400 Attend 25th Annual Pinelands Short Course at Stockton

The 25th annual Pinelands Short Course at The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey on March 8 featured 36 presentations by experts illuminating the Pinelands’ culture, history and ecology.

The daylong event drew 400 people to hear experts on topics such as the southern pine beetle, wildlife habitat restoration, the Jersey Devil, butterflies and moths of the Pinelands, owls of New Jersey, the Pine Barrens Byway, the Kirkwood-Cohansey Aquifer system and the Bass River State Forest.

Dr. Ron Hutchison, associate professor of Biology at Stockton, outlined how elevated levels of carbon dioxide (CO$_2$) in the atmosphere are affecting plants in the Pinelands, during a presentation titled, “Climate Change in Forested Ecosystems.”

Earth’s temperatures have fluctuated between warm and cold periods for 4.5 billion years, Dr. Hutchison said. But since 1880, studies show global surface temperatures have been rising as man has burned “a tremendous amount of fossil fuels,” adding more CO$_2$ to the atmosphere than ever before.

Increasing use of solar, wind and water to power the planet could cut down or eventually eliminate the burning of fossil fuels and CO2 emissions, he said.

“The barriers are social and political, not technical or economic,” Hutchison said. Unlike fossil fuels, “the sun is always there, the wind is always there,” he said.

Dr. Jamie Cromartie, associate professor of Entomology at Stockton, outlined how elevated levels of carbon dioxide (CO$_2$) in the atmosphere are affecting plants in the Pinelands, during a presentation titled, “Climate Change in Forested Ecosystems.”

He compared a flower’s need to attract pollinators to pizza shops at the shore competing to draw customers during the summer.

A mini lesson in bee anatomy showed that pollen is transported by getting trapped on hairs, known as scopae, covering a bee’s abdomen and/or hind legs.

For more information about the 25th annual Pinelands Short Course, click here.
State Assembly honors Dr. Reid-Merritt for 40 Years of Work with Afro-One

Dr. Patricia Reid-Merritt, Distinguished Professor of Social Work and Africana Studies, was honored by the State Assembly on Feb. 27 for her 40 years of service as founder and artistic director of Afro-One Dance, Drama and Drum Theatre, Inc.

“I received a call from Assemblyman Troy Singleton's (D-Burlington County) office informing me that my presence was requested in the Chambers,” she recounted. “I’ve received state resolutions before, but I was never asked to come to the Statehouse. The assemblyman told the house chamber members that I had impacted thousands of youth over the years, which is true. Then they gave me a mic and granted permission for me to address the Assembly. That has never happened before!

“Of course, I used my time to ask the Assembly members to consider providing greater support for after school programs, youth programs and the arts,” Dr. Reid-Merritt said.

Dr. Reid-Merritt began her dance training in Philadelphia, studying with the Sydney King School of Dance, Eakins Theatre, Karen Steptoe Warrington and Danielle Perna.

She founded the Afro-One Dance, Drama and Drum Theatre in 1974, in Willingboro, NJ. The group, now headquartered in Mount Laurel, continues to perform all over South Jersey, the Delaware Valley and other parts of the Northeast.

“Forty years ago, all I could think about was preserving the culture,” said Dr. Reid-Merritt. “There were limited cultural opportunities available for my children and other youth in the area, so I decided to start my own.”

Afro-One has provided an educational and training program in cultural and performing arts to residents of South Jersey. The group offers afterschool programming, a free summer program for youth and classes for adults in dance, drum and performance art.

“In addition to my work with Afro-One, I began teaching African and African-American dance at Stockton in 1976,” Dr. Reid-Merritt said. “There are more than 1,000 Stockton alums who have passed through those classes. Many of these students have also performed with Afro-One.”

