

State of Hate in Greater Buffalo: A Community Perspective

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Abstract

In a time of increased hate, understanding hate in the immediate world that surrounds us has become essential to engaging with greater society. This report discusses hate and inter-community relations in the Buffalo-Niagara region of Western New York, one of the most segregated metros in the nation and the second most densely populated area in New York State. Data from the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program, and Anti-Defamation League (ADL) indicate that hate and hate crimes, specifically antisemitic hate crimes, maintain a pervasive presence in Buffalo-Niagara. To address antisemitism, Buffalo-Niagara's Jewish community has successfully come together with the help of community organizations. Their model of addressing hate can be applied more generally across the region. Interviews with 18 community members and leaders were conducted to gather insights into intra-community realities and inter-community relations of living in Buffalo-Niagara. These insights reflect lacking measures for anti-hate action within communities and, in many cases, non-existent relationships between communities. This report thus seeks to serve as a resource for community members to identify allies across Buffalo-Niagara that seek to develop inter-community relationships and address hate in all its forms. Knowledge of reporting mechanisms and organizations across Buffalo-Niagara will enable the region's communities to find allyship among one another, promote mutual respect, facilitate cultural understanding, and unearth common ground that will undercut and contribute to driving out hate. Lists and maps of these organizations have been generated and included below using information collected through interviews as well as online listings. The report closes with final takeaways to keep in mind moving forward.

Background on Buffalo-Niagara

Buffalo is the second largest city in New York State (NYS) after New York City. The city is located in Erie County and is surrounded by suburbs in both Erie and Niagara Counties. While many people live outside Buffalo city limits, they consider themselves Buffalonians. To be inclusive, this report will focus on the Buffalo-Niagara Falls Metropolitan Statistical Area which encompasses both Erie and Niagara Counties. For the purposes of this report, Erie and Niagara Counties will hereafter be referred to as Buffalo-Niagara and/or Greater Buffalo.

According to Partnership for the Public Good (PPG), Buffalo-Niagara is one of the most racially and economically segregated metros in the nation (Blatto, 2018). Decades of federal, state, and local policies that were either plainly discriminatory or more subtly undercut equity have made Buffalo the city it is today,

the sixth most segregated metro in the nation on the white-Black index (Census Scope, 2012). According to the 2013 Greater Buffalo Jewish Community Study, it is estimated that approximately 97% of Western New York's Jewish households are located in Erie County and of them, approximately fifty-seven percent reside in Williamsville, Amherst, and Tonawanda (Boxer et al. 2013). These three areas directly neighbor each other and as such, these statistics indicate that Buffalo-Niagara's Jewish population is concentrated in the suburbs of the City of Buffalo. The Jewish community, like the rest of the Buffalo-Niagara's communities, is geographically separate and thus disconnected from neighboring communities. Across Buffalo-Niagara, neighborhood lines are rigid and segregation, inequity, food insecurity, job insecurity, and educational inequality run rampant.

Criminologists argue that hate-motivated crimes generally ensue from segregation, discrimination, and the marginalization of people who have historically been

viewed as different. Criminologist Barbara Perry asserts that individuals who reflect society's dominant identity traits and physical attributes more easily amass social and political power. These power dynamics paired with existing segregation create rifts between different racial, cultural, religious, and ethnic groups (Perry, 2001). The more divides have deepened over time, the more lacking inter-community relationships have become. Our ability to empathize with others is a function of our proximity, and because people of different communities live, learn, and exist apart from one another, they understand each other less. Ultimately, less empathy has resulted in more hate and less progress.

In this era of heightened hate and louder calls for equality, it is imperative that we understand hate in the immediate world that surrounds us, engage with our neighbors to generate empathy, and join in concerted efforts to create common good and improve our shared society.

Hate in Buffalo-Niagara

Understanding How Hate Crimes Differ from Bias or Hate Incidents

At the federal level, the United States Department of Justice defines a hate crime as a crime motivated by bias against race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or disability (United States Department of Justice, 2021). As defined by Article 485 of New York State Penal Law, *a person commits a hate crime when they commit a specified offense and either:*

Intentionally selects the person against whom the offense is committed or intended to be committed in whole or in substantial part because of a belief or perception regarding the race, color, national origin, ancestry, gender, gender identity or expression, religion, religious practice, age, disability or sexual orientation of a person, regardless of whether the belief or perception is correct, or

Intentionally commits the act or acts constituting the offense in whole or in substantial part because of a belief or perception regarding the race, color, national origin, ancestry, gender, gender identity

or expression, religion, religious practice, age, disability or sexual orientation of a person, regardless of whether the belief or perception is correct (New York State Senate, 2020).

