

STOCKTON COLLEGE

THE RICHARD STOCKTON COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY



Hughes Center at Stockton Examines Civility in Political Campaigns

Former Congressmen Mickey Edwards and Matthew McHugh Give Views Before Large Gathering of Students

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Galloway Township, NJ- Americans should demand more civility from their elected officials, and politicians should be held accountable for their actions in campaigns, according to a pair of former longtime congressmen who spoke Tuesday night at the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey.

The William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy event drew more than 200 to the Alton Auditorium for the timely discussion. Former representatives Mickey Edwards, a Republican from Oklahoma, and Matthew McHugh, a Democrat from New York, made compelling arguments for a return to moiré civil discourse. "Uncivil behavior in American politics dates back to the Founding Fathers," McHugh said, citing Aaron Burr's duel with Alexander Hamilton, which cost Hamilton his life. "Things aren't so violent now but the mud-slinging can still be quite vicious."

Edwards said bi-partisanship should be encouraged as a means to keep political debate civil. "I considered Matt to be a friend and even though we were from opposing political philosophies, we respect each other and our views. Today you see public officials being pressured by their parties not to deviate or compromise."

The event was the brainchild of the Hughes Center namesake, former Ambassador to Panama and former Congressional Rep. William J. Hughes of Ocean City. "Civility is essential in the democratic process," Ambassador Hughes said. "I think people are tired of all the negative attack ads and want to see a return to a more civilized discussion of the issues."

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