



Retired Atlantic-Cape May county judge joins Stockton's Hughes Center

📅 September 14, 2022 11:03 am 👤 Lynda Cohen



A retired judge who headed the Atlantic and Cape May county courts is joining the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy at Stockton University.

Julio L. Mendez, who started his career in Cumberland County, retired March 1 from his position as assignment just for the Atlantic-Cape May County vicinage.

“The most important part of this for me is to work with and to inspire Stockton students,” Mendez said. “I want them to see how legal issues affect so many areas of the lives and careers of people, and not just lawyers.”

The former judge will lead discussions with groups of students of all majors about issues they care about, and he will mentor pre-law students interested in a legal career.

Mendez will produce written analyses and columns examining aspects of important issues of the day as a senior contributing analyst for the Hughes Center.

His first piece will be on the conservative tilt of the U.S. Supreme Court. It is scheduled to be published later this month.

“This collaboration will provide academic opportunities for students to learn from an expert who served at high levels in the state judiciary,” said Marissa Levy, dean of the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences, in which the Hughes Center operates.

Mendez will also participate in public programs and panel discussions aimed at educating students, faculty and South Jersey residents about trends and issues affecting government, the law and society.

“In a time of social change and volatility as we’re in today, we are pleased to have an experienced leader like Judge Mendez at Stockton to offer ethical and insightful guidance to our community,” Stockton President Harvey Kesselman said.

Mendez is one of three groundbreaking judges honored with courtrooms named for them in the new Central Municipal Court of Atlantic County. He was the state’s first Hispanic assignment judge and helped facilitate the new county court.

Working with the retired judge honors the center’s namesake, the late Congressman and Ambassador William J. Hughes, who was a lawyer and prosecutor, Director John Froonjian

said.

The collaboration can raise the Hughes Center's profile in the legal community, Froomjian added.

Mendez's judicial career began in 2002 with his appointment as a Superior Court judge in Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem counties. In June 2005, he was named presiding judge of the Family Part for that vicinage. He has the distinction of serving as a judge in all court divisions and handling all dockets, with 11 of his trial court opinions approved for publication.

N.J. Supreme Court Chief Justice Stuart Rabner designated Mendez as Assignment Judge, the top position in a court vicinage, in Atlantic and Cape May counties in November 2011. He served in that capacity until his retirement.

The many court committees on which Judge Mendez served worked on issues including domestic violence, drug courts, municipal court reform, and children and family issues.

Judicial recognitions he has received include the New Jersey State Bar Thurgood Marshall Award.

Judge Mendez received his Juris Doctor degree from Rutgers School of Law-Camden. He became a member of the New Jersey Bar in 1981.



Groundbreaking Atlantic County court honors groundbreaking judges

It was a celebration of firsts Wednesday at the official dedication of the Central Municipal Court of Atlantic County. The court covering municipal-level cases in nine towns is the first of its kind in the state. A feasibility committee was formed in 2020 by Atlantic County Executive Dennis Le