New York State does not provide a legal definition of a bias or hate incident. Deferring to the federal definition, hate incidents are *acts of prejudice that are not crimes and do not involve violence, threats, or property damage*. In short, hate crimes are different from bias or hate incidents in that the actions and expressions involved in a hate crime constitute criminal activity whereas actions and expressions in an incident do not break any law. There is no statutory mandate to report hate incidents, and federal and state law enforcement agencies solely publish statistical reports on hate crimes, not hate incidents. In the last year, hate crime bills have been worked on at both the federal and state levels. In May 2021, President Biden signed the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act which aims to increase public outreach and ensure bias-reporting resources exist in multiple languages to make hate crime reporting accessible (Hirono, 2021). The New York State Senate is also working to pass Senate Bill S70A, which relates to “enacting the hate crimes analysis and review act” (New York State Senate, 2021). The Hate Crimes Analysis and Review Act will ensure that the State will collect and report data on the sexual orientation, gender identity, and racial or ethnic identity of victims and alleged perpetrators to better understand LGBTQIA+ experiences in NYS. Similar to how both bills focus on hate crimes and not hate incidents, data included in this report solely covers hate crimes, not hate incidents.

What does Hate Crime Frequency in Buffalo-Niagara look like?

Hate crime frequency data for Buffalo-Niagara has been analyzed, compiled, recorded, and reported by the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) and the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program. The Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program generates reliable statistics for use in law enforcement and includes data from more than 18,000 city, university and college, county, state, tribal, and federal law enforcement agencies. Agencies participate voluntarily and may submit their crime data either through a state UCR program or directly to the FBI's UCR Program (FBI, 2018). In New York State, the DCJS is authorized by statute to serve as the central repository of crime and

arrest information. DCJS oversees the UCR Program for the State and reports crime data to the FBI. New York State law enforcement agencies submit monthly crime reports to DCJS which are reviewed for completeness and accuracy before being added to the statewide database and submitted to the FBI (NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services).

DCJS reports for Erie and Niagara Counties respectively specified the type of bias involved in reported hate crimes. The data for Erie and Niagara counties for 2016 through 2019 are as follows:

DCJS Data by County

Table 1. *DCJS Hate Crime Data for Erie County, 2016 through 2019*

Year	Anti-Black	Anti-White	Anti-Asian	Anti-Arab	Anti-Jewish	Anti-Gay Female	Anti-Gay Male	Anti-Trans-gender	Anti-Multi Racial Groups
2016	8	2	1	0	4	0	2	3	0
2017	4	2	0	0	0	1	2	0	1
2018	10	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
2019	5	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0

Table 2. *DCJS Hate Crime Data for Niagara County, 2016 through 2019*

Year	Anti-Black	Anti-White	Anti-Asian	Anti-Arab	Anti-Jewish	Anti-Gay Female	Anti-Gay Male	Anti-Trans-gender	Anti-Multi Racial Groups
2016	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
2017	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
2018	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2019	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

Data included in these figures was reported by the NYS DCJS to the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program (New York Division of Criminal Justice Services, 2021).

These data sets are reviewed by DCJS and submitted annually to the FBI's UCR, which breaks down the crime reports by municipality and city and categorizes them into six different categories: race/ethnicity/ancestry, religion, sexual orientation, disability, gender, and gender

identity. The data below includes all municipalities and cities in Erie and Niagara Counties that were recorded by the FBI UCR as having submitted hate crime reports between 2016 and 2019.

FBI UCR Data by Municipality and City

Table 3. *FBI UCR Crime Data for Municipalities and Cities in Erie and Niagara Counties, 2016*

Location	Race/Ethnicity/Ancestry	Religion	Sexual Orientation	Disability	Gender	Gender Identity	Total
Amherst Town	2	0	0	0	0	1	2
Buffalo	5	0	1	0	0	1	7
Cheektowaga Town	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Hamburg Town	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Niagara Falls	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
North Tonawanda	2	0	0	0	0	0	2

Table 4. *FBI UCR Crime Data for Municipalities and Cities in Erie and Niagara Counties, 2017*

Location	Race/Ethnicity/ Ancestry	Religion	Sexual Orientation	Disability	Gender	Gender Identity	Total
Amherst Town	6	0	2	0	0	1	9
Buffalo	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Niagara Falls	3	0	0	0	0	0	3

Table 5. *FBI UCR Crime Data for Municipalities and Cities in Erie and Niagara Counties, 2018*

Location	Race/Ethnicity/ Ancestry	Religion	Sexual Orientation	Disability	Gender	Gender Identity	Total
Amherst Town	5	0	0	0	0	0	5
Buffalo	5	0	0	0	0	1	6
Hamburg Town	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Niagara Falls	1	0	0	0	0	0	1

Table 6. *FBI UCR Crime Data for Municipalities and Cities in Erie and Niagara Counties, 2019*

Location	Race/Ethnicity/ Ancestry	Religion	Sexual Orientation	Disability	Gender	Gender Identity	Total
Amherst Town	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Buffalo	5	0	0	0	0	0	5
Tonawanda	1	0	0	0	0	0	1

Data included in this figure was analyzed, compiled, and recorded by the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program (FBI, 2010).

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) elaborated on some of the incidents occurring in Buffalo-Niagara between 2016 and 2019 behind these statistics in their Hate, Extremism, Antisemitism, and Terrorism dataset, listed here: (ADL H.E.A.T. Map)

1. Antisemitic Incident – Vandalism, 03/2016 in Buffalo, NY: “Antisemitic graffiti reading ‘kill all kikes’ discovered in campus bathroom.”
2. Antisemitic Incident – Vandalism, 04/2016 in Buffalo, NY: “Swastika found spray-painted on wall.”
3. Antisemitic Incident – Harassment, 12/2018 in Buffalo, NY: “Individual drove down a street shouting ‘The Holocaust was a hoax. The Jews are lying.’”
4. Antisemitic Incident – Harassment, 09/2019 in Buffalo, NY: “A synagogue received a handwritten antisemitic letter.”
5. Antisemitic Incident – Vandalism, 11/2019 in Buffalo, NY: “Graffiti that included two swastikas, the n-word, and homophobic slurs was found written on a bathroom stall in Knox Hall at the University of Buffalo.”

