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- Requirements: 1) at least one semester at A&M with minimum 2.0 GPA
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3) provide transportation or have access to it

The majority of the at-risk youth in our project are males and 60% are minorities. If you would make a good mentor for such youth and/or wish to be exposed to multicultural issues, call the Project BELONG staff at 845-8800 or e-mail us at postmaster@ppri.tamu.edu

Schindler's widow remembers Holocaust

The Associated Press

ACTON — Walking among the bright bluebonnets and Indian paintbrushes of rural Hood County, 86-year-old Emilie Schindler looked at ease.

For weeks she had been asked to conjure up cold, bleak memories of Polish and Czechoslovakian prison camps where she and her husband, Oskar, fought to help thousands of Jews escape death by the German SS during World War II.

In the warm spring winds of Texas, that all seemed very far behind.

Schindler had traveled to Texas with longtime friends Bernard and Eva Scheuer, whose son and daughter-in-law provided brief but welcome hospitality at their home near Acton.

As they gathered around the dining room table, it was clear that each knows the story of the Schindlers. But they know, too, that much of Emilie Schindler's story was left out of Steven Spielberg's film, "Schindler's List."

They discussed her story in their native languages: German, Polish and Czech. There was even a little Spanish and a smattering of English.

Based on a book by Thomas Keneally, "Schindler's List" focuses almost entirely on the efforts of Oskar Schindler to save the lives of nearly 1,200 Jewish prisoners who formed the work force for his factories.

Emilie Schindler's contributions are largely overlooked.

In 1939, on the heels of the Nazi invasion of Poland, her husband made his way to Krakow to find an investment, leaving her behind. Oskar Schindler joined the Nazi party and ingratiated himself with German officers.

In time, he bought an enamel-works factory, previously owned by Jews, and staffed it with hundreds of residents of the Jewish ghetto that the Nazi SS had established.

He profited handsomely. Labor was cheap, and his

enamelware proved to be a welcome commodity on the black market.

Even after the bloody 1943 liquidation of the Krakow ghetto, Schindler's factory turned a profit and his workers were saved from the darkest depths of the new Plaszow labor camp.

But in 1944, Plaszow was closed, and Schindler's workers were sent to a new factory at Brinnlitz in Czechoslovakia. The enamelware was gone, the black market was gone. Eventually, the money was gone. At Brinnlitz, the Schindlers had to spend everything they had earned to keep the 1,200 workers alive.

"It was very difficult," said Bernard Scheuer, who was at Plaszow. "In Poland, they could get food through the black market, but in Czechoslovakia it was difficult to feed the 1,200 people. You must realize that the ration from the SS there for each prisoner was equivalent to 2 1/2 ounces of bread a day. There was a cup of some black liquid that was called coffee, and a soup where the most challenging thing was to find a piece of turnip."

"People couldn't survive on it. It was up to her (Emilie) to be the main supplier of food. She supplied all the food and medication. The burden of feeding these 1,200 fell on her."

And she took in other prisoners, besides those who came to work for her husband.

She recalled one day when Oskar Schindler was away, and a German train pulled up outside the factory at Brinnlitz.

The train commandant told her that he was supposed to deliver 200 Jews to one of the factories, but that no one wanted them. "I have no choice but to kill them," he said.

"I'll take them," Emilie Schindler said. "We have a factory, and I (will) take these people."

After the war, the Schindlers eventually made their way to Switzerland. They could not return to Germany because they were considered traitors. The only country that would take them was Argentina, Scheuer said.

Holocaust

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The largest number of rescuers, 3,300, were from Holland, and 3,200 were from Poland.

Krammer said many lessons can be learned from the actions of the rescuers.

"One obvious need is to prevent the rise of anti-Semitism," he said. "And there is cause for alarm right now."

Krammer said he is concerned with the results of a Roper Poll from last April which indicated 21 percent of Americans do not believe the Holocaust ever happened, and 11 percent want to see more evidence.

"The Germans are obsessive record-keepers and documented themselves the murders they were perpetrating," he said. "The U.S. Army has thousands of pages of documents and photographs from when they liberated the camps at the end of the war."

Krammer said Gen. George S. Patton was so horrified when he saw the camps that he had every detail photographed and recorded because, he said some day people wouldn't believe that something this horrible could happen.

"We must concentrate on education," he said. "If one-third of Americans are not convinced now, what will the history books say 100 years from now?"

Krammer said the best weapon in the fight for education is first-

hand accounts. "We've got to get the survivors to tell their stories," he said.

Krammer gave several examples of people who risked their lives to save the Jews, including a female mail carrier who was tortured by the Gestapo for giving ration cards to Jews and a Swiss border guard who violated his country's policy of denying entry of Jews into Poland.

Krammer, who specializes in German history, is currently teaching the history of Nazi Germany.

The speech was held in conjunction with "Rescuers of the Holocaust," an exhibit currently being displayed at the J. Wayne Stark University Center Galleries in the MSC.

The exhibit will continue through April 30.

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