

THE RICHARD STOCKTON COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY

Office of Public Relations
Pomona, NJ 08240

***Stockton Council of Black Faculty and Staff
Honors Jackson, Gonzalez, Lakew***

***Awards Dinner and Dance Set for Thursday, November 8, 2007 at
Carriage House in Galloway***

For Immediate Release

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Galloway Twp., NJ –Three members of the Stockton College community will share in the Annual Merit Award at The Richard Stockton College Council of Black Faculty and Staff Annual Awards Dinner and Dance.

Mr. Brian Jackson of Galloway Twp., Dr. Thomasa Gonzalez of Hammonton and Dr. Melaku Lakew of Mays Landing will be the co-recipients of the Council's highest award, while Mr. Orkeem Davis, class of 1994, was selected to receive the Distinguished Alumni honor. James L. Cooper, Esq., Richlyn F. Goddard, Ph.D., Mr. Ralph E. Hunter, Sr. and Mayor Ralph Peterson will receive Lifetime Achievement Awards.

The event takes place on Thursday, November 8, 2007 at the Carriage House in Galloway Twp. A cash bar cocktail hour kicks off the evening at 5:30 p.m., followed by dinner and the awards program, beginning at 6:30 p.m.

According to Council President Stephen Davis, "The response to this event has been overwhelming and has really taken off in recent years. We have reached the point of becoming a major fundraiser for the benefit of the Stockton College Foundation's scholarship fund."

Now in its 26th year, The Annual Awards Dinner and Dance has always been an important event on the social schedule of the Stockton community. In recent years, it has begun to attract many interested parties including elected officials, influential business leaders and supporters of higher education. In addition to raising funds, the event honors outstanding members of the community for their contributions, as well as outstanding Alumni.

Framing this year's event is the theme of "Honoring and Celebrating Diversity."

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The evening includes a gourmet dinner and the musical accompaniment of The Dynasty Band.

Dr. Vera King Farris, President Emerita, is Honorary Chair for the event.

Tickets are priced \$75 each or \$70 each when purchasing two or more tickets. Call Trish Collins at (609) 652-4523 for ticket information or Yubi Pena at (609) 652-4382 to advertise in the program booklet. Tickets are also available online at www.stockton.edu (In the Keyword and Search box, type in the keywords "Black Council").

Brian K. Jackson is the Executive Assistant to the President at The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey. Prior to joining Stockton College in January 1998, Brian served as Manager of Administrative Planning, Budgeting and Research and as an adjunct instructor at Atlantic-Cape Community College.

Born in Boston, Massachusetts and raised in Tallahassee, Florida and Baltimore, Maryland, Brian credits his parents for encouraging him to attain his education and ultimately steering him to a career in higher education. Brian is a proud graduate of one of most prestigious as well as the third oldest high school in the nation, Baltimore City College High School. He also holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Economics and Finance and an MBA from Southern New Hampshire University (the first to receive a master's degree in his family). Brian was selected as one of fifty emerging leaders in New Jersey to receive a 2007 Leadership New Jersey Fellowship.

An active and passionate volunteer, Brian serves on several community boards including Family Service Association, the African American Heritage Museum of Southern New Jersey, Making Precious Strides, and the United Way of Atlantic County where he has chaired the Community Initiatives Committee for over seven years. Brian has received several awards and proclamations in recognition of his community service, including The Alan Angelo Award for Community Service and most recently the 2007 George Lynn Volunteer of the Year Award, presented annually by the United Way of Atlantic County to a volunteer who shows an extraordinary commitment to the organization and to the general well-being of the community.

Among his affiliations, Brian is a devoted member of Kappa Sigma Fraternity and the Atlantic County Community Emerging Leaders. A member of the Council for ten years, Brian served as Second Vice President of the Council of Black Faculty & Staff for several years and played a vital role in the success of the Annual Awards Dinner and Dance and the establishment of the Council's Endowment with the Stockton College Foundation.

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Dr. Thomasa González is a committed social worker and educator. She currently serves as the Dean of Students at The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey. She has worked at Stockton since 1986, holding many positions including Director of Counseling and Health Services and Associate Dean of Students. Dr. González is among the colleges' most vital community members.

Dr. González received a Bachelor of Social Work (B.S.W.) from Kean University, a Master of Social Work (M.S.W.) from the Graduate School of Social Work at Rutgers University, and a Ph.D. in Social Work from the Union Institute and University Graduate School of Interdisciplinary Science. Dr. González trained as a Psychoanalyst in the Philadelphia School of Psychoanalysis. She is licensed as a Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) and is a member of the Academy of Certified Social Workers (ACSW).