(ADL H.E.A.T. Map)

Taking these three data sets together, it is clear that antisemitism has maintained a consistent presence in Buffalo-Niagara across the four-year period spanning 2016 through 2019.

Interviews with Community Members and Leaders

Numerous members of Buffalo-Niagara's Jewish community shared stories of their firsthand experiences as victims of antisemitism. For one, a long-time resident family of Buffalo who wished to remain unnamed was victim of an antisemitic act of harassment in the first degree (New York State Senate, 2020). During the 2020 winter holiday season, the family was mailed threatening messages, letters, and propaganda to their home. The threatening messages read “Die Jews” and “We're coming for you” and were believed to have been prompted by the placement of a menorah in this family's home window.

Students in Buffalo-Niagara's schools have also encoun-

tered antisemitism. Jewish college freshman Adam Beiter who, at the time of his interview, had just recently graduated from high school recounted multiple antisemitic acts committed by his peers. In his economics class, students worked in teams on a project and one team of students named themselves the Einsatzgruppen after the Nazi death squads in the Holocaust. Beiter noted that throughout his middle school and high school years, Holocaust jokes and Nazi references were made on numerous occasions, even as recently as directly prior to his high school graduation. “We do what’s called a memory walk where we walk through our old elementary school and middle school,” said Beiter. “As we were walking through the old middle school... we happened upon a group of middle schoolers who were all huddled together doing the Nazi salute.”

Many of the Jewish community’s leaders have noted that hate continues to abound because of lacking understanding. Chair of the Buffalo Jewish Federation’s Jewish Community Relations Council Deborah Goldman shared her belief that “[t]here should be more opportunities for people to get to know Jews not as Judeo-Christians and [she] would say the same thing about other communities, too. If you know people, it’s harder to hate them.” CEO of the Buffalo Jewish Federation Rob Goldberg similarly believes that the best ways of combating hate and antisemitism are through deepening cultural understanding. “I think our role is education, I think our role is... bridge-building,” said Goldberg. “I think we have to confront hate and be honest that hate exists.”

For some community members, however, confronting hate head-on poses a challenge. According to Minister Denise Walden, Lead Faith & Live Free Organizer for social justice group VOICE Buffalo, some victims of hate crimes have historically refrained from reporting their experiences to law enforcement either because it is traumatic for them to talk about their experience or because they may not trust law enforcement. People may also not know where to turn to report a crime and may not know that bias-reporting systems exist. Similar views were reflected by members of Buffalo’s Chinese community. Founder and President Yan Liu of Bridges from Borders, a non-profit focused on bridging gaps between different cultures, noted increased xenophobia towards the Chinese community in the region relating to COVID-19 and noted that nobody did much to re-

port such incidents. “Chinese don’t really put a spotlight on racial things because we have disciplined ourselves to follow white so-called culture,” said Liu. “We shrink ourselves and make ourselves as small as possible but even with this, we realize we cannot survive... We have learned that we should promote, together, that we are human beings. We should align on that common thread alone and we have started moving in that direction with coalitions.”

Many note that concerted efforts have already proved impactful. Rene Petties-Jones, president of the National Federation for Just Communities (NFJC), noted that the NFJC helped the Jewish Federation argue on behalf of the movement of the first day of school to a date that would not create a religious conflict for Jewish students observing Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish new year. In working together with other communities, Petties-Jones noted that “[i]t just makes you feel good that you’ve got allies and that someone’s got your back. When you’ve got an issue, you know who you can go to to talk and say hey, what do you think of this and if there is something you don’t quite understand or need to learn more of, you’ve got people willing to step up.”

Community and Anti-Hate Organizations ‘Doing This

The Organizations

Seeing as Buffalo-Niagara is one of the most segregated metros in the United States, it takes a great deal of effort to connect with others. As previously mentioned, many organizations in Buffalo-Niagara seek to uplift their own communities while learning to understand and work with other communities. There are also several organizations in Buffalo-Niagara that are committed to addressing hate and educating against prejudices and biases.

Community leaders who engage in these activities have noted that while there is a great number of organizations that work in community development and addressing hate, most community members outside organizations are not always aware of the work being done. Moreover, community leaders observe that because many individuals do not engage with community development or anti-hate work, they do not see the work that their

communities do together with others. Community leaders worry that because of this unawareness, people may be more likely to maintain prejudices and remain susceptible to hating others. Reverend Denise Walden of VOICE Buffalo shares that “[m]ost hate comes from a place of ignorance and not understanding other folks and where they are coming from.” To shatter community prejudices, community leaders believe that they need to make their inter-community relationships more visible and work more consistently with their community partners. For them, this will ensure that community members understand the scope of their communities’ relationships with others and how valuable they are to achieving social justice and a better shared society for all. “The more that they see the partnership, the more

that it will become part of the norm, so it is not so unusual,” says Rene Petties-Jones, President of the National Federation for Just Communities. “We do not have to work in silos, we can work together.”

