



## **Stockton to Co-Sponsor Three Public Legislative Debates in October**

### ***For Immediate Release***

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**Galloway, NJ** – The William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy at The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey, in partnership with The Press of Atlantic City, is sponsoring three public debates for legislative races covering Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland and Ocean counties this fall.

"Candidate debates are essential to civic engagement. They give the voting public an opportunity to hear directly from both major party candidates," said Dan Douglas, executive director of the Hughes Center.

Democratic state Sen. Jim Whelan will debate his Republican challenger, Atlantic County Sheriff Frank Balles, in the first segment from Legislative District 2 (which covers part of Atlantic County.) The Oct. 2 event at Stockton's Dante Hall Theater on N. Mississippi Avenue in Atlantic City will also include a debate between incumbent Republican Assemblymen John Amodeo and Christopher A. Brown vs. Democratic challengers Vincent Mazzeo, who is mayor of Northfield, and Mayor Nick Russo of Longport.

All the debates will start at 6 p.m. with state Senate candidates, followed at 7 p.m. by candidates for the Assembly. The format will allow for two-minute opening statements by each candidate, followed by an approximately one-hour question-and-answer session on each race, with a moderator and panel from the Hughes Center and

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***-Continued from Page 1-***

The Press. The format allows for a one-minute rebuttal from any candidate after each answer; candidates will have a one-minute closing statement as well.

Candidates from District 1, which covers Cape May County and parts of Atlantic and Cumberland counties, will debate at the Old Courthouse on Route 9 in Cape May Court House on Oct. 21.

Incumbent Democratic state Sen. Jeff Van Drew will face off against Republican Susan Adelizzi-Schmidt, while incumbent Assemblymen Nelson Albano and Bob Andrzejczak, both Democrats, will take on Republicans Sam Fiocchi, a Cumberland County freeholder, and Kristine Gabor, a Cape May County freeholder.

The final debate, with candidates from District 9 (comprised of parts of Atlantic, Burlington and Ocean counties) will take place on Oct. 23 in the Campus Center Theatre on Stockton's main Galloway campus.

State Sen. Chris Connors, the Republican incumbent, will face Democratic challenger Anthony Mazzella, a former director at the Department of Treasury; while Republican Assembly members DiAnne Gove and Brian Rumpf will debate Democratic candidates Peter Ferwerda III, a retired municipal and civil engineer, and Christopher McManus, a Stockton Honors Program student in Business Studies.

"The Hughes Center is pleased that the Republicans and Democrats from each of the three districts have agreed to the debates," said Douglas.

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