

Stockton, University of Johannesburg Join to Teach Computer Coding Skills for Global Market

March Programs Kick Off Effort to Reach Children in South Jersey, South Africa, Leading to Future Careers in Growing Math/Science Field

For Immediate Release; photos of Chetty and Ackerman

Monday, February 29, 2016

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 - Stockton University has formed a partnership with the University of Johannesburg to help teach students in South Jersey and South Africa about computer coding, a project that could lead students to careers in math and science and help the United States to close a gap of over a million computing jobs expected to go unfilled by 2020.

Amy Ackerman, associate professor of Instructional Technology in Stockton's School of Education, has partnered with Jacqui Chetty, a professor within the Department of Applied Information Systems (AIS) at the University of Johannesburg, to develop a series of events for Stockton Master of Arts in Instructional Technology (MAIT) students, alumni, faculty and staff, students from area K-12 schools, and area teachers and future teachers interested in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). Graduate students pursuing Stockton's [Training and Development](#) Certificate for corporate and higher education learners will also participate in these offerings.

"We are working collaboratively to develop free, online tutorials that will demystify computer coding and enable more students to progress from problem-solving to coding and other careers in this fast-growing field," said Ackerman. "The \$11,500 program, with matching funds from Stockton's 2020 Initiatives program and the University of Johannesburg, also has the potential to reach teachers worldwide who want to utilize innovative but inexpensive teaching methods in computer science. All this fits into Stockton's themes of delivering excellence in teaching and encouraging global perspectives, with a current focus on STEM."

-more-

-continued from page 1-

Chetty's work focuses on cultivating students' computer programming skills as they enter the workplace. Her research addresses how to better prepare students for the challenges of learning computer programming through the use of innovative teaching tools. She has published conference papers and journal articles on a national and international level. Her involvement with Lego Mindstorm robotics, at the university as well as at the elementary school level, is fostering exciting developments.

Chetty will be in southern New Jersey from March 5-20, visiting schools including the Rieck Avenue School in Millville, Southern Regional Middle School, Tuckerton Elementary School, Egg Harbor Township High School, the William Davies School in Hamilton Township, as well as at Stockton. She will speak to students, faculty, and staff regarding career opportunities for pursuing STEM areas with an emphasis on computer programming skills as she conducts demonstrations with Lego Mindstorm robots. In some of Chetty's sessions, students will benefit from hands-on programming experience with Scratch, a free app that can be used for digital storytelling.

Students at the South Jersey schools are expected to have ongoing opportunities to use Skype and other virtual meeting tools to interact with students in South Africa, learning together and helping to develop more effective methods for teaching computer coding skills. The collaboration also will involve Service-Learning projects at both universities.

Chetty will be talking to future teachers through Stockton's Career Center and the School of Education. She will judge a high school computer science competition on coding on March 18 in Stockton's D-Wing Atrium.

The public is invited to two free events at Stockton related to this effort:

- **Wednesday, March 9:** The southern New Jersey chapter of the Computer Science Teachers Association meeting will hear Chetty speak about the global status of computer science education, from 6- 7:30 p.m. in the Campus Center's Meeting Room 5.
- **Thursday, March 10:** The documentary film, "Big Dream," which tells the stories of seven young women and the challenges they face in pursuing their passions for science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), will be screened at 4:30 p.m. in the Campus Center Theater. Following the screening, a panel of women professionals who work in STEM fields, including Chetty and Lynne Kesselman, Stockton's first lady and a nationally recognized technology educator, will share their experiences and answer questions. To ensure adequate seating is available, attendees are asked to reserve their seats at Stockton.edu/bigdream.

For more information on the growing demand for computing jobs, visit <https://www.ncwit.org/edjobsmap>.

Click for more information on Stockton's [Master of Arts in Instructional Technology](#) program and the [Training and Development Certificate](#) or visit Stockton.edu/grad.

#