

## **Stockton Council of Black Faculty and Staff To Honor Nine at Nov. 5 Scholarship Dinner**

### ***For Immediate Release***

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**Galloway NJ** -The Council of Black Faculty and Staff of Stockton University will honor eight members of the community and one student group with awards at its annual dinner dance on **Thursday, Nov. 5.**

The event, which is open to the public, will be held beginning at 6 p.m. at the Stockton Seaview Hotel & Golf Club in Galloway.

The council acts to foster communication among the Stockton community and the state concerning the voice and position of African-American personnel and students at Stockton. The council provides scholarships and supports the recruitment, hiring and well-being of African-American faculty, staff and other under-represented student groups.

The honorees this year are:

**Merydawilda Colon**, executive director of the Stockton Center for Community Engagement and a professor of Social Work, who will receive a Lifetime Achievement Award. Colon holds a Master of Philosophy in Social Welfare Degree and a Doctor of Philosophy in Social Welfare Degree from The City University of New York. She began her career teaching high school after earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in Secondary Education from the Universidad de Puerto Rico.

Colon has taught at Stockton since 2001, after working as a hospice social worker and HIV-AIDS case manager for the Atlantic City Medical Center.

She currently serves as the chair of the Youth and Social Service Subcommittee for the Atlantic City and Pleasantville Municipal Planning Board and as a member of the Human Rights Committee for Career Opportunity Development, Inc., among other groups.

As leader of the Stockton Center for Community Engagement, Colon founded a Homework  
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Completion Program at Stanley S. Holmes Village in Atlantic City, in collaboration with the Atlantic City Police Department and the Atlantic City Housing Authority and Urban Development Agency. She also initiated two programs for English Learners in the community, among other projects.

**Albert B. Kelly** president/CEO and founder of Gateway Community Action Partnership, Inc., will also receive the Lifetime Achievement Award. Gateway is one of the largest community agencies in New Jersey with an annual budget of over \$50 million. It serves over 56,000 low-income to moderate-income people through more than 40 programs at sites in Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem counties and employs over 700 people.

Kelly, the mayor of Bridgeton, has served on many boards including the Bridgeton Board of Education, the Cumberland County College Board of Trustees, as a former City Council president, and former president of the Bridgeton Police Athletic League.

He currently serves a member of the Bridgeton Area Chamber of Commerce, the Cumberland County Improvement Authority, the County Workforce Investment Board; the Cumberland County Black Hall Of Fame; Cumberland County Empowerment Zone, Cumberland Development Corporation, and on the advisory board for PNC Bank and the board of directors of Inspira Health Network. He helped start the Sunday Soup Kitchen Program, which has served over 25,000 meals in eight years.

Kelly is also currently a member of the Walter Rand Institute Advisory Board, the Code Blue Homeless Shelter Team, second vice president of the New Jersey League of Municipalities and a board member of the NJ Conference of Mayors, New Jersey vice president of the Urban Mayors Association and Adelante Tres!, Hispanic Heritage and Multicultural Celebration group.

The Bridgeton native is a graduate of Trenton State College (now The College of New Jersey) and has worked in the state and municipal court systems. He has received recognition and awards at local, state and national levels for his dedication to community services.

**Arnaldo Cordero-Roman**, and Stockton **Trustee Madeleine Deininger** are this year's Merit honorees.

**Cordero-Roman**, associate professor of Spanish at Stockton, holds a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from the University of Maryland and a B.A. and M.A. in Hispanic Studies from the University of Puerto Rico.

He has taught at Stockton since 1999 and previously held teaching position at Howard University and St. Mary's College of Maryland.

He currently serves as the faculty representative to the Student Affairs Board of Trustees, as chair of the Student Affairs faculty committee, and as a member of the advisory boards of the Center for Global Engagement, the International Studies Minor and Veteran Affairs, among others. He is co-chair of the Committee for Diversity, Equity and Affirmative Action.

**Deininger**, a 1980 graduate of Stockton with a B.A. in Liberal Studies, is currently chair of the Board of Trustees.

She is the founder and president of Sonoma, California-based Kismet Wines, Inc. where she  
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has developed a highly successful national marketing and sales program for California and European fine wines. She is a general partner at Bedrock Vineyards and has also worked as a freelance photographer, writer and editor.

She and her husband, Joel Peterson, sponsor the annual Ravenswood Poetry Reading Series at Stockton.

She also holds M.A. in Liberal Studies from Dartmouth College and an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from Stockton.

The Distinguished Stockton Alumni honorees are: **Rick Epps-Kearney, Marion McClary, Jr.** and **Stacey Smith.**

**Epps-Kearney** is a teacher at Atlantic City High School, where he teaches Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition and African American Literature. He is the adviser to the National Honor Society and one of the coaches of the school's academic team.

In 2014, he was selected Teacher of the Year for Atlantic City High School and District Teacher of the Year for Atlantic City Public Schools in 2014, and was named as one of the 10 most inspiring teachers in 2007 by the Atlantic City High School graduating class.

