Annual Report 2016 & 2017 Update

Holocaust Survivors
Oral Health Program

Program Guardian
The Claire Friedlander Family Foundation

Enhancing the Quality of Life for Holocaust Survivors

October 2017
The Need
A Population in Need

Among the 100,000 Holocaust survivors living in the U.S. today, approximately a third live in poverty, making it all but impossible to access the care and support services they so desperately need. The aging of this vulnerable population is exacerbating their profound need as compounding health issues accompany advancing years. Survivors often have special oral health needs, as many experienced prolonged nutritional deprivation and received little or no dental care throughout their childhoods, compromising their lifelong oral health.

Overview
Program Overview

In response to this need, Alpha Omega International Dental Fraternity and Henry Schein, Inc. developed the Alpha Omega-Henry Schein Cares Holocaust Survivors Oral Health Program. By increasing Holocaust survivors’ access to oral care, this program is meeting a critical need and significantly enhancing the overall health and quality of life of this underserved population.

Launched in 2015, the program provides pro bono oral care to the most economically vulnerable Holocaust survivors, as well as individuals of any faith who are survivors of Nazi persecution and meet the eligibility requirements of the program. In addition to financial need, the three critical factors in prioritizing patients for participation are: elimination of pain, restoration of function, and lack of dental coverage. A clear set of clinical guidelines directs the specific scope of care provided through this program. The scope of treatment is wide and comprehensive, ranging from emergency care to restorative, endodontic, periodontal, and prosthetic treatment—all expertly delivered free of charge.
The Alpha Omega-Henry Schein Cares Holocaust Survivors Oral Health Program is a shining example of the powerful impact of strategic collaboration across sectors. The program was created in response to the White House’s 2014 call to action to develop innovative public-private partnerships to help Holocaust survivors. Individuals are referred to the program through members of the Association of Jewish Family & Children’s Agencies and other identified local partner organizations. Once eligible patients are identified, Alpha Omega’s participating members contribute their professional expertise and skill as dentists to provide pro bono care.

Henry Schein donates the dental supply kits used by participating dentists, while Town & Country Dental Studios, the program’s Laboratory Partner in the United States, and Orthodont Ltd. in Canada, as well as other dental laboratories, donate crowns, dentures, and other appliances necessary for proper patient care. All dental work is completed under the clinical guidance of Dr. Allen Finkelstein, CEO of Bedford HealthCare Solutions. Finally, a number of philanthropic partners generously contribute the essential financial resources needed to operate the program, managed and directed through the Alpha Omega International Dental Fraternity. The Claire Friedlander Family Foundation serves as the Program Guardian.
Sometimes you feel like a hero. Yesterday we gave a Holocaust survivor back his smile! At age 11, his front teeth were badly damaged when he was struck in the mouth by a Nazi rifle butt while trying to protect his mother and sister who were being beaten. Over the years (his teeth) were replaced but the years of neglect during the war took their toll and additional supporting teeth were lost. We were able to replace those teeth as well as provide other needed dental care in cooperation with the Alpha Omega-Henry Schein Cares Holocaust Survivors Oral Health Program, a charitable arm of the Alpha Omega Dental Fraternity, of which I am a proud member. Town & Country Dental Studios donated their excellent services to help us create a beautiful smile for this dear man. He is such a sweet gentleman, we were blessed to work with him and his lovely wife. My team and I feel as grateful as our survivor for the opportunity to share love, kindness and smiles to counteract hate.

Dr. Robin Santiago, West Hartford, CT
The results achieved through this program over its first two and a half years have been profound, both in terms of the impact upon the lives of survivors and the multi-faceted engagement of numerous stakeholders. Since its inception, the program has provided necessary, comprehensive, free dental care valued at more than $1.3 million to nearly 700 economically vulnerable Holocaust survivors across North America, with an operating expenditure of slightly more than $200,000.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Number of Patients Treated</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atlanta</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
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<td>New York</td>
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<td>Philadelphia/South Jersey</td>
<td>23</td>
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<td>Phoenix</td>
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<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
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<tr>
<td>West Hartford</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Toronto</td>
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<td>Winnipeg</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>Temple/KleinLife</td>
<td>81</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>686</strong></td>
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“Most critically, we issued a call for innovative public-private partnerships to fill in the gaps where survivors have unmet needs, and that’s where Henry Schein and Alpha Omega stepped up. Together you have brought the resources of a major company and the skills of volunteer dentists to provide services in major areas across the United States….This obviously makes a difference. It makes lives better in tangible ways….Thank you, thank you, thank you for allowing us to live up to our moral obligation.”

