



Stockton Trustees Name Joseph Sheairs to Head Stockton Aviation Research & Technology Park

Actions at September Meeting Include Award to AtlantiCare's Lori Herndon

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Galloway Township, NJ - Joseph M. Sheairs, Sr., a veteran executive with over 35 years of experience in aviation, engineering, technology and business, today was named the new executive director of the Stockton Aviation Research and Technology Park (ARTP) by the Board of Trustees of The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey.

Sheairs is a graduate of West Point and the New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) and holds degrees in engineering and computer sciences. In 2009-10, he served as interim executive director and then deputy executive director of the Next Generation Aviation and Technology Park, a pre-cursor to the Stockton ARTP.

Sheairs was instrumental in securing the Virginia Tech FAA Unmanned Aircraft Systems test site designation, which includes work in southern New Jersey. Stockton College and Stockton ARTP are members of the Virginia Tech team known as the Mid-Atlantic Aviation Partnership (MAAP), which is helping to test unmanned aircraft systems.

The Stockton ARTP, a non-profit charged with developing a facility on 58 acres owned by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), became an auxiliary organization of the college in 2013.

The Stockton ARTP is responsible for development and management of the park, while the college will be the lead agency in developing aviation-related educational programs and research.

Sheairs replaces Ronald J. Esposito, who retired as executive director of the Stockton ARTP after a 34-year career in aviation administration, including previously serving as acting director of the Federal Aviation Administration's William J. Hughes Technical Center in Egg Harbor Township.

In other action at the board meeting:

- Lori S. Herndon, executive vice president of AtlantiCare and president and CEO of AtlantiCare Regional Medical Center, received the School of Health Sciences Leadership Award “for her significant contributions to health care, to her profession of nursing, and to the welfare of people in our community,” said Dean Theresa Bartolotta.

“She is a proven leader in nursing and health care administration and provides significant service to a number of nonprofit organizations in the greater Atlantic County area,” said Dr. Bartolotta. “A graduate of Stockton’s baccalaureate nursing program, she is an exemplary role model for our students on how to lead through service.”

Herndon, who started her career as an Intensive Care Unit staff nurse at Atlantic Regional Medical Center Mainland Campus in 1983, has held many leadership roles at the hospital and the health system. She is also a member of the Stockton College Foundation board.

- Stockton’s overall enrollment was reported as reaching a record high, with undergraduate and graduate students combining to reach the full-time equivalent (FTE) of 8,115, up 2.38 percent from 7,926 in Fall 2013. The figures presented to the board reflect updates after Sept. 10, as students adjusted their schedules after the first week of classes.

The Class of 2018 is the largest ever, with first-time freshmen up 10.94 percent over the number of Stockton students entering college for the first time in 2013. As of Sept. 10, 1,186 first-time freshmen were enrolled, compared with 1,069 in Fall 2013.

The number of students attending Stockton this year is also the largest in history, with a headcount of 8,570 as of Sept. 10, up from 8,458 in Fall 2013.

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