



Edward J. Bloustein School
of Planning and Public Policy

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MEDIA ADVISORY

March 9, 2020

EDITOR'S NOTE: Media members wishing to attend this event should contact Karyn Olsen at karyno@ejb.rutgers.edu or 848-932-2814. All visitors to campus attending this event, including members of the media, must register their vehicles by visiting <https://go.rutgers.edu/myersparking> prior to parking on campus. Non-registered vehicles may be ticketed.

Rabbi Jeffrey Myers, RC '77, Architect Esther Speber (AIA) will be featured speakers for April 1 panel discussion on importance of balancing safety and security in sacred spaces

WHAT: The 2020 Ruth Ellen Steinman and Edward J. Bloustein Memorial Lecture, "Building Safe Sacred Spaces: Personal and Architectural Perspectives."

WHO: **Rabbi Jeffrey Myers, RC '77**, Tree of Life synagogue (Pittsburgh, PA) and **Esther Speber (AIA)**, founder, Studio ST Architects.

WHEN: Wednesday, April 1, 2020, 4:00 p.m.

WHERE: Rutgers Hillel, 70 College Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ on the campus of Rutgers University.

BACKGROUND: Synagogues, churches, and other places of spiritual worship have traditionally been welcoming, open spaces. At their best, these communal institutions offered shelter, food, and emotional support to both members and those passing through. The recent violent attacks in synagogues and churches, while statistically rare, have nevertheless challenged us to grapple with the conflicting values of openness and security. How can we create a welcoming space that is safe? How do we insure that we do not fall in the trap of fearing the other?

Rutgers alumnus **Rabbi Jeffrey Myers, RC '77** of Tree of Life synagogue will reflect on his mission to make his community and the world "stronger than hate" by stopping the spread of "h-speech" in order to restore civil discourse in society. **Esther Speber (AIA)** will present a number of synagogue projects built by her firm Studio ST Architects over the last decade and discuss the ways in which they have incorporated excellent design with spiritual, sustainable, and secure components.

The Ruth Ellen Steinman Bloustein and Edward J. Bloustein Memorial Lecture was established to honor the memory of these two extraordinary individuals. For nearly nineteen years, the Blousteins dedicated their enormous energies to Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. The lecture series focuses on three main themes: the study and preservation of animal species and the natural environment, the celebration of love, happiness, and laughter as tools of clinical medicine, and the exploration and promotion of humane values, which Ed Bloustein believed were woven in the fabric of Judaic tradition and passed down from generation to generation. Events of the third theme are co-sponsored by the [Bloustein School](#) and the [Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life](#) at Rutgers University.

Members of the media interested in attending this event should contact Karyn Olsen at karyno@ejb.rutgers.edu or 848-932-2814 by March 31. **All visitors to campus attending this event, including members of the media, must register their vehicles** by visiting <https://go.rutgers.edu/myersparking> prior to parking on campus. Non-registered vehicles may be ticketed.

This event is free and open to the public but RSVP is REQUIRED. Paper or digital ticket must be presented at the door, or guests must have a photo ID to confirm registration. Visit <https://building-safe-sacred-spaces.eventbrite.com> to register.

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