

# The gift of education

## There are many reasons to contribute to scholarship funds

By **DIANE D'AMICO**  
Staff Writer

It takes training to get a good job, but without a job, it can be tough to pay for the training. That's why the Chelsea Neighborhood Association in Atlantic City provides five \$1,000 scholarships to city residents each year, including at least one to a student in Atlantic Cape Community College's hospitality programs.

"It's a way to help residents get jobs in the city where they live," said Edward O'Donnell, of Atlantic City, a representative of the Association, at a recent event at Caremes, the restaurant run by the students at the Mays Landing campus. "And it's a way to keep local students in the area."

Each year high school graduates go off to college, some with scholarships they earned in high school. But most of those funds only last one year. College foundations have played a growing role in raising money for scholarships for students already attending college.

This year, the Richard Stockton College Foundation awarded 224 scholarships totaling \$504,000. Atlantic Cape awarded 174 scholarships worth more than \$173,000 in May. In November, Atlantic Cape ended a capital campaign that created 55 new scholarships and raised \$1.4 million to endow them.

Atlantic Cape president Peter Mora said at a campaign event that finances are the primary reason students leave college before they get their degree.

For students, the funds are a way to help pay for college without taking on as much debt or maybe, working as many hours. For donors, the funds are a way to remember a loved one and encourage a new generation.

Tusheeway Henderson, of Buena, said the scholarship she receives to the Academy of Culinary Arts helps cover her costs as she works towards her dream of owning a business making specialty cakes.

"I like to cook, and I love art," she said. "I want to put art on my cakes."

She said she also works but doesn't earn enough to cover all her costs.

Devyn Seigfried, of Cherry Hill, said



Staff photo by Edward Lea

**Lonnie Folks, left, endowed a scholarship at Richard Stockton College of New Jersey in memory of his predecessor, former Athletic Director G. Larry James. Nicole Disch, 20, of South Plainfield, is using the money to study criminal justice.**

her father lost his job for awhile, so she needed scholarships to attend college. Arielle Toronto, of Marlton, said receiving a culinary scholarship also gave her confidence that she was qualified and could succeed.

Sandra Harmon Weiss and her husband Richard Weiss, of Cape May Court House, endowed \$15,000 for an annual nursing scholarship at Atlantic Cape in memory of her sister, Marilyn Rhoads Miller, who was a nurse.

"We all believe in education," she said. "And we wanted it to go to someone from Cape May County because the county college is so important to us here."

Diane Donio, of Hammonton, endowed a scholarship in memory of her husband, Samuel, who was one of the original trustees of the original Atlantic Community College. It's awarded to a second-year student majoring in history.

"When I was in high school, there was no money to attend college," she said. "I came to Atlantic Cape, then went to Stockton, but I didn't get my degree until I was 50."

### To help

Anyone interested in donating to a local college scholarship fund or creating a scholarship can contact:

#### Atlantic Cape Community College

Maria Kellett, Director of Major Gifts,  
609-463-3670 or [mkellett@atlantic.edu](mailto:mkellett@atlantic.edu)

#### Richard Stockton College Foundation

Philip T. Ellmore, chief development officer, 609-652-4382 or  
[Philip.Ellmore@Stockton.edu](mailto:Philip.Ellmore@Stockton.edu)

Friends of Encore Learning uses education to fund scholarships at Stockton. The group offers continuing education classes in Ventnor and Margate, charging a \$25 fee, all of which goes to the scholarship fund.

"Many of our members are former teachers and love to learn," said Beverly Rubin, of Margate, who represented the group at a recent scholarship event last month at Stockton. The group has more

□ See Give, A5

## Give

(Continued from A4)

than 200 members and in five years has raised \$25,000 toward the scholarship endowment. They awarded four \$1,000 scholarships this year.

"People like that when they come to a class they are also helping others," Rubin said.

One of this year's recipients, Amanda Gossenberger, of Marlton, Burlington County, plans to be a teacher and said scholarships made it possible for her to finish college.

Howard and Gayle Gross, of Linwood, endowed an environmental scholarship that this year went to Adam Sturts, of

Weymouth Township, a biology major who is doing research on honeybees.

Gayle Gross said they admire Stockton's environmental program, and the award helps students do research projects.

Some scholarships have links to the colleges themselves.

Absecon resident Nancy Messina, Stockton Class of 1982, and her daughter Sarah, Class of 2008, award a scholarship in memory of Nancy's husband and Sarah, father, Dominick, who had been a bursar at the college.

"This college really was tied to his identity," Nancy said. "This is a way to memorialize him and give back something positive."

The scholarship goes to a student in the arts and

humanities. This year's recipient is Dimilar Dimitrov, a native of Bulgaria who now lives in Atlantic City. A visual arts major who will graduate in May, he hopes to start a graphic design business.

"I was so excited to get it," said Dimitrov, who said he also works at Starbucks and is paying for college himself.

Athletic director G. Larry James was an icon at Stockton, an Olympic medalist who worked at the college from 1972 until his death in 2008. Current athletic director Lonnie Folks helps keep his memory alive through an endowed scholarship, with funds raised from a 5K run and a bike tour.

"I'm trying to perpetuate the legacy that Larry had,

and what better way to do that than to help students," he said. "That's what he was all about. It wasn't about how many goals they scored."

Students do not have to be athletes to qualify, but must have good grades and show leadership. This year's recipient is Nicole Disch of South Plainfield, a criminal justice major who hopes to work for the FBI or DEA.

"It's such a big help," she said. "I jumped for joy when I got it. I've already borrowed \$30,000. Money really does hold people back from going to college."

Contact Diane D'Amico:  
609-272-7241  
[DDamico@pressofac.com](mailto:DDamico@pressofac.com)

TAKE A