

Stockton's 12th Annual Fannie Lou Hamer Human and Civil Rights Symposium Set Oct. 6

Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman to give keynote address

***For Immediate Release; with Watson Coleman photo;
Coverage invited***

Tuesday, September 22, 2015

Contact: Maryjane Briant
News and Media Relations Director
Galloway Township, NJ 08205
Maryjane.Briant@Stockton.edu
(609) 652-4593

Galloway, NJ –The 12th Annual Fannie Lou Hamer Human and Civil Rights Symposium, "Race and Social Justice," will be held on **Tuesday, Oct. 6**, featuring U.S. Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman, D-12, New Jersey's first black congresswoman, as the keynote speaker and a panel discussion: "Race and Social Justice: Do Black Lives Matter?"

Watson Coleman became the first African American woman to lead the New Jersey Democratic State Committee when she was elected chair in 2002. She served as the Majority Leader of the New Jersey General Assembly from 2006 to 2010.

Watson Coleman served as a member of the Stockton Board of Trustees from 1981-1998 and was the board's chair from 1990-91. She represents the 12th congressional district, which includes municipalities in Mercer, Middlesex, Somerset and Union counties.

The program, which for the past 11 years has been a sell-out event, is free and open to the public. It will take place starting at 12:30 p.m. in the Performing Arts Center in the M-Wing on the Galloway campus. A reception will follow in the Upper K-Wing.

Distinguished Professor of Criminal Justice Janice Joseph, Associate Professor of Philosophy Anne Pomeroy and Bishop Dwayne Royster, executive director of POWER and founding pastor of Living Water United Church of Christ, will participate in the panel discussion on race and social justice. Donnetrice Allison, associate professor of Communications and Africana Studies, will be the moderator.

The program will also include a selection of freedom songs performed by Stockton's Highest

-more-

-continued from page 1-

Praise vocal group, and a tribute, "The Women of Selma," performed by Afro-One Dance, Drama and Drum Theatre, Inc.

Hamer was a civil rights activist who helped organize the Mississippi Freedom Summer voter registration drive for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee in 1964. She also helped found the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party to oppose her state's all-white delegation at the 1964 Democratic Convention in Atlantic City. Hamer, who died in 1977, brought Mississippi's civil rights struggle to the national stage during a televised speech at the convention.

Her speech galvanized millions of viewers, who heard how African-Americans were being denied the right to vote in various states through intimidation and illegal tests and poll taxes. As a result, two MFDP delegates were given the right to speak at the convention and the other members were seated as guests.

The symposium continues Stockton's tradition of bringing informative educational programs that speak to the life and legacy of Hamer to the university and the wider community.

The event is sponsored by the Africana Studies Program, Unified Black Students Society, Office of the Provost, Office of the President, Office of Institutional Diversity and Equity and the Social Work Program.

#\