

Press Release

Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect
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**ANNE FRANK CENTER AND EMBRACING OUR DIFFERENCES CONFRONT HATE
THROUGH PERFORMANCE EDUCATION**

In partnership with Embracing Our Differences, the Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect (AFC) brings its performance *'Letters from Anne and Martin'* to Temple Beth Sholom, Sarasota, FL on the 5th of February at 7pm.

The performance is one of five the AFC will perform across Sarasota, Venice and North Port over two days, bringing the dual messages of hope and empathy to school students, teachers and communities.

The production "Letters from Anne and Martin," developed from excerpts from *The Diary of A Young Girl* and Martin Luther King's *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*, evokes the important messages of tolerance and respect, as two historical figures — born a world apart in the very same year — write of their hopes and vision for a peaceful and unified world.

In light of hate crimes spiking 17 per cent in the last year, including a significant rise of anti-Semitic attacks, the message of this production is more important than ever, showcasing the best of humanity and uniting audiences in mutual respect and understanding.

"Dr. Martin Luther King and Anne Frank still speak to us today," says Sarah Wertheimer, executive director of Embracing Our Differences. "Sadly, the hatred they both fought isn't a thing of the past. The struggle for human decency goes on—and their words still resonate. We're thrilled and honored to share them across our community."

This series of special performances would not be happening without the support and efforts of AFC board member and Holocaust Survivor, Pieter Kohnstam. Pieter knew Anne Frank personally as a child, when his family lived in the ground-floor apartment below the Frank family in Amsterdam. Together with his wife, Susan, Pieter has canvassed Florida for over six years, educating students and communities on Anne Frank, the Holocaust and the spirit of unity among international partners. This June Pieter and Susan Kohnstam will be among the humanitarian award recipients at the annual Spirit of Anne Frank Awards, commemorating what would have been Anne Frank's 90th birthday.

Through the production of "Letters from Anne and Martin," the AFC counters hate with education, words that inspire and connections between seemingly different cultures. As Anne Frank observed, "We're all searching for happiness; we're all leading lives that are different and yet the same."

Proudly sponsored by The Sarasota Bar Association and Embracing Our Differences.

For further details please email education@annefrank.com

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