

STOCKTON COLLEGE

THE RICHARD STOCKTON COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY



Stockton Professor Norma Boakes Turns Flat Paper Into an Effective Teaching Tool

Students' Origami Projects on Display April 29

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Galloway Township, NJ- The ancient Japanese tradition of origami is more than just an art form; it's a valuable teaching tool. Norma Boakes, associate professor of education at The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey, uses origami as a way to educate students about culture, history and mathematics. On **Thursday, April 29, 2010**, Professor Boakes and her students will host the 3rd Annual Origami Showcase from **2:30 p.m. to 4:20 p.m.** in the Lower E-Wing gallery near the Library entrance on Stockton's main Galloway Township campus.

In addition to teaching courses in math education, methods of teaching, and technology integration, Professor Boakes instructs "The Art and Math of Origami," which she developed from her dissertation work at Temple University. Professor Boakes's dissertation focused on the impact of origami on the mathematical skills of middle school-age children. Over the course of the semester, students in her college course learn the art of paper folding while developing a sense of the art's link to geometric concepts, history in many cultures around the world and its significance as an art form. As a final project for this course, students are asked to develop a collection of origami, which is formally presented to the public and displayed in Stockton's Library. This year's origami showcase highlighting the spring semester's student collections is themed "Animals of the World."

Professor Boakes has added a new twist to this year's show. Beyond the over 100 origami models that will be on display, guests will be able to craft their own origami models. Professor Boakes's students have been asked to produce instructional origami videos as part of their coursework, similar to what one might find on YouTube or OrigamiTube. Visitors at the event will be able to view and try their hand at some of these instructional videos.

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The showcase will feature more than just paper animals. The Atlantic City Aquarium has agreed to join the event bringing animals found on our beaches and in our ocean in a portable touch tank. From sea stars to horseshoe crabs, this tank will help highlight one of the five main animal themes planned for this year's showcase.

Professor Boakes's research on origami as a tool for improving students' mathematical skills spurred the concept for her college course "The Art and Math of Origami." While the course focuses on mathematics, students find that the experience strengthens their communication skills, concentration and knowledge of cultures beyond their own. Professor Boakes said, "This rich experience proves to be beneficial to students across many majors. This year's origami showcase, as in previous years, is a chance for others to admire and learn about the ancient art of paper folding through this group of budding origamists."



A student in Professor Boakes's origami class prepares for the upcoming April 29 Origami Showcase.

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