

# Man who vandalized Alaska Jewish Museum with swastika stickers sentenced to 18 months in prison

By Kavitha George, Alaska Public Media - Anchorage - July 26, 2023



*Photo released by Anchorage police in 2021 as they sought a person of interest in their investigation into the placement of swastika stickers on buildings in the city. (Anchorage Police Department)*

An Anchorage man who pasted swastika stickers at several locations around the city in 2021 was sentenced in federal court on Tuesday to 18 months in prison. He was convicted on two acts of hate-motivated property damage and one drug trafficking offense.

According to a news release from the U.S. Attorney's office, in May, 2021, Luke Foster, now 28, placed swastika stickers with the text "WE ARE EVERYWHERE" at eight locations around Anchorage, including the Alaska Jewish Museum and the gay nightclub Mad Myrna's. Foster returned to the Jewish Museum a few months later to place another sticker and carve a swastika into the door.

The swastika is an ancient religious symbol now most associated with the German Nazi Party, which persecuted Jewish people, LGBTQ people and many others during the Holocaust.

"It's very sad when you see young people who are misguided, and don't understand the danger of being influenced by the fear of 'the other,'" said Rabbi Yosef Greenberg, president of the museum board.



Museum Director Rabbi Yosef Greenberg and Curator Leslie Fried stand in front of the Alaska Jewish Museum. (Matt Faubion/Alaska Public Media)

Greenberg said he was encouraged by an apology Foster made during court proceedings, saying he was misguided and hoped to learn from the experience.

Nationwide, the number of recorded antisemitic events has reached an **all-time high**, according to a 2022 audit from the Anti-Defamation League. Greenberg said, in his 32 years in Alaska, he's also noticed an uptick in threats against the Jewish community in the last decade. He blames it on the spread of misinformation aided by the internet.

"Bigotry and hatred only leads to destruction of themselves, of those who do it," Greenberg said. "But that does nothing good. Evil can never prevail."

Federal agents initially caught Foster on drug charges, after he was **found using social media to sell psilocybin mushrooms**. While executing a search warrant, agents found "Nazi-inspired imagery, including a box of swastika stickers" in Foster's home, according to the U.S. Attorney's office.

The office said the federal Bureau of Prisons will assign Foster to a facility to carry out his sentence in the next few weeks.



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