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JHSSC Announces Winnners of First Essay/Media Contest for Youth

*"My South Carolina Jewish History" resonated with creative SC teens
searching for a meaningful activity while sheltering at home"*

(Charleston, SC, May 29, 2020) – The Jewish Historical Society of South Carolina (JHSSC), a nonprofit organization dedicated to studying, preserving, and promoting awareness of Jewish history and culture in South Carolina, today announced the winners of its first-ever contest for youth. Three students from across the state won cash prizes for their written, visual, and video representations of "My South Carolina Jewish History." Finalists and Honorable Mention submissions can be viewed at jhssc.org/contest.

The contest finalists and two honorable mention notables are:

1st Place: Sophie Kamen Dewhirst, John's Island, SC – "Joy's Journey" (graphic novel)

2nd Place: CJ Kincaid Doss, Williamston, SC – "The Sabbath Brings the Sun"

3rd Place: Sydney Lee, Mt. Pleasant, SC – "My Family Legacy" (written essay)

Honorable Mentions: Shashana Rosenbaum, Charleston, SC

Olivia Kamen Dewhirst, Johns Island, SC

The contest was designed to engage South Carolina youth ages 12-16 and get them and their parents thinking about how they are connected to place, religion, and family – core components of the JHSSC's mission to tell stories and preserve memories. It launched in January with outreach to Jewish education organizations across the state. Little did anyone know at the time that classrooms including religious schools would soon be shut down, along with the materials (and school advocates) promoting the contest. As quarantine stretched out, though, some families looking for meaningful activites turned to JHSSC; four out of the five notable entries were submitted in April.

"We're delighted with the really wonderful submissions we received and blown away by the thoughtfulness and creativity that went into them," said Mark Swick, JHSSC's Executive Director. "I hope exposure to this contest makes more people aware of South Carolina Jewish heritage and encourages them to become involved with our organization."

A total of \$1,000 in prize money was provided by a grant from the **Stanley B. Farbstein Endowment** at the Coastal Community Foundation. JHSSC hopes to hold the "My South Carolina Jewish History" youth contest again in 2021; to learn more about this year's contest and submission criteria, and to watch for future announcements, visit jhssc.org/contest.

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For more information or to interview contest winners, please contact Mark Swick at swickmn@cofc.edu



About JHSSC

The [Jewish Historical Society of South Carolina](http://jhssc.org/) was founded in 1994 to study, preserve, and promote awareness of the history and culture of the Jews of South Carolina. Originally begun to preserve memories about small town Jewish life in South Carolina, the Society has expanded over its 26-year history to provide conferences, a biannual magazine, and documentation of Jewish burial grounds and Jewish merchants across South Carolina. The JHSSC's mission is further supported under the auspices of the Jewish Heritage Collection at the College of Charleston, where more than 500 oral histories have been gathered alongside manuscripts and family and business archives. <http://jhssc.org/>