

Fleet Reserve Association of Atlantic City To Award New Veteran Scholarship at Stockton

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

Galloway, NJ - Student veterans at Stockton University will benefit from a new scholarship from the Atlantic City branch of the Fleet Reserve Association, which represents U.S. Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard personnel.

Robert Campbell, the group's vice president, and Robert Burness, its secretary, today signed an agreement with Stockton University Interim President Harvey Kesselman and Rick Dovey, chair of the Stockton University Foundation Board of Directors, creating the Fleet Reserve Association Branch 13 Atlantic City Award. The scholarship will provide a minimum of \$1,000 a year for at least the next two years in what is intended to become an annual award.

The award will go to student veterans, with a preference for veterans who served in the U.S. Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard personnel, beginning in the 2016-2017 academic year.

Stockton student veterans who attended the signing were Navy veteran Joshua Melton, a sophomore Sociology major from Galloway, Brianna Cray, a junior Social Work major from Egg Harbor Township who is in the Army reserves, Melissa Bounthisane, a senior Business Finance major from Egg Harbor Township who is in the Air National Guard, and Marine veteran Paul Garraty, a sophomore Criminal Justice major, of Galloway.

"We are honored that you have initiated this, and more importantly the students genuinely appreciate the kind of support this provides," said Kesselman.

Stockton has been nationally recognized as "Best for Vets" by The Military Times. The university's Veteran Affairs program serves over 640 active duty and former service members, according to Tom O'Donnell, assistant dean of students and Veteran Affairs, who was present at the ceremony.

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The Fleet Reserve Association is a community of the sea services: U.S. Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard personnel and veterans. The Fleet Reserve Association works for service people, veterans and their families on Capitol Hill and in their communities, with the guiding principles of loyalty, protection and service to shipmates.

“When I called and told our national people that we had intended to support higher education, particularly if we could find veterans that we could funnel the money to, my national organization thought it was such a great idea that they went out and hired a professional who is going to be a liaison with all of the colleges,” said Campbell, of Mays Landing, a Navy veteran.

“We are anxious to make a real success. Because of what we are doing here, it’s becoming a national program,” he added.

Navy veteran Burness, of Northfield, is a 1981 Stockton Finance graduate and a former Stockton employee.

Kesselman and Dovey were in Stockton’s inaugural class, which took its first classes in the Mayflower Hotel in Atlantic City in 1971. Recalling the early days, Kesselman said, “We had a very large veteran population. In fact among the very first student organizations was the veterans’ organization, because we had many Vietnam veterans coming back when we were founded, and it was at the time of the G.I. Bill.”

“You have a lot of support here, and we could not be happier that you are telling other veterans to come to Stockton,” he told the student veterans in attendance.

Student recipients will be determined by a Scholarship Selection Committee. Recipients are expected to be full-time students with a minimum cumulative GPA 3.0.

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