

STOCKTON COLLEGE

THE RICHARD STOCKTON COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY



Former Chief Counsel William Castner and Assemblyman Jay Webber Advised Students on Pros and Cons of Public Service

William J. Hughes Center Hosted Event Titled "Public Service: Why Would
Anyone Want to Enter Into It?"

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Contact: Tim Kelly
Susan Allen
Office of Public Relations
Galloway Township, NJ 08240
Tim.Kelly@stockton.edu
(609) 652-4950

Galloway Township, NJ- "What do you want the world to look like?" That is the question Assemblyman Jay Webber posed to students last night at a public service lecture series event hosted by the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy at The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey.

Assemblyman Jay Webber and William J. Castner, Jr., former chief counsel to Governor Jon S. Corzine, spoke to an audience of students, faculty, staff and community members about the advantages, disadvantages, sacrifices and rewards of public service.

"If you're young, give it thought. It's a big sacrifice. There's a laundry list of negatives and the current atmosphere is a direct threat," said Castner. He went on to explain that public service can be rewarding and personally fulfilling.

Brian K. Jackson, Stockton's chief of staff, served as the moderator at the event. Jackson asked the experts, "Has the decline in civility in government translated into a lack of interest?"

Assemblyman Webber answered, "In the 18th century, Jefferson and Adams savaged each other. There's been a long history of negativity in politics. However, Lincoln never had to check Facebook, so there is a new element in today's politics. Politicians need to disagree without being disagreeable."

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Someone thinking about entering into government service needs to check off passion, vision, experience and depth from their checklist, but Castner and Webber offered additional inside advice. Castner explained to students, “Internships are a great training ground, but don’t sit back and be the water taker. Go out of your way, attend meetings and offer your assistance, but don’t be annoying.”

Webber agreed with Castner, and explained that he participated in at least five internships throughout his academic career. He said, “Young professionals need to observe other professionals in action. Internships give you a flavor.”

The media, which affects both public servants and their families, has a major impact on government service. Internet blogs, YouTube, Facebook and other forms of social media have become challenges because of their invasive nature. Webber explained that information has become infotainment. “Good public servants are thoughtful about what they say,” said Webber.

Webber and Castner stressed that individuals entering into public service need a direction, a purpose and the passion to accomplish something. They also emphasized the importance of mastering the basics before leaving college. Students can go far with a combination of good writing skills, promptness and professionalism.

For more information on upcoming Hughes Center events, please visit their Web site www.stockton.edu/hughescenter.



From left, Brian K. Jackson, William Castner and Assemblyman Jay Webber

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