

THE KASSOW LEGACY AT TRINITY

The Kassow family's influence at Trinity College is unparalleled. During her two decades as the Trinity Hillel Director, **Lisa Pleskow Kassow** has provided opportunities for students to explore their Jewish identity, heritage and practice. When Lisa arrived the Zachs Hillel House was under construction. Soon after the Kassow Kosher Eatery was established. Lisa has led hundreds of Jewish holiday and Shabbat experiences, and has expanded programs to resonate with students of all faiths, creating space for students to generate programs that are meaningful to them including many themed Shabbatot highlighting Jewish life around the world, Pink Shabbat, Rainbow Shabbat, and Sushi in the Sukkah, to name just a few. Under her guidance thousands of students have gained leadership skills both on campus and at national and international conferences. Off campus she has organized summer and alternative spring break trips to non-traditional destinations such as Uganda, Trinidad, and Colombia, as well as trips to Israel for diverse student groups. She was instrumental in helping to establish the first Hillel in Poland. For over twenty years her consistent focus has been to build community and share strong Jewish values. Lisa's inclusive and wide-ranging leadership was acknowledged by Hillel International in 2017 when she received the prestigious Richard M. Joel Exemplar of Excellence Award.



Lisa Kassow with Trinity Students and staff at the American Cancer Society Making Strides Walk

Samuel D. Kassow '66, the Charles H. Northam Professor of History, has dedicated half a century to teaching History at Trinity. He is an internationally recognized scholar of Russian and Soviet history, modern European history, and the history of Ashkenazi Jewry, and has taught at universities around the world. Throughout his career, Professor Kassow has brought much honor to Trinity, most recently with the critically acclaimed film based on his book, *Who Will Write Our History*. He was on the scholarly team that developed the award winning POLIN Museum devoted to the history of Polish Jews in Warsaw, Poland. Professor Kassow's classes on Russian History, modern Jewish History, World War II, and the Holocaust continue to be among the most popular courses taught at Trinity. Within and beyond the classroom walls, Sam has mentored thousands of Trinity students. On campus he has been a weekly presence at Shabbat and holiday celebrations. Farther afield, he has led transformative travel experiences with Trinity students to Russia and Poland. Professor Kassow's many publications have advanced the scholarship of Eastern European Jewry and the Holocaust.



Samuel Kassow speaking in front of a memorial site in the former Vilna Ghetto

TWO OPPORTUNITIES TO HONOR THE KASSOW LEGACY AT TRINITY COLLEGE

Together, Lisa and Sam Kassow have developed inspiring classroom and experiential programs that encourage Jewish students to explore and strengthen their identity, and have engendered a greater appreciation of history and of Jewish traditions among the entire campus community. In honor of Lisa's retirement this June, and to mark Sam's 50th anniversary of teaching at Trinity College, Trinity seeks to continue their legacy through the creation of two endowed funds.



Sam and Lisa Kassow with Trinity Group at the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, Warsaw

The Lisa Pleskow Kassow Hillel Directorship Fund: Over the last 20 years Trinity students benefited greatly by having a full-time director. Trinity is blessed to have partial funding for this position. Fully endowing the Directorship in Lisa's honor will ensure that there will always be a home for Jewish students on campus, and that the robust programming that is synonymous with Trinity Hillel will continue to engage Jewish students far into the future.

The Samuel D. Kassow '66 Scholarship Fund: Professor Kassow has taught thousands of students over his career, both in the traditional classroom setting and through experiential travel opportunities. Under his guidance and mentorship students in the History Department and in the multidisciplinary Jewish Studies Program learn to understand historical context, consider competing perspectives, and ask important questions. The Kassow Scholarship honors Sam's contributions to these disciplines by providing financial assistance to talented students who plan to major in History or in Jewish Studies.