

Stockton University

Faculty Senate Resolution

Naming AC Campus Event Space in Honor of Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer

Whereas, for many decades, communities around the state and the nation have developed programs, special events and public sites to honor Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer and educate new generations about her struggle for freedom and social justice. For the past 13 years, Stockton has played an active role in uplifting the Hamer legacy and is known around the state, region and country for working toward this goal;

Whereas, the Africana Studies Program was contacted by the New Jersey State Historical Commission and asked if we would consider hosting a special event to commemorate the 40th anniversary of Hamer's speech at the 1964 Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City. Stockton was selected precisely because our institution was closely connected to Atlantic City and the larger community. It was at the DNC convention that Mrs. Hamer stirred the consciousness of the nation when she questioned America's ideals of democracy and freedom;

Whereas, Fannie Lou Hamer challenged the very seats of power in America. Her Boardwalk speech in Atlantic City, New Jersey, highlighting the struggle for racial equality in Mississippi reverberated throughout the nation. With the momentum that started with the protest by the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP), Mrs. Hamer became a leading national figure in the civil rights movement; one of a small handful of African American women who proved powerful enough to shake the nation;

Whereas, Stockton has hosted the annual Fannie Lou Hamer Human and Civil Rights Symposiums since 2004. They have proven to be incredibly powerful educational events. In addition, Stockton assumed a leadership role in galvanizing a national grassroots community effort that resulted in the commission and placement of a full-length bronze statue of Fannie Lou Hamer at the Hamer Memorial Garden in Ruleville, Mississippi – one of only four such full-length statues of a Black woman in America. When asked, more than a handful of recent Stockton graduates can tell you they are aware of the Hamer legacy; and

Whereas, Fannie Lou Hamer made history on the Boardwalk of Atlantic City and October 2017 marks the 100th year anniversary of her birth. As the new Stockton campus continues to rise, there could be no greater public honor than to recognize Mrs. Hamer's contribution to the march toward freedom and social justice; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Faculty Senate of Stockton University recommends the Event Space located in the new Atlantic City Gateway Campus be named in honor of Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer – a place where students, faculty, staff and community will come to learn, reflect and listen to voices of reason.

Adopted September 19, 2017