



The Louis D. Brandeis Center, Inc. (LDB) is an independent, non-partisan institution for public interest advocacy, research and education. The Center's mission is to advance the civil and human rights of the Jewish people and to promote justice for all.

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## **Brandeis Center Pioneers Revolutionary Approach to Combat Rising Anti-Semitic Threat** *First-ever program to equip a fleet of law students with the legal tools to fight frightening resurgence*

**Washington, D.C., Nov. 2:** The Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law, in conjunction with [Hasbara Fellowships](#), today launched the innovative [JIGSAW Initiative](#), an unprecedented pilot program to train law students to combat and prevent resurgent anti-Semitism.

“As the tragic and horrific events in Pittsburgh made abundantly clear, anti-Semitism is escalating at a frightening rate in the U.S.,” stated Alyza D. Lewin, Brandeis Center President and General Counsel. “We must reverse this rising tide of anti-Semitism and ethnic racism, and there is no substitute for legal action. By properly training a select team of law students to work with undergraduates and utilize specific legal tools and strategy, we can begin to take the offensive in this battle.”

According to the FBI’s latest [reporting](#), in the United States there were more incidents of anti-Semitism than all other religious hate crimes combined. The [ADL reports](#) anti-Semitic incidents rose 57% across the nation last year, and 89% on college campuses alone. Fifty-four percent of Jewish college students experienced anti-Semitism in 2014, according to a [Trinity College-Brandeis Center nationwide survey](#), and only a year later, a [Brandeis University study](#) found that figure had spiked to nearly 75%.

Studies demonstrate the threat is increasing. Hate and extremist groups are on the rise nationally, according to the [Southern Poverty Law Center](#). White supremacists are targeting college campuses like never before, [reported the ADL. AMCHA Initiative found](#) that incidents driven by Israel-related anti-Semitism were significantly more likely to contribute to a hostile campus for Jewish students than the classic/white supremacist form. And this past week, a gunman murdered 11 individuals attending Shabbat services at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, PA.

JIGSAW stands for **J**ustice **I**nitiative **G**uiding **S**tudent **A**ctivists **W**orldwide and its motto is “*Achieving Justice Piece by Piece.*” Under JIGSAW, Brandeis Center lawyers will train a specialized corps of law students to utilize legal tools and expertise to combat both classic/white supremacist and anti-Israel anti-Semitism. The law students will focus on combatting anti-Semitic incidents on campus by using university policies, and state and federal law. After they graduate, former JIGSAW Fellows will have the knowledge and personal expertise to address incidents nationwide.

JIGSAW Fellows will engage in both joint training with the Hasbara Fellows as well as a separate legal-based curriculum specifically developed by Brandeis Center attorneys. Topics to be covered include how to recognize both classic and anti-Israel anti-Semitism; utilize internal student government policies to combat anti-Semitism; understand university bias and discrimination complaint procedures; understand Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and how to file complaints for violations of Title VI with the Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights; understand and utilize protections provided by the First Amendment; be conversant in the state penal codes that apply to event disruptions and other criminal activity including assault and vandalism; and understand international law principles as they relate to Israel and BDS.

As part of the program, JIGSAW Fellows will participate in a trip to Israel, along with Hasbara Fellowships, where they will visit significant sites and meet Israeli government officials, Palestinian representatives, academics, journalists, and

representatives from humanitarian organizations.

The Brandeis Center has been working with legal experts to develop the JIGSAW Initiative curriculum for months and will begin accepting applications today. More [details](#) about the program, including opportunities for [pro bono credit](#), and a link to the [application](#) can be found [here](#).

“In the pilot year, we plan to train 12 law students, and then to grow the program substantially each year, increasing to up to 50 the second year and 100 students after that,” stated Lewin. “Our goal is to select students who are dispersed geographically across the country, so that each law student can cover a geographic region, and to eventually expand the program to other countries, such as Canada and the U.K. We hope to arm a new generation of individuals with firsthand experience and an understanding of the federal, state and international law necessary to combat anti-Semitism so that they may assist college students now and remain engaged, effective advocates long after they graduate.”

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**About The Louis D. Brandeis Center:** The Louis D. Brandeis Center, Inc., or LDB, is an independent, nonprofit organization established to advance the civil and human rights of the Jewish people and promote justice for all. The Brandeis Center conducts research, education, and advocacy to combat the resurgence of anti-Semitism on college and university campuses. It is not affiliated with the Massachusetts university, the Kentucky law school, or any of the other institutions that share the name and honor the memory of the late U.S. Supreme Court justice.