Vice President Joseph Biden (speaking about the program at The Blue Card’s Gala, 2015)
Between 2015 and 2016, the program grew significantly, with more than twice as many patients receiving services in 2016 compared to 2015. The number of providers willing to contribute free care to this population also grew tremendously year over year, with 474 of Alpha Omega’s provider members volunteering to treat survivors in 2017, compared to 227 in 2015.

In addition, the program has expanded geographically since its inception. During 2016, the program grew from 11 to 19 cities in North America and added the Temple University Maurice H. Kornberg School of Dentistry Clinic at KleinLife.

During the first eight months of 2017, the program expanded to a total of 21 cities, now including Cincinnati and Milwaukee. Two additional schools were also added to the program—AT Still University Arizona School of Dentistry and Oral Health and New York University College of Dentistry.

Through the addition of dental schools to the program, we are pleased to engage the next generation of dental professionals in this effort to care for this most vulnerable population.
AO-HSC Holocaust Survivors Oral Health Program

**Geography**

**Geographic Scope of Program**

**Original Cities:**
- Boston
- Chicago
- Detroit
- Montreal
- NYC
- NY/NJ Metropolitan Area
- Philadelphia
- Seattle
- Toronto

**2015 Additions:**
- Atlanta
- Calgary
- Columbus

**2016 Additions:**
- Dallas
- Greater Washington, DC Area
- Los Angeles
- Phoenix
- San Francisco
- West Hartford
- Winnipeg

**2017 Additions:**
- Cincinnati
- Milwaukee

**Dental Schools:**
- AT Still University
- Arizona School of Dentistry and Oral Health
- New York University College of Dentistry
- Temple University Maurice H. Kornberg School of Dentistry Clinic at KleinLife
These patients have endured such terrible atrocities, and I am glad that we are able to make a positive impact on their lives. Personally, treating these patients has been a highlight of my professional career. I believe I am receiving more out of this experience than the patients receiving the dental care.

Dr. Laurie Gordon-Shaw, Illinois

Treating these Holocaust survivors has been an amazing experience. Some of them have communication challenges using English. But those who speak English have very interesting and often sad stories to tell. Because of their age, we may have one of the last opportunities to hear their stories. I only wish we had this program earlier in these folks’ lives.

Dr. Bernard Dishler, Philadelphia

The Holocaust Survivors Oral Health Program has been a vital bridge between Alpha Omega in Columbus and members of the local Jewish community in need. With the help of Jewish Family Services, not only have we been able to provide valuable services to Holocaust survivors, but our chapter has been energized with a new philanthropic purpose.

Dr. Shaun Rotenberg, Columbus, Ohio

I cannot say enough about the service that has been provided to me, totally free of charge. Starting with promptly arranged appointments at hours most convenient to me, to the friendliness and helpfulness of all the personnel involved, to the efficacy and professionalism of Drs. Sumareva and Kaufman, and particularly for Dr. Sumareva’s concern for my general comfort and well-being at my rather advanced age. I sport beautiful teeth, easily maintained, and have regular hygiene provided. I consider myself extremely fortunate in having this wonderful service.

Patient of Dr. Rada Sumareva, New York

I am so appreciative of this program. I was so scared I would be in so much pain after the deep cleaning. Dr. Friedman and his staff took such good care of me and…of my needs. I am so lucky to have such good dental care at this stage in my life.