Dr. Reid-Merritt will be presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award for her work with Afro-One during the 40th Anniversary Jazz Brunch Gala on Saturday, April 5 at the Riverton Country Club in Cinnaminson, NJ. The event begins at noon. For further information, contact: (856) 234-1774 or email: AfroOne@msn.com

Dr. Franklin Smith receives Lifetime Achievement Award in Film

Dr. Franklin Ojeda Smith, professor of Sociology, has received The Garden State Film Festival 2014 Lifetime Achievement Award for Acting & Education for his contribution to the cinematic arts and his service to Stockton as an educator for 40 years.

Early in life, Dr. Smith chose baseball over acting, then academia over baseball.

“I avoided my secret, inner passion since my early teens, then 14 years ago cancer ran me down,” said Dr. Smith. “I had an epiphany. I said yes! Back in the day the ‘barb wires’ were more visible.”

Dr. Smith began acting when he made his stage debut in 2001 in the role of Troy Maxon in August Wilson's “Fences.” Subsequently, he has focused on film, television, commercial, and voice-over endeavors.

A noted storyteller and orator, Dr. Smith says, "...the kids are grown, the dog is dead and now that I may, I choose acting."

The Garden State Film Festival was co-founded in 2002 by the late Robert Pastorelli and Diane Raver, executive director of the festival, with the mission to promote the art of filmmaking on all levels by showcasing a wide variety of film and video as well as to provide educational programs to the public and industry leaders. The organization is hosting its next festival in Atlantic City from April 3-6, including events at Dante Hall.
Men’s Basketball Advances to NCAA Sweet Sixteen: Go Ospreys!

Stockton’s Men’s Basketball Ospreys knocked off fourth-ranked Cabrini College 85-76 last Saturday night on the Cavaliers’ home court to reach the NCAA Tournament Sweet 16.

Stockton will play Morrisville (NY) State College this Friday, March 14 at 5:30 p.m. at Amherst College in Mass.

Stockton, ranked 22nd, shot 54.4 percent from the field to win its NCAA tournament second round game on Saturday, after beating Bowdoin College 72-66 in the first round on Friday.

Prior to the game, Cabrini had been 70-1 at home since the start of the 2009-10 season. The second half featured six ties as the teams exchanged baskets until Stockton took over in the last seven minutes. The Ospreys scored 12 of their last 16 points at the free throw line to stay in front and knock off the Cavaliers 85-76 for their 10th straight win.

If the Ospreys win their game against Morrisville State Friday night, they will play the winner of #7 Amherst v. Plattsburgh State on Saturday at 7 p.m.

Stockton is in the NCAA Tournament for the 14th time in school history and first since 2010. The Ospreys are 24-15 (.615 winning percentage) all-time in NCAA Tournament games. Stockton reached the NCAA championship game in 2009 and advanced to the Final Four in 1987. This season marks the eighth time in Stockton’s 14 NCAA trips that they have won at least two games in the national tournament.

The Ospreys are led by Head Coach Gerry Matthews, who earned his 500th career win in January 2012. Coach Matthews surpassed previous record holder Pete Carril (Princeton) for most wins in New Jersey college basketball history with his 515th win on Nov 17, 2012. Coach Matthews currently holds 534 wins, making him the winningest coach in NJ college basketball.

For more information and video from the Ospreys’ win over Cabrini, please click here. A preview of Friday’s game against Morrisville State with Coach Matthews can be viewed here.

Stockton EMS Wins First Place in Medical Scenario Competition

The Stockton Emergency Medical Services (EMS) team attended the National Collegiate Emergency Medical Services Foundation (NCEMSF) annual conference in Boston recently, where the team came in first place in a medical scenario skills competition. Stockton EMS was also selected as one of three teams to compete in front of the entire conference in a mass casualty scenario.

Joseph Lizza, assistant director of the Campus Center for Operations and Programs, and Barry Kraus, police communicator and medical coordinator, attended as staff supervisors along with four student members. The students competed in the Physio-Control EMS Skills Competition alongside 116 colleges and universities from across the U.S. and Canada.

“This is a great accomplishment for an organization founded at Stockton in 2011,” Lizza said.

