

## **Stockton Welcomes Nelida Valentin to Board, Former EOF Student Is V.P. of Princeton Area Community Foundation**

***For Immediate Release; with photos on [flickr](#)***

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**Galloway, N.J.** - Stockton University today welcomed Nelida Valentin as the newest member of the Board of Trustees. Valentin, who graduated with honors in 1986, first came to Stockton through the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) and went on to a career that includes leadership positions with the Princeton Area Community Foundation, NJIT's Innovation Institute and the Newark Workforce Investment Board.

"I am extraordinarily pleased that Nelida is joining the board," said President Harvey Kesselman, who has known her since 1982, when he was EOF director. "She has a unique perspective as an alumna with expertise in grants, community service, Hispanic affairs, social and economic development initiatives, and programs connecting students to the workforce. We welcome her home to Stockton, and we intend to take full advantage of her exceptional skills and experience on behalf of our students and the entire community."

Valentin, a resident of Trenton, is currently vice president of Grants and Programs for the Princeton Area Community Foundation. She holds a master's degree in Political Science/Public Policy from Rutgers University, and a B.A. in Business Studies from Stockton. She has taught several master's level courses on Leadership and Diversity as an adjunct faculty member at Rutgers-Newark.

"I am extremely honored to serve on the Board of Trustees of my alma mater, Stockton University," Valentin said. "National data trends show that higher education, including the attainment of a degree and high quality credentials, is key to our national and international competitiveness."

"Personally, I would not have achieved a career trajectory full of such challenging and positive

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experiences as I have enjoyed without a college degree,” she continued. “Stockton provided an environment for me to grow and experience education with as wide a lens as possible; to project a future of unlimited possibilities. The Educational Opportunity Program, led then by Dr. Harvey Kesselman, gave me an opportunity to feel included on a college campus. It made an extraordinary difference, providing financial and emotional supports that made college a real possibility for me.

“I am pleased to serve and to have an opportunity to give back to Stockton, and to support the commitment Dr. Kesselman has toward high-quality education and inclusiveness,” Valentin said. “I trust campus students see the value in their education, and the supportive environment that I am certain is endemic of Stockton's culture.”

The board also heard about the success of Stockton 2015 graduates six months after commencement: 88 percent of those surveyed reported that they were either employed or in graduate school.

Christy Cunningham, associate director of the Stockton Career Center, presented findings from a survey of conducted by the Stockton Polling Institute and verified by the Office of Institutional Research. Over 700 graduates responded out of 1,936, a 40 percent response rate. Seventy percent stated that their occupation was related or very related to their field of study, and 74 percent of the employed graduates reported being somewhat or very satisfied with their jobs.

Most found jobs in New Jersey, with 82 percent employed in-state and another 9.5 percent combined working in neighboring states, with 5.1 percent in Pennsylvania, 3.1 percent in New York and 1.3 percent in Delaware. Another 2 percent found jobs in in Florida.

Stockton graduates outpaced the 84 percent of graduates nationwide who were employed or in graduate school after six months, based on data from the National Association of Colleges & Employers (NACE).

Of those furthering their education, 68.9 percent of the Stockton graduates were getting master's degrees, 14.6 percent were in a Ph.D. program, 6 percent were in medical school and 2.6 percent were pursuing law degrees.

The board approved summer tuition rates and fees that will allow students to take three courses for the price of two, as long as at least one course is taken at any of Stockton's four instructional sites in Manahawkin, Atlantic City, Hammonton or Woodbine.

Under this plan, one four-credit course will cost \$1,599.08 tuition and fees, two-to-three courses (8 to 12 credits) will cost \$3,198.16, and each additional four-credit course will cost \$1,599.08.

The board approved the university's state budget request of \$34,455,758 for Fiscal Year 2018. The request seeks state funding for pensions and benefits for 346 positions above the 764 positions currently funded. It also includes approximately \$5 million for equipment for the Unified Science Center 2 currently under construction, and \$7.27 million to restore the university's direct state appropriation to its 2006 level of \$25.665 million.

Dean Theresa Bartolotta of the School of Health Sciences presented its Leadership Award to Adeola Sonaike, national director of the Get Fit Program at the Family Resource Network. Stockton opened a quarter-mile fitness trail with 10 stations for stretching and strength training that loops through a scenic stretch of the campus earlier this year.

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The trail is part of Get FIT @ Stockton, an exercise and nutrition program that helps individuals with developmental disabilities live healthier lives. The program, now in its third year, is a partnership between Stockton, Family Resource Network and The Arc of Atlantic County.

“Dr. Sonaika and her colleagues at the Family Resource Network are true partners with Stockton,” said Bartolotta. “We look forward to continuing our work with FRN to improve the quality of life for all individuals in our community.”

Sydney Sykes was appointed as the student board member of the Stockton Aviation Research & Technology Park. Sykes, a resident of Egg Harbor Township, is double-majoring in Sustainability with an Energy concentration, and Applied Physics; she is minoring in Mathematics.

For more information about Stockton University, visit [Stockton.edu](http://Stockton.edu).

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