State of Hate in Greater Buffalo: A Community Perspective
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I.   Executive Summary

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) is used to determine that Buffalo-Niagara has a relatively low hate crime frequency, especially when compared with New York City in the context of New York State. All data sets referenced in this report indicated Buffalo-Niagara's low hate crime frequency. However, there were discrepancies in the numbers of hate crimes reported by different agencies. Interviews with 15 community members and leaders were conducted to gather community insight into thoughts on these data discrepancies, views on inter-community relations, and the reality of living in Buffalo-Niagara. This report also 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. Lists and maps of these organizations are included below. The report closes with final takeaways to keep in mind moving forward.

II.   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 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 encompassing both Erie and Niagara Counties. For the purposes of this report, Erie and Niagara Counties will be referred to as Buffalo-Niagara.

According to Partnership for the Public Good (PPG), Buffalo-Niagara is one of the most racially and economically segregated metros in the nation.[1] Decades of federal, state, and local policies that were either plainly racist or more subtly undercut equity[2] have made Buffalo the city it is today, the sixth most segregated metro in the nation on the white-Black index.[3] Thirteen percent of Erie County's population is Black while Black people make up 37% of the City of Buffalo's population. Within Buffalo, 85% of residents who identify as Black live on Buffalo's

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[1] Blatto, Anna. "A City Divided: A Brief History of Segregation in Buffalo." *Buffalo Commons*, Partnership for the Public Good, 17 May 2018, ppgbuffalo.org/files/documents/data-demographics-history/a_city_divided__a_brief_history_of_segregation_in_the_city_of_buffalo.pdf.

[2] Ibid.

[3] "Segregation Results from 2010," Census Scope, March 18, 2012, http://censusscope.org/dev/content/segregation-results- 2010.

East Side.[4] These statistics indicate that Buffalo-Niagara's Black population is concentrated on the East Side of the City of Buffalo, and this is just one of the many realities Buffalonians face. 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.[5] 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, racial reckoning, 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.

III.   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.[6] 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.[7]*

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[4] Blatto, Anna. "A City Divided: A Brief History of Segregation in Buffalo." *Buffalo Commons*, Partnership for the Public Good, 17 May 2018, ppgbuffalo.org/files/documents/data-demographics-history/a_city_divided__a_brief_history_of_segregation_in_the_city_of_buffalo.pdf.

[5] Perry, Barbara. "In the Name of Hate: Understanding Hate Crimes." *Google Books*, Psychology Press, books.google.com/books/about/In_the_Name_of_Hate.html?id=doDHZXvq19YC.

[6] "Learn about Hate Crimes." *The United States Department of Justice*, 3 May 2021, www.justice.gov/hatecrimes/learn-about-hate-crimes.

[7] "Legislation." *NY State Senate*, www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/PEN/485.05.

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*.[8] 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 the 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 aimed to increase public outreach and ensure bias-reporting resources exist in multiple languages to make hate crime reporting accessible.[9] The New York State Senate is also working to pass Senate Bill S70A, which relates to "enacting the hate crimes analysis and review act."[10] 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.[11] 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.[12] 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.[13]

DCJS reports for Erie and Niagara Counties respectively specified the type of bias involved in reported hate crimes. Hate crimes are broken down into two categories: crimes against persons and property crimes. The data for Erie County for 2016 through 2019 are as follows:

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[8] Ibid.

[9] Hirono, Mazie K. "Text - S.937 - 117th CONGRESS (2021-2022): COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act." *Congress.gov*, 20 May 2021, www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/937/text.

[10] "NY State Senate BILL S70A." *NY State Senate*, 1 June 2021, www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2021/S70.

[11] Ibid.

[12] "Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program." *FBI*, FBI, 10 Sept. 2018, www.fbi.gov/services/cjis/ucr.

[13] "Division of Criminal Justice Services." *NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services*, www.criminaljustice.ny.gov/crimnet/ojsa/crimereporting/ucr.htm.

