated conduct of any kind. Everyone has the right to feel safe and welcome in our community".

"The sight of swastikas is painful for our local Holocaust survivors and others in the Jewish community, particularly in the midst of a growing national trend of increasing acts of hatred and violence towards Jewish people," said Lael Gray, CEO of Jewish Silicon Valley. "We are truly grateful to the town of Los Gatos and the many partners who are bringing our community together to stand up against antisemitism and bias of all kinds."

The Los Gatos Interfaith Clergy Group's Convener, Rev. Ricardo Avila, added, "Sadly, these recent expressions of hate particularly target the Jewish community, but in effect they diminish us all. We belong to each other, and hate against one affects us all."

Stephen Parsons, President of the Los Gatos Union School District Board of Trustees, added the commitment of our school district: "The Los Gatos Union School District stands against all

hate activities. Our highest priority is to advocate for and provide an inclusive and respectful educational environment for all our students.”

The partners joining this effort include the Town of Los Gatos, the Chamber of Commerce of Los Gatos, the Los Gatos Union School District, Jewish Silicon Valley and the Los Gatos Clergy Association, and all have expressed their commitment to actively condemn antisemitism wherever it appears, along with all forms of hate and intolerance. The Town leadership is also embarking on Diversity and Inclusion Training through the American Leadership Forum, and the Los Gatos Union School District is continuing its Equity and Inclusion Initiative.

Volunteers interested in helping to organize the Community Walk Against Hate, and press or community members with any questions can contact:

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cc: Town Council
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