At the conference, Lizza presented a workshop on “Customer Service for EMS,” and was invited to sit on a panel of EMS and legal experts discussing “Hot Topics in Higher Education.” Lizza is also serving as the 2014 National Association for Campus Activities Mid-Atlantic Conference Chair.

Stockton EMS is a student-run organization established in 2011 that provides emergency medical care to the students, faculty, staff, and guests of Stockton, which operates as a branch of the Stockton Police Department. Stockton EMS was awarded a Command Citation for exemplary conduct in the improvement of campus safety from the New Jersey College and University Public Safety Association (NJCIUPSA) in June 2013.

To learn more about Stockton EMS, visit the organization’s webpage, or “like” its Facebook page by clicking here.
Evelyn ‘Missy’ Delaney and Family Welcome Grandson

Evelyn ‘Missy’ Delaney, senior clerk in the Mail Room, welcomed a grandson on Jan 31. Jordan Lawrence Di Natale was born at 11:30 a.m. He weighed in at 7 pounds, 14 ounces, and measured 21 inches long. Di Natale is the son of Delaney’s daughter, Chelsea, and her fiancé, Jim. Everyone is well, including big brother, Jimmy. Delaney, her husband, Mark, and son, Jake, are thrilled!

HESIG, Hughes Center Host Roundtable on College Value

Dr. Darryl Greer, Senior Fellow of the Stockton Center for Higher Education Strategic Information and Governance (HESIG), facilitated a Feb. 27 roundtable of business executives, education and community leaders, and elected officials to explore the topic of college value.

The roundtable discussion is part of a larger project, “Finding Solutions, Building Public Trust in an Era of Change,” which is supported, in part, by a grant from the Educational Testing Service (ETS) Center for Advocacy and Philanthropy to HESIG, as well as by the President’s Strategic Initiative Fund, and the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy.

The purpose of the project is to identify practical solutions to enhance college affordability, accountability and value, and especially to increase educational achievement for New Jersey’s diverse emerging student population. Roundtable participants provided candid advice about defining college value (“return on investment”) in terms broader than economic payoff, such as employment and prospects for increased earnings over a lifetime.

“One of the group’s many contributions is that college-level learning should add to graduates’ ability to understand and connect goals and objectives in a work setting; to work collaboratively and to communicate effectively and confidently,” said Dr. Greer.

“Educators at all levels need to develop standards that lead to achieving the broad thinking skills required for college and non-college bound students,” Dr. Greer said. “In partnership with business, we need to help students throughout the educational process develop the abilities they need for the workplace and to be effective citizens.”

Educators and Stockton staff on the panel included: President Herman Saatkamp and Provost Dr. Harvey Kesselman, executive vice president of the college; Rochelle Hendricks, New Jersey Secretary of Higher Education; Dr. Ali Houshmand, president of Rowan University; Dr. Peter Mora, president, Atlantic Cape Community College; Richard Novak, Senior Fellow, Association of Governing Boards of Colleges and Universities (AGB), Washington, D.C.; Sharon Schulman, CEO of External Affairs and Institutional Research at Stockton; Superintendent Steven Ciccariello of the Greater Egg Harbor School District and Daniel J. Douglas, director of the Hughes Center for Public Policy.

A HESIG/Stockton scientific poll this spring will gauge public perceptions about college value. Additional information about HESIG, its expert Policy Steering Council, and the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy can be viewed at www.stockton.edu/hughescenter/hesig.

Send Us Your News!

We want to know about things going on in the Stockton community. Do you have an unusual hobby? Did one of your co-workers win an award or perform outstanding public service? Births, weddings, graduations and the like are all good things to submit to the Stockton Times. Contact the editor at (609) 652-4593 or e-mail Stockton-Times@stockton.edu

News about distinguished students can now be found at Distinctive Stockton Students. To contribute a news item for the blog, please contact the editor at distinctive@stockton.edu