For the purposes of this report, there are over 60 community organizations focused on promoting community through bridge building. These organizations have been included in this report because they expressed in their mission statements and/or values one or multiple of the following keywords: “Community”; “Promote Understanding”; “Services”; “Assist Families”; “Cultural”; “Serve Our Community”; “Cultural Diversity”; “Facilitate Understanding”; “Legacy”; “Civil Society”; and “Just Society.”

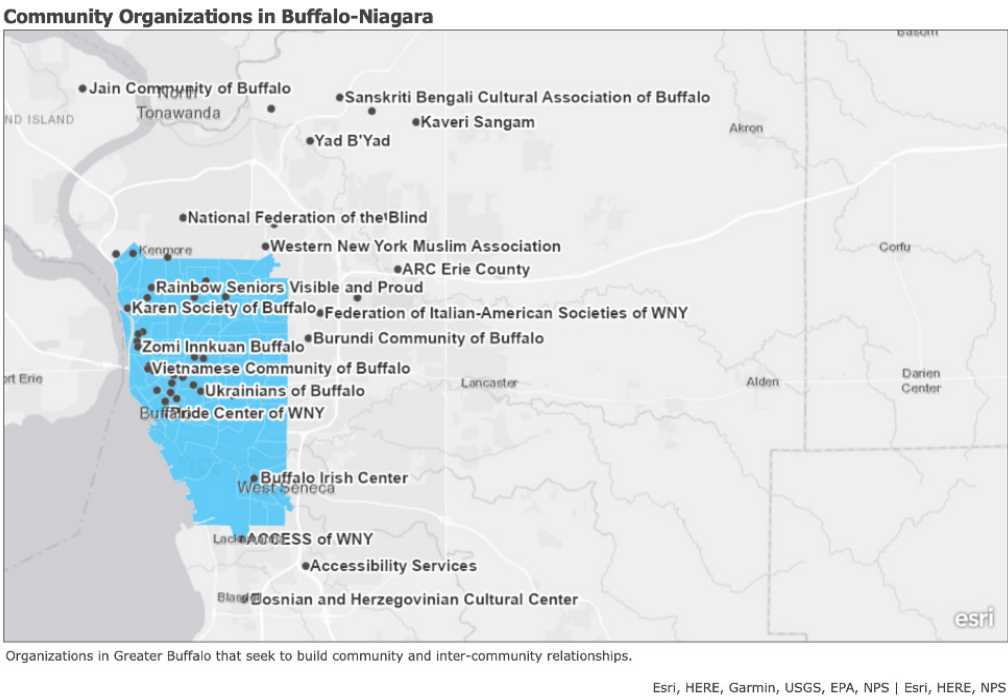


Figure 1. Community Organizations in Buffalo-Niagara. This map pinpoints over 60 community organizations working towards serving their own communities and building relationships with other communities in Buffalo. This figure was created by inputting independent research into ArcGIS Mapping Software.

The full list of community organizations is as follows:

Table 16. List of Community-Oriented Organizations in Buffalo-Niagara

ACCESS of WNY	Accessibility Services
African American Cultural Center	African Heritage Food Co-op
ARC Erie County	Asian Indian Community Foundation of WNY
Aspire of WNY	Autism Services, Inc.
Bhutanese-Nepali Hindu Community of Buffalo	Bosnian and Herzegovinian Cultural Center
Buffalo Belles	Buffalo Gurdwara Sahib
Buffalo Hearing and Speech Center	Buffalo Irish Center
Buffalo Jewish Federation	Buffalo Zen Dharma Community
Burmese Community Services, Inc.	Burundi Community of Buffalo

Centro Culturale Italiano di Buffalo	Chin Community of Buffalo
Chinese Club of WNY	Community Services for Every1
Congolese Community of Buffalo	Deaf Access Services
Embrace of Western New York	Eritrean Community of St. George
Ethiopian Community Association of Buffalo, Inc.	Federation of Italian-American Societies of WNY
Gay and Lesbian Youth Services	Global Bridge Impact, Inc.
Hindu Cultural Society of WNY	Hispanic Heritage Council of WNY
India Association of Buffalo	Iraqi American Society, Inc.
Islamic Society of Niagara Frontier	Jain Community of Buffalo
Jewish Community Center	Jewish Family Service of Buffalo and Erie County
Karen Society of Buffalo	Karenni Community of Buffalo
Kaveri Sangam	Kongo Dia Ntotila Solution
Lt. Col Matt Urban Human Services Center	MOCHA Buffalo
National Federation of the Blind	Native American Community Services
PFlag	Pride Ability of WNY
Pride Center of WNY	RAHAMA
Rainbow Seniors Visible and Proud	Sanskriti Bengali Cultural Association of Buffalo
Service Bridges	Sierra Leone Cultural Alliance of WNY, Inc.
Somali Bantu Community Organization of Buffalo	Spectrum Transgender Group of WNY
Sudanese American Community of Buffalo	Ukrainians of Buffalo
Vietnamese Community of Buffalo	Western New York Muslim Association
WNY Women's Foundation	Yad B'Yad
Zomi Innkuan Buffalo	Zonta Club Buffalo

Buffalo-Niagara is also home to over 30 anti-hate organizations. These organizations have been included in this report because they expressed in their mission statements and/or values multiple of the following key-

words: “Combat”; “Racism”; “Discrimination”; “Hate”; “Antisemitism”; “Foster Inclusion”; “Coalition”; “Human Rights”; “Combating Hate”; and “Combating Violence.”

