

Stockton Honors Late Trustee Dean C. Pappas For His Philanthropy and Service to University

Former Board Chair Curtis Bashaw Recognized for Service

For Immediate Release; with [Bashaw photo](#)

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Galloway, N.J. - The extraordinary contributions and legacy of Dean C. Pappas, the Stockton University trustee and former board chair who lost his battle with cancer on Saturday, were recognized today by the university community at a meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Pappas is remembered as an “extraordinary individual who was kind, gentle, humble and generous,” said President Harvey Kesselman. He noted that Pappas was committed to improving the lives of others, and over nearly a decade of service, used his leadership, expertise and talent to help Stockton grow into one of the top public regional universities in the northern United States.

“Dean Pappas truly loved Stockton, and he contributed both his time and financial resources to enhance the quality of life at Stockton,” Kesselman said. “Dean and his wife Zoe’s gifts to Stockton have made a significant difference in the lives of so many of our campus community members, and his legacy will live on at Stockton forever.”

The Pappases donated \$1 million to establish the Dean C. and Zoe S. Pappas Visiting Scholar Endowment Fund to bring noted scholars and thought leaders to the University for classes, workshops and public events. The inaugural speaker in 2014 was retired Associate Supreme Justice Sandra Day O’Connor.

Pappas had said he underwent “a transformational experience” as an undergraduate college student at Dickinson College in 1961, when he heard the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. speak. He wanted students at Stockton to have similar access to outstanding visiting scholars.

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Dean and Zoe Pappas also committed \$250,000 in July 2015 to the University Foundation to establish a Greek Art and Architecture Fund to provide students with new learning experiences.

The Dean C. and Zoe S. Pappas Center for Hellenic Studies was renamed for them in 2015 to honor their generosity and commitment to scholarship. In 2012, they had donated \$150,000 to endow the work of the Interdisciplinary Center for Hellenic Studies.

The Pappas family, including Dean's siblings, also had endowed the Clement and Helen Pappas Professorship in Hellenic Studies in honor of their parents. He had retired as chairman and co-Chief Executive Officer of Clement, Pappas & Co., Inc., a family-owned food processing company.

"When I saw the empty chair, I felt saddened and I missed his counsel, his intelligence and his kindness," said board Chair Mady Deininger of Pappas. "But we have this wonderful engagement of the Stockton community, which meant so much to Dean and to his family." She called for a moment of silence, and afterward added, "Thanks, Dean, we're thinking of you."

Kesselman noted that Pappas was the son of immigrants and the first person in his family to go to college, and because the Stockton experience is so tied to that dream, it spoke to him. "That's why he became our trustee and our chair - and we all miss him," he said.

"He was immensely successful and immensely humble," said Trustee Raymond Ciccone. "I've never met anyone quite like him."

The community also honored Curtis J. Bashaw of Cape May, N.J., a former chair and member of the board from 2004-2016. He received a chair as a symbol of his leadership, and a certificate in appreciation of his "outstanding leadership, service and other significant contributions to Stockton University and the community."

Under his tenure, Stockton expanded its instructional facilities into Cape May, Ocean and western Atlantic counties, developed many new academic programs, transformed the main campus with new buildings, and became a university.

Deininger cited Bashaw's "passion and attention to detail, particularly in regard to this building" (the Campus Center) and she noted his "good humor, fair-mindedness and civility."

Bashaw said it was "very gratifying" to see Stockton "double in size and stature" during his time on the board. He noted that he appreciated Deininger's compliment on civility, a hallmark of civilization which he fears is currently under siege.

"Stockton has a deep place in my heart and I'll always be there to help," he said.

Bashaw, a former executive director of the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority (CRDA), is co-managing partner of Cape Advisors, a real estate and hospitality enterprise that includes Congress Hall, the Virginia Hotel and other properties in Cape May, the Chelsea Hotel in Atlantic City and a hotel in Sag Harbor, N.Y.

The board also voted to award posthumous degrees to two students who died in the past month, before they were able to receive their diplomas.

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Nikita N. Cross, 35, of Galloway, N.J., was on track to complete her Bachelor of Science degree in Social Work when she was killed by shots fired at a birthday party she was attending in April. The single mother had a 3.08 GPA.

George J. Lees, 33, of Smithville, N.J., was about to obtain his Master of Science degree in Computational Science and was maintaining a 4.0 GPA.

Ten students each received Board of Trustees Fellowship Awards for Distinguished Students to conduct research this summer and fall, with a total of \$6,000 in funding.

Faculty research, creative activity and professional development also received a total of \$219,173 in funding; with adjunct faculty proposals receiving \$3,300 in adjunct opportunity funds.

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