

JCPA's 2020 End-of-Year Report

2020 will be remembered as a time of profound struggle and upheaval, and a pivotal moment in history. Over the past year, JCPA worked tirelessly to support the Jewish community relations network and the most vulnerable during the pandemic, engaged the new civil rights movement, supported Israel's diplomatic expansion and encouraged engagement during polarized elections. We were timely, substantive, and played a much-needed leadership role for the field.

JCPA helped the community relations field rise to the occasion and respond to the challenges in supporting intergroup engagement and in educating the broader Jewish community. The social "infrastructure" that JCPA put in place over the past few years between ensured a cohesive network during this emergency period of time. This infrastructure included a standing Policy Advisory Committee, representative Delegates Assembly, regularly scheduled JCRC chairs and professional meetings, and a Frank Fellow alumni group. These cohorts were all instrumental to our success, and our support and leadership were critical to their successes locally. As a result, JCPA and its local-national network remain vibrant, dynamic, and ever more crucial in today's fractious environment. We have demonstrated that when our community comes together, we make an impact. This report is an overview of JCPA's accomplishments over the past year.

Highlights include:

- Mobilized our grassroots network by developing strategies, education, and toolkits on the new civil rights movement, elections and get out the vote, and more.
- Launched advocacy campaigns that mobilized thousands of people around the country around the CARES Act (providing relief to nonprofits), the COVID-19 emergency in prisons, jails, and immigration detention centers, and policing and public safety.
- Propelled our network into the re-energized civil rights movement and demonstrated our commitment to ending systemic racism and pledged to work harder to achieve justice.
- Worked hand in hand with national Jewish agency members and our partners from diverse faiths and racial backgrounds.
- Launched an #EveryVoteCounts campaign to ensure non-partisan, fair, free, and accessible elections.
- Organized 35 webinars on major issues related to COVID-19 that lifted up the voices of those impacted and the experts that directly informed our response to crisis concerns.
- Supported Israel and opposed antisemitism on both ends of the political spectrum
- Raised over \$80,000 through our first Virtual Benefit, which featured dynamic programing and videos that attracted more than 300 attendees.

JCPA2020 National Conference

JCPA convened 300 Jewish professionals and civic lay leaders from February 8-11 in Washington, D.C., for the JCPA2020 National Conference. Participants tackled today's most

challenging issues in a series of powerful plenaries and workshops, and left with the skills and networks they need to be successful in their community relations work across the country. Highlights of the Conference include: Development of a [strategic roadmap](#) to combat antisemitism and hate by leveraging the power of the community relations field; criminal justice reform track focusing on elevating the faith voice in ending mass incarceration; Israel sessions on politicization, understanding current events, and countering delegitimization on campus; and workshops on JCPA's public policy priorities, including immigration, gun violence prevention, civil rights, and religious liberty, and the adoption of [six new policy resolutions](#) by the Delegates Assembly. [To read the recap, click here.](#)

Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic

During this COVID-19 public health crisis, JCPA ensured the community relations field remained strong. We prioritized supporting the Jewish Community Relations Councils (JCRCs) on the frontlines of engagement with legislators on aid to the Jewish community that was severely impacted by this pandemic, increased our educational webinar platform, and intensified advocacy with our diverse issue-based coalition partners. Our work with the coalitions focused on helping those vulnerable populations at higher risk of infection, including individuals in prison, immigrants and children in detention, in long-term care facilities, and homeless populations.

Advocacy for Congressional relief packages:

- JCPA sent letters to House and Senate leaders, as well as an action alert that generated thousands of messages to Members of Congress to share faith principles for the COVID-19 crisis response, created by the interfaith Domestic Human Needs Working Group, in which JCPA is an active member.
 - [To read JCPA's letter to Congressional leaders click here.](#)
 - [To read the interfaith letter click here.](#)
- JCPA mobilized its field in support of COVID-19 relief, nutrition assistance, health care, and paycheck protection:
 - [Protect the Most Vulnerable from the Impacts of COVID-19](#)
 - [Support the Paycheck Loan Protection Program](#)
 - [Ask Congress to Support Additional COVID-19 Relief](#)

