

## **John Scarpa, Judge Salas Among Recipients of Hughes Center Honors Awards on Nov. 9**

***Media release with photos***

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**Galloway, N.J.** — Philanthropist and business leader John F. Scarpa will receive the Distinguished Lifetime Achievement Award for his contributions to New Jersey public life at the Hughes Center Honors on Nov. 9, 2023.

Other honorees include U.S. District Court Judge Esther Salas, who has turned her family's personal tragedy into a campaign to protect judicial independence and democracy; Port Authority of New York and New Jersey Chair Kevin O'Toole, a former Republican state senator; retiring Democratic State Assemblyman Thomas Giblin; William Mullen, New Jersey Building Trades Council president; and recent Stockton University graduate Emily Kramer.

The Hughes Center Honors are awarded for professional excellence and a commitment to public service, civility and bipartisanship that reflect the life and career of Ambassador William J. Hughes, who served as U.S. ambassador to Panama and as a U.S. congressman for 20 years. The awards program is sponsored by the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy at Stockton University.

The ticketed event, which is open to the public, will start at 6 p.m. in the Campus Center on Stockton's Galloway campus.

John F. Scarpa is an entrepreneur who established successful businesses in cable television, radio, the internet and cellular communications. He helped establish the New Jersey and the Northeast Cable TV Association and was a co-founder, president and COO of American Cellular Network Corporation. Partnering with Sam and Michael Azeez, Scarpa also established UNITEL, where he developed and operated wireless communication systems in rural areas nationwide.

He has shared his financial success through extensive philanthropy, having established the John F. Scarpa Foundation and supported John F. Scarpa Cumberland County Technical Education Center and St Augustine Preparatory School.

"The impacts of John Scarpa's generosity have been felt throughout the South Jersey region and beyond, from helping cancer patients to aiding disadvantaged families to supporting the arts," said Richard Tolson, Hughes Center Advisory Board chair.

In 2019, Scarpa donated \$8 million to Stockton University that is mainly supporting academic programs in Atlantic City and the Health Sciences program at the Galloway campus.

“It is appropriate that two buildings on Stockton’s campuses are named after Mr. Scarpa. Generations of Stockton students will benefit from his gift,” Tolson said.

Scarpa received honorary doctorate degrees from the American University of Rome, Italy, and Villanova University, where the Villanova Law School building was named “John F. Scarpa Hall” in honor of his charitable giving. Villanova also established the John F. Scarpa Chair in Catholic Legal Studies and the John F. Scarpa Center for Entrepreneurship and Law.

He and his wife, Jana, split their time living in Avalon, Cape May County, and Palm Beach, Florida.

Past Lifetime Achievement Award recipients include the late former New Jersey Governors Brendan Byrne and Jim Florio, former Governors Thomas Kean and Christine Todd Whitman, and the late Ambassador Hughes, who was presented his award in 2017 by then-former Vice President Joe Biden.

The following 2023 Hughes Center Honors awards will also be presented Nov. 9.

### **Excellence in Civic Engagement Award**

In July 2020, an assailant armed with a gun went to the home of **Judge Ester Salas** and opened fire when the door was answered, seriously injuring Salas’ husband, Mark Anderl, and killing their son, Daniel, 20. Judge Salas has since become a tireless advocate for protecting judges and court personnel, arguing that judges must remain free of intimidation and violent threats and that judicial independence is crucial to democracy. State and federal laws named after Daniel have since been passed prohibiting the publication of addresses and personal information of judges.

Salas, former president of the N.J. Hispanic Bar Association, graduated with a BA from Rutgers University in 1991 and received her juris doctorate from Rutgers University School of Law in Newark in 1994.

### **Civility in Government & Politics Award**

Two New Jersey leaders will be recognized in bipartisan fashion with this award.

**Thomas P. Giblin**, a Democrat, is a N.J. State Assembly member and is business manager for Local 68 of the International Union of Operating Engineers. Giblin was elected to the Assembly from Legislative District 34 in 2006 and has been the deputy majority leader since 2008. Previously he served on the Essex County Board of Freeholders in the 1980s and ‘90s and was Essex County Surrogate from 1990-93. Giblin served as Democratic State Committee Chair from 1997 to 2001. A graduate of Seton Hall Preparatory School and Seton Hall University, Giblin served in the N.J. Air National Guard (1966-1972), achieving the rank of staff sergeant. He has announced plans to retire from the State Assembly after the 2023 legislative elections.

**Kevin O’Toole** is chairman of the Board of Commissioners of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. Before moving to the Port Authority board in 2017, O’Toole, a Republican, had a distinguished career in elected office, serving on the Town Council and as mayor in Cedar Grove in the early 1990s and being elected to the N.J. State Assembly in 1995, representing the 21st Legislative District. After serving in the Assembly until 2001, O’Toole represented the district in the State Senate for a year, before being elected again to the Assembly in 2001, representing the 40th Legislative District, and serving there for the next six years. He returned to the State Senate from 2008 to 2017. He is the founding and managing partner of the O’Toole Scrivo law firm. He graduated with bachelor’s and juris doctorate degrees from Seton Hall University.

## **Excellence in Community Leadership Award**

**William T. Mullen** is president of the New Jersey State Building & Construction Trades Council, representing 150,000 members in 15 international building trades unions and 13 county councils. Mullen joined Ironworkers Local #11 in 1968 following a two-year stint with the U.S. Army in Korea. He was elected vice president of the more than 500-member Iron Workers Local #11 in 1981 and served in that capacity through 1990 when he was elected president. In 1993, he was elected business manager, the union's highest position, until his retirement in May 2008. Mullen is currently a trustee at Montclair State University, a member of the New Jersey State Building Authority and of the board of the New Jersey Casino Reinvestment Development Authority.

## **Distinctive Student Leadership Award**

**Emily Kramer** graduated from Stockton University in May 2022 with a dual degree in Political Science and Languages and Culture Studies and a 4.0 GPA. She held a research internship with the Hughes Center, which published her paper, "Changes in Racial and Ethnic Diversity in New Jersey 2000 – 2020," that drew media coverage throughout New Jersey. She also served as an intern for the Ranked Choice Voting Resource Center, where she conducted research about elections at the state-level. Kramer served as president of Amnesty International at Stockton and represented the university at National Model UN (NMUN) conferences in Japan, Washington D.C., and New York.

## **Ticket information**

The Hughes Center Honors event is open to the public. Sponsorships and program book ads are available at various levels. Net proceeds will benefit the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy Endowed Fund. For information on [tickets and sponsorships](#), contact Hughes Center Executive Director John Froomjian at [john.froomjian@stockton.edu](mailto:john.froomjian@stockton.edu), at 609 626-3626, or visit the Hughes Center website at [www.stockton.edu/hughescenter](http://www.stockton.edu/hughescenter).

The William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy ([www.stockton.edu/hughescenter](http://www.stockton.edu/hughescenter)) at Stockton University serves as a catalyst for research, analysis and innovative policy solutions on the economic, social and cultural issues facing New Jersey, and promotes the civic life of New Jersey through engagement, education and research. The center is named for the late William J. Hughes, whose distinguished career includes service in the U.S. House of Representatives, Ambassador to Panama and as a Distinguished Visiting Professor at Stockton. The Hughes Center can be found on [YouTube](#), and can be followed on Facebook [@StocktonHughesCenter](#), Twitter [@hughescenter](#) and Instagram [@stockton\\_hughes\\_center](#).

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**Stockton University**

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