Patient of Dr. Michael Friedman, Atlanta

I am writing this letter as a 95-year old Holocaust survivor who is very grateful to have received dental services at Temple’s clinic at KleinLife. I was seen for many visits by Dr. Farah Haroon who provided dentures for me and made certain that they fit correctly, were comfortable, and functional. I would like to commend her outstanding dental care, and thank you all for this wonderful program. This program of Temple’s for Holocaust survivors is so beneficial to the community, and I greatly appreciate and applaud.

Patient using Temple’s KleinLife Clinic

My life has changed, I can now talk for a half hour and have no problems with my dentures staying in.

Patient of Dr. Matthew Zizmor, Boston
The feedback we are receiving from our clients who have accessed the program has been very positive. Those who have been in touch with us have said that all the dentists they have worked with have been kind and compassionate, respectful and professional. From their first contact (with your program through) the various appointments with practitioners, (our clients) indicated that they felt they were in good hands and received stellar dental treatment. I thought you all deserved to know that the service you are providing to these Holocaust survivors is important, meaningful, and immensely appreciated by them. They all feel very fortunate to be connected to the program.

Social Service Agency Partner

Dear Dr. Kleiman, Who can be so lucky, to have a dentist just like you? That honors his heritage, being so generous and true! You treat your patients kindly, you don’t just say open wide, but treat them with dignity, respect and pride. I hope this makes you smile, maybe even a laugh. Please, please also thanks to your most wonderful staff.

Patient of Dr. Jeffrey Kleiman, Phoenix

Thank you for referring me to Lakeside Dental’s Dr. Janet H. Century, DDS in Barrington, Illinois. Being in that office is like being in a fairy tale. The instruments, machines, materials that they are working with—super classy, non-invasive, and very modern—I didn’t see anything like this in any other dental office even though I am here, in the U.S., for a very long time. But most important, this office has dental professionals who make it easy on patients like me. I got the best care ever and I am very thankful for it. When my treatment was over, the dentist scheduled a six-month cleaning and check-up—also free of charge! I was pleasantly surprised by this generosity and attention. Thank you!

Patient of Dr. Janet H. Century, Illinois

Until you have the opportunity to make a difference for someone in need who is so appreciative, it is an impossible feeling to explain properly to others. I have been in practice for over 37 years and today was truly one of my most rewarding moments. I am thankful to all those who put this program together and invited me to participate and have the opportunity to make someone’s dental health better.

Dr. Ira Schecter, Toronto

When I first met (my patient), he hugged me and thanked me before I even introduced myself. We heard stories of sadness, grief, starvation, and hope, all bringing a tear to my eye and my dental assistants. He calls me his son, which is very nice, (and) he never comes or goes without a hug.

Dr. Paul Amato, Seattle

As a child of Holocaust survivors myself, whose mother was liberated from Bergen-Belsen and father spent his childhood in Auschwitz and Theresienstadt, it was an emotional and meaningful experience (treating a patient).

Dr. Bonnie Chandler, Toronto

AO-HSC Holocaust Survivors Oral Health Program
Success in expanding the program’s reach was the result of significant progress made during the second year in educating referring agencies about the unmet need for oral health care within their service communities and the tremendous benefits available to those eligible for the program. Nearly a quarter of program expenditures in 2016 were invested in field engagement, education, and the sharing of best practices with social service agency partners.

Despite all of the program’s success, we found that initial outreach efforts in 2015 did not yield the full volume of referrals expected because too many within our partner agencies were simply unaware of the program or uncertain as to how to refer clients to it. As a result, we re-doubled our efforts to more effectively reach out to our social service agency partners. On November 9–10, 2016, the Alpha Omega-Henry Schein Cares Holocaust Survivors Oral Health Program convened a Town Hall meeting in Washington, D.C., bringing together representatives from 16 social service agencies with 14 dental ambassadors from across North America. The meeting served to strengthen connections between the social service agencies, program ambassadors, and the program administration as well as share common challenges and best practices. A similar roundtable meeting was convened on December 16, 2016 in New York City, hosted by the Alpha Omega-Henry Schein Cares Holocaust Survivors Oral Health Program, the Russian American Dental Association (RADA), and The Blue Card. On Holocaust Remembrance Day, Monday, April 24, 2017, a delegation of participating Alpha Omega dentists and members of the Henry Schein Team met with 23 members of Congress or their legislative staffers on Capitol Hill to raise awareness of the oral health needs of economically vulnerable Holocaust survivors, and share with them the critical impact the program is having in communities.