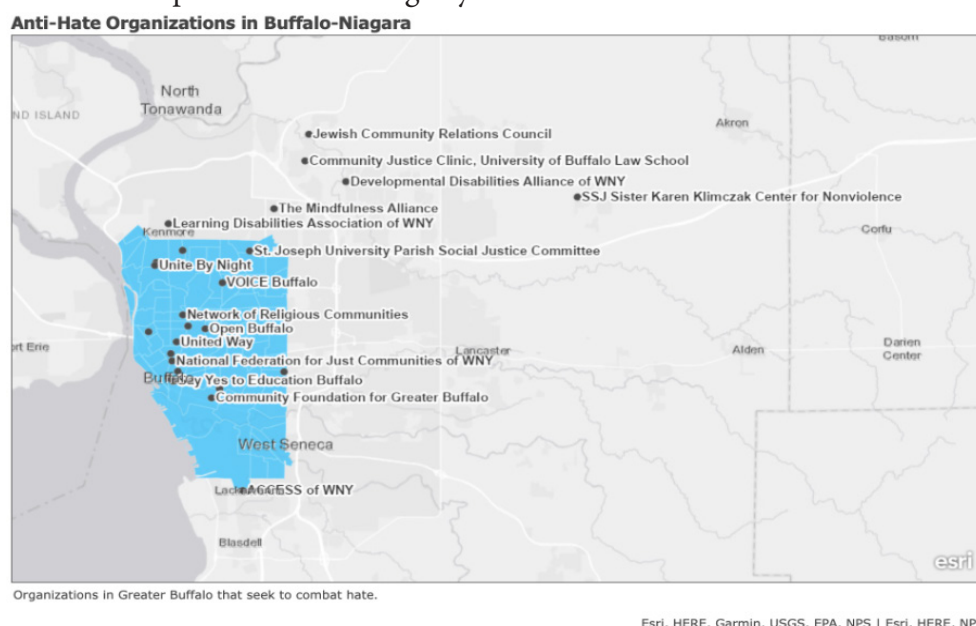


Figure 2. Anti-Hate Organizations in Buffalo-Niagara. *This map pinpoints over 30 anti-hate organizations working towards combating hate in all its forms throughout Buffalo. This figure was created by inputting independent research into ArcGIS Mapping Software.*

The full list of anti-hate organizations is as follows:

Table 16. *List of Anti-Hate Organizations in Buffalo-Niagara*

ACCESS of WNY	Anne Frank Project
Buffalo Human Rights Center	Buffalo Urban League
Center for Elder Law and Justice	Center for Self Advocacy
Citizen Action	Civil Rights and Transparency Clinic, University of Buffalo Law School
Community Action Organization	Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo
Community Justice Clinic, University of Buffalo Law School	Developmental Disabilities Alliance of WNY
Erie County Restorative Justice Coalition	Holocaust Resource Center
International Institute of Buffalo	Jewish Community Relations Council
Junior League of Buffalo	Learning Disabilities Association of WNY
NAACP Buffalo	National Federation for Just Communities of WNY
Network of Religious Communities	Open Buffalo
Peace of the City Ministries	Peaceprints of WNY
Pride Center of WNY	Say Yes to Education Buffalo
SSJ Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Nonviolence	St. Joseph University Parish Social Justice Committee
The Mindfulness Alliance	Unite By Night
United Way	VOICE Buffalo

Jewish Community Relations

Many general community leaders in interviews expressed their pride in working with the Jewish community to achieve a better shared society in Buffalo-Niagara. They have found that being present for one another has been powerful and comforting. “It makes you feel good that... someone’s got your back. When you’ve got an issue, you know who you can go to talk to and say hey, what do you think of this and if there is something you don’t quite understand... you’ve got people willing to step up,” says Rene Petties-Jones.

Beyond working alongside the Jewish community to affect change, some communities look to the Jewish community as an example. Members of the region’s Chinese community have noted that at times where the Asian community may struggle to respond to local hate, they find their strength with other minority communities, and they have found that strength with the Jewish community. “[T]he Jewish community is a model for us in terms of their organization and structure,” says Yan Liu, Founder of Bridges from Borders. Yan also said the JCRC-powered Multicultural Women’s Group is a best practice model where people from other backgrounds make friends and show respect to each other.

While the Jewish community already has some strong ties to other communities in Buffalo-Niagara, some relationships may be lacking and in need of attention. “I haven’t personally encountered negative things said about the Jewish community but there isn’t a lot of inter-connectivity there between the Latinx and Jewish communities,” says community activist Alexsandra Lopez.

