Several hundred individuals were on hand to celebrate a major event in Queensborough Community College (QCC) history on Sunday, October 18 – the ribbon cutting of the new building for The Harriet and Kenneth Kupferberg Holocaust Resource Center and Archives.

Before moving into its own building, which includes exhibition spaces, a library and conference room, the center had been located in the basement of the school’s library.

QCC President Eduardo Martí explained that the center had been moved “from the darkness of the library to the forefront of the college” and that it “now serves as a symbol that we at Queensborough Community College stand proud against
prejudice in all forms."

“It’s a laboratory that provides our students with the tools that are necessary to combat prejudice and hate crimes,” Martí also said.

Throughout the presentations, the many individuals who made the new center a reality were recognized and thanked for their efforts. Arthur Flug, the Executive Director of the Kupferberg Holocaust Center, said his goal is for people to ask “Washington, D.C. or Bayside?” when someone says he or she is going to the Holocaust center.

Queens Borough President Helen Marshall described the center as a symbol of what can be done when people come together for a common purpose.

“We must remember the evils of the past so that those who suffered did not do so in vein,” Marshall said. She added that we must “make sure that hate is removed from this world.”

Ethel Katz, who was the only member of her family to survive the Holocaust, told of her experiences. She also spoke about what it meant to her to see the ribbon cutting happen.

“In my mind’s eye, I see and I feel my father speaking after we survived an attack,” she said. “He said, ‘who will tell the world of our despair?’ Daddy, I am doing it, the survivors are doing it, the students of the … Holocaust Center are speaking out.”

Katz also said that the Holocaust was the greatest crime in history and that the world must know what happened.

Others who participated in the ribbon cutting ceremony were Cantor Sol Zim; Father Patrick Flanagan from St. John’s University; Asaf Shariv, the Consul General of Israel in New York; Allan Dobrin, the Executive Vice Chancellor of the City University of New York; Commissioner Galen D. Kirkland of the New York State Division on Human Rights; Kupferberg Center Advisory Board chair Joseph Sciame; Holocaust survivor Hannah Deutch; and Mark Kupferberg.

Several local elected officials were in attendance and made presentations to the center. They included Senators Frank Padavan and Toby Ann Stavisky, Assemblymembers Mark Weprin and Rory Lancman, and Councilmembers James Gennaro, and David Weprin.