

# EIGHTEEN:22

A GLOBAL NETWORK FOR CHANGE  
THE NEXT CHAPTER OF LGBTQ JEWISH LIFE

A SCHUSTERMAN CONNECTION POINT

-FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE-

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## JEWISH LGBTQ AND ALLY VISIONARIES GATHER IN AUSTRIA FOR THINK TANK'S HISTORIC LAUNCH

**SALZBURG, Austria, Aug. 19** – Riding a wave of popular support for LGBTQ human rights worldwide, more than 60 international Jewish gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, and ally community builders and LGBTQ-rights activists gathered in Salzburg last week for the historic launch of the global forum [Eighteen:22 | An International Think Tank for Jewish LGBTQ and Ally Changemakers](#).

Taking its name in an act of reclamation and defiance from Leviticus 18:22 — a verse which has been used against LGBTQ people for centuries — and with the theme “the next chapter in LGBTQ Jewish life,” Eighteen:22 aims to build a global network for today’s emerging and established Jewish LGBTQ and ally visionaries who have demonstrated a profound commitment to pursuing positive change for LGBTQ Jews and their communities.

“Our convening arrives at a remarkable moment in history,” said Eighteen:22 Founder **Robert J. Saferstein**. “LGBTQ human rights inhabits the zeitgeist in a way that has helped catalyze the passage of laws and rights thought impossible only a few years ago. We have even seen moves towards acceptance and inclusion in the most unexpected corners of traditional observance and Jewish life.”

Saferstein added: “We know all too well that increased global attention does not necessarily guarantee progress — it sometimes leads to the exact opposite — and intolerance, discrimination, and violence continue to be promoted and accepted in far too many places worldwide.”

Part of the [Schusterman Connection Points](#) program, and organized by Saferstein and Halley Cohen, Eighteen:22 took place at the historic and symbolic Schloss Leopoldskron Hotel. Originally owned by famed Jewish impresario and Salzburg Music Festival Founder Max Reinhardt, “the Schloss” was confiscated by the Nazis during World War II. Following the war, the Schloss was later reclaimed and turned into the Salzburg Global Seminar — a forum to challenge current and future leaders to solve issues of global concern. Salzburg Global has previously hosted three, independent global LGBTQ human rights sessions.

“If recent events have taught us anything, it is that there is still much work to be done within our Jewish communities and in the world at large,” said Saferstein. “As the world becomes increasingly smaller and more interconnected, we see how vital the cultivation of an international network such as Eighteen:22 is, in order to learn from each other, to deliberate the challenges we face today, and to strategize the steps needed to advance positive change.”

“Coming out of our first gathering, it is clear that a connective tissue runs between us, and that there is a genuine desire and determination to work together to increase our global impact. I am invigorated by the potential of what we will build together over the coming weeks and months. Without a doubt, this is just the beginning.”

**About Schusterman Connection Points:**

Schusterman Connection Points is an initiative launched by the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation to put young Jewish leaders at the helm of creating a series of gatherings around the world. Designed as a new and meaningful way for young Jews to assemble with purpose, Connection Points are part of Schusterman's broader investment in organizations and programs that empower young leaders to take an active role in shaping a vibrant Jewish future. For more information please visit <http://www.schusterman.org/connectionpoints>.

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