DCJS Data by County (Erie)

	Erie County, 2016	
	Crimes Against Persons	**Property Crimes**
	2 Anti-White 5 Anti-Black 1 Anti-Asian 1 Anti-Jewish 1 Anti-Gay Male	3 Anti-Transgender 3 Anti-Black 3 Anti-Jewish 1 Anti-Gay Male
Total Crimes	10	10
Total Victims	10	10
Total Offenders	11	10

	Erie County, 2017	
	Crimes Against Persons	**Property Crimes**
	1 Anti-White 2 Anti-Black 2 Anti-Gay Male 1 Anti-Gay Female	1 Anti-White 2 Anti-Black 1 Anti-Multi Racial Groups
Total Crimes	6	4
Total Victims	6	5
Total Offenders	10	4

	Erie County, 2018	
	Crimes Against Persons	**Property Crimes**
	1 Anti-Transgender 1 Anti-White 6 Anti-Black	4 Anti-Black
Total Crimes	8	4
Total Victims	8	4
Total Offenders	9	5

	Erie County, 2019	
	Crimes Against Persons	**Property Crimes**
	1 Anti-White 1 Anti-Jewish 1 Anti-Arab	5 Anti-Black
Total Crimes	3	5
Total Victims	3	5
Total Offenders	5	5

Data included in these figures was reported by the NYS DCJS to the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program.[14]

The data for Niagara County's DCJS reports between 2016 and 2019 are as follows:

[14] New York Division of Criminal Justice Services. "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*, 20 Jan. 2021, data.ny.gov/Public-Safety/Hate-Crimes-by-County-and-Bias-Type-Beginning-2010/6xda-q7ev.

DCJS Data by County (Niagara)

	Niagara County, 2016	
	Crimes Against Persons	**Property Crimes**
	1 Anti-Black 1 Anti-Gay Female	1 Anti-Black 1 Anti-Gay Male
Total Crimes	2	2
Total Victims	2	2
Total Offenders	2	3

	Niagara County, 2017	
	Crimes Against Persons	**Property Crimes**
	1 Anti-White	1 Anti-Black 1 Anti-Arab
Total Crimes	1	2
Total Victims	1	2
Total Offenders	1	2

	Niagara County, 2018	
	Crimes Against Persons	**Property Crimes**
	*None Reported by DCJS	1 Anti-Black
Total Crimes	-	1
Total Victims	-	1
Total Offenders	-	1

	Niagara County, 2019	
	Crimes Against Persons	**Property Crimes**
	*None Reported by DCJS	1 Anti-Asian
Total Crimes	-	1
Total Victims	-	1
Total Offenders	-	1

Data included in these figures was reported by the NYS DCJS to the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program.[15]

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.

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[15] Ibid.

FBI UCR Data by Municipality and City

2016

Location	Race/Ethnicity/ Ancestry	Religion	Sexual Orientation	Disability	Gender	Gender Identity	Total
Amherst Town	2	0	0	0	0	0	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

2017

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

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

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.[16]

This data comes to life with personal stories. One such story was an antisemitic act of harassment in the first degree.[17] During the 2020, winter holiday season, a family of Greater Buffalo's Jewish community was mailed threatening messages, letters, and propaganda to their home. The threatening messages read, "Die Jews" and "We're coming for you." They were believed to have come from the placement of a menorah in this family's home window. Another example of hate in Buffalo-Niagara was an antisemitic experience recent high school graduate Adam Beiter had in

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[16] "Hate Crimes by State (Table 13 for Each Individual Respective Year)." *FBI*, FBI, 15 July 2010, ucr.fbi.gov/hate-crime/.

[17] "Harassment Legislation." *NY State Senate*, www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/PEN/240.25.

economics class where students worked in teams on a project and one team of students named themselves the Einsatzgruppen after the Nazi death squads in the Holocaust.

