

STOCKTON COLLEGE

THE RICHARD STOCKTON COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY



Stockton Center for Community Schools to Build School Gardens in Atlantic City

College Students, Community Volunteers, Teachers Come Together at New York Avenue School

For Immediate Release

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Galloway Township, NJ- The calendar might say fall, but two new gardens will soon spring from the earth at New York Avenue School in Atlantic City.

Through the efforts of the Stockton Center for Community Schools, Atlantic City Public Schools and a dedicated team of volunteers, the local school will have two actual gardens installed on Saturday to accompany a "Garden curriculum" to meet state standards in academic subjects.

Stockton students, faculty and administration, New York Avenue School students and teachers and the volunteer team will meet at the school at 11 a.m., Saturday October 24 to complete the first phase of building a raised bed vegetable garden and a flower garden to be designated as the "reading garden" at the inner city school. The "reading garden" is envisioned as a place where storytelling, songs and reading will take place.

"It is fitting that the building of these gardens will take place this Saturday, United Nations Day, a celebration of the achievement of our most treasured human aspirations," said Dr. Harvey Kesselman, Stockton's Dean of the School of Education. "This is a perfect way to launch our Community Schools initiative."

The goal for the day is to build three or four of the raised bed vegetable gardens and to complete the design for the reading garden, according to Dr. Reva Curry, Interim Director of Stockton's Community Partnerships. Subsequently the wood used in the raised beds will be stained, the soil, donated by the Atlantic County Municipal Utilities Authority (ACMUA), will be delivered and a winter planting will take place, Dr. Curry said.

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The school gardens represent the first stage of Stockton's new Community Schools program, designed as the latest in the College's community initiatives. Coordinated by faculty member Professor Joe Rubenstein, the program helps provide college resources for the aid of the southern New Jersey region. "These projects are of mutual benefit to the school and Stockton," Dr. Curry said. "The schools gain resources they otherwise would not have access to and our students have the broadening experience of service to our neighbors. Stockton's Community Schools provide a great win-win scenario."

In addition to the gardens, the following Community Schools projects are on tap for New York Avenue School:

- Teacher assistance: Stockton students have been assigned to various classrooms to mentor and provide homework help.
- Mural: Design and planning of an interior art mural is taking place at the school.
- Healthy active lifestyle: Stockton athletes will come to the school to encourage physical education and activities.

In addition, Stockton's Community Schools are establishing an after-school program at Sovereign Avenue School; and a parent center in which Atlantic City School parents might become more involved in their sons' and daughters' educations, and a "green" initiatives program in conjunction with the schools and the ACMUA.

For more information or to help with Stockton's Community Schools initiative, contact Dr. Reva Curry at reva.curry@stockton.edu or call 609-652-4535.