

For Immediate Release: with photos attached; grad list link

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**Contact: Maryjane Briant
Interim News and Media Relations Director
Galloway Township, NJ 08205
Maryjane.Briant@stockton.edu
(609) 652-4593**

Galloway, NJ – “Find a way to get into trouble,” U.S. Rep. John Lewis of Georgia, a founder of the American Civil Rights movement, told some 662 graduates receiving Baccalaureate degrees Saturday afternoon at The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey.

Lewis, a Democratic congressman from Georgia’s 5th District, said when he was inspired to civil rights activism by Rosa Parks’ actions and the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s words on the radio, he was told by his elders: “ ‘Don’t make trouble, don’t get in the way.’ ”

“It inspired me to get in the way – it was necessary trouble,” said U.S. Rep. Lewis, a Freedom Rider and founder of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, which organized student sit-ins protesting racial discrimination.

“By sitting down, we were standing up for the very best in the American tradition,” Congressman Lewis said of sit-ins at segregated lunch counters in the South.

“I urge you – I plead with you – to do your part, not with bitterness...but with love,” he said.

He told the graduates, “You, too, can go out and change the world.”

He also

Congressman Lewis recognized his past colleague, former U.S. Rep. William Hughes, who had represente