Contextualizing Buffalo-Niagara's Hate Crime Frequency in New York State
In comparing Buffalo-Niagara to NYC, hate crime frequency is much higher in New York City (NYC). New York City is the only city larger than Buffalo in NYS, and is a point of comparison...
Hate crime frequency for NYS at large from 2016 to 2019 is as follows:

FBI UCR Data for NYS

NYS Hate Crimes, 2016-2019							
Year	Race/Ethnicity/ Ancestry	Religion	Sexual Orientation	Disability	Gender	Gender Identity	Total
2016	155	311	99	1	5	24	595
2017	189	284	64	1	0	14	552
2018	153	286	69	1	1	13	523
2019	164	357	73	1	0	16	611

Data included in this figure was analyzed, compiled, and recorded by the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program.[18]

Based on this data, NYS reported an average of 570 hate crimes per year and 2,281 hate crimes between 2016 and 2019. On a national scale, the United States reported 27,311 hate crimes between 2016 and 2019. NYS accounted for a dramatic ~8.5% of hate crimes recorded in this time period. Of NYS hate crimes, Buffalo-Niagara accounted for a mere ~2% of reports.

FBI UCR Data for Buffalo-Niagara

Buffalo-Niagara Hate Crimes, 2016-2019							
Year	Race/Ethnicity/ Ancestry	Religion	Sexual Orientation	Disability	Gender	Gender Identity	Total
2016	11	0	2	0	0	1	14
2017	10	0	2	0	0	1	13
2018	12	0	0	0	0	1	13
2019	6	1	0	0	0	0	7

Data included in this figure was analyzed, compiled, and recorded by the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program.[19]

Of NYS's reported 27,311 crimes, Buffalo-Niagara reported 47 crimes. While acknowledging the gravity and severe impacts of any hate crime, these numbers seem relatively low. Accounting for the ~2% of the state's reported hate crimes while being the second-largest city in the state suggests that other parts of the State are reporting more hate crimes. The state's largest city, New York City, contributes to the heavy weighting of NYC data. New York City consists of Bronx, Kings, New York, Queens, and Richmond counties.
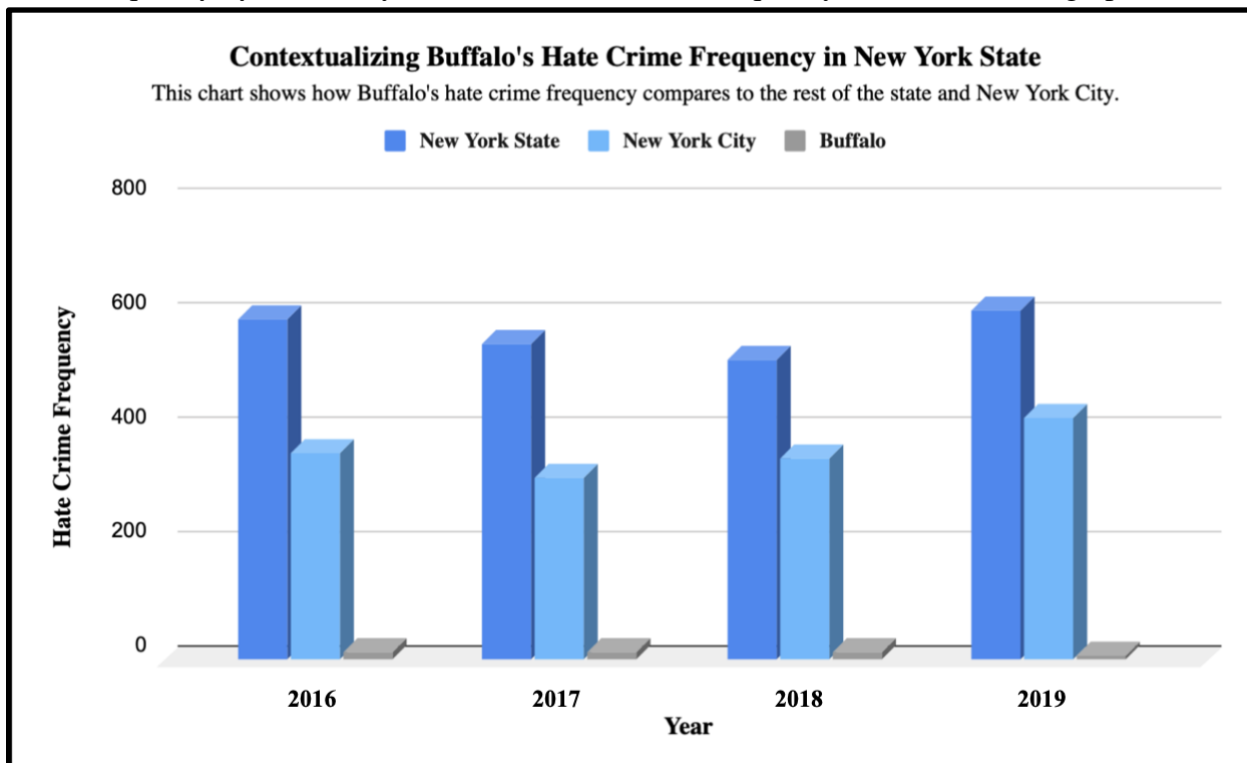
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[18] "Hate Crimes by State (Table 13 for Each Individual Respective Year)." *FBI*, FBI, 15 July 2010, ucr.fbi.gov/hate-crime/.
[19] Ibid.

