



NEW JERSEY

Association of State Colleges and Universities

150 West State Street, Trenton NJ 08608

Phone (609) 989-1100

**QuickTakes!**

## **Stockton President Responds to Richard Stockton Controversy on Campus**

August 28, 2017

*The following message was sent to the Stockton University community on August 28, 2017, and is also posted on the Stockton website.*

Dear Members of the Stockton Community,

Over the past few days, I have been reading many emails, fielding calls, and listening to the wide range of viewpoints expressed by our Stockton and surrounding communities.

The decision to temporarily remove the bust of Richard Stockton from our Library entrance has created the opportunity to engage in a discussion of the man, his role in America's history, and how we might remember him today.

Accounts of the desecration and destruction of historical statues fill our news, and reminds us that our nation is struggling with accepting multiple points of view, with interpreting facts, and with finding common ground.

We are hopeful that through the development of the Richard Stockton Exhibit we will demonstrate that difficult issues can be dealt with in a way that strengthens and unites us.

Accordingly, I have asked our Provost to establish a Richard Stockton Exhibit Committee. The exhibit will thoughtfully and objectively explore the life and legacy of our namesake. The initial meeting of the steering committee\* will take place this Wednesday as they begin the planning process.

Their first task is to recommend an appropriate safe and secure public space for the temporary relocation of the Stockton bust, which will include a panel exhibit that explains how and why we are undertaking this research initiative at this time. This will be completed expeditiously.

They will then lead the effort to develop a comprehensive Richard Stockton Exhibit, a larger installation that will be complemented with educational activities that may include panel discussions, guest lectures, and the creation of a course on Richard Stockton.

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As we move forward, we welcome and encourage the participation of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community members in this important endeavor. Many have already volunteered. We hope that you will support us as we embark on this new chapter in Stockton University's history.

\* The Steering Committee of the Richard Stockton Exhibit Committee will be comprised of key institutional leaders including the Presidents of the Faculty Senate, Stockton Federation of Teachers, and Student Senate, and our Student Trustee. It will also include our Dean of General Studies, our Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, and our Associate Provost for Strategic Planning, Academic Planning & Assessment.

Best regards,

Harvey Kesselman  
President  
Stockton University