

STOCKTON COLLEGE

THE RICHARD STOCKTON COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY



Nelson Johnson, Willie Geist to Deliver Commencement Addresses at Stockton Graduation

Boardwalk Empire Author, MSNBC Host to Speak
at Morning and Afternoon Ceremonies, Respectively

For Immediate Release

Thursday, May 05, 2011

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Galloway Township, NJ- Honorable Nelson Johnson, whose book *Boardwalk Empire: The Birth, High Times, and Corruption of Atlantic City* was the basis for the critically-acclaimed HBO series *Boardwalk Empire*, and MSNBC news commentator Willie Geist will be keynote speakers Saturday at the annual Spring Commencement ceremonies at The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey.

Hon. Johnson will speak at the 9:30 a.m. ceremony for the Schools of Graduate and Continuing Studies, Arts and Humanities, Business and Education. Geist will speak at the 2:30 p.m. ceremony for the Schools of General Studies, Health Sciences, Natural Sciences and Mathematics and Social and Behavioral Sciences.

"Stockton is pleased that our 2011 graduates will have the benefit of hearing from Nelson Johnson and Willie Geist," President Herman J. Saatkamp, Jr. said. "Nelson is the preeminent historian of our Atlantic City region, and Willie represents a young voice of today's 'new' media. They offer remarkable perspectives our guests will enjoy."

New Jersey natives Johnson and Geist have risen to national prominence in recent years.

Prior to serving as a New Jersey Superior Court judge, Hon. Nelson Johnson was attorney for the Atlantic City Planning Board at the time of the approvals for many of the casinos and was inspired to write an objective political history of the city. He then spent nearly two decades researching and writing his book. In 2010, HBO began airing episodes of the television adaptation of the volume and it quickly became one of the most-watched and acclaimed series on the network. Johnson, whose family presence in Atlantic County predates the founding of

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Atlantic City, followed up *Boardwalk Empire* with *The Northside: African Americans and the Creation of Atlantic City*, released in November, 2010.

Willie Geist is host of MSNBC's "Way Too Early with Willie Geist" and co-host of the network's popular "Morning Joe" show. He also hosts [Zeitgeist](#), a satirical video blog on msnbc.com.

Geist joined MSNBC in 2005 as a senior producer of *The Situation with Tucker Carlson*. During the show's development, producers decided Mr. Geist's newsroom banter with Carlson would be ideal for the show, so Geist spent the last segment of *The Situation* (later called *Tucker*) reporting and offering his unique spin on the day's news.

Willie Geist graduated from Ridgewood High School and went on to Vanderbilt University in Nashville where he earned a B.A. in Political Science. He contributes frequently to a number of NBC News programs including *Today*. Geist is the author of the New York Times bestselling book *American Freak Show*.

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