

Holocaust Remembrance Speaker Keeps Story of Selfless Acts Alive

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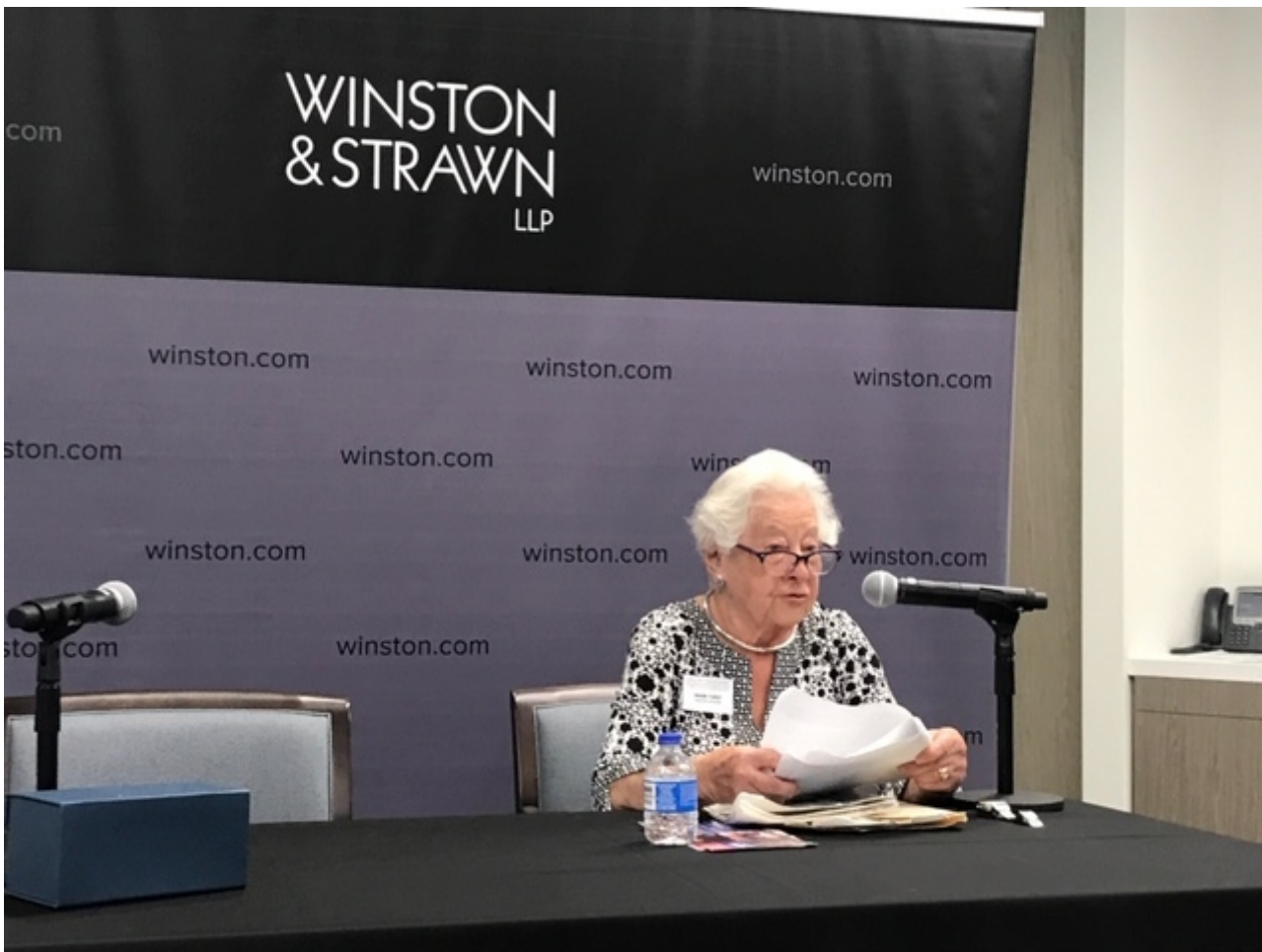
Winston's Diversity & Inclusion Committee was pleased to present a Holocaust Remembrance Day Program on May 2 featuring Magie Furst, a 90-year-old national treasure whose sense of humor is one of many testaments to the resilience of survivors. Director of Diversity & Inclusion [Sylvia James](#) welcomed the 500+ firm members, clients, and alumni who attended this enlightening program, which was presented live in Dallas and broadcast to all U.S. offices.

Magie Furst was among the 9,354 Jewish children transported from Germany, Austria, and Czechoslovakia to the United Kingdom via Kindertransport, a little-known but important operation that took place in 1938-39. A regular speaker at the Dallas Holocaust Museum Center for Education and Tolerance, she began the program with a brief history of the Jewish people as they migrated from the Middle East and Asia and, over hundreds of years and many tribulations, became well-integrated into Eastern European communities by the end of the 19th Century.



Magie was born in Germany in 1929, a few years before Hitler came to power. When she was just four years old, her father died of a heart attack brought on by the distress of the SS Stormtroopers marching, shouting, and throwing rocks at her family's home and general store day and night. "My father thought he would be safe because he had the iron cross [from his German military service in WWI], but he was the first one they came for," she said.

After her father's death her mother persevered in the face of growing persecution by the Nazis, who ordered Jewish people to turn over all of their valuables and bank accounts, limited where they could live and go to school, and even tried to take away their individuality by giving all females the name Sarah and all males the name Israel. "Things went from bad to grave" after Kristallnacht in November 1938, Magie explained, as Jewish business seizures accelerated and men were dragged off to concentration camps. "My mother could no longer risk her children's lives" and began looking for a way to get me and my brother out of Nazi Germany.



Kindertransport was born out of an emergency measure passed by British parliament, and the first group of children left Germany for the UK in December 1938. “Fair play comes to mind when I think of the selflessness of ordinary British people who volunteered to ‘make room in their hearts and homes’ for needy children,” Magie said. Family in the UK were instrumental in getting visas for her and her brother and work for her mother as a caretaker for traveling children, and the three of them arrived in the UK via Kindertransport on May 23, 1939.

“We were overjoyed that we could all go together” and it “was all a big adventure for the kids” Magie said, but went on to recount the years of separation, German air raids, uncertain living conditions, and occasional exploitation they had to endure before ultimately reuniting and immigrating to the United States at the end of WWII. “We were spared the horror of the death camps but something did happen—we were uprooted and had to adapt to a different culture.”

Margaret Thatcher and other dignitaries addressed the Kindertransport children, four of whom went on to become Nobel laureates, at their 50-year reunion in 1989. “We shall always be indebted to the British people for their indomitable spirit, kindness, and compassion,” Magie said in closing. “They saved our lives and those of many others.”

This Heritage Month program was part of Winston’s annual series that celebrates the diversity that exists at the firm and helps foster an inclusive work environment. Visit our [Diversity & Inclusion](#) page for more information.

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