He holds bachelor degrees in Sociology and Literature from Stockton and is currently pursuing an M.A. in American Studies from Stockton.

He was the graduate student recipient of the 2014 Stockton Community Engagement Award and in 2012, he was the recipient of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated – North Atlantic Region's Excellence in Education Award. Also, he was recognized by Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Alpha Upsilon Chapter of Atlantic City for his commitment to education with the chapter's 2014 Scholarship Award.

**Marion McClary Jr.** is a professor of Biology and co-director of the School of Natural Sciences on the Metropolitan campus of Fairleigh Dickinson University (FDU). McClary received his B.S. in Marine Science from Stockton and his Ph.D. in Zoology from Duke University. McClary's role in Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, Inc. at Stockton prepared him to serve on the executive board of the Board of Trustees for the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) as secretary. As a member of Christ Church in Montclair and Rockaway, NJ, McClary was co-director and tutor in the Learning Center with his wife, Madlyn.

In the community service arm of Christ Church, Impact Community Development Corporation (ICDC), McClary served as academic director and tutor for the Youth Leadership Institute. At Christ Church in Rockaway, McClary currently serves as a teacher in the Children's and Joining Our Church Family Ministries.

At FDU, McClary is the faculty athletics representative and coordinator of the Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics), a grant sponsored by the National Science Foundation with the purpose of doubling the number of minorities earning B.S. degrees in STEM.

McClary's current research focuses on the nerve impulses in crayfish and shrimp that are caused by various chemicals.

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**Smith** is an instructor at Rowan University, where she has taught Introduction to the Courts and Theories of Crime and Criminality. As a graduate assistant at Arizona State University, she assisted in teaching introductory courses on Criminal Justice and Criminology.

Her previous career includes working as a New Jersey certified childcare provider and managing an in-home childcare facility.

She holds an M. S. Criminology and Criminal Justice from Arizona State University and a B.A. in Criminal Justice from Stockton.

While at Stockton, she served as vice president of the Unified Black Students Society and co-founded the Focused Educated Motivated Aspiring Ladies Empowering Society (F.E.M.A.L.E.S)

Her community service has included serving as a board member of the Focus Point Youth Ministry at the Restoration Christian Fellowship Church, in Sicklerville, NJ; organizing holiday programs for the elderly at Laurel Manor in Stratford, NJ and being the keynote speaker at the Winslow Township, NJ High School and Middle School Commencement Ceremony in Atco, NJ.

She also participated in the National HIV/AIDS Day Walk in Phoenix, Ariz., organized the Helping Our People Excel (H.O.P.E.) March and has worked with the Atlantic City Rescue Mission, the Carpenter's Shelter in Alexandria, Va. and the Walkathon against Homelessness in Washington, D.C.

The Outstanding Stockton Student or Club award will go to **F.E.M.A.L.E.S**, Focused, Educated, Motivated, Aspiring Ladies Empowering Society, which was founded in 2006.

Its mission is to promote unity, leadership and sisterhood within Stockton University and the community it serves; to inspire women to discover their goals, passions and purpose and to serve the community through promoting education.

The organization's leadership includes: Kadejah Lawrence , president; Melanie Atallah, vice president; Allyson Crawford, secretary; Taylor Snyder, treasurer; Sydnei Devose-Fletcher, community service; Nina Richardson, sergeant-at-arms; Shaneka Gearhart, historian and Shirley Pope, public relations.

**Stockton's Interim President Harvey Kesselman**, a member of the Class of 1979, is the Special Recognition Honoree. He has more than 35 years of experience in higher education and has served Stockton in many leadership roles, including as provost and executive vice president, dean of the School of Education, interim vice president for Administration and Finance, CEO of the Southern Regional Institute (SRI) and Educational Technology Training Center (ETTC), and vice president for Student Affairs.

Kesselman is a nationally known educator who is noted for his emphasis on putting students first.

He is involved in many national academic organizations and is a frequent presenter at the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), the American Council on Education (ACE), and the Society for College and University Planning (SCUP). He also serves as a reviewer for the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE).

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Kesselman received his bachelor's degree in Political Science from Stockton, and was in the inaugural group of students when Stockton began classes in 1971. He received his master's in Student Personnel Services/Counseling from Rowan University, and his doctorate in Higher Education Administration from Widener University.

Since 1981, the Council of Black Faculty and Staff has provided over \$274,500 in scholarships to Stockton students and has awarded \$24,000 to undergraduate, graduate and doctoral recipients for fiscal year 2015-16.

Net proceeds from the dinner help support scholarships for minority students. Tickets are \$85 each or \$850 for a table, and may be purchased [online](#) by the Oct. 19 deadline.

"It remains the council's mission to provide financial support through scholarships, which makes the difference in helping students continue their education at Stockton," said Patricia Collins, council president.

For more information about the CBFS or the awards dinner, to place a camera-ready ad in the program book or to make a donation, please email [cbfs@stockton.edu](mailto:cbfs@stockton.edu) by Oct. 19 or visit the council's [website](#).

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