

Stockton University Opens New Get FIT Trail

Fitness Trail Offers 10 Exercise Stations and Is Open to Community Members of All Ability Levels

For Immediate Release; Photos on [Flickr](#); map attached

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

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Galloway, N.J. – A new ¼ mile fitness trail with 10 stations for stretching and strength training loops through a scenic stretch of Stockton University's Pinelands campus. The trail, which opened this week, is available to the public for exercise and recreation.

For students in the School of Health Sciences, the trail offers more than just an exercise opportunity. They are working with individuals with developmental disabilities to help them lead healthy lifestyles.

Alysia Mastrangelo, professor of Physical Therapy, Joan Perks, associate professor of Nursing, and Mary Kientz, associate professor of Occupational Therapy, developed 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 (FRN) and The Arc of Atlantic County.

Jillian Maisch, an Occupational Therapy graduate student, said that the new trail is "beneficial for students and our partners."

Students are developing inter-professional relationships and gaining real-life experience helping clients who have developmental disabilities, now at a specially designed site with exercise equipment and detailed signage explaining each exercise, she explained. "Health isn't just exercise. It's about nutrition and an overall healthy lifestyle," Maisch explained.

Mastrangelo said that the trail "truly demonstrates what collective impact is. We are making it possible for all to exercise here at Stockton. As a health care provider, I really do believe that exercise is medicine and prevention is the key to a lot of disease and illness, and if we can all just get out there and walk, whether you are walking, running or rolling, you can do it around the trail here."

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Get FIT Trail/ page 2

Theresa Bartolotta, dean of the School of Health Sciences, commended the Stockton faculty members who took the lead in bringing the trail to fruition.

“They are demonstrating what our mission is for the School of Health Sciences to improve the health of the community that surrounds us,” she said.

A team from Stockton’s Facilities and Plant Operations worked to install the signage and exercise props.

Dozens of Stockton students, faculty and staff as well as representatives from The Arc of Atlantic County and Family Resource Network attended a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Monday, April 11.

Pat Jones, CEO of The Arc of Atlantic County, said, “The Arc couldn’t be happier to be a community partner with Stockton. I know that our participants who are here tonight are having fun.”

Members of The Arc in the audience responded with cheers.

After the ribbon was cut, guests walked the trail stopping at each station. Stockton students helped members of The Arc perfect their technique for various exercises.

“We are here today to really show what happens when you bring different communities together, unlikely partners together, to combine their efforts and develop opportunities so that everyone irrespective of their ability level can get fit here at Stockton University,” said Adeola Sonaiké, national Get FIT director at Family Resource Network.

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