

'Salute to Stockton' Summer Speaker Series Set

Public Invited to Presentations at Congregation Beth Judah in Ventnor, NJ

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Galloway Township, NJ - Faculty from Stockton University will give presentations on topics ranging from medical immortality, to math, to music, to meeting students where they live, as Temple Emeth Shalom sponsors its 18th annual "Salute to Stockton" lecture series this summer.

The public is invited to this free series of events, to be held this year at Congregation Beth Judah, 700 N Swarthmore Ave, Ventnor, NJ. The programs will begin at 7:30 p.m. during Friday evening Sabbath services in July and early August, and feature a question-and-answer session following the presentations.

Rabbi Gordon Geller of Temple Emeth Shalom in Margate, and a longtime Stockton faculty member in the School of General Studies, said the talks are always a cultural highlight for the congregation and community. The two temples are holding a number of joint services this summer in Beth Judah's larger sanctuary, including the "Salute to Stockton" series.

The schedule is as follows:

Friday, July 17: Dr. Chia-Lin Wu, Associate Professor of Mathematics, will speak on "Stockton and Community Partnership in Math." Dr. Wu has been actively involved with math education, including forming community partnerships with local elementary, middle, and high schools to provide professional development for mathematics teachers.

Schools involved include Greater Egg Harbor Regional, Ocean City, Mainland Regional, Egg Harbor Township, Southern Regional School District, the Marine Academy of Science and Technology and the Atlantic County Institute of Technology.

He has also run "Math Mayhem," a program that brings more than 60 students from 10 South Jersey high schools to Stockton to compete in exams that challenge the students and assess their current skill development, which helps bridge the gap between high school and college.

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Friday, July 24: Dr. Nathaniel Hartman, Assistant Professor of Biology, will speak on: “Medical Immortality: Who Wants to Live Forever?”

Advancements in medical technology have made it possible for humans to overcome disease, repair broken organs and tissues and extend lifespan, Dr. Hartman notes. Public health initiatives have dramatically decreased infant mortality rate and modern agriculture has given us an abundance of food to stave off malnutrition. As the pace of biomedical research quickens, humans may come face to face with a new option - to never die.

In this lecture, Dr. Hartman will discuss the major advancements in the fields of regenerative medicine and brain-computer interface as ways to achieve medical immortality. He will explore the possibility of using medical advances in stem cell biology and bioengineering to avoid death. He will discuss some of the moral and ethical dilemmas that we will face as a society if technology allows us to overcome death.

Friday, July 31: Dr. Eileen Conran-Folks, director of Stockton’s Hammonton & Manahawkin Instructional Sites, will speak on: “Meeting Students Where They Live and Making New Community Partners Along the Way.” This presentation will outline the positive outcomes Stockton University has realized through its expansion and development of instructional sites in Hammonton and Manahawkin.

Dr. Conran-Folks has worked as a Higher Education administrator for 33 years, including 24 years at Stockton where she has held several key positions including: Dean of Students and Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs.

Dr. Conran-Folks currently serves as a Board of Directors for: The Eagle Theatre, The Hammonton Art District and The Noyes Museum and serves as an Advisory Board member for Gilda’s Club South Jersey and the South Jersey Culture and History Center of Stockton. She also created the Miniversity program for regional high school students and serves as Stockton University’s liaison to the Atlantic City Boys and Girls Club.

Friday, Aug. 7: Dr. Beverly Vaughn, Professor of Music, will host a program built around songs about freedom from slavery, including a sing-along with audience members and guest performers.

Dr. Vaughn, a mezzo-soprano known for her velvety tone and vibrant personality, is director of Choral Activities at Stockton. She has won numerous awards and citations for her teaching and has also received several awards from the regional organizations for outstanding community outreach and service.

As director of Stockton’s choral program, she conducts the College Chorus and The Stockton Chorale along with both The Stockton Oratorio Society and the Vocal Jazz Ensemble, which she founded. These choral organizations have traveled to Europe and have enjoyed overwhelming regional acclaim under her direction.

One of the choral program’s most important productions continues to be its bi-annual performance of Handel’s “Messiah.” It has grown to be one of the most anticipated events in the region and represents one of Stockton’s major community outreach initiatives.

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