Relationships need constant care and there is always room to build new ones. The Jewish community should both continue to build on existing relationships and foster new ones.

Conclusion

Hate continues to exist in Buffalo-Niagara, and in response to it, there is work to be done. Community members in the region agree that they need to build on the strong foundation of networking, allyship, and shared programming to build a tolerant shared society in the region.

Most Buffalonians do not engage with social justice issues and/or other communities than their own.

[justice.gov/hatecrimes/learn-about-hate-crimes](https://www.justice.gov/hatecrimes/learn-about-hate-crimes)

Legislation. NY State Senate. Retrieved July 1, 2021, from www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/PEN/485.05

New York Division of Criminal Justice Services. (2021) *Hate Crimes by County and Bias Type: Beginning 2010: State of New York, Hate Crimes by County and Bias Type: Beginning 2010 | State of New York*. Retrieved July 17th, 2021, from data.ny.gov/Public-Safety/Hate-Crimes-by-County-and-Bias-Type-Beginning-2010/6xda-q7ev

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Perry, Barbara. (2001) *In the Name of Hate: Understanding Hate Crimes*. Psychology Press. Retrieved July 2, 2021, from books.google.com/books/about/In_the_Name_of_Hate.html?id=doDHZXvq19YC

Segregation Results from 2010. (2012) Census Scope. Retrieved July 1, 2021, from <http://censusscope.org/dev/content/segregation-results-2010>

Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program. (2018) FBI. Retrieved June 28, 2021, from www.fbi.gov/services/cjis/ucr

Supplementary Materials

GLOSSARY

1. **Bias or Hate Incident (Federal):** Acts of prejudice that are not crimes and do not involve violence, threats, or property damage.¹
2. **Bias or Hate Incident (New York State):** New York State does not define incident.
3. **Buffalo-Niagara Falls Metropolitan Statistical Area (“Buffalo-Niagara”):** A statistical area used by the Federal Census Bureau for census-tracking purposes that covers Erie and Niagara Counties.²
4. **Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program³**
 - a. The Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program generates reliable statistics for use in law enforcement. It also provides information for students of criminal justice, researchers, the media, and the public. The program has been providing crime statistics since 1930.
 - b. The UCR Program includes data from more than 18,000 city, university and college, county, state, tribal, and federal law enforcement agencies. Agencies participate voluntarily and submit their crime data either through a state UCR program or directly to the FBI’s UCR Program.
5. **First Degree Harassment (New York State):** A person is guilty of harassment in the first degree when he or she intentionally and repeatedly harasses another person by following such person in or about a public place or places or by engaging in a course of conduct or by repeatedly committing acts which places such person in reasonable fear of physical injury. This section shall not apply to activities regulated by the national labor relations act, as amended, the railway labor act, as amended, or the federal employment labor management act, as amended.⁴
6. **Hate Crime (Federal):** At the federal level, a crime motivated by bias against race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or disability.⁵
7. **Hate Crime (New York State)⁶**
 - a. A person commits a hate crime when he or she commits a specified offense and either:
 - i. Intentionally selects the person against whom the offense is committed or intended to be committed in whole or in substantial part because of a belief or perception regarding the race, color, national origin, ancestry, gender, gender identity or expression, religion, religious practice, age, disability or sexual orientation of a person, regardless of whether the belief or perception is correct, or
 - ii. Intentionally commits the act or acts constituting the offense in whole or in substantial part because of a belief or perception regarding the race, color, national origin, ancestry, gender, gender identity or expression, religion, religious practice, age, disability or sexual orientation of a person, regardless of whether the belief or perception is correct.
8. **New York City:** The largest American metropolis and largest city in New York State encompassing Bronx, Kings, New York, Queens, and Richmond Counties.⁷
9. **New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS)**
 - a. The New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services is a multi-function criminal justice

¹ “Learn about Hate Crimes.” *The United States Department of Justice*, 3 May 2021, www.justice.gov/hatecrimes/learn-about-hate-crimes.

² Bureau, US Census. “2010 Census Coverage Measurement Results for New York.” *The United States Census Bureau*, 25 Mar. 2021, www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/about/coverage-measurement/pes/2010/ccm-results-new-york.html.

⁴ “Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program.” *FBI*, FBI, 10 Sept. 2018, www.fbi.gov/services/cjis/ucr.

⁵ “Harassment Legislation.” *NY State Senate*, www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/PEN/240.25.
<https://www.justice.gov/hatecrimes/learn-about-hate-crimes>

⁶ “Legislation.” *NY State Senate*, www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/PEN/485.05.

