

## **Hon. Steven P. Perskie Among Recipients of Hughes Center Honors on Nov. 10**

***For immediate release: with photos***

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**Galloway, N.J.** – Former Senator, N.J. Casino Control Commission Chair and retired Superior Court Judge the Honorable Steven P. Perskie will receive the Distinguished Lifetime Achievement Award for his contributions to New Jersey public life at the Hughes Center Honors on Nov. 10, 2021.

Other honorees include Richard S. Dovey, president of the Atlantic County Utilities Authority; Danielle Combs, a recent Stockton University graduate; and four South Jersey hospitals being recognized for their efforts in battling the coronavirus pandemic.

The Hughes Center Honors are awarded for professional excellence and a commitment to public service, civility and bipartisanship, which 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 5:30 p.m. in the Campus Center on Stockton's Galloway campus.

"Steve Perskie's many contributions have helped shape the history of Atlantic City, the casino industry and all of New Jersey," said Dr. Edward H. Salmon, chairman of the Hughes Center Steering Committee. "His commitment to public service represents the civic values that guide the work of the Hughes Center and Stockton University."

"We are truly honored to recognize these leaders who have had a profound positive impact on Stockton and who have improved the lives of members of their communities," said Dr. Harvey Kesselman, Stockton President.

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

Perskie was elected to the New Jersey State Assembly in 1971 at age 26, and in 1978 he moved up to the State Senate, where he served as Majority Leader and chaired the prestigious Judiciary Committee. He was the author and principal sponsor of the New Jersey Casino Control Act (1977), which brought casino

gaming to Atlantic City. He served as Chief of Staff to Governor Florio 1989-1990, after which Florio appointed him as Chairman of the New Jersey Casino Control Commission, a position he held until 1994. Perskie led a comprehensive restructuring and refocus of the commission and its agenda.

A public defender early in his law career, Perskie served as a New Jersey Superior Court judge from 1982 to 1989, when he temporarily left the bench for the Florio administration. He returned to Superior Court from 2002-2010 and served in the Civil Division and as Presiding Judge of the Family and Criminal Divisions. In 2007, Judge Perskie mediated the resolution of the Tropicana garage collapse litigation, which involved more than 50 parties and claims totaling more than \$100 million.

Three other Hughes Center Honors awards will also be presented.

### **Distinctive Alumni Leadership Award**

Richard S. Dovey ('75) has been President of the Atlantic County Utilities Authority (ACUA) for more than 27 years, overseeing a staff of 250 and an annual budget exceeding \$60 million. ACUA operates a 40-million-gallon-per-day wastewater treatment plant in Atlantic City and a regional sewerage collection system that serves 14 Atlantic County municipalities. ACUA also operates a state-of-the-art solid waste facility, as well as a regional trash collection fleet that serves more than 100,000 residents and businesses.

ACUA has been nationally recognized for excellence in innovation, efficiency and environmental stewardship under Dovey, a strong proponent of renewable energy and sustainability. Prior to joining ACUA, Dovey led the Atlantic County Regional Planning and Development Department. He has served on numerous industry councils and civic or charity boards, and formerly chaired of the Stockton University Foundation Board of Directors.

### **Distinctive Student Leadership Award**

Danielle Combs, a 2021 graduate of Stockton, is an activist for social justice who helped revitalize the university's NAACP chapter and served as its president. She organized a Juneteenth March for Justice on the Galloway campus in the spring. A Dean's List student, Combs is applying for admission to law school starting in fall 2021. She was a recipient of the Alan F. Arcuri Pre-Law Award, which provides a stipend to cover the cost of a prep program for the LSAT exam and a mentor for the law school application process. Combs wants to go into law to protect vulnerable and underserved members of society.

### **Excellence in Community Leadership Award**

For the first time, the Hughes Center Honors program will include awards to local institutions. The first Excellence in Community Leadership Award is presented to four South Jersey hospitals: AtlantiCare; Shore Medical Center; Cape Regional Health System; and Inspira Health. The hospitals and their staffs, who have been working on the front lines of the coronavirus pandemic, are being honored for their leadership and service in battling COVID-19.

## **Ticket information**

The Hughes Center Honors event is open to the public. Sponsorships 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, call Hughes Center Executive Director John Froomjian at 609 626-3626. To learn more, visit <https://stockton.edu/hughes-center/hughes-center-honors-2021.html>.

**The William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy** at Stockton University ([www.stockton.edu/hughescenter](http://www.stockton.edu/hughescenter)) serves as a catalyst for research, analysis and innovative policy solutions on the economic, social and cultural issues facing New Jersey. The Center is named for Ambassador 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 College. The Hughes Center can be found at [www.facebook.com/Hughes.Center.Stockton.College](https://www.facebook.com/Hughes.Center.Stockton.College) and can be followed on Twitter: @hughescenter.

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### **Stockton University**

Stockton University is [ranked](#) among the top public universities in the Northeast with more than 160 undergraduate and graduate programs, as well as continuing education opportunities. The University, [one hour from Philadelphia and two hours from New York City](#), [offers](#) unique living and learning environments throughout southern New Jersey, including the 1,600 acre Galloway campus in the Pinelands National Reserve and Stockton University Atlantic City, located on the Boardwalk, just steps from the beach. Additional locations include Hammonton, Manahawkin and Woodbine. Founded in 1969, Stockton held its first classes in 1971 and is planning its 50th anniversary. Learn more about the many reasons to choose Stockton at [stockton.edu](http://stockton.edu).