JCPA Webinars

During the start of the pandemic, JCPA rapidly moved its work to educating and activating the community relations field through webinar programming leading the Jewish community in the virtual space. We found that bringing high level and diverse speakers that were experts, advocates, those impacted to discuss issues taking place during the pandemic was a great resource both to our own Network and the Jewish community at large. We also partnered with most of our national Jewish organizations to highlight their priority concerns and regularly amplified and shared JCRC produced webinars. JCPA ran more than 35 webinars with an audience the majority of which with over 1000 people. During this period, we added 8000 new people to the friends of JCPA. [Click here for a list of webinars, speakers and topics.](#)

Solidarity with Asian American Communities Around COVID-19

At the start of the pandemic, we saw an increase in hate and bigotry against Asians and Pacific Islander communities in America. JCPA wrote a solidarity letter to those communities in both English and Chinese, signed by 87 national organizations and JCRCs across the country, which received significant national and media attention by Jewish and Chinese press. More than 50 Jewish and Asian American groups signed a second JCPA letter urging the President not to use the term “Chinese Virus,” which inflames stereotyping and physical violence against Asian Americans. When the President ceased using the term, JCPA and Asian groups pivoted to a new letter expressing appreciation for the change. As a response, the United Chinese Americans organization (UCA) provided generous donations of thousands of donated surgical masks to the Jewish Social Service Agency of Greater Washington. Chinese-American groups sent thousands of much-needed protective items to Jewish social service agencies in Boston, New York City, Cleveland, Buffalo, and San Francisco. This is the power of the network in action.

- [Read the JCPA letter of solidarity here.](#)
- ["U.S. Jewish group calls for solidarity against virus-generated xenophobia in letter," *Xinhua*](#)
- ["74 Jewish groups condemn racism against Chinese Americans amid coronavirus outbreak," *JTA*](#)
- [Dozens of US Jewish Groups Issue Open Letter of Support for Chinese Communities Amid Coronavirus Outbreak," *Algemeiner*](#)
- ["Anti-Asian Racism and Violence Are Surging Amid Coronavirus Fears. Here's How Groups Are Responding," *Prism*](#)
- [Joint Op-Ed: "Coronavirus is unnecessarily harming our Squirrel Hill economy," *Pittsburg Jewish Chronicle*](#)
- [JBS Video News Update](#)
- [JTA Article: Chinese-American groups return a Jewish message of solidarity by providing protective gear to agencies](#)

JCPA Convened an Emergency COVID-19 Delegates Assembly Special Session

JCPA convened a two-part Delegates Assembly Special Session on COVID-19 to determine whether JCPA needed new policy to respond to critical issues raised by its intergroup coalition partners in response to COVID-19. More than 180 representatives from its member agencies attended the education session in April. Participants heard from experts on elections and voting rights, immigration, prisons and jails, and the social safety net before breaking into working groups to discuss where JCPA had gaps in its policy. The Delegates Assembly determined that JCPA should adopt new policies at a voting session.

On May 8th, the Delegates Assembly met again for a voting session and adopted four emergency resolutions related to the COVID-19 crisis at a voting session attended by almost

100 representatives of local Jewish community relations councils and national Jewish agencies. The resolutions expanded the scope of JCPA's policies related to the pandemic on immigration detention, decriminalization, and enforcement; decarceration of prisons and jails; and vote-by-mail and in-person voting. The Assembly also passed, for the first time, a resolution on handling pandemics. Here are links to the resolutions: [Immigration Concerns During a Pandemic](#), [Criminal Justice Reform During a Pandemic](#), [Voting Rights and Elections During a Pandemic](#), and [Principles for Responding to a Public Health Crisis](#).

JCPA's Immigration Work During COVID

JCPA and HIAS teamed up to organize a Jewish organizational sign-on letter urging legislators to ensure that our country's response to the COVID-19 pandemic includes resettled refugees, Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) recipients, asylum seekers, and asylees. In addition, the letter also urged the Administration to restart the U.S. refugee resettlement program as soon as public health experts deem it safe and that it reverses recent policies that deny people access to our asylum system. [Click here to read the full letter signed by 192 Jewish organizations.](#)

In April, JCPA gave presentations on our policy and advocacy issues and actions related to COVID-19 at the Jewish Federations of Miami and Seattle, particularly on immigration.