New York City Hate Crimes, 2016-2019							
Year	Race/Ethnicity/ Ancestry	Religion	Sexual Orientation	Disability	Gender	Gender Identity	Total
2016	74	183	79	1	5	19	361
2017	88	173	46	0	0	11	318
2018	84	216	41	0	0	10	351
2019	90	266	53	1	0	13	423

Data included in this figure was analyzed, compiled, and recorded by the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program.[20]

It is clear from the above data that New York City accounts for ~64% of all NYS reported hate crimes. Buffalo-Niagara's hate crime frequency is vastly outweighed by New York City's hate crime frequency by over thirty-fold. This difference in frequency is notable in this graph:

Data included in this figure visually represents data compiled by the FBI UCR Program (previously discussed and cited). It shows total numbers of hate crimes reported per location per year in the 2016-2019 period.

Data Discrepancies

There are inconsistencies in the data published by New York State's DCJS and the FBI's UCR Program. Hate crime report totals are inconsistent for Erie County between the two data sets in 2016 when UCR reported 11 hate crimes whereas DCJS reported 20, in 2018 when UCR reported 11 hate crimes whereas DCJS reported 12, and in 2019 when UCR reported seven hate crimes whereas DCJS reported eight. This is also true for Niagara County. In 2016, UCR reported three

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[20] Ibid.

hate crimes; DCJS reported four. DCJS recorded one hate crime in Niagara County in 2019 and FBI UCR data records none. Additionally, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) reported in their Hate, Extremism, Antisemitism, and Terrorism dataset that there were five antisemitic incidents occurring in Buffalo-Niagara between 2016 and 2019, listed here:[21]

Type of incident	Ideology	Description
○ **Antisemitic Incident - Vandalism** 11/2019 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 at Buffalo.
○ **Antisemitic Incident - Harassment** 09/2019 Buffalo, NY		A synagogue received a handwritten anti-Semitic letter.
○ **Antisemitic Incident - Harassment** 12/2018 Buffalo, NY		Individual drove down a street shouting "The Holocaust was a hoax. The Jews are lying."
○ **Antisemitic Incident - Vandalism** 04/2016 Buffalo, NY		Swastika found spray-painted on wall.
○ **Antisemitic Incident - Vandalism** 03/2016 Buffalo, NY		Anti-Semitic graffiti reading "kill all kikes" discovered in campus bathroom.

