

Cheryl J. Kessler, z"l, to Receive Doctor of Jewish Communal Service at HUC-JIR Graduation Ceremony in Los Angeles

Cheryl J. Kessler, z"l, will receive a Doctor of Jewish Communal Service, *honoris causa*, awarded posthumously, from the **Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR)**. The degree will be granted at HUC-JIR's Los Angeles Graduation ceremony on Monday, May 18, 2009. HUC-JIR is the nation's oldest institution of higher Jewish education and the academic, spiritual, and professional leadership development center of Reform Judaism.

Communal leaders, relatives, and friends will gather at the Los Angeles Campus, 3077 University Avenue, for the HUC-JIR Graduation Ceremonies of the 134th academic year.

Rabbi David Ellenson, Ph.D., announced HUC-JIR alumni recipients who will be awarded honorary Doctorates of Divinity, Music, Jewish Religious Education, and Jewish Communal Service, as well as the Founders' Medallion, in recognition of their 25 years of distinguished professional service.

Rabbi Ellenson said, "As a social worker at the Menorah Park Center for Senior Living in Beachwood, Ohio, Cheryl Kessler treated families and patients with compassion and dignity. As a founding co-president of the Network of Jewish Communal Professionals, she shared her talents and expertise with her colleagues in the field. She gave of her gifts of heart and mind to the Young Israel of Greater Cleveland and AMIT Women, and her work in the Cleveland Jewish community of Menorah Park earned for her the Jewish Communal Professional of the Year Award and the Florence Azoff Wish Professional Service Award. Her own personal struggles with her illness led her to volunteer for Gathering Place and Sharsheret, organizations dedicated to supporting families touched by cancer. She left behind an everlasting legacy of love for her husband, children and family."

For more information on the HUC-JIR Graduation, Investiture, and Ordination ceremonies in New York, Los Angeles, and Cincinnati, please visit <http://www.huc.edu/newspubs/pressroom/article.php?pressroomid=271>.

Founded in 1875, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion is the nation's oldest institution of higher Jewish education and the academic, spiritual, and professional leadership development center of Reform Judaism. HUC-JIR educates men and women for service to American and world Jewry as rabbis, cantors, educators, and communal service professionals, and offers graduate and post-graduate programs to scholars of all faiths. With centers of learning in Cincinnati, Jerusalem, Los Angeles, and New York, HUC-JIR's scholarly resources comprise renowned library and museum collections, the American Jewish Archives, biblical archaeology excavations, research institutes and centers, and academic publications. HUC-JIR invites the community to an array of cultural and educational programs which illuminate Jewish history, identity, and contemporary creativity and which foster interfaith and multiethnic understanding. Visit us at www.huc.edu.

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