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Stockton University *Programs Link* CANNABIS STUDIES *to* CAREERS

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Stockton University Programs Link Cannabis Studies to Careers

Diane D'Amico

Director of News and Media Relations, Stockton University

Stockton University Professor of Biology Ekaterina “Kathy” Sedia, coordinator of Stockton’s new undergraduate minor in Cannabis Studies, has heard all the jokes about the program’s role in “higher” education.

But the potential for careers in the industry is no joke, and students from a variety of majors are registering for the courses.

Stockton introduced the new minor in fall 2018. In the spring, a non-credit online Cannabis Studies Certificate was added through the Office of Continuing Studies to accommodate adults interested in cannabis business careers.

“This is a growing industry,” said Sedia, who can give as good as she gets when it comes to cannabis humor. “We want to prepare our students from a variety of academic and career viewpoints.”

Medical marijuana is currently legal and expanding in New Jersey, though legislative efforts to decriminalize

or legalize recreational marijuana remain unresolved. At the federal level, U.S. House Judiciary Chairman Jerry Nadler (D-N.Y.) said in July he would like to see legislation to remove the federal ban on the sale and use of cannabis, though no specific legislation has been proposed.

Stockton’s minor has five courses, including an internship. The online certificate program covers many of the same topics, with an additional focus on cannabis cultivation. Some participants in the online certificate program are already working in the medical marijuana industry. The first two required courses in the minor are Cannabis Law and Introduction to Medical Marijuana. Interested students are majoring in fields such as business, criminal justice, social work, and health sciences. “Having a background on the issues in a new and evolving industry will add value to our graduates’ degrees,” Sedia said.

Student Jenna Misciascio, president of the Stockton chapter of SMART, the Student Marijuana Alliance for Research and Transparency, sees the potential for cannabis tourism. In May, SMART hosted a networking and jobs panel discussion on the future of the industry moderated by attorney Bridget Hill Zayat, who also



Attorney and Stockton University Cannabis Law Adjunct Professor Bridget Hill Zayat.



taught the Cannabis Law class at Stockton. “There are so many potential job opportunities in cannabis,” Misciascio said at the workshop. “I’m a hospitality major, so I have a lot of options. I could create something similar to the ‘Ganja Goddess Getaway’ or a website that’s like a TripAdvisor for cannabis road trippers. The jobs in this industry will not be limited to plant-touching.”

Stockton has also entered into partnerships that will give students hands-on experience in different areas of the cannabis industry. A partnership with Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia will allow 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. “It can be difficult to do research on marijuana because of its’ federal status as a controlled drug,” Sedia said. “The Lambert Center is a leader in the medicinal cannabis and industrial hemp fields.”

Stockton also has agreements with Relevant, an arm of Reliance Health Care; the New Jersey CannaBusiness Association; the New Jersey Cannabis Industry Association and Leafly, a national cannabis

information resource. The partners will provide speakers, materials, and internships, sharing information on changes in the law, cultivation techniques, marketing, retail operations and industry challenges. “The partnerships will allow students from different majors to apply what they are learning to their field of interest,” Sedia said.

Stockton has also hosted discussions on the issue of legalization featuring former U.S. Congressman and mental health advocate Patrick Kennedy, who has urged caution on legalization. Sedia stresses that Stockton’s role is to provide information, not to advocate for or against a political viewpoint. “We are not telling students what is the right thing to do,” Sedia said. “We are providing a context and information they can use to make their own decisions.”



*Stockton University
Associate Professor of
Biology Dr. Ekaterina Sedia.*



Camden County College Helps Businesses Grow

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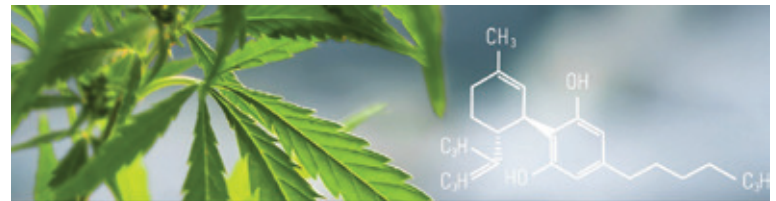
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