

Jewish Journal

Palm Beach Central

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BROWARD

More than 1,000 people unite for Oct. 7 anniversary observance

By Alan Goch

Florida Jewish Journal

Hundreds of candlelights illuminating the packed David Posnack Jewish Community Center's Orlove Auditorium in Davie set the tone for an emotional "Afternoon of Remembrance, Resilience and Hope." The candlelit vigil accompanied the singing of "Nachamu," a prayer of comfort and consolation. The commemoration, sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Broward County in collaboration with partner organizations and synagogues, marked the one-year anniversary of the October 7 attacks perpetrated by Hamas terrorists that left more than 1,200 innocent people murdered and over 250 taken hostage.

As the Jewish community continues to grapple with the aftermath of October 7, 2023, the powerful display of Jewish unity and resilience in Broward County was one of several programs held throughout South Florida that reaffirmed our community's strength and commitment to Israel.

Emotions ran high at the heart-warming event at the



Left: Israeli flags are waved during "An Afternoon of Remembrance, Resilience and Hope." **Right:** A candlelit vigil is held during the event. **Below:** Adi Salma Levi recalls the loss of her sister and family during the Oct. 7 commemoration.

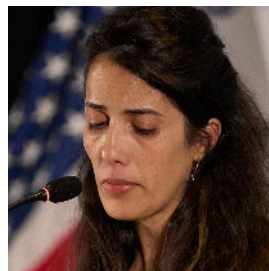
PHOTOS COURTESY OF JEWISH FEDERATION OF BROWARD COUNTY

Posnack JCC that honored the courage of those affected by the October 7 atrocities and demonstrated the bonds that have held our people together these past 12 months.

Audra Berg, President and CEO of the Jewish Federation of Broward County, addressed the crowd, reflecting on the significance of the day: "Today is an opportunity to honor those who died, pray for the release of the hostages and come together in our

sadness and grief, but also in our hope for the future."

The gathering also featured a powerful account from Adi Salma Levi, sibling of Livnat Kutz, who was killed alongside her husband and three children in Kibbutz Kfar Aza on October 7. Their bodies were found together



in one bed in their home where they huddled together during their final moments. Her story brought many attendees to tears, serving as a poignant reminder of the personal losses suffered.

The Consul General of Israel in Miami, Maor Elbaz-Starinsky, spoke about

the enduring spirit of the community.

"Let this day symbolize our unbreakable resilience and unity. Our shared values of appreciation for life, respect for faith, inclusivity, tolerance and dedication to liberty, freedom and justice are and will always be a part of who we are. No force in the world, not even pure evil, can silence nor overcome them," Elbaz-Starinsky said.

The event also included tributes through student

art installations and musical performances, which highlighted the spirit of the community.

IDF Reservist Yochanan Nelson and other local dignitaries also offered words of solidarity and support, further strengthening the bonds among those present.

Len Weiselberg of Fort Lauderdale expressed why it was important for him to attend the commemoration.

"I've been to Israel eight times (seven with the Federation). As a Jew, it's important to support Israel and her people."

Roslyn Schragar of Tamarac shared a similar sentiment.

"My son lives in Jerusalem, so I feel a personal connection to Israel. As Jews, we ALL have a responsibility to support Israel."

As the community left the event, the atmosphere was one of somber reflection but also of collective strength and commitment to use the past to build a hopeful future.

"We must show solidarity with Israel and let the world know that we are not afraid of anyone. Let's bring peace to the world," Myron Sandler of Weston, concluded.

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