



Stockton President Herman Saatkamp Receives Leadership Award from Beth El, Bridge of Faith

Jewish Family Service Also Honored at Interfaith Ceremony on June 7

For Immediate Release; photo attached

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Galloway, NJ – President Herman Saatkamp of The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey was honored on Friday, June 7 with the Father Thom Schiavo Leadership Award given by Beth El Synagogue and Bridge of Faith.

“Your inspired leadership of Stockton has become a great source of pride in our area, state and nation,” said Rabbi Aaron Krauss of Beth El, in announcing the award. “The growth of Stockton has attracted favorable attention in the academic world and beyond in an unprecedented manner.”

“I am deeply honored to receive this year’s Father Thom Schiavo Award,” President Saatkamp said. “I know that I follow in the footsteps of many extraordinary individuals from our community who also have received this honor – such as last year’s recipients, for whom I have such tremendous respect and admiration: Sam and Leo Schoffer.”

“What makes this award so meaningful to me is that it recognizes and celebrates mutual respect, acceptance and understanding of what it means to live, work, and co-exist within an increasingly diverse society,” President Saatkamp continued. “Celebrating those common attributes as well as those which distinguish one from another.”

“With over 8,500 students and over 2,000 full- and part-time employees, Stockton is a

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city within itself,” President Saatkamp said, “a place where people from all backgrounds, races and nationalities, orientations, ages, social economic status, religious backgrounds, and various life experiences come together for a similar purpose...to learn, engage, and self-discover.”

The award is named for the late Father Thom Schiavo, who was assistant pastor at Blessed Sacrament Church in Margate at the time of his death at age 37 more than 20 years ago. Father Schiavo, who was of Italian and Jewish descent, had reached “across boundaries of religion and race to make the world a better place,” Rabbi Krauss explained. “The award was established to perpetuate his ideals.”

Rabbi Krauss formed Bridge of Faith four years ago to provide a forum for communication and cooperation among all faiths. The group now includes numerous religious and charitable organizations. Bridge of Faith has raised funds for earthquake victims in Haiti and aided victims of Hurricane Sandy, as well as provided anti-bullying programs in schools, among other activities.

Leo Schoffer, of Schoffer Enterprises and a member of the Stockton Board of Trustees, presented the award to President Saatkamp. Schoffer and his father, Sam, received the award last year for their contributions to the community, including The Sara and Sam Schoffer Holocaust Resource Center at Stockton, which is named in honor of Sam and his late wife, Sara, survivors of the Holocaust. .

Michael Azeez, businessman, civic leader and founder of the Sam Azeez Museum of Woodbine Heritage Museum, also spoke at the ceremony. He has donated, through the Azeez Foundation, \$5 million including the museum to the college, and partnered with Stockton to open the college’s first instructional site in Cape May County, Anne Azeez Hall.

Jewish Family Service of Atlantic County received the Community Service Award for its work with victims of Hurricane Sandy.

Representatives of various Christian, Muslim and Jewish denominations took part in the ceremony, along with the Beth El Synagogue choir.

The interfaith awards ceremony was held in the sanctuary at Beth El Synagogue, 500 N. Jerome Ave., Margate.

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