Through our intensive efforts to more effectively engage our social service agency partners, the referral volume has steadily increased, reflecting the high unmet need for oral care within the communities they serve. In 2017, we continue to invest in the training and tools necessary to encourage the engagement of our social service agency partners and ensure that we reach as many eligible patients as possible.
The program is not only meeting a critical need for emergency oral health services, but is also helping to create a “dental home” for many of the patients served. We found that the ratio of average value of the care provided per patient decreased slightly in 2016 as a result of the program’s success in retaining patients who originally entered the program for high-value emergency treatment, but have subsequently returned to access the routine care they need to maintain good oral health throughout the remainder of their lives. The program’s high return rate reflects the exceptional service provided to patients by dentists who donate their services.
Program Honors

Over its first two and a half years of operation, the Alpha Omega-Henry Schein Cares Holocaust Survivors Oral Health Program has been honored to receive several awards in recognition of the critical services it provides to its deserving participants.

- Congressman Thomas Suozzi recognized the program in the Congressional Record, noting the program “serves as a model for what we can accomplish together to help those in need” (2017)
- Citation from United States Senator Chris Van Hollen in recognition of the program’s success in providing pro bono dental services to Holocaust survivors in need (2017)
- Kupferberg Holocaust Center at Queensborough Community College honored Alpha Omega-Henry Schein Cares Holocaust Survivors Oral Health Program at the “Jacket from Dachau” event (2016)
- Commendation from Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel for leadership and dedicated service to Holocaust survivors (2016)
- Certificate of Commendation from United States Senator Sherrod Brown extending congratulations on the success of the program (2016)
- The Blue Card’s Max L. Heine Humanitarian Award (2015)
- Proclamation by Seattle Mayor Edward Murray declaring November 2, 2015 as Alpha Omega International Dental Fraternity Day in recognition of the Alpha Omega dentists treating Seattle Holocaust survivors through the program (2015)
- Janice B. Ballas Community Service Award presented to dentists of Alpha Omega’s Columbus chapter for their participation in the program (2015)
Thank You to our 2016—2017 Dental Ambassadors

The following Dental Ambassadors lead the Alpha Omega-Henry Schein Cares Holocaust Survivors Oral Health Program efforts in their respective cities, and represent the 474 exceptional dentists who volunteer for this program:

Atlanta
Dr. Michael Friedman

Boston
Dr. David Dano, Dr. S. Murray Miller

Chicago
Dr. Laurie Gordon-Shaw

Cincinnati
Dr. Glen Meyer

Columbus
Dr. Shaun Rotenberg

Dallas
Dr. Gary Solomon

Detroit
Dr. Jamie Feldman, Dr. Mark Luria, Dr. Marvin Sonne

Los Angeles
Dr. Paul Selski

Milwaukee
Dr. Stanley Teplin

New York
Dr. Rada Sumareva

Phoenix
Dr. Irwin Feinberg

San Francisco
Dr. Jay Cohen

Seattle
Dr. Kal Klass

Philadelphia/ So. Jersey
Dr. Bruce Silver

Washington, D.C.
Dr. Ben Williamowsky, Dr. Alan Singer

West Hartford
(This area operates without an Ambassador)

Calgary
Dr. Brian Sacks

Montreal
Dr. Jeffrey Tenser

Toronto
Dr. Gerald Pearson

Winnipeg
Dr. Gary Hyman
Thank You To Our Founding Program Donors

The following donors have made a meaningful gift of up to a three-year commitment to support our program:

