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Officials, Students Expect Stockton Polling Institute to Provide Greater Voice For Community

The institute became official Friday morning.

By [Anthony Bellano](#) | [Email the author](#) | 12:12 pm

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SHAPING LIVES THROUGH CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



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It was a day seven years in the making for [Richard Stockton College of New Jersey](#) officials.

On Friday morning, Sept. 14, the college unveiled its own [polling institute](#).

The college established a polling relationship with Zogby International in 2005, but according to Stockton President Herman J. Saatkamp, the Stockton Polling Institute in the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy was the ultimate goal all along.

"Zogby International brought with it a lot of credibility, but the intent was always to have our own institute," Saatkamp said following the institute's ribbon-cutting ceremony Friday morning.

Saatkamp said when the relationship was initially established with Zogby in 2005, Stockton didn't have the expertise to run its own polling institute.

The institute will employ 50 students, and officials estimate the cost will be roughly the same as the cost associated with Zogby polling.

"The money that was going to Zogby will be staying here," William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy Director Daniel Douglas said.

Sharon Schulman, Special Assistant to the College President, estimates the college spent about \$100,000 a year during its relationship with Zogby. Those contracts ran from 1-2 years, and were funded through the Hughes Center.

"This builds credibility and gives our school a bigger voice," said Stockton College senior and Galloway native Justin Frankel, who was on hand for Friday morning's ribbon-cutting. "We can compete with Rutgers and Princeton. It gives our school a chance to produce reports that can change New Jersey and the entire country."

Frankel is the Chairman for the Legislative Policies and Government Affairs Committee on the Student Senate. He majors in Political Science.

The ribbon-cutting came one day after Stockton opened an instructional site in Manahawkin, and two days after the U.S. News and World Report gave the college high marks during its recent "America's Best Colleges" edition.

"(All the recent changes at the school) make my degree just as credible as Rutgers and some of the bigger schools."

William J. Hughes and his wife, Nancy, were on hand, as were Sen. Christopher Connors, Assemblyman Brian Rumpf and Assemblywoman DiAnne Gove.

"We can now do our own polling in-house, and polling is becoming extremely important," Hughes said. "It's educational and informative. ... It's helpful in shaping policy."

Officials spoke about the center providing more of a voice for southern New Jersey residents. The scope of the polling issues will include politics and industry issues, including hospitality and tourism, given the college and the institute's proximity to Atlantic City.

Saatkamp also spoke of the advantage of keeping the polling records in one place, on campus.

"It allows us to do two, five and 10 year comparisons, see trends and anticipate what may be happening," Saatkamp said.

The first polling begins next week, according to Douglas, and will tackle the District 2 congressional race. Douglas expects five polls prior to November's election, including two each for District 2 and District 3 and a statewide poll.

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