- [Watch the presentation](#) on immigrants and refugees at Seattle's [Be a Jewish Upstander](#) program.
- [For the action alert on steps Congress can take to support immigrants, click here.](#)

JCPA and the Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington filed comments with the federal government opposing a proposed 161-page rulemaking that would drastically restrict asylum eligibility and undermine the process that has allowed Jews and other persecuted peoples to find safe haven in this country for over 150 years. The rule proposed a host of harmful changes, including categorically barring asylum for gender-based persecution, allowing immigration judges to summarily deny cases without a court hearing or applicant testimony, and creating new barriers to obtaining asylum that would impact hundreds of thousands of asylum seekers. [Click here to learn more.](#) JCPA will advocate for the next Administration to rescind these and other harmful rules.

Criminal Justice Webinar Series During COVID-19

JCPA's Criminal Justice Initiative launched an educational series attended by thousands of people to further educate the JCRC network on criminal justice priority concerns during the pandemic. JCPA's series included: [Coronavirus in Prisons, Jails: An Emergency We Need To Address NOW](#), [Over 6 Million Americans on Community Supervision: Reforming Pretrial, Parole, and Probation](#), and [Front End Justice: Exploring Why Pretrial Reform is Needed](#).

Recognizing the potential catastrophe facing incarceration facilities in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak, JCPA joined with its partners in the [Interfaith Criminal Justice Coalition](#) and the [Justice Roundtable](#) to advocate for emergency practices at the federal, state, and local levels. JCPA then launched an advocacy campaign to raise awareness of emergency conditions in prisons and jails during the pandemic and mobilize the Jewish community to support

decarceration efforts. Almost 800 Jewish community members sent letters to Congress asking their national and local elected officials to prioritize these concerns and enact swift measures to stem the spread. [Click here to read JCPA's action alert.](#)

JCPA also continued to team up with the Ending Mass Incarceration (EMI) Multifaith Initiative. JCPA is a core member of the Steering Committee and serves as the federal policy advisor to the group. JCPA partnered with EMI to hold a townhall meeting on the COVID-19 emergency in prisons and jails. [Click here to watch the program.](#)

Response to Black Lives Matter Movement and Advocacy on Racial Justice

The grievous killing of George Floyd by police officers compounded by existing racial disparities gave rise to one of the largest grassroots movements in U.S. history. We are living through the new civil rights movement of our time, and JCPA and community relations network are standing with the Black community to advocate for ending structural racism in the U.S. JCPA prioritized educating and engaging the Jewish community in this new movement and provided opportunities for activism.

In the wake of the George Floyd killing, JCPA issued a statement of solidarity with the Black community pledging to work to end systemic racism, signed by more than 130 Jewish organizations. To read the statement, [click here](#). JCPA produced an op-ed printed in the Forward, "My Fellow Jews: Get in the Fight," by Melanie Roth Gorelick, JCPA Senior Vice President. [Click here](#) to read the article. JCPA and JCRCs endorsed an open letter from 600+ Jewish communal organizations supporting the Black Lives Matter movement that appeared in the Medium and the New York Times. [Click here to read the open letter.](#)

JCPA worked with JCRCs to respond to the Black Lives Matter movement and to strengthen their engagement with Black leaders and community locally by convening weekly strategy meetings, organized meetings with leaders of NAACP, LULAC, UAC, and Muslim Advocates to hear firsthand about their priorities during this time. We produced toolkits to support their efforts. We began by [surveying the field on their current status of this work](#) and created a [JCPA Guide on Strengthening Relationships with the Black Community](#). We also provided program ideas [JCPA Template for Jewish Community Relations Virtual Program Series on Today's Civil Rights Movement](#) and worked with more than 20 JCRCs to handle or jumpstart this work locally.

In response to questions and concerns about antisemitism within the Black Lives Matter movement, JCPA produced resources to educate the Jewish community and to support JCRCs. These included a range of webinars featuring diverse speakers and several talking points and fact sheets including: [JCPA's Fact Sheet on the Black Lives Matter Movement](#), [JCPA Talking Points on Antisemitism and the Black Lives Matter Movement](#), and [Eric Ward on How the Jewish Community Can Navigate the Current Political and Social Moment](#), excerpts from a presentation to JCPA.

