

Report to the Board of Trustees
President R. Barbara Gitenstein
October 7, 2004

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman. I'll begin my report with some good news about our entering class. This has been a very successful year. We attracted exactly the number of first-year students we wanted to attract, and the profile is exemplary: the average SAT for generally admitted students is 1307; high school rank is in the 92nd percentile. In addition, we made significant progress toward our goal of attracting students from underrepresented groups. This year's incoming class saw an 18% increase over last year in enrolled African American students, and an 18% increase in enrolled Hispanic students.

Yesterday the College celebrated Community Learning Day. The programming theme for the 2004-2005 academic year, "Debating Equality," was selected by the Committee for Cultural and Intellectual Community (CCIC) to promote exploration of varied and complex questions about the role of equality in our lives, particularly our obligations as moral agents and citizens. Barbara Ehrenreich, nationally acclaimed author of "Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting by in America," (this year's Summer Reading selection for incoming students) provided a thought-provoking keynote address.

We've had some very positive opportunities in the last several weeks to be involved in press commentary with regard to the many positive events happening on campus. Certainly the publicity surrounding the College's Sesquicentennial celebration has been magnificent, including highlights of the kick off event for the exciting 13-month celebration. And as all of you know by now, The College of New Jersey was ranked in the 2005 edition of *Barron's Profiles of American Colleges* in its "Most Competitive" category. TCNJ joins the likes of Duke University, Stanford University, Harvard University, Princeton University and the six other Ivy League institutions among the 75 schools in that category. It is important to note as well that of those 75, only 7 from across the country are state-supported institutions. A remarkable success – and it did not happen in the last 5 years – we have a long history of marvelous stewardship by this board, by my predecessors, and by the wonderful faculty and students that make up this community.

More recently, TCNJ was included in *CosmoGIRL!* magazine's first-ever "Guide to The 50 Best Colleges for Girls." In compiling the list, editors at *CosmoGIRL!* consulted admissions officers and guidance counselors across the country to determine the kind of environment that gives girls the best chance of success in school and after graduation. The result was a list of six key factors that were then cross-referenced with baseline data from The Princeton Review to determine those schools that best fit the bill. The six key factors -- small class size, prominent female faculty members, strong women's sports programs, a career center that facilitates internship opportunities, opportunities to hold leadership positions in clubs and activities, and an active alumni network -- were all seen by *CosmoGIRL!*'s panel of experts to provide unique elements essential to success.

The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education's Report Card also provided opportunities for commentary in the press. While the primary focus was on the "D" New Jersey received for affordability, some very important evaluations of New Jersey were overlooked, including the percentage of high school students going on to higher education. The downside is that New Jersey continues to be the greatest net outmigrator of students in the country, resulting in a negative drag on our economy, because students so often take jobs where they get their baccalaureate degrees. Our success in keeping students in New Jersey after graduation is very high and our success in employment after graduation is also very high. (Our last survey of graduates indicates 95% employment rate within 12 months of graduation.)

I would also like to comment on a newspaper article having to do with the recently reported assault on campus. I want to comment not so much on the event, but rather on a quotation that was included in the article, because I think it is important to underline. The comment was made that the numbers of assaults have "soared from 2 to 8 from 2000 to 2003." We are currently reporting 5 for this year. I cite that because I wish to remind the community and the Board of what I said in June 2001, when I named the sexual assault task force: "the sexual assault task force report, co-chaired by Dean Mary-Elaine Perry and Dean Susan Bakewell Sachs, provides an excellent plan of action for the next several years. We confirmed that there is absolutely no evidence of institutional attempts to hide statistics; however, we have concluded that we must develop more proactive and more supportive structures for victims to report such episodes. I need to alert you that should we be successful, our sexual assault statistics will increase. This increase will not necessarily reflect an increase in events, but rather show an increase in the number of victims who feel comfortable about asking for help and holding their attackers accountable." I cannot verify for sure that this is the case, but I remind the board and the community of the comment because that is my interpretation. In fact, we have, through the wonderful work of the Sexual Assault Task Force and the partnerships we've created in the community, created a much more comfortable environment for victims to come forward and report the incident, and hold their attackers accountable.

I'd like to also update you on the status of our request for funding from the federal government. As many of you are aware, there have been several visits to Washington, DC to meet with each of New Jersey's congressional delegates to seek \$1 million to support the Bonner Center for Civic and Community Engagement. We have a lot of support from the delegation, being led by Rush Holt, as well as support from Senators Corzine and Lautenberg. Right now in DC there is not a lot of activity happening about anything that is not directly related to the national election, so I don't think we can hope to see any immediate action on the bills requesting money. I am optimistic, though, that we will have positive results. The most important result of this particular effort, beyond the money, will be to continue to improve our relations with all members of the New Jersey delegation. And we are doing that. At my first visit to the New Jersey delegation it was very clear that the congressman from our district, and those near us, are very receptive, and the congressmen from the rest of the state were not so. That is no longer the case. I think everyone is recognizing that when we show them the statistics that our students come from every single congressional district throughout the state, and our alumni are in every single congressional district throughout the state. So, if a congressman is interested in supporting his constituents, he should consider supporting the College. I am scheduled to attend a conference in DC at the end of October, and will make time to visit with our delegates at that time.

I have a couple of development opportunities and alumni opportunities that I want to make sure people are aware of. On Monday, October 11, the Annual TCNJ Golf and Tennis outing will take place at the Trenton Country Club. This is a wonderful friend and fund-raising event, and I am pleased to announce that this is a 'sold out' event.

Homecoming will take place on Saturday, October 16. Additional Sesquicentennial activities promise wonderful additions, including a parade through Ewing. I congratulate Sandra Carroll, our new Director of Alumni Affairs, for doing an excellent job in pulling together resources and enlisting the support of the community, particularly the offices of College and Community Relations, and Student Life. It is wonderful to see how people have jumped in to make this a fun-filled day for our alumni, students, and parents. Thank you.

And finally, I would like to take a personal moment to acknowledge the hard work and commitment of three individuals who will no longer be serving on our board. This is Harry Reichard's last meeting as a member of the board. Harry, your wisdom, intelligence, commitment, dedication, sense of humor, and your ability to work with your colleagues is extraordinary. We will miss you. I also wish to thank Tom Bracken, who could not be with us this afternoon because he is with his daughter at a college function. We will certainly miss Tom's advice and support. And although Bob Gladstone will no longer serve as a trustee, he has graciously agreed to continue to serve in the leadership role as chairman of the Sesquicentennial committee. Thank you to all three of you. It is also a great pleasure to welcome our newest trustees, Brad Brewster and Susanne Svizeny, and our alternate student trustee, Stefanie Nieves. You have a tough act to follow, but I'm certain you are up for the challenge.

Thank you.