



## **300 Volunteers from Stockton Tackle 14 Community Projects in Atlantic City**

College Partners with Atlantic City, CRDA for 10<sup>th</sup> Day of Service

***For Immediate Release; with link to photos, captions***

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**Galloway Township, NJ-** Some 300 volunteers from The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey worked on 14 Atlantic City community projects Saturday, including dune-grass planting, setting up for the Boardwalk Art Show, cleaning up lots and helping people register to vote.

The college's 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Day of Service took students, faculty and staff off the Galloway main campus to Atlantic City for a full day of community service, in partnership with the City of Atlantic City and the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority (CRDA).

"I'm delighted that Stockton is again engaged in a community-wide Fall Day of Service," said Stockton President Herman Saatkamp. "Like our MLK Day of Service in January, both events will celebrate 10 years of service and both have grown significantly, with hundreds of our students, faculty and staff taking a day 'off' to be 'on' by giving back to our community. Our Fall Day of Service really kicks off, in a significant way, the College's civic engagement activities which go on throughout the year, with the College community giving thousands of volunteer hours to the community. These are the kinds of activities which make me most proud to be president."

About 14 Stockton students gathered outside Boardwalk Hall Saturday morning, stopping passers-by to ask whether they were registered to vote and offering to register them if not.

"Voter registration is the megaphone that turns a complaint into action," explained Mico Lucide, a Political Science major in his senior year and co-founder of Stockton's

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Coalition for Civic Engagement.

Ben Peoples, a Political Science major who co-founded the coalition with Lucide, is a student member of the college's Board of Trustees. Peoples said the volunteers wanted to "give people the opportunity to go to the polls and vote for candidates they think will support what they believe."

Down at Maine and Atlantic avenues in the city's Inlet section, 43 student volunteers including members of Stockton's WaterWatch group and Anthropology Associate Professor Laurie Greene planted 2000 American Beach Grass plants. Their job was to "try to stabilize the beachhead here," after Hurricane Sandy washed away the rocks and landscaping, Greene said.

The CRDA donated the dune grass and provided the services of a landscaper who gave the volunteers a quick lesson on how to plant it, according to Jon Bitzer of the CRDA's Special Improvement District division, who was coordinating planting projects around the city.

Many of the students at the dune-grass planting were freshmen and this was their first time in Atlantic City.

"It's beautiful here on the water," said Julie Eller, a freshman Biology major in the Honors program from Caldwell, in Essex County. The Honors program includes a Service-Learning requirement, so volunteering was a good way to satisfy that and "meet new friends and see the city," Eller said.

Traditionally, Stockton Day of Service volunteers have worked on various off-campus service projects, but this is the first year the College has focused on one municipality. The Day of Service is a joint effort between the Offices of Student Development and Service-Learning.

Service projects on Saturday also included post-Sandy cleanup with the Atlantic City Police Athletic League, setup and operational support for the DO AC Boardwalk Art Show with the Noyes Museum of Art of Stockton College, pre-Miss America cleanup projects, gardening at the Covenant House Atlantic City Crisis Center and a barbecue cookout with senior citizens at the Shore Park Tenant Association, among others.

The Sept. 7 Day of Service marked the beginning of Stockton's first-ever Semester of Service, which includes two full days of service at the start of each semester and Make a Difference Day in October, Homelessness and Hunger Awareness Week in November, Read Across America Day in March and National Volunteerism Week in April.

"Having a Semester of Service allows for a number of different opportunities to give back. It's also a reminder that there are 364 other days to serve, so if you miss one, you can catch another," said Office of Service-Learning Program Assistant Diana Strelczyk, who organizes the college's service events throughout the year along with Daniel Fidalgo Tome, assistant director of Service-Learning.

For more information or questions on upcoming projects, please email [servicelearning@stockton.edu](mailto:servicelearning@stockton.edu).

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