This figure was prepared by and directly sourced from the Anti-Defamation League's website.[22]

This data aligns with the five antisemitic cases DCJS statistics report. However, FBI UCR data only reports one religion-related incident across the entire time period spanning 2016 to 2019.

Community Thoughts on Data Discrepancies

Why are there discrepancies in the data? Here are some reasons from interviews with over 18 Buffalo community leaders:

- These data sets focus on hate crimes. Not everything constitutes a crime; hateful and/or bias-motivated cases not deemed criminal, (i.e. incidents) are not reflected in the data. Some data sets may initially include incidents that, upon review, are removed from the set because they do not constitute a hate crime.

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[21] "ADL H.E.A.T. MAP." *Anti-Defamation League*, www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resource-knowledge-base/adl-heat-map?s=eyJhcmVhcyI6W3siY2l0eSI6IkJ1ZmZhbG8sIE5ZIiwidHlwZSI6ImNpdHkifSx7ImNpdHkiOiJOaWFnYXJhIEZhbGxzLCBOWSIsInR5cGUiOiJjaXR5In1dLCJpZGVvbG9naWVzIjpbXSwiaW5jaWRlbnRzIjpbIkFudGlzZW1pdGljIEluY2lkZW50Il0sInllYXIiOlsyMDE2LDIwMjFdLCJ6aXBjb2RlcyI6W119.

[22] Ibid.

- Several interviewees, based on anecdotal evidence, believe the numbers of reported hate crimes do not reflect reality. They said some victims of a hate crime might wish to refrain from reporting their experiences to law enforcement, because either it is traumatic for them to talk about their experience or they may not trust law enforcement. They also may not know where to turn to report a crime and may not know that bias-reporting systems exist at all.
- Buffalo-Niagara has many organizations dedicated to inter-community relationship building. Because there are so many organizations doing this work, more people engage in bridge-building and concerted efforts. This cross-community collaboration has contributed to the dwindling prevalence of hate in Buffalo-Niagara. Specific to the Jewish community, JCRC Chair Deborah Goldman notes, "[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."