Responding to Calls to Defund the Police

To support the network to better understand the discourse around police reform and to engage in criminal justice reform locally, JCPA organized a Delegates Assembly which brought more than

160 lay and professional community relations leaders from 79 communities around the country to learn more about policing . Our focus was how to move beyond the headlines and reimagine communities that ensure the safety and meet the needs of all people. Some of our resources include: [JCPA's Resources for Understanding Police Reform 101](#), [JCPA's Priority Principles for Federal Legislation on Policing](#), and [JCPA's Restorative and Rehabilitative Justice Resolution, passed in February 2020](#).

JCPA submitted a Statement for the Record on the eight priorities to the House and Senate Judiciary Committees Oversight Hearing on Policing Practices and Law Enforcement Accountability. We worked with national coalition partners to secure improvements to the package of reforms, known as the [Justice in Policing Act](#), introduced in the House, which included most of the eight recommendations. The House passed the bill on June 25. [Click here to read JCPA's Statement for the Record](#).

Democracy and the 2020 Elections

We are proud of the important work that JCPA carried out during the 2020 elections to support safe, free and accessible elections during this polarized time period. We increased our advocacy on elections and voting rights as a major priority of the community relations network. We mobilized the community relations field to urge Congress to provide at least \$4 billion in funding to states and counties to administer the 2020 elections during the COVID-19 crisis. [Click here to read the action alert](#). JCPA also cosponsored a National Council of Jewish Women and AEPHI Digital Lobby Day as part of this campaign. We were successful in securing \$200 million in funding for state elections assistance, though more was needed. As a member of the Faithful Democracy Coalition, a national interfaith coalition, JCPA cosponsored a town hall on how the faith community is ensuring the 2020 elections are safe and fair despite COVID-19 and what people of faith can do to help. [Click here to watch](#).

We also deterred attempts to polarize elections by launching a #EveryVote Counts educational campaign. JCPA began by ensuring that the JCRC network had updated election education and non-partisan get out the vote training materials that were relevant for COVID-19 and included alternative voting options in each country. JCPA also held nonpartisan Get Out the Vote training sessions for the JCRCs and created a resource page on our website. JCPA produced a [Candidate and Voter Education Guide 2020](#) and a JCPA [Nonpartisan "Get Out the Vote" Resource Guide](#).

JCPA joined the Free&Fair: Our Duty to Democracy Initiative organized by the Lippman-Kanfer Foundation to ensure that Jewish organizations had the resources they needed to support the Jewish community through the election season. JCPA became an instrumental part of this campaign and brought together all of the different JCPA cohorts to learn about it and have the resources they need. Meetings were held with JCRC professionals, chairs, JCPA Board, and national member organizations. JCPA closed on election day. JCPA joined with over 30 Jewish organizations to close our offices on election day to ensure our staff can vote and participate in volunteer activities in their communities.

JCPA's Democracy and election work included:

- Statement on Elections on Democratic Principles. [Click here](#) to read.
- JCPA spearheaded “A Jewish Statement on Elections and Democratic Principles,” signed by the community relations network--more than 90 Jewish organizations, including 15 national member agencies and 76 local Jewish community relations councils and Federations. [Click here](#) to read the statement.
- JCPA Reiterates Civility Statement and Condemnation of White Supremacy — In the current political environment, marked by extreme polarization and inflammatory rhetoric, JCPA is called upon all candidates running for elected office, as well as all Americans, to engage during this election season in a thoughtful, respectful, and civil discussion over the future direction of this country. [To read the statement, click here.](#)
- Notice on Election Day planning and fighting disinformation. [Click here](#) to read.
- #EveryVoteCounts Resource Page. [Click here](#) to visit.
- JCPA also ran two webinars on the election focused on the Jewish case for civic engagement and voting.
- Faithful Democracy 2020: Restoring the Voters Covenant [Click here to read the Covenant.](#)
- Interfaith letter from faith leaders that was sent to every Congressional office on integrity, safety, and fairness in the 2020 election. [Click here to read the letter.](#)

