

STOCKTON COLLEGE

THE RICHARD STOCKTON COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY



Richard Stockton College to Honor the Distinguished Life and Legacy of President Emerita Dr. Vera King Farris

A Celebration of Life Event is Scheduled for Jan. 17

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Contact: Tim Kelly
Susan Allen
Office of Public Relations
Galloway Township, NJ 08240
Tim.Kelly@stockton.edu
(609) 652-4950

Galloway Township, NJ- The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey sadly lost President Emerita Dr. Vera King Farris on November 28, 2009. Dr. Farris was Stockton's longest-serving president in its history, presiding for 20 years during a period of rapid growth and change. Stockton College will honor the life and legacy of Dr. Farris with a "Celebration of Life" event on **Sunday, January 17, 2010** in the **Sports Center** on the Galloway Township campus.

"It is fitting this celebration takes place in the Sports Center, one of Dr. Farris' favorite spots on campus," said Dr. Herman J. Saatkamp, Jr., President. "She delighted in our graduations there, and she was one of Stockton's most enthusiastic sports fans. We hope a large number of community members will come and honor her memory."

The program and reception will take place from 2-4 p.m. To accommodate the number of people expected to attend, the College is asking attendees to register in advance. This may be done online by visiting www.stockton.edu and clicking on the Celebration of Life icon; or by calling Kathleen Cochrane in the Office of Development at 609-652-4658. A brief registration process in advance of the event will take place at the Sports Center from 1-2 p.m.

Dr. Farris, an Atlantic City native, was named Stockton's third president on May 25, 1983, and she became the first African American woman president of a New Jersey state college. From 1983 until her retirement in 2003, she successfully transformed a young, growing state college into a nationally-ranked higher education institution dedicated to delivering a first-rate, affordable, and accessible education to students.

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Below are just a few of the accomplishments under Dr. Farris' leadership at Stockton:

- 1990: The College opened one of the nation's first Holocaust Resource Centers, (now the Sara and Sam Schoffer Holocaust Resource Center).
- 1991: The College was reaccredited unconditionally for another 10 years by the Middle States Association Commission on Higher Education, with a special commendation for achieving social and intellectual diversity.
- 1993: All the buildings comprising the academic complex went on line with a new environmentally friendly, state-of-the-art, geothermal heating and cooling system, which saved more than \$300,000 each year in fuel costs.
- 1994: The College was selected as training site for the World Cup soccer team from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which advanced to the second round of the tournament for the first time in the nation's history.
- 1996: The Arts and Sciences Building, designed by renowned architect Michael Graves, opened and a resolution was passed for the construction of a new multi-purpose Sports Center, which opened in May 2000.
- 1999: The College offered the first Master of Arts program in Holocaust and Genocide Studies in the nation.
- 1999: Stockton was recognized by the Templeton Foundation for outstanding leadership in the field of character development. The foundation lauded Stockton for the CHEER (Civility, Harmony, Education, Environment, and Respect) Conference to reduce prejudice, violence, and bigotry in schools while championing cultural diversity and for the College's leadership role in Holocaust education.
- 1999: President Farris spoke at the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust, hosted by the Prime Minister of Sweden and attended by 44 national heads of state.

Dr. Farris was instrumental in expanding the campus, establishing educational programs, and supporting green initiatives. As the average SAT score rose and the College's academic reputation surged, Dr. Farris was also busy serving students as a role model and mentor.

Stockton students, alumni, faculty, and staff and the surrounding community will gather to remember and celebrate the exceptional legacy of Dr. Vera King Farris, one of Stockton's remarkable treasures. Dr. Farris' vast array of accomplishments is a subtle reminder of an extraordinary life.

For additional information, please contact Kathleen Cochrane in the Office of Development at 609-652-4658.

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