IV.   Community and Anti-Hate Organizations 'Doing This Work'

The Organizations

Seeing, as Buffalo-Niagara is one of the most racially 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 committed to addressing hate and educating against prejudices and biases.
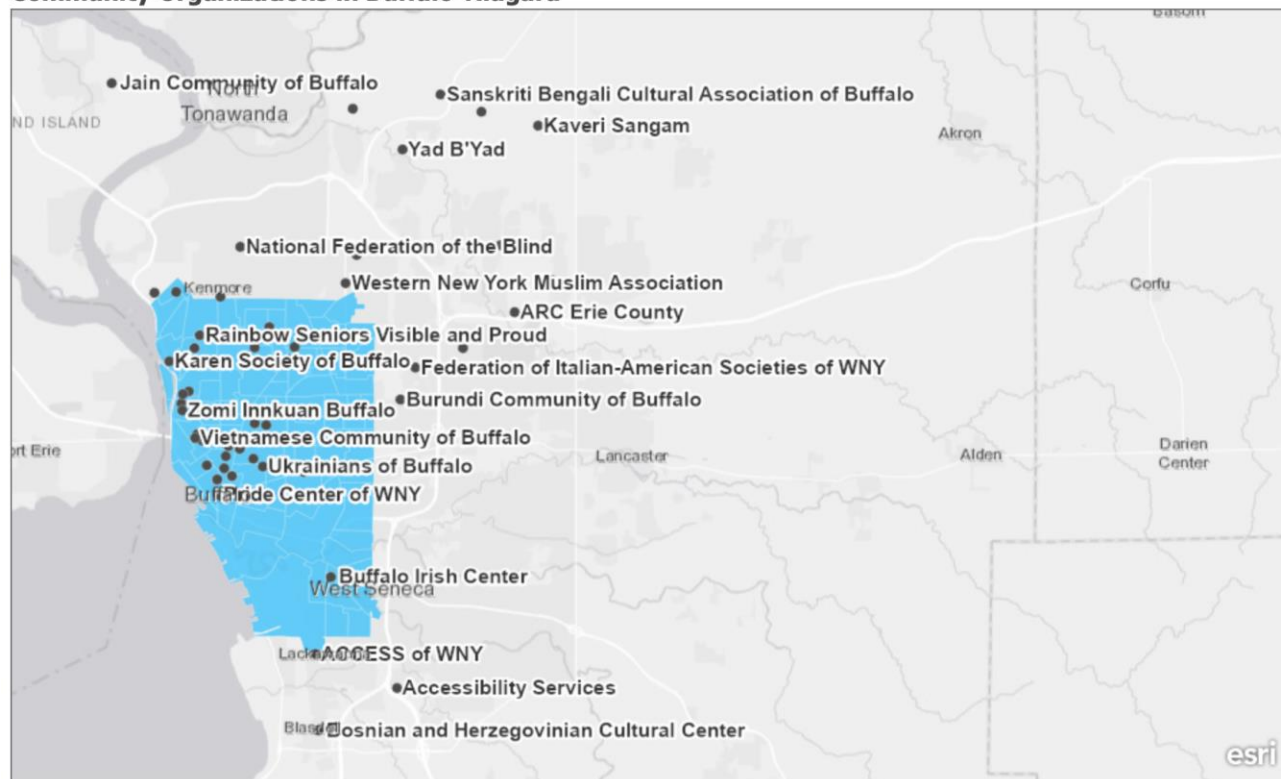
Community leaders note that while there is a great number of organizations that work in community development and addressing hate, the vast majority of community members outside organizations are not always aware of the work being done. Moreover, community leaders observe that because many individuals 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 they need to make their inter-community relationships more visible and work more consistently with their community partners. This will ensure 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."

Community Organizations in Buffalo-Niagara

Organizations in Greater Buffalo that seek to build community and inter-community relationships.

Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, EPA, NPS | Esri, HERE, NPS

This figure was created by inputting independent research into ArcGIS Mapping Software.
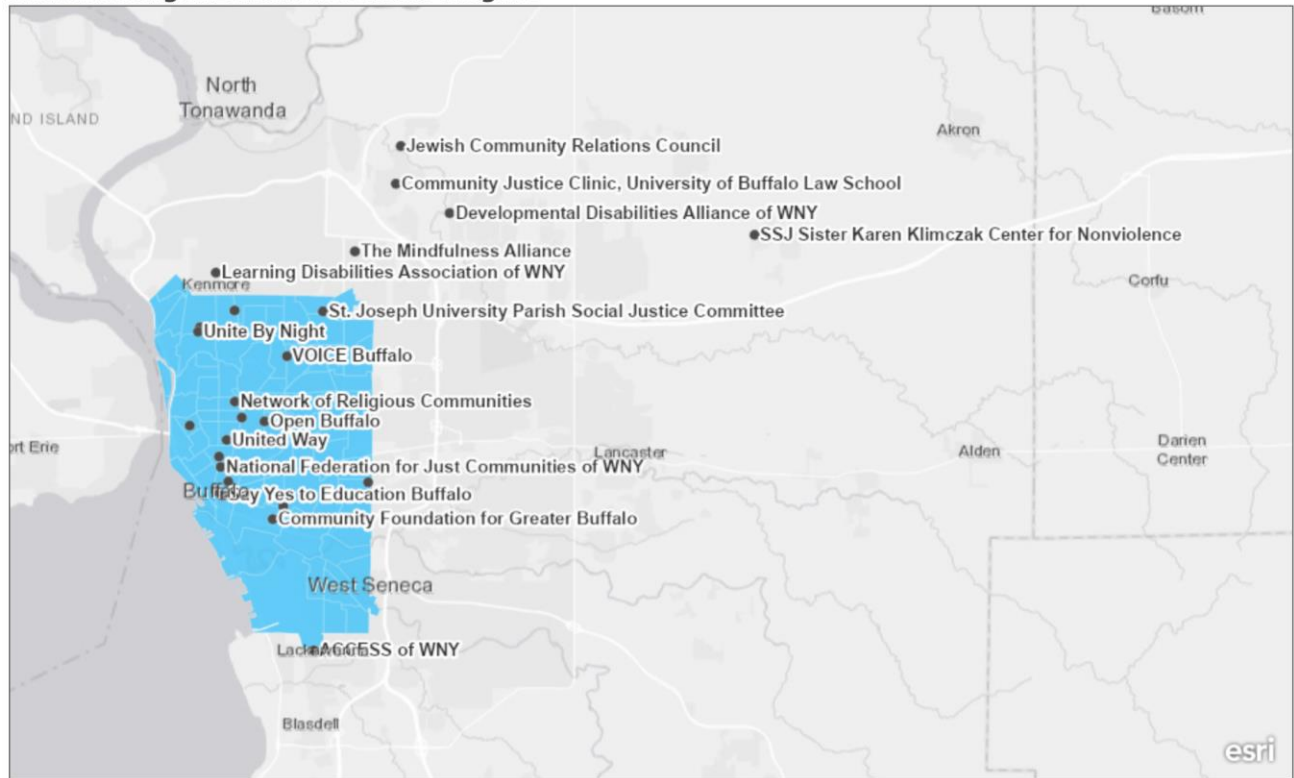
The full list of community organizations is as follows:

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 keywords: "Combat"; "Racism"; "Discrimination"; "Hate"; "Antisemitism"; "Foster Inclusion"; "Coalition"; "Human Rights"; "Combating Hate"; and "Combating Violence."

Anti-Hate Organizations in Buffalo-Niagara

Organizations in Greater Buffalo that seek to combat hate.

This figure was created by inputting independent research into ArcGIS Mapping Software.

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

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.

V. Takeaways and Potential Next Steps

While hate exists in Buffalo-Niagara, there were not a lot of reported hate crimes in the region between 2016 and 2019. However, Buffalo-Niagara's relatively low hate crime frequency does not mean that there is not work to do.
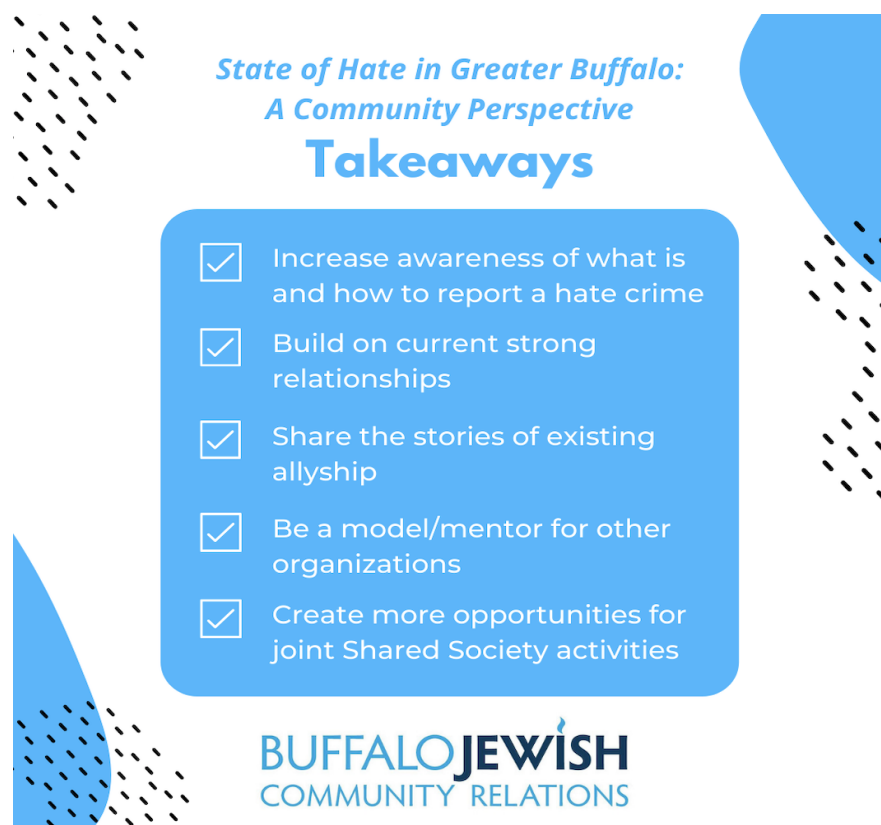
Some interviewees explained low numbers are because people do not trust law enforcement or do not know how to report hate crimes. There needs to be more public awareness of how to report hate crimes. Beyond publicizing bias reporting procedures and systems, community