**Program Guardian**  
The Claire Friedlander Family Foundation  
Peter Klein, President

**Benefactor**  
Curt C. & Else Silberman Foundation  
Ben Friedmann, Trustee

**Sustainer**  
Henry Schein Cares Foundation  
Dr. Louis Sullivan &  
Stanley M. Bergman, Co-Chairs

**Angel**  
The Slomo and Cindy Silvian Foundation, Inc.  
Stanley and Audrey Goldstein Foundation

**Champion**  
Bedford HealthCare Solutions  
Allen Finkelstein, DDS, CEO

**Benefactor**  
Dr. Edward B. Shils Entrepreneurial Fund, Inc.  
Steven W. Kess, President

**Sustainer**  
The Wagner Family Foundation  
Leon and Lisa Wagner

**Laboratory Program Partners**  
U.S.  
Town & Country Dental Studios  
David and Stephen Lampert

**Angel**  
The Slomo and Cindy Silvian Foundation, Inc.  
Stanley and Audrey Goldstein Foundation

Thank You To Our Generous Partners

We are so thankful to all of the following participants for helping to make critical oral health care services available to this deserving population:

- The White House issued the call to action in 2014, leading to the program’s creation
- The Association of Jewish Family & Children’s Agencies and other partner agencies are identifying patients for participation in the program
- Alpha Omega’s members are donating their professional expertise and skill as dentists to provide pro bono dental care to program patients
- Henry Schein catalyzed the program and is donating dental supply kits to participating dentists, as well as providing its expertise in a range of areas, including communications, legal and program design, and the establishment of public-private partnerships
- The program’s philanthropic partners, as listed above, are generously providing the much needed financial resources that make this program possible
- Town & Country Dental Studios, the laboratory program partner in the United States, and Orthodent Ltd. in Canada are donating the fabrication of crowns, dentures, and other appliances necessary for the proper care of patients
- Bedford HealthCare Solutions is providing the critical oversight and guidance for the clinical aspects of our program
About Alpha Omega International Dental Fraternity and Henry Schein Cares

The Alpha Omega-Henry Schein Cares Holocaust Survivors Oral Health Program is guided by the two organizations’ shared commitment and deep sense of passion to serve those in need.

Alpha Omega, as an international Jewish dental organization, has a deep commitment to “repairing the world”—the concept of tikkun olam—and in this spirit, the fraternity’s Global Oral Health Initiative has been providing for at-risk populations worldwide for decades. With Alpha Omega’s unique perspective and special connection with the Holocaust survivor community, the organization recognized the need to improve the oral health and quality of life of this most deserving population and are extremely pleased to provide such essential care through this unique program.

Henry Schein was founded in 1932 based on the belief that the company can fulfill its responsibilities as a corporate citizen by giving back to the industries and communities it serves. Ever since then, Henry Schein has pursued the ideal of “doing well by doing good.” This spirit of corporate citizenship is exemplified through Henry Schein Cares and the Henry Schein Cares Foundation, which seek to “help health happen” by expanding access to care for at-risk and underserved populations.

Since its founding 16 years ago, the model of success for Henry Schein Cares has been the establishment of innovative public-private partnerships, and we have used our experience with that model to drive this impactful oral health program.

Executive Committee:

Ms. Bernice Edelstein  
Program Manager  
Alpha Omega International Dental Fraternity

Dr. Allen Finkelstein  
Program Chief Dental Officer  
CEO, Bedford HealthCare Solutions

Mr. Steven W. Kess  
Program Co-Chair  
Vice President, Global Professional Relations  
Henry Schein, Inc., and President, Henry Schein Cares Foundation, Inc.

Mr. Peter Klein  
Member  
President, The Claire Friedlander Family Foundation

Ms. Allison Neale  
Program Co-Founder  
Director of Public Policy, Office of the CEO  
Henry Schein, Inc.

Ms. Heidi Weber  
Member  
Executive Director, Alpha Omega International Dental Fraternity

Dr. Avi Wurman, DDS  
Program Co-Chair  
Program Co-Founder  
2014 President, Alpha Omega International Dental Fraternity

Thank You To Our Generous Partners

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Steven W. Kess, President

The Wagner Family Foundation  
Leon and Lisa Wagner

Laboratory Program Partners  
U.S.  
Town & Country Dental Studios  
David and Stephen Lampert  
Canada  
Orthodent Ltd.  
Bill Van Evans
Why These Holocaust Survivors Say Their Life Was Saved Twice

Because of their horrific early experiences that created nutritional deficiencies, many Holocaust survivors are in need of extreme dental repair that they can’t afford—but thanks to a partnership between Henry Schein, the world’s largest provider of health care products and services, the Alpha Omega International Dental Fraternity, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, they’re receiving life-changing dental care.

