Stockton Faculty, Staff Members Present at American Democracy Conference

A team of Stockton faculty, staff and students presented at the American Association of State College and Universities (AASCU) 2015 ADP/TDC/NASPA Civic Learning & Democratic Engagement Meeting in New Orleans, La. from June 4-6.

Daniel J. Douglas, director of the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy, and Diana Strelczyk, program assistant for the Office of Service-Learning, presented “A Civic Engagement Playbook: Supporting Long-term Initiatives.” They discussed how Stockton’s 2020 funding supports initiatives such as the Activist-in-Residence, and how the Hughes Center promotes civic engagement, education and research.

Linda J. Wharton, associate professor of Political Science and co-coordinator of PEP, introduced and moderated “Stewardship of Place: Case Study of Atlantic County, NJ,” a panel consisting of Daniel Fidalgo Tomé, director of Service-Learning; Erin O’Hanlon, adjunct instructor; and Dr. Kristin Jacobson, associate professor of Literature. The panelists described service-learning and civic engagement activities in Atlantic County.

“...I outlined how students and faculty in three classes created the first Report on the Status of Women in Atlantic County,” Dr. Jacobson said. “The report, commissioned by The Atlantic County Advisory Commission on Women, is a collaborative effort between the commission and Stockton.”

O’Hanlon discussed how her Communication students worked on the Adaptive AC blog, which shares stories about citizen empowerment and civic engagement.

Dr. Carra Leah Hood, assistant provost for Programs and Planning, and Dr. Gerald Martin, assistant dean of Students, collaborated with representatives from Eastern Washington University for their presentation, “Mission Possible: Academic and Student Affairs’ Partnerships Lead to Transformative Learning.” They discussed the ways in which productive partnerships between Academic and Student Affairs enhance student learning; faculty, student, administrator, and professional staff engagement; and overall institutional effectiveness.

Dr. Oliver Cooke, associate professor of Economics, and Dr. Tina Zappile, assistant professor of Political Science, also attended the conference. Dr. Cooke and Dr. Hood serve as the co-chairs of AASCU’s Economic Inequality Initiative for Stockton. Dr. Cooke spent a day working with a team of 10 individuals designing AASCU’s blended course on economic inequality.

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Dr. Zappile serves on AASCU’s Global Engagement Initiative and was recently appointed to the AASCU’s National Blended Course Consortium (NBCC) committee for its “Global Challenges” curriculum. She attended meetings for both the Global Engagement Initiative and NBCC committee at the conference.

O’Hanlon said the ADP meeting is a signature conference for service-learning and civics engagement.

“A civic engagement is an integral part at Stockton and especially Southern New Jersey,” Tomé added.

A number of the Stockton representatives serve on Stockton’s Political Engagement Project (PEP), which is part of the AASCU’s American Democracy Project. To learn more about these initiatives, click here.

Gwathney Presents Awards to Amoriello, Chandler and Dr. Lakew

Jim Gwathney, Intramurals and Recreation coordinator, recently presented awards to three distinctive Stockton faculty and staff members. Each year, Gwathney presents the awards to Stockton employees who “go above and beyond in the Stockton way.”

Gwathney presented the Shannon Newberry Award to David Amoriello (pictured top), evening and weekend coordinator in Athletics, for his commitment to students and the Intramural program.

“Dave is more than deserving of this award. Dave always steps up for the Athletics department and I see how much he does for the program on a daily basis. Student workers love him,” Gwathney said.

The Shannon Newberry award is named for a former Intramural student officer and Physical Therapy major who passed away in a car accident her senior year at Stockton, Gwathney explained.

Kevin Chandler (pictured center), crew supervisor, building maintenance worker and assistant coach of Track and Field, received the G. Larry James Award.

“Kevin is long overdue for this award. He has been at Stockton for more than 20 years,” Gwathney said. “He works very well with the staff he supervises during the day, and in the evening he coaches student-athletes on the track team. Kevin has always been devoted to making life better for the lives that he has touched.”

The award is named for the late G. Larry James, a longtime administrator at Stockton and an Olympic gold and silver medalist.

Gwathney presented Dr. Melaku Lakew (pictured bottom), professor of Economics, with the Dr. Vera King Farris award, named for the former president of Stockton.

“Dr. Lakew makes sure he gives back,” said Gwathney. “He is a great professor and an even better person. He takes groups of students to Africa so students experience other cultures firsthand. Dr. Lakew continuously helps those who are less fortunate.”
Kathy Franzese of Human Resources Retires After 25 Years of Service

Kathy Franzese of Human Resources is retiring this year after more than 25 years of service at Stockton.