⁷ “New York City.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., www.britannica.com/place/New-York-City.

support agency. One of their core functions is to collect and analyze statewide crime data.⁸

- b. DCJS is authorized by statute to serve as the central repository of crime and arrest information for New York State. DCJS oversees the UCR Program for the State and reports crime and arrest data to the FBI. New York State law enforcement agencies submit monthly crime reports to DCJS which are reviewed by DCJS personnel for completeness and accuracy before being added to the statewide database and submitted to the FBI.⁹

10. Second Degree Criminal Mischief (Vandalism; New York State): A person is guilty of criminal mischief in the second degree when with intent to damage property of another person, and having no right to do so nor any reasonable ground to believe that he has such right, he damages property of another person in an amount exceeding one thousand five hundred dollars.¹⁰

11. The symbol “~” denotes a statistical approximation.

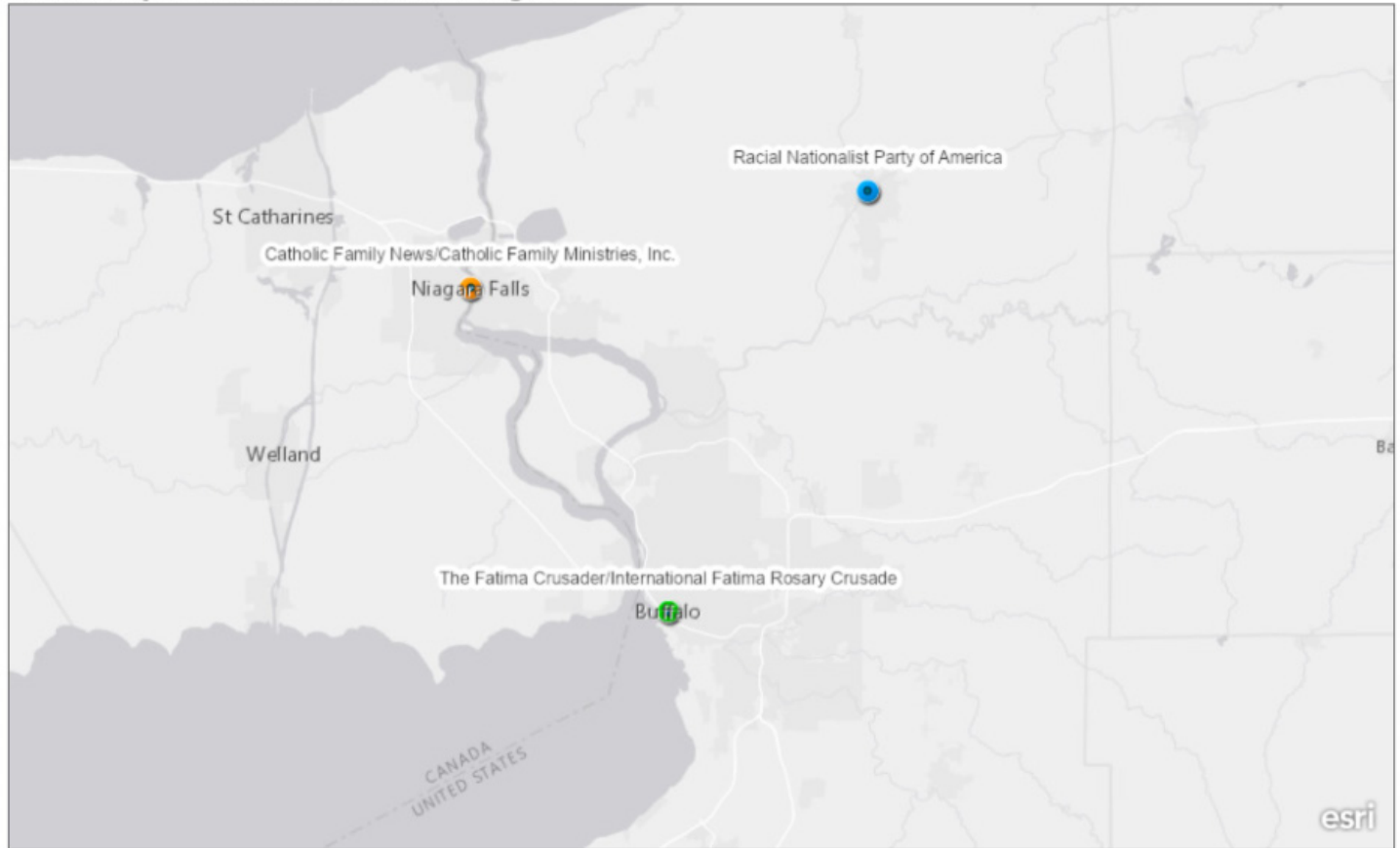
⁸ <https://www.ny.gov/agencies/division-criminal-justice-services>

⁹ “Division of Criminal Justice Services.” NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services, www.criminaljustice.ny.gov/crimnet/ojsa/crimereporting/ucr.htm.

¹⁰ “Legislation.” NY State Senate, www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/PEN/145.10.

ACTIVE HATE GROUPS IN BUFFALO-NIAGARA

Hate Groups in the Greater Buffalo Region



Three formally recognized Hate Groups operate in the Greater Buffalo region: the Fatima Crusader/International Fatima Rosary Crusade in Buffalo, Catholic Family News/Catholic Family Ministries, Inc. in Niagara Falls, and the Racial Nationalist Party of America in Lockport.

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Figure 1. Hate Groups in the Greater Buffalo Region. This map pinpoints the three active hate groups in Greater Buffalo, including the Fatima Crusader, Catholic Family News, and the Racial Nationalist Party.

