

Stockton Offers Tuition-Free Urban Teacher Academy to High School Students

Aspiring Teachers to Visit Atlantic City, Discuss Urban Education

For Immediate Release; photos on [Flickr](#); coverage invited

Thursday, June 30, 2016

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Galloway, N.J. – Stockton University is hosting its inaugural Urban Teacher Academy (UTA) **weekdays through July 8** for high school students on the main Galloway campus and in Atlantic City. The two-week summer program exposes the aspiring teachers to the teaching profession while discussing issues pertinent to urban education, including poverty; the role of schools in urban environments; teacher retention; and high shortage subject areas.

Participants, who were selected to the program through an admissions process, are required to complete assignments, keep a portfolio, and write a summary of their experience in the program.

On **Tuesday, July 5**, the group will tour Atlantic City via Jitney; meet Mayor Don Guardian at City Hall; and visit local schools in the city.

The group traveled to Carnegie Center in Atlantic City on Wednesday, where they attended a lecture on the history of the city with Assistant to the Provost for Atlantic City Alex Marino; met Interim Superintendent Paul Spaventa of the Atlantic City School District; met Chief Henry White of the Atlantic City Police Department; and heard from Michelle Carrera, CEO of the Boys & Girls Club of Atlantic City, and Natalie Devonish, coordinator of the Youth Exposure mentoring program.

Meg White, assistant professor of Education and director of the program, designed the UTA to focus on daily themes explored in roundtable and panel discussion formats.

“One of the goals of this academy is for the kids to have a better understanding of what an urban environment is,” explained White, who recently co-authored [a book](#) defining urban environments and urban education.

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“The first day, we discussed poverty while focusing on what it means to be a teacher; the second day, we explored what it means to be an ‘effective’ teacher,” she said.

Throughout the program, the group will explore the similarities and differences in middle to upper class high schools and “behemoth” high schools in inner cities, as well as portrayals of urban environments in the media.

“I suspect students will see more similarities than differences,” she said.

White received back-to-back internal grant funding from Stockton to support the academy. She used the first round of funding to research Urban Teacher Academies held at other institutions of higher education in the state, including The College of New Jersey, Rowan University, and William Paterson University.

“The first grant supported research to gain a greater understanding of Urban Teach Academy program structure and implementation at other universities in New Jersey so that I could create the foundation for the one here at Stockton,” she explained. “The second grant supports the camp itself, which allows students to participate tuition-free.”

In addition to preparing students for roles in urban education, the academy also serves as a long-term recruitment strategy to increase the pool of candidates interested in becoming teachers.

“The UTA is so reflective of what we are doing in Stockton’s Teacher Education program, and we want to expose them to that as well as campus life,” she said.

Claudine Keenan, Stockton’s dean of Education, discussed the students’ interests in teaching and the current evolution of the evaluations process. UTA participants will also meet with representatives from Stockton’s Office of Admissions, Athletics and Recreation program, and Stockton students and alumni to hear about experiences available both in and outside the classroom at the university.

“I’m really a facilitator of this program; I’m leading and directing but I’m also bringing in as many people as I can to give these students as much information about teaching in urban environments as well as what Stockton has to offer,” White said.

Events of interest schedule below. Photo and video opportunities are available.

Tuesday, July 5

Jitney Tour of Atlantic City

Departure location: Carnegie Center at 9:45 a.m.

- City Hall with Mayor Don Guardian from 10-10:30 a.m.
- Pennsylvania Avenue School from 10:45-11:15 a.m.
- Sovereign Avenue School from 11:30 a.m. to noon
- Lunch Break from 12:15-1:15 p.m.
- Richmond Avenue School from 1:30-2:00 p.m.
- Jitney Drop-off at Carnegie Center at 2:15 p.m.

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Thursday, July 7

Urban Teacher Academy Graduation Ceremony at 10 a.m.

Location: Classroom J-202 on the main Galloway campus

Carnegie Center is located at 35 S. Dr. Martin Luther King Blvd. in Atlantic City, N.J.

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