Sam Weinreb was 13 in 1941, when he arrived home from a bar mitzvah lesson to find the front door locked and his family gone. A neighbor told Sam that his family had been taken by German soldiers to Auschwitz, the Nazi concentration camp in Poland. Sam fled his small town in Czhekoslovakia to Hungary in search of a way to find his family. When he approached the Hungarian police for help, they imprisoned him for two years and beat him daily while incarcerated. After that, he was crammed into a cattle car with more than 60 other people and sent to Auschwitz himself. “Upon arrival they told me I no longer needed to remember my name, only the number they tattooed on my arm,” Weinreb says. While at Auschwitz, Sam suffered tooth and gum problems that he dared not report, though the German soldiers encouraged Jewish prisoners to do so. “Anyone that reported any sickness never returned to camp. I wasn’t sure if I would survive one hour to the next,” Weinreb told Reader’s Digest. Eventually, those in Weinreb’s camp were forced to take a death march, under the guise of being taken to a new camp.

Weinreb story continues page 17
Due to the severe weather, within a few days most of the marchers died—only 400 of the 5,000 people who began the march survived. Weinreb knew his only hope of survival was escape, and in the middle of the night he fled the death march into the forest. “To this day, I don’t know how far I ran, but I awoke in the forest to Russian soldiers, who took me to a nearby hospital,” he recalls. After hospitalization and a full recovery, Sam was sent to the U.S. to be placed in an orphanage in New York.

He eventually married his childhood sweetheart, and raised two children with his wife, Goldie. Though he once faced unspeakable tragedy, Weinreb is quick to focus on the positive in his life—even the gift of finally receiving treatment for the gum and tooth issues he has dealt with since his days at Auschwitz. (Here are some of the diseases that gum disease can reveal.) Dr. Matthew Zizmor, a dentist practicing in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, and a member of the Alpha Omega International Dental Fraternity, treated Weinreb for his severe dental problems that began during his imprisonment. Through the benevolent work of Dr. Zizmor, Sam received both upper and lower dentures, held in position by implants placed by an oral surgeon, also part of the program to aid Holocaust survivors. Dr. Zizmor told Reader’s Digest the greatest reward for participating in the program is a connection to the patients themselves. “The most rewarding part is having a chance to give back my knowledge, skill, and expertise to people who need it the most. In Jewish tradition it is an example of “gemilut chasadim”—acts of loving kindness. But what is most rewarding is the thankfulness and appreciation that the patients have for their treatment. Over time, I feel a bond with my patients that comes close to being part of their family,” he says. As for Weinreb, today at 91 years old he’s found a renewed ability to eat and enjoy food again. “I now have all of my teeth, which I didn’t have for so many years,” he says. “I don’t have to worry anymore or be afraid of biting into anything. My whole life is different today.”

