PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

The Nancy and David Wolf Holocaust and Humanity Center
Holocaust Survivor Stories Get Bold New Storage Space

Since 2000, the Nancy and David Wolf Holocaust and Humanity Center (HHC) has "been developing and delivering educational, outreach, and social programs promoting Holocaust history, understanding, and preservation." In 2019, it relocated into Union Terminal, a landmark building in Cincinnati, Ohio. In making the move, the HHC's curator looked to Patterson Pope for help designing an upgraded archival space for its growing collection.

THE PROBLEM

The HHC's collection had for a decade been housed at a Jewish day school in Kenwood. The partnership was welcome, but the storage solutions weren't ideal. In moving to Union Terminal, the archived collections were guaranteed a certain amount of space. But the collection is always growing.

"Collection, care, preservation and access are critical right now for us," said curator Cori Silbernagel. *"We're among our last generation of survivors...this is the time when we can help document their stories before the names are lost to history or parts of their story don't get passed down."*

Different types of artifacts are coming in from all different sources — survivors, military veterans and Americans who were living abroad during the Holocaust. *"We care for really fragile things that need a specific environment,"* Silbernagel said.

The new archival space needed to house everything from suitcases and small objects to letters and art. It was a matter of finding the right products to accommodate current artifacts while still planning for the future.

THE SOLUTION

The new HHC space was basically a *"blank box,"* said Silbernagel. She knew she wanted a space that wasn't just storage but also served as a workspace. At the same time, she wanted to effectively store objects of various sizes such as old documents, letters, certificates, textiles, jewelry, trunks, and suitcases.

"The survivor's firsthand story is so integral to everything we do at the Center," she said. *"Within our collections, several hundred individuals are represented. Each collection is unique. There is never one common holocaust narrative. The collections are very different."*

The HHC was also on a "tight timeline." As it

was Silbernagel's first experience building a new collection space, she turned to Patterson Pope. She wanted to work with a firm that could answer and ask the right questions. *"I needed that expertise and guidance to ensure that we had everything that we needed,"* she said.

With Patterson Pope's storage solution, the museum:

» Added a variety of flexible storage options for different-sized Holocaust artifacts

» Designed a streamlined storage and workspace for center staff

» Improved ease of access to its collections

» Gained confidence in the quality of its curation and ability to grow for the future

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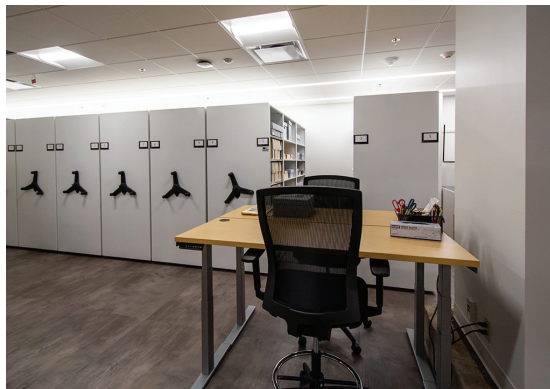>
> Cori Silbernagel
> Curator
> Nancy and David Wolf Holocaust and Humanity Center

THE OUTCOME

The new HHC has been embraced as a cultural location, Silbernagel said. The museum has enjoyed a *"positive reaction from our community."* With the move, the organization has also gained attention and increased access for the community to hear and see the stories of the Holocaust.

Silbernagel, meanwhile, is enjoying her high-density mobile shelving, flat files, static shelving, art racks, and oversized storage. She said, *"I walked into a brand new storage space that was really everything I was expecting it to be."*

ABOUT THE CLIENT

The Nancy and David Wolf Holocaust and Humanity Center (HHC) "exists to ensure the lessons of the Holocaust inspire action today." The Cincinnati, Ohio, museum educates about the Holocaust, remembers its victims, and offers them a gathering place for friendship. HHC impacts more than 180,000 individuals annually.