

Holocaust Expert and Educator Returns Home to Lead the Pittsburgh Holocaust Center into a New Era

Dr. Lauren Apter Bairnsfather will guide the Center's major expansion initiatives

Pittsburgh, PA ([PRWEB](#)) August 12, 2015 -- Dr. Lauren Apter Bairnsfather has been appointed director of the [Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh](#), an affiliate organization of the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh. Bairnsfather will oversee transformation of the 33 year-old Holocaust Center into a regional destination for education and research when the Center relocates its offices and opens exhibit space late this summer.

“We could not have asked for a more ideal leader to move the Holocaust Center into a new era,” said Lori Guttman and Barbara Shapira, chairs of the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh Board of Directors. “Dr. Bairnsfather possesses tremendous passion for the organization, along with a deep knowledge of Holocaust events and its contemporary implications. Her personal interests, combined with her extensive education and museum leadership experience, are all perfect for this role. The fact that she is returning to her hometown makes the great fit even better.”

With a professional background in non-profit work that has included six years in museums and more than ten years in higher education, Dr. Bairnsfather will oversee a professional staff of five employees. Together with volunteer leadership, the team will develop the Holocaust Center into a visitor-based institution offering exhibits, events, and a range of education programs for educators, students, and the public. By late summer 2015, the organization will move into its new space at Squirrel Hill Plaza, 826 Hazelwood Avenue in Pittsburgh's East End.

A native of McKeesport, Pennsylvania, Dr. Bairnsfather developed a strong interest in Jewish culture and Holocaust history at a young age. While writing her senior honors thesis as an undergraduate at the University of Texas, she became acquainted with two Sephardic Holocaust survivors, which inspired her to take a job at the Photo Archives office at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Fueled by a desire to learn more, she completed her graduate studies thesis “The Second Generation and the Future of Holocaust Remembrance” at the University of Chicago, which focused on the future of Holocaust remembrance without survivors to play the primary role. Then, after two years running Spertus Museum in Chicago, she returned to the University of Texas at Austin to pursue a PhD in History. She worked with the Morton H. Meyerson Family Foundation in Dallas before returning to The University of Texas at Austin to work most recently in the College of Liberal Arts Dean's Office.

While residing in Austin, she was a top fundraiser for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society in Central Texas and advocated for people with disabilities. She is active in the American Historical Association and has participated in the national conversation about career options for humanities PhDs. Dr. Bairnsfather will reside in Edgewood with her husband and three dogs.

Established in 1981, the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh (<http://holocaustcenterpgh.org>) was created by the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh as a living memorial and a comprehensive resource center to help people throughout Western Pennsylvania, Eastern Ohio, and Northern West Virginia learn about the Holocaust and to help counter intolerance and hate in all its forms. Through education, events and programming, the Center engages with other organizations, individuals and institutions to convey the contemporary relevance of



the Holocaust and its lessons. The Center is committed to education about the events of the Holocaust, commemoration of those who suffered and triumphed, and documentation of the stories of survivors, liberators and protectors.

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