

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Asper Foundation and The Jewish Heritage Centre of Western Canada proudly announce the creation of the Manitoba Institute to Combat Antisemitism

WINNIPEG, MB (October 3, 2025) – Antisemitism in Canada today is more pervasive and aggressive than ever before. A July 22, 2025 Statistics Canada report on crime notes that in 2024, Jewish people were the group most targeted by hate crimes in the country. Almost 19%, or 920, of the nearly 4,900 reported hate crimes and almost 70% of religiously motivated hate crimes were against Jewish people—even though they make up only 0.9% of the population. The Asper Foundation and the Jewish Heritage Centre of Western Canada are honoured to support the creation of the Manitoba Institute to Combat Antisemitism—an action-oriented initiative based on the conviction that education is the most effective weapon against hate.

The Institute offers customized training for students, educators, non-profit organizations, businesses and professional groups to educate participants about the genesis and evolution of antisemitism—and how to fight it.

Jewish Manitobans have played a vital role in shaping this province, contributing to every aspect of civic, cultural, and economic life. Since October 7, 2023, the province has seen an unprecedented surge in antisemitism, arising through the spread of disinformation and amplification of extremist ideologies. This toxic mix is fueling threats and violence against members of Manitoba's Jewish community.

Antisemitism endangers our shared values, disrupts national security and erodes democracy. The Institute's mission is to provide education and training to empower people with the tools needed to foster a peaceful, inclusive, and respectful society and to respond—with clarity and action.

Belle Jarniewski, Executive Director of the Jewish Heritage Centre of Western Canada, will lead the Institute. Belle was appointed to Canada's delegation to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) by the federal government in 2013 and serves on the Education Working Group and the Committee on Antisemitism and Holocaust Denial. A University of Manitoba Gold Medalist in the Faculty of Education, Belle has taught thousands of Manitoba students and educators about the Holocaust and antisemitism since 2010. She has also led training sessions for professionals in law, medicine, and law enforcement, including the Winnipeg Police Service.

Delaney Vun, whose law firm, Fillmore Riley, recently underwent training from Belle, said: "It is important for Manitobans to be aware of discrimination of all kinds, both in the historical context and as it persists today. The training from Belle provided a powerful, analytical, and objective look at antisemitism in society."

Anita Wortzman, President of The Asper Foundation, stated: "We are pleased to be able to launch this initiative in Manitoba where most of the population feels strongly that it is important to combat antisemitism but often needs the tools to help fight this fight. The Institute will provide the resources to combat antisemitism and help Manitoba to continue to be the great democratic province we all choose to live in."

The Manitoba Institute to Combat Antisemitism is now available to deliver this essential service to any group seeking to understand and counter the scourge of antisemitism.

For more information, please contact Belle Jarniewski at 204-478-8590 or by email: bjarniewski@jhcwc.org