members in the region need to build on the strong foundation of networking, allyship, and shared programming.

Most Buffalonians do not engage with social justice issues and/or other communities than their own. Community leaders observe that community members do not see the work that their communities do together with others as a result and they worry that because of this unawareness, people may be more likely to maintain prejudices and remain susceptible to hating others. There may be wisdom for communities to look within and outside their community to build better relationships and looking to other communities is not very difficult in Buffalo-Niagara. The region is home to an extensive network of organizations that build community and address hate.

Several organizations are proud to work with the Jewish community but it is imperative to keep in mind that relationship building is a never-ending process. These relationships are avenues for members of different communities to connect and truly learn about each other, which overrides and undercuts any and all prejudices.

Richard Lipsitz, former President of the Western New York Area Labor Federation, noted that in his experience in the labor movement, "[i]f there is a struggle going on in the workplace… people will join together, especially if there is a strike…. People sit down and talk to one another. They come together and forget their differences for the most part to deal with the bigger problem they're facing." Common ground fends off differences, and community leaders are hopeful that cross-community collaboration will grow in the future.

State of Hate in Greater Buffalo:
A Community Perspective
Takeaways

- ☑ Increase awareness of what is and how to report a hate crime
- ☑ Build on current strong relationships
- ☑ Share the stories of existing allyship
- ☑ Be a model/mentor for other organizations
- ☑ Create more opportunities for joint Shared Society activities

BUFFALO JEWISH
COMMUNITY RELATIONS

VI.   Addendum

Glossary

1. **Bias or Hate Incident (Federal):** Acts of prejudice that are not crimes and do not involve violence, threats, or property damage.[23]
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.[24]
4. **Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program[25]**
   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.[26]
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.[27]
7. **Hate Crime (New York State)[28]**
   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,

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[23] "Learn about Hate Crimes." *The United States Department of Justice*, 3 May 2021, www.justice.gov/hatecrimes/learn-about-hate-crimes.

[24] 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.

[25] "Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program." *FBI*, FBI, 10 Sept. 2018, www.fbi.gov/services/cjis/ucr.

[26] "Harassment Legislation." *NY State Senate*, www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/PEN/240.25.

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

[28] "Legislation." *NY State Senate*, www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/PEN/485.05.

> 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.[29]

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 support agency. One of their core functions is to collect and analyze statewide crime data.[30]

    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.[31]

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.[32]

11. The symbol "~" denotes a statistical approximation.

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?

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[29] "New York City." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., www.britannica.com/place/New-York-City.

[30] https://www.ny.gov/agencies/division-criminal-justice-services

[31] "Division of Criminal Justice Services." *NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services*, www.criminaljustice.ny.gov/crimnet/ojsa/crimereporting/ucr.htm.

[32] "Legislation." *NY State Senate*, www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/PEN/145.10.

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 did not 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?
    i. Were there any initiatives or campaigns that you worked together on that stood out to you as the most effective in building unity?
    ii. 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 did not ask about that is important for you to tell me?