Pinpointed on this map are The Fatima Crusader of the International Fatima Rosary Crusade in Buffalo, Catholic Family News of Catholic Family Ministries, Inc. in Niagara Falls, and the Racial Nationalist Party of America in Lockport. The first two groups are radical traditional catholic and the latter is a white nationalist/supremacist group. There was arguably a fourth hate group in the region, Nation of Islam, that has quieted in the last five years. There is some contention on whether this group qualifies as a hate group but in accordance with the SPLC, its deeply racist, antisemitic, homophobic, and transphobic contributions to society has earned it the hate group classification (and it surely doesn't hurt that the organization's top minister for decades was Louis Farrakhan). NOI did not make it on this map because it is unclear as to whether or not they are still active in Buffalo (they frankly seem to have fallen off the face of the planet) or if the Buffalo branch reoriented themselves under a new name and mission.

COMPARISON BETWEEN BUFFALO AND ROCHESTER

The report contextualizes Buffalo's hate crime frequency with NYS's hate crime frequency and that of New York City to reflect the notion that Buffalo is relatively safe. There's a lot to be discussed in the realm of relative population densities, but seeing as New York City is the one city bigger than Buffalo in NYS I thought it would be an interesting comparison and really drive the aforementioned point home.

That being said, comparing Buffalo to Rochester was deemed a more appropriate comparison by some Buffalonians. This is what hate crime frequency looked like for Rochester between 2016 and 2019 (including Brighton, Gates, Greece, Rochester from FBI UCR data to create a picture of Greater Rochester):

Table 1. Rochester Hate Crimes

Rochester Hate Crimes, 2016-2019							
Year	Race/Ethnicity/ Ancestry	Religion	Sexual Orientation	Disability	Gender	Gender Identity	Total
2016	2	0	1	0	0	0	3
2017	2	1	2	0	0	0	5
2018	4	0	1	0	0	0	5
2019	5	3	1	0	0	0	9

The numbers are lower for Rochester than they are for Buffalo. This may have a great deal to do with population densities.

QUESTIONS ASKED IN INTERVIEWS

Questions for Jewish Community Members

1. How long have you lived in Buffalo?
 - a. Which neighborhood do you live in? Have you always lived there? Why or why not?
2. Tell me about your family and their relationship to Buffalo.
 - a. How long has your family lived in Buffalo? Which neighborhood do they live in? Have they always lived there? Why or why not?
 - b. Do you see your family sticking around here?
3. Do you think the Jewish Community in Buffalo has changed in the past five years?
 - a. Has it shrunk? Has it grown? Has the average age of community members changed?
4. How would you characterize antisemitism in Greater Buffalo?
 - a. What does the term antisemitism mean to you? Do you see antisemitism in Buffalo?
 - b. Has anyone in your community ever experienced antisemitism?
 - c. Would you say that local law enforcement's response to antisemitism is proportional and appropriate?
 - d. Is there anything else you want to tell me (regarding antisemitism and/or antisemitic hate crimes in Greater Buffalo)?
5. How would you characterize the role of the Jewish community in addressing antisemitism and hate?
 - a. Have you participated in any of that work yourself?
 - i. If so, why?
 - ii. If not, why?
6. How would you describe the Jewish community's relationship with other faith, racial, ethnic, and cultural groups in Buffalo?
 - a. What is your experience with this? What is your opinion on the effectiveness of these relationships?
 - i. Are there any initiatives or campaigns that stood out to you as the most effective in building unity?
 - b. Is there anything else you want to tell me (on hate in Greater Buffalo)?
7. If you were given \$1 Million, what would you do to fight antisemitism in the Buffalo area?
8. What other organizations in the Buffalo-Niagara region work towards this goal of fighting antisemitism?
 - a. Who else is doing this work? What other organizations are doing this work?
9. Is there anything I didn't ask about that is important for you to tell me?

Questions for Other Faith, Racial, Ethnic, and Cultural Groups Community Members

1. How long have you lived in Buffalo? How long have you worked with your organization?
2. What can you tell me about hate crimes against your community in the area? Are there any specific instances of hate you may share with me?
 - a. Would you say that local law enforcement's response to these hate crimes is proportional and appropriate?
 - i. Do the numbers of hate crimes that are reported related to your community reflect inaccuracies?
 - b. Is there anything else you want to tell me (regarding hate and/or hate crimes in Greater Buffalo)?
3. How would you characterize the role of your community in addressing hate?
 - a. What are some initiatives that you have found the most effective and/or successful in combating hate in Greater Buffalo?
4. Can you evaluate the relationship you have with the Jewish community?
 - a. Were there any initiatives or campaigns that you worked together on that stood out to you as the most effective in building unity?
 - i. If not, why?
 1. What can they do better to build a relationship with your community to more effectively combat hate?
 2. Do you think an anti-hate coalition would be beneficial in addressing hate? Are there barriers to working together? How may we rectify this disconnect tangibly?
 - b. Is there anything else you would like to tell me (on working together/cross-community collaboration/joint efforts with the Buffalo Jewish Community)?
5. If you were given \$1 Million, what would you do to fight hate in the Buffalo area?
6. What other organizations in the Buffalo-Niagara region work towards this goal of fighting hate?
 - a. Who else is doing this work? What other organizations are doing this work?
7. Is there anything I didn't ask about that is important for you to tell me?

SUMMARY OF TAKEAWAYS GRAPHIC

