



NEW JERSEY

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QuickTakes!

Stockton Will Partner with Thomas Jefferson University and Other Institutions for its Cannabis Studies Program

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Stockton University announced new academic and non-academic partnerships that will enhance opportunities for students in its new Cannabis Studies program.

A partnership with Thomas Jefferson University will provide opportunities for students and faculty to collaborate with Jefferson's Lambert Center for the Study of Medicinal Cannabis and Hemp within The Institute of Emerging Health Professions.

Stockton Associate Professor of Biology, Dr. Ekaterina Sedia, coordinator of the Cannabis Studies minor, said the partnership will give students the opportunity for internships and research with a highly respected academic institution. "The Lambert Center is a leader in the medicinal cannabis and industrial hemp fields," Dr. Sedia said. "We are thrilled that Jefferson will share their knowledge with the students in our Cannabis Studies minor, and offer them additional opportunities. We are looking forward to mutually beneficial academic relationship."

Jefferson is the first major health sciences university in the United States to provide a comprehensive academic resource for the medicinal applications of cannabinoids, which can be derived from both marijuana and hemp. Jefferson currently offers unique graduate courses in cannabis medicine and in cannabinoid chemistry, pharmacology, and toxicology, leading to one of three graduate certificates. Students who complete two certificate programs (8 graduate courses) and a capstone project can earn the nation's only master's degree in cannabis studies.

"The Lambert Center at Jefferson is thrilled to extend its reach to undergraduate students who are interested in this exciting and fast-growing field," said Charles Pollack, MA, MD, the Center's Director and Associate Provost at Jefferson. "We also welcome the opportunity to collaborate with the expert faculty at Stockton to expand the curricular offerings of both institutions and enhance our shared leadership in all educational aspects of cannabinoid science, research, policy, and practice."

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Stockton introduced a Cannabis Studies minor in the Fall 2018 semester to address the need to provide academic and practical study and research to the issue of medical and recreational marijuana use in New Jersey and the nation. The new minor addresses Stockton's mission to prepare students for the complexities of the world in which they live and work and the issues that are shaping the future.

Stockton also has agreements with three non-academic partners: Relevant, an arm of Reliance Health Care; the New Jersey CannaBusiness Association (NJCBA); and the New Jersey Cannabis Industry Association. These partners will provide speakers and materials to Stockton and the local community and internship opportunities to Stockton students.

Dr. Sedia said Stockton's program provides students with a broad perspective on cannabis use and production as it relates to the law, criminal justice, health sciences, finance and business. "Students in the program come from a variety of majors ... The new partnerships will allow our students to apply what they are learning to their field of interest."

Dr. Jon Regis, president and CEO of Reliance Medical Group said they look forward to working with students and faculty. "we are excited to work with students involved in the clinical application of cannabis, and to collaborate with Stockton to administer best practices with clinical evaluation and monitoring of the patients for better outcomes, while strengthening curriculum and instruction."

As the leading cannabis trade organization in New Jersey, the New Jersey Cannabis Industry Association (NJCIA) is "thrilled to have the opportunity to partner with Stockton as they continue to develop their pioneering program in Cannabis Studies," said Kelley Crosson, vice president of New Jersey Cannabis Industry Association. "We look forward to working together as this exciting new industry expands, and we congratulate Stockton on their forward-thinking approach NJCIA will provide input and access to cannabis industry thought leaders for classroom lectures and events in a wide range of topics that impact the lives of New Jersey residents – bridging the gap between politics, commerce, and education," Vice President Crosson said.

Scott Rudder, president of the New Jersey CannaBusiness Association (NJCBA), said that "preparing today's students for tomorrow's rapidly evolving cannabis industry is exactly the type of mission we want to undertake We have subject matter experts that will bring real-world professional experience into the classroom to help support this exciting new program."

Areas where the NJCBA looks to support Stockton's Cannabis Studies program include: the complexities of the law, the science behind the plant, cultivation techniques, marketing and packaging strategies, retail operations and challenges, the history of prohibition and legalization efforts. The NJCBA will also work with Stockton to establish a robust internship program between the industry and students.

Stockton Associate Provost for Strategic Planning, Academic Programming and Assessment Dr. Carra Hood, said the new partnerships will provide the Stockton community with information about the cannabis industry from both an academic and business perspective. She said other partnerships are also pending.