

Rabbi Aaron Krauss, Who Was Instrumental in Stockton's Founding, to Receive Honorary Degree

Margate Rabbi, a Former Trustee, to be Honored at December Commencement

For Immediate Release; with Krauss photo

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Galloway, N.J. - Rabbi Aaron Krauss of Beth El Synagogue in Margate, N.J., a former trustee and faculty member who was instrumental in Stockton's founding, will receive an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree at the university's Commencement ceremonies on Dec. 18.

"Rabbi Aaron Krauss has a long history with Stockton, including convincing New Jersey's leaders that a four-year college was needed in South Jersey, which led to our founding," said President Harvey Kesselman. "He also assisted in obtaining the land for Stockton's campus, and served on the Board of Trustees and as an adjunct professor in Jewish Studies for over 20 years. Beyond that, he has shown an incredible commitment to inclusion, building bridges between the clergy and citizens of the region and promoting harmony and equality for all. Stockton will be honored to bestow on Rabbi Krauss the honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters at our December Commencement."

Krauss remembers reading about efforts by fellow Stockton founder Elizabeth Alton to bring a college to the region, and he called her on the phone one day in the late 1960s. He said he felt strongly that a college was needed in the area and he offered to help her mobilize support.

They went to meetings in Trenton and Washington and to then-Governor Richard Hughes' house in Princeton. "There was not a lot of support initially, but people came around," Krauss said. "I remember getting a crucial phone call from the governor saying the college was going to come."

He said having a college in the region helped keep younger people from leaving and enabled more to further their educations, a decision that is paying off even more strongly today. "I'm very pleased and proud that in an area where casino industry declining, the university is showing growth," he said.

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-continued from page 1-

Krauss began serving as rabbi for the Community Synagogue in Atlantic City in 1962 and has served as rabbi of Beth El Synagogue in Margate since 1983. He is a scholar in Jewish history and has written many published articles on Jewish culture, heritage, and history. He is currently writing a book on the history of Jews in Lithuania.

He received a B.A. from Yeshiva University in New York City and his rabbinical ordination, M.A. in Hebrew Literature and Doctor of Divinity from the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in New York. He also served as a Navy chaplain in San Francisco and with the Third Marine Division in Okinawa, Taiwan and southern Japan.

As a community leader, he was founder and first chairman of the Greater Atlantic City Human Relations Forum, the founding president of Atlantic Human Resources, and founder of the local Inter-Faith Council of Clergy.

As Stockton grew, its community outreach spread, including establishment of the Sara and Sam Schoffer Holocaust Resource Center, which offers support for Holocaust and Genocide education and has published the memoirs of many local Holocaust survivors.

"We're very proud of the close association between the Jewish community and Stockton," Krauss said.

His many contributions to Stockton and the community will be honored at the Fall Baccalaureate Commencement on Sunday, Dec. 18 beginning at 11 a.m. in the Sports Center on the Galloway, N.J. campus.

Credit if using photo larger than headshot:

Photo by Maryjane Briant/Stockton University

Caption if needed:

Rabbi Aaron Krauss of Beth El Synagogue in Margate, N.J. will be honored Dec. 18 for his contributions as a founder and former trustee of Stockton University.