



From darkness, light.

For Immediate Release

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2020 Guardian of the Human Spirit Virtual Event Raises \$575,000 for Virtual Education Programming

HOUSTON, TX (November 11, 2020)...Due to COVID-19 restrictions, Holocaust Museum Houston (HMH) held its annual Guardian of the Human Spirit Luncheon as a virtual event that streamed on Monday, November 9, 2020, raising \$575,000 for general operating funds with a focus on virtual education programming and learning resources to the Houston community and beyond.

The 2020 Guardian of the Human Spirit Virtual Event honored Dr. Milton Boniuk. A longtime humanitarian, philanthropist and author, Dr. Boniuk bases much of his good works on a simple belief: Differences among individuals should be celebrated, not feared. His dedication to an inclusive community includes the creation of Holocaust Museum Houston's Boniuk Library and Boniuk Center for the Future of Holocaust, Human Rights, and Genocide Studies, and Rice University's Boniuk Institute for the Study and Advancement of Religious Tolerance.

The streamed event included a keynote speech from Holocaust Survivor, psychologist and *New York Times* bestselling author Dr. Edith Eger. A native of Hungary, Dr. Eger was just a teenager in 1944 when she and her family were sent to Auschwitz. Her parents were sent to the gas chambers but Edith's bravery kept her and her sister alive. Her memoir entitled *The Choice - Embrace the Possible* became an international bestseller.

Honorary Chairs for this historic event included Houston Methodist President and CEO Dr. Marc L. Boom and Rice University President David W. Leebron. Event chairs were Debra and Steven Cohen, Leisa Holland-Nelson and Bob Bowman, Elyse and Lewis Kalmans and Drs. Ann and Timothy Stout. Abby Daniels and Debbie Tummins served as host committee chairs.

Since 1997, Holocaust Museum Houston (HMH) has recognized dedicated individuals and organizations who have worked to enhance the lives of others with the Guardian of the Human Spirit Award. These individuals and organizations embody the mission of the Museum by demonstrating a true commitment to service and building an open-minded society for the enrichment of the local population.

Previous recipients of the award have included the Astros Foundation; Texas A&M Corps of Cadets and Aggie Liberators of World War II; UT President Gregory L. Fenves and The

University of Texas at Austin; Ric Campo; Velva G. and H. Fred Levine; Edith and Josef Minberg, Bill Morgan and Murry Bowden; the Harry Mach family; KIPP founders Dave Levin and Mike Feinberg; former Mayor Annise Parker, Barbara and Gerald Hines; Marc J. Shapiro; Lester and Sue Smith; Sandra Weiner and Martin Fein; Naomi Warren and Fred Zeidman; Joan and Stanford Alexander; Ed Wulfe and the H-E-B grocery chain; Jack Blanton and The Houston Chronicle; the Rev. William A. Lawson and Julie and Ben Rogers; Linda P. Lay and Siegi Izakson; and Ron Stone.

Produced by Cut to Create with graphics by Vision Productions, a pre-show presentation streamed starting at 11:50 a.m. followed by a virtual program beginning at noon and lasting for approximately 42 minutes. The Museum's CEO Dr. Kelly J. Zúñiga and Board Chair Carl Josehart hosted a small watch party and socially-distanced luncheon for the honoree, his guests and the event chairs.

PaperCity served as media sponsor for the event and United Airlines as the official airline of Holocaust Museum Houston.

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