

STOCKTON COLLEGE

THE RICHARD STOCKTON COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY



Stockton Hosts Former Gov. Thomas Kean, Former Attorney General John Farmer Jr. for “A Revealing Look at 9/11”

Packed Alton Auditorium Audience Listens to “Insiders” Perspective on Worst Terrorist Attack in U.S.

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Galloway Township, NJ- A failure to communicate at the highest levels among governmental agencies led to the nation’s inability to recognize and respond effectively to the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, according to John Farmer Jr., senior counsel to the government’s 9/11 Commission and former New Jersey Attorney General. Thomas Kean, former Governor of New Jersey who co-chaired the Commission, said, “the terrorists’ new strategy is for smaller attacks and to recruit Americans and other diverse people who don’t fit the profile of Middle Eastern terror organizations. We need to continue to fight the war on terrorism, particularly within our borders.”

The pair gave these thoughts and many others before a crowd of more than 400 people who filled the Elizabeth Alton Auditorium and spilled into an overflow room to watch the event on video. The William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy presented the talk, “A Revealing Look at 9/11,” to a rapt audience of dignitaries, students, faculty, staff, and community members. The event, held roughly one year from the 10th anniversary of the attacks on America, presented a unique perspective on the events of that fateful and tragic day in U.S. history.

“If law enforcement agencies had spoken to one another,” it could have been a different story, said Farmer, author of *The Ground Truth: The Untold Story of America Under Attack on 9/11*. “As the Commission looked into this event we learned the ‘official’ story differed from what actually happened that day. We were originally told that air defense had been given a shoot down order (on all planes subsequent to the first which struck New York City’s World Trade Center North Tower) and had nearly stopped (the attacks on the South Tower and Pentagon in suburban Washington D.C.). But that was not the case.”

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Stockton Looks at 9/11/ page 2

Farmer added that federal agency communications problems have not improved in the years following the attacks. "We have seen it repeatedly with cases such as Hurricane Katrina and the would-be Times Square bomber. Top-down response isn't what addresses the problem. The first responders are those on the ground."

Kean said Americans need to be vigilant to terror threats and average citizens can divert future disasters.

"We must not let 9/11 become relegated to history. We must learn lessons from it," he said. "It was a street vendor who noticed the would-be Times Square bomber and alerted police."

The William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy of The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey seeks to inform and engage the community on key policy issues. Past events have included discussions on human trafficking, the impact of negative political campaigns, environmental and energy issues among others. Such speakers as presidential candidate Bill Richardson, Gov. and then - U.S. Attorney Chris Christie, and NJ Attorney General Anne Milgram have appeared at Hughes Center events. The Hughes Center, named in honor of former U.S. Ambassador to Panama and longtime Congressman William J. Hughes, also conducts polls with Zogby International and has hosted several political debates.

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