During her tenure at Stockton College, Dr. González was instrumental in the development of the Counseling Center, the Learning Access Program, and the Drug and Alcohol Education program. In 1998, she orchestrated the restructuring of the Health Services operation on campus, which was successfully merged with the previously mentioned programs into what is now known as the Wellness Center at Stockton. Continuing with her appointment as the Dean of Students in 2005, her advocacy for student life on campus has always been paramount. She established the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities and is overseeing the restructuring of the Residential Life Office.

Thomasa is an alumna of the Hispanic Women's Leadership Institute, a year-long institute sponsored by the Eagleton Institute of Rutgers University. She has received several awards and recognition for her scholarly presentations, community service and for her dedicated work with students in colleges and universities.

Dr. González has served as a member on many boards of directors and statewide committees, such as Proceed Incorporated in northern New Jersey and CASA PRAC in Vineland, New Jersey. She is a member of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW)-NJ where she has served as a unit chair for Atlantic, Cumberland, and Cape May Counties. She has also served as a delegate to the NASW National Assembly. She is a member of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) and the Hispanic Association of Higher Education (HAHE.)

Dr. González is a proud founding mother of Lambda Theta Alpha, Latin Sorority, Inc., the first Latin Sorority in the United States with chapters across the nation and the Caribbean. She was instrumental in founding the Zeta Chapter at Stockton--which will be celebrating its twentieth anniversary this December—and considers this as one of her most prolific accomplishments as it has guaranteed that members have a home away from home on campus. Furthermore, thousands of hours of service, scholarships and support are provided to the most-needy members across the nation. She has served as advisor, teacher and mentor to member students for more than 30 years.

Dr. González has a daughter, Zaira, who is a Stockton graduate, and two grandsons, Joshua and Anthony, and a fiancé, Rafael Bracero.

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Dr. Melaku Lakew graduated from University of California, Berkeley with a Bachelors degree in Economics and Sociology. In 1980 he also received his Ph.D. in economics from the University of California, Riverside. Before coming to Stockton he taught at University of California, Los Angeles and Portland State University in Oregon.

Melaku joined the economics program at Stockton in fall 1982 and served the college in various capacities. He has served as the coordinator of the economic programs, the president of the Council of Black Faculty and Staff, and chaired the Administration and Finance committee. It is estimated that Melaku taught more than 5000 students since he joined Stockton.

His scholarly works covers economic pedagogy, African economic development, the economics of immigration, and monetary theory. He has published in both Ameharic his native language and English in various journals on different topics including the impact of globalization on the working people of the third world. He co-authored a book *Exploration in Economic Reasoning* distributed by Dotlearn, Inc. The book has been adopted by over 35 colleges and universities all over the country to teach introductory economics classes. Melaku has also presented his scientific research works nationally and internationally at various professional conferences including the Western and Eastern American Economic Association gathering.

Melaku has co-authored and received grants from National Science Foundation while he was teaching at Stockton State College. Since 1982 he has been involved in many important college wide committees and co-chaired the Vision 2010 Affordability Committee and been involved in two major curriculum transformation projects in the college during his tenure at Stockton: internationalizing the curriculum and quantitative skills across the curriculum. He represented his division of Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Melaku Lakew is founder of Books Without Borders and has served as a board member and chaired the Greater Philadelphia Ethiopian Community Association. Books Without Borders shipped thousands of books to Ethiopia and South Africa and to other countries. He is also a board member and chairman for Kidus Amanuel Ethiopian Orthodox Church in Philadelphia. He founded *SEED (Society of Ethiopians Established in Diaspora)* in 1992 with his friends and currently he is the chairman of this organization. For four years Melaku served as a member of the Galloway Township Planning Board.

Twelve years ago, Melaku with his study tour program to South Africa open the continent's doors to Stockton. During the last twelve years students and faculties were able to visit the ancestral homeland of the African-American community. He brought a new option to our students who were unable to participate in a comprehensive study abroad program by enabling them to have international experiences through the option of study tour. Over 200 students traveled to South Africa from Stockton to study. They observed an evolving nation from racially based minority rule to that of a model of multiracial democracy.

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Melaku received The Dusty Award from the Stockton Federation of Teachers in 2004, the Distinguished Service Award from The Tri-State Ethio Ider of Philadelphia and the Outstanding Leaders Award from the Greater Philadelphia Ethiopian community in 1997. Just recently the United Black Student Society recognized him through the Distinguished Faculty Award for many years of service in leading the South Africa study tour. He is also a recipient of Stockton's Merit Award.

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