Campaign to Stop Hate Online

For more than a year, JCPA has been part of a Jewish advisory panel to Facebook, urging the social media giant to take steps to ban antisemitism and hatred. Our hard work paid off – a [decision was announced](#) to finally ban Holocaust denial. Our efforts began in August of this year, when we organized a campaign against antisemitism and hate on Facebook, garnering support from [90 Jewish organizations](#). In September, JCPA convened all the Jewish participants in the Facebook Jewish Advisory group, prior to a meeting with Facebook officials, so that we could take a coordinated approach. We emphasized what we thought was the highest priority: Facebook needed to ban Holocaust denial. Zuckerberg had [pointedly refused](#) to do so in the past. And it worked. Earlier this morning, a month after that very hard-hitting meeting with Facebook officials, Zuckerberg announced a change in policy. JCPA also signed on to a letter for nonprofit organizations supporting with the #StopHateForProfit coalition's Facebook ad boycott.

Israel's Changing Policies in the West Bank

In preparation for a possible Israeli government decision on implementing an application of sovereignty or annexation over parts of the West Bank, JCPA, in coordination with the Israel Action Network, put together a task force to assist JCRC directors and chairs in responding locally. As JCPA does not have specific policy on this issue, the Task Force prioritized the need for education on all sides of the discussion and supporting a two-state outcome. To that end, JCPA compiled articles, webinars for the JCRC field, and studies on the issue to assist the

field. To read the resource page, [click here](#). The Israeli government has since paused on moving forward this policy.

JCPA Mourns the Lives of Two America Heroes

JCPA mourned the passing of two American heroes, Congressman John Lewis and Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, and celebrates their lives and achievements. The leadership and impact that they have had on shaping a just and pluralistic America is highly valued and appreciated by JCPA and the community relations network. JCPA held a memorial with Hadassah, NCJW, JWI, and the Women's League for Conservative Judaism that brought together more than 5000 participants.

JCPA Applauds Passage of the Middle East Partnership for Peace Act

JCPA applauded Congress for passing the bipartisan Nita M. Lowey Middle East Partnership for Peace Act, which will provide \$250 million over five years to expand coexistence between Arabs and Israelis and peacebuilding programs in the region and support projects to strengthen the Palestinian economy. This historic legislation will help create an environment in which the parties can eventually achieve peace in the Middle East. The President signed the bill into law on December 27, 2020. [Click here to read the full press release.](#)

JCPA and ADL Cosponsor Jewish Organizational Letter Urging Passage of the NO HATE Act

JCPA and ADL sent every Senator a letter signed by 26 national Jewish organizations urging them to pass the Jabara-Heyer NO HATE Act. The bill would significantly enhance the accuracy and utility of the FBI's hate crimes statistics by authorizing new streams of funding and technical support to improve hate crimes data collection and ensure their participation in the FBI's data compilation. [Click here to read the full letter.](#)

JCPA's First Virtual Benefit

JCPA ran its first Virtual Benefit The premier of JCPA's Virtual Benefit was an incredible night for the organization, with hundreds of people attending and generously supporting JCPA, exceeding our fundraising goal. The benefit showcased JCPA's response to the pandemic's challenges, racism, and hate and the new civil rights movement. [If you missed it, click here is a link for you to watch at your leisure.](#)

JCPA's Four-Year Review (2016-2020) - — Over the last four years, JCPA has worked tirelessly to meet the challenges of the day. JCPA strengthened its local-national network and helped shape it into vibrant, dynamic and impactful force in the community. JCPA also increased its national advocacy on domestic policy concerns and built trusted relationships in common cause with diverse communities. We demonstrated that when our community comes together, we can make an impact. To that end, we produced the **Highlights of JCPA's Impact** and annual reports that provide substantive information about JCPA's impact and

accomplishments . Each report gives an overview of JCPA's work on the JCRC Network, policy priorities, criminal justice reform, Israel advocacy, webinar programs, and other special initiatives. A comprehensive impact report and the annual report for 2019-2020 are coming soon. To read the reports [click here](#).