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*For immediate release: with photo*

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**Galloway, N.J.** — Julio L. Mendez, a retired assignment judge of the N.J. Superior Court, will work with the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy at Stockton University in the coming year to engage students and participate in public programming centered around the law.

“The most important part of this for me is to work with and to inspire Stockton students,” said Mendez, who retired March 1 as assignment judge for the Atlantic-Cape May County vicinage. “I want them to see how legal issues affect so many areas of the lives and careers of people, and not just lawyers.”

Judge Mendez, as a Senior Contributing Analyst for the Hughes Center, will produce written analyses and columns examining aspects of important issues of the day. His analyses will be published online by the center and be offered to New Jersey news outlets. His first piece about the conservative tilt of the U.S. Supreme Court is scheduled to be published later this month.

The 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.

“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.

Judge 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,” said Stockton President Harvey Kesselman.

Working with the judge is appropriate for the Hughes Center because its namesake, the late Congressman and Ambassador William J. Hughes, was a lawyer and served as a prosecutor in Cape May County, said John Froomjian, director of the center. The collaboration can raise the Hughes Center’s profile in the legal community, Froomjian said.

Judge 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, which is a judicial district. 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.

### **About the Hughes Center**

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.

Pinelands National Reserve in South Jersey and at our coastal residential campus just steps from the beach and Boardwalk in Atlantic City. The university offers more than 160 undergraduate and graduate programs. Learn more at [Stockton.edu](http://Stockton.edu).