Over the years, Franzese has served as administrative clerical support in Computer Services, Campus Hearing Board administrator, and most recently as associate director of Human Resources, Health Benefits, Pensions and Payroll. On an official union leave of absence from the University, Franzese was a staff representative for CWA, Local 1031, and she returned to Stockton in 2007.

During her retirement celebration on June 15, Franzese reminisced about seeing an ad for Stockton State College in the newspaper in 1989 – “an ad that would change my life,” she said. “I was proud to be a union member, elected union branch president and negotiate on others’ behalf. At first, I wondered how a strong union member would work in HR, but I was able to assist all employees in the same way. I was able to listen, resolve issues and create an environment of trust and support.”

She quoted Maya Angelou and said, “I hope I made people feel valued. Thank you for your friendship and support. From the bottom of my heart, thank you, thank you. To Joe [husband] and Debbie [daughter], thank you for being there for me. You are my world. I look forward to retiring and living the dream.”

Kathy Franzese (center with corsage) pictured with team members from the Office of Human Resources.

Diana Meischker of Stockton’s PAC Retires After 18 Years

Diana Meischker, principal clerk transcriber in Stockton’s Performing Arts Center (PAC), is retiring after 18 years of service to the Stockton community.

Meischker’s Stockton career began when she accepted at 10-week temporary position in Payroll. She later worked in the Division of Building and Construction for about a year and returned to Payroll as a part-time payroll clerk for six years, before moving into her current position at the PAC.

Over the years, Meischker has enjoyed watching students and the community have the chance to experience a variety of programs through the PAC.

“The opportunity was a great chance to be part of the mission,” she explained. “I’ve thoroughly enjoyed that experience.”

Through her role, Meischker has interacted with performers, managed their hospitality and traveling accommodations and assisted families coming to see the shows. She said she has had the pleasure of watching Theatre students grow at the University and in their careers.

At Stockton, Meischker served on the 2020 Steering Committee since it started and served as 12 years as the president of the CWA 1031. “In my 18 years, I’ve watched Stockton grow tremendously,” she said.

Meischker and her husband, Ron, who retired from Plant Management four years ago, together have seven children and 10 grandchildren. In retirement, Meischker said what she is looking forward to the most is “a new career. I like to dabble in some politics, do some writing, travel … just to see what’s on the other side of the mountain.”

L-R: Jeanne Jackson, Diana Meischker and Anita Gras.
Dr. Laurie Shanderson Participates in Program at Harvard

Dr. Laurie Shanderson, assistant dean of the School of Health Sciences, was selected to participate in the Management Development Program Class 2015 at the Harvard Graduate School of Education from May 31-June 12.

Dr. Shanderson said she applied to the program to gain a greater skill set for her new role as associate dean of the School of Health Sciences effective July 1.

More than 100 mid-level administrators, deans, directors and department heads, representing 24 countries participated. The program consisted of case studies, presentations, roundtables and intensive training sessions.

“I learned about higher education administration, management, managing programs, leadership assessment, strategic planning and finance relative to my role as an administrator,” Dr. Shanderson said.

Dr. Shanderson received a certificate upon completion of the program and described the experience as “transformative.”

“I was exposed to master teachers, college presidents, finance and administration leaders, and strategic planners who really discussed the challenges that they face and also the challenges that exist in higher education,” she explained.

Foundation Receives Gift from Winners of Up to Us Competition

The Stockton Foundation recently received a gift of $7,000 from Stockton’s winning team of the Up to Us 2015 competition.

A $5,000 donation was used to create the Up to Us 2015 Term Scholarship, which will provide a $1,000 award to qualified undergraduates over the next five years. The team also donated $2,000 to the General Scholarship Fund in support of the Students Helping Students Initiative.

Stockton University’s team won the $10,000 grand prize in the Up to Us 2015 competition, competing against 45 universities from across the country and raising awareness about the nation’s long-term national debt.

“This was their money to spend however they chose, and they decided to donate it to the Foundation,” said Nick Sena, assistant director of Annual Giving. “It is the first time the Foundation’s staff can recall students donating such a generous amount to fully fund a scholarship at this level. It is a perfect example of ‘paying it forward.’ We are proud to recognize them alongside some of our most generous alumni and donors, and share the impact they make.”

Craig Stambaugh, associate dean of Students, and Laurie Griscom, director of Events Services and Campus Center Operations, served as the team’s advisers. The team consisted of five students: Angelo Bechara, Louis Chevere, Maryam Sarhan, Brad Ross and Victoria Muraoka.