

STOCKTON COLLEGE

THE RICHARD STOCKTON COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY



Stockton to Participate in NJ Higher Education Service-Learning Conference

Roni Bier of Forked River Will Present Stockton's Food Stamp Enrollment Project

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Tim Kelly
Susan Allen
Office of Public Relations
Galloway Township, NJ 08240
Tim.Kelly@stockton.edu
(609) 652-4950

Galloway Township, NJ- Representatives from The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey will be attending the New Jersey Higher Education Service-Learning Consortium's first statewide conference entitled *Learning to End Hunger: "Connecting Classrooms and Communities."* The conference is scheduled for Friday, April 9, 2010 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the Conference Center at Raritan Valley Community College. The conference will offer innovative workshops, which will illustrate the unprecedented approach to end hunger in New Jersey through service-learning and civic engagement on college campuses.

The various workshops offered at the conference will explore service-learning and civic engagement best practices that address hunger and food insecurity in our communities. The practices include interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary collaborations, innovative partnerships, student leadership development and research. The conference is intended for faculty, administrators, students and community partners interested in beginner to advanced levels of hunger-related, service-learning and civic engagement work.

The Service-Learning Program at The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey has been encouraging students to become involved in their communities for nearly 20 years. The program recently was awarded a grant from the Philadelphia Higher Education Network for Neighborhood Development (PHENND) to implement a food stamp enrollment project in cooperation with Atlantic Cape Community College, the Community Food Bank of southern New Jersey (Egg Harbor Twp.), and the South Jersey AIDS Alliance (Atlantic City). Stockton students work weekly shifts to pre-screen individuals and families for food stamp eligibility and follow up with clients throughout the process to ensure that they apply for benefits through the Atlantic County Office of Family and Community Development if they are eligible.

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Roni Bier, the Service-Learning Assistant at Stockton, is the project coordinator for the food stamp enrollment program. She will represent Stockton at the Conference and present the food stamp enrollment program. Roni is a senior Literature major and a resident of Forked River, New Jersey. Also representing Stockton is Tara Ronda, Coordinator of Service-Learning. Tara is also the secretary of the New Jersey Higher Education Service-Learning Consortium, and she has helped to plan the upcoming conference. Both Roni and Tara hope to recruit members of the community to attend the conference, where participants will learn about numerous community engagement opportunities.

Ms. Hillary Kane, Director for the Philadelphia Higher Education Network for Neighborhood Development, will provide the keynote presentation on the importance of building strong partnerships to support anti-hunger initiatives within the state. Ms. Kane has extensive experience in partnership building through PHENND, which is a consortium of 32 institutions of higher education in the Greater Philadelphia region that seek to help campuses connect to their communities through mutually beneficial service and service-learning partnerships.

About the New Jersey Higher Education Service-Learning Consortium: The consortium is a statewide network of educators, community partners and students that supports and fosters service-learning principles and practices at institutions of higher education in the state. Through development of a strong network of institutions, community partners and individuals committed to service-learning, the Consortium promotes education for citizenship and social change. Combining a variety of experiential learning strategies, the Consortium seeks to strengthen both academic institutions and communities.

Please visit <http://learningtoendhunger.pbworks.com> and click on the link for the April 9, 2010 Conference for more information. Registration is \$30, and student registration is \$10. Breakfast and lunch are included. People interested in attending the conference need to RSVP before March 26. To RSVP please contact Tara Ronda at tara.ronda@stockton.edu.

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