Jose Urbach, 77, was only 4 months old when he and his parents were forced to relinquish their home in Poland to German soldiers and move to a nearby ghetto. Conditions were crowded and morale among those in the ghetto were increasingly desperate as deportations to Nazi camps began to take thousands of Jews at a time to meet a dismal fate. In July 1944, Urbach and his family were placed aboard a train and sent to a forced labor camp in Demlin, Poland. Though he was young, Urbach has clear memories of this time and is eager to share his story of sorrow, suffering, and triumph. Urbach told Reader’s Digest, “In the camp in Demlin, hunger, death, and brutality continued. We were forced to witness executions and public hangings.” He recalls, “Three times I was taken with other children to be killed.”
We were miraculously spared by postponements and coincidences.” On his fifth birthday, Urbach’s father defied barrack rules and found his way to the barrack of his wife and child. He had two small candies he received from a camp worker, when he explained that he wanted to give his son something for his birthday. “It was the last time I ever saw my father,” Urbach recalls. “He was taken to another camp a few days later and did not survive.” Urbach and his mother were eventually freed by Russian soldiers in 1944 and returned to their hometown before settling in Bogota, Colombia, with his mother’s family. Urbach came to New York with his wife on a university art scholarship when he was 28, and the couple have lived in the U.S. ever since. Not surprisingly, after many years of malnutrition during his youth, Urbach experienced severe dental issues as an older adult. Dr. David Shipper, DMD, of Central Park West Dental in New York, a volunteer with the Alpha Omega-Henry Schein Cares Holocaust Survivors Oral Health Program, performed three root canals, filled several cavities, and is in the process of doing four dental implants to replace missing teeth for Urbach. And it’s his pleasure to be able to do it. He tells Reader’s Digest, “It’s extremely rewarding just to be able to help an individual like Jose who, without the Holocaust survivor program, would probably not receive any dental care or at least not quality care. I’ve been practicing long enough to know and understand that giving back to society is an honor, and a privilege, and most importantly, a responsibility.” “I was so happy when I heard about the Alpha Omega-Henry Schein program,” Urbach says. “Dr. Shipper is a wonderful person and a great dentist. This is a great thing for people like me, who survived the Holocaust and need help. I am very grateful,” he adds. Dentists are often able to spot other medical conditions during an exam, such as diabetes.

Meymís story begins on page 19
Greg Meymis, 83, of Seattle, was 7 years old when World War II reached his homeland of Moldova, then part of the Soviet Ukraine. Fearful of what was to come, he and his mother tried to escape by horseback from the German soldiers taking Jews to nearby ghettos, but their efforts were unsuccessful. “You can only escape so far on horseback,” Meymis tells Reader’s Digest. He was taken with his mother and several family members to a ghetto in Russia, where they faced bleak living conditions. “It was a difficult time, with a lot of starvation,” Meymis recalls. When the Nazis were preparing to deport him and his extended family to a concentration camp, the adults in Meymis’ life took action by bribing guards to allow them to escape. The group escaped to Kazakhstan until the war was over. They returned to Moldova in 1945 to find it completely destroyed, and they once again faced difficulty and starvation. Those that offered safety to Jews during the Holocaust are considered heroes today, including Gil and Eleanor Krause of America, who saved 50 children. In 1990 Meymis immigrated to the U.S. as a refugee, after the many civil wars related to the collapse of the Soviet Union. By that point he had severe dental problems due to frequent episodes of starvation. When he needed a full-mouth reconstruction, it was Dr. Paul Amato, DDS, FAGD, of Seattle, who did the dental rescue. “When I met Greg, he had several teeth with chronic infections,” Dr. Amato recalls. “He had difficulty chewing most foods since he was missing teeth in the back of his mouth. As such, his nutrition was sub-optimal.” If left untreated, Dr. Amato notes, the chronic tooth infections could have been life threatening. Dr. Amato says of his experience serving the survivors of the Holocaust, “There are so many aspects of this program that are rewarding. As an American, a Jew, and a dentist, this program allows me to give back to the Jews that survived and suffered. I have met and treated several survivors, and they are gracious, kind, and good people.” Dr. Amato’s sentiment is part of the mission of the program. “The lessons of the Holocaust carry the greatest weight when they are delivered by the very people who survived it,” says Stanley M. Bergman, Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of Henry Schein, Inc. “By restoring the oral health of Holocaust survivors in need, we can help these courageous people to tell their stories and live their lives with dignity and confidence. So far, thanks to the combined efforts of our program partners, we have been able to restore function, eliminate pain, and improve the overall health and quality of life for more than 600 survivors who lived through unspeakable conditions. We are encouraged by the steps we have taken and the relationships we have forged, and we anticipate having an even greater impact as we move forward together.” For Greg Meymis, the dental care has been life-changing. “Greg was also self-conscious about his front teeth,” Dr. Amato says. “He hesitated to smile or would not smile broadly. After we fixed his teeth, he was all smiles.”

A version of this article appeared on readersdigest.com on August, 25, 2017.
For more information about the AO-HSC Holocaust Survivors Oral Health Program, please contact:

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