

OPENING REMARKS

President R. Barbara Gitenstein

AUGUST 28, 2002

Good afternoon. It is a pleasure to welcome everyone at the beginning of the 2002-2003 academic year, to review the past year and to outline a plan for the year to come.

I am pleased to report that during the 2001-2002 year, The College achieved major successes in the areas that I outlined for focus last fall. As in the past, we have continued to inform the community on these matters throughout the year; a complete update can be found on The College website. Today I wish to cite a couple of noteworthy accomplishments of last year.

1. We increased our grant dollars in FY '02 by 45%.
2. Almost 37% of our new tenure track faculty hires were from underrepresented groups.
3. Our music department attained National Association of School of Music (NASM) re-accreditation, and our education programs attained re-accreditation by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).
4. Last spring, The College's wind ensemble had a most successful trip to Vienna, Linz, and Salzburg, performing as part of the 2002 American Celebration of Music in Austria.
5. Thirteen of twenty-one athletic teams competed in NCAA championship competitions last year, and ten teams were NJAC champions.
6. And, as always, our athletes are scholars as well: one athlete earned an NCAA postgraduate scholarship after earning a spot on the first Verizon Academic All-American College Division Soccer Team; ten of our students were recognized as Verizon Academic All-American District honorees, two have already been named National Academic All-American; and two others were on the ballot for national recognition.
7. To give you a sense of the institutional history of excellence in athletics, let me give you a quick overview: Since joining the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), TCNJ teams have earned 36 national championships, 29 NCAA runner-up titles, including 30 national championships in women's athletics. The athletic program has also produced six NCAA post-graduate scholarship recipients, more than 775 All-Americans, and 38 Verizon Academic All-Americans.
8. Students won national recognition for their academic successes:
 - a. The lunar rover team won the American Institute for Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) best design award-university category at the 2002 NASA-sponsored moonbuggy competition;
 - b. the mini-baja team got first place at the 2002 mini-baja east competition (sponsored by the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) in 3 categories: engineering design, land maneuverability, and the four-hour long endurance race;
 - c. the solar boat team at the 2002 solar splash competition sponsored by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) received an

- outstanding electrical system design award and first place award for technical reporting;
- d. two technology education seniors were selected from a national pool of students for International Technology Education Association (ITEA) scholarships;
 - e. two students earned Fulbrights;
 - f. one of our last year's graduates was awarded one of 52 National Fellowship Awards from the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi;
 - g. one of this year's students has been selected as a winner of the 2002 Morris K. Udall Foundation award, and this for the second consecutive year.
9. The campus conversation on academic transformation progressed well last year, including discussions of the implications for enrollment management, faculty staffing, and technology needs.
 10. Last year, faculty and deans developed two new minors: comparative literature, and public policy analysis and management, and a new master's program in applied Spanish.
 11. We moved into the new social science building last fall, completed the work on the chilled water mains between Kendall and Social Sciences, in the area around Ely, Allen, Brewster, and between Green Hall and West Library. We tore down Crowell Hall and moved into a good portion of the new science complex this fall. (We're finally, though partially, "in." Commendations are due our construction managers and staff for accomplishing what seemed impossible and to the science faculty, particularly our colleagues in chemistry, whose patience has been wonderful.)
 12. We have renovated the Food Court in Brower Student Center, and it will be open for business tomorrow – not with all the offerings that will come our way by the end of September, but when you see the additional space, the greater variety of food, and the beautiful space, I know you will agree with me that it was worth the wait.
 13. Significant progress has been made on the recommendations made by the sexual assault task force. Dr. Beth Paul will be able to share some analyses of data, assessing our student values and assumptions on these matters, sometime this fall. The task force has completed an application for a Department of Justice grant to support the task force programs.
 14. Last year, we implemented our first formal "welcome back" for senior students.
 15. The new community liaison office in Student Life enhanced services to off-campus students and helped establish a basis for expectations for student behavior off campus.
 16. Dr. David Tiffany, who joined us last January as vice president for development and alumni affairs, has significantly improved the structures for outreach to alumni and donors.
 17. The report from the national marketing firm, Lipman Hearne, received in the spring, served as important resource material for executive staff discussion this summer, and will provide a foundation for broader campus discussion on national positioning this year.

18. Last year, we continued our partnership with WPVI-TV and the League of Women Voters by hosting one of the gubernatorial debates.
19. Planning for the 2004-5 sesquicentennial proceeded well, with some very important developments on which I will report at the end of my comments.
20. We enhanced our use of the web as a means of communication – including the web placement of the viewbook and an issue of the TCNJ Magazine.
21. We concluded staff training for and completed the revision of major portions of the Critical Incident Plan.
22. We advanced the implementation of the human resources module of PeopleSoft.

Several of our professional academic programs can cite impressive outcomes measures from last year to validate their students' success:

1. 97% of BSN graduates passed the NCLEX (National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses), which is higher than the state or national average (# 8 of 33 in NJ; #42 of 479 in US);
2. there was a 100% pass rate for 2001 ANCC (American Nurses' Credentialing Center) for Family Nurse Practitioners;
3. this year's results on the Title II Teacher Preparation Assessment: Praxis Test was a 99% pass rate (363 of 365 passed, #1 ranking);
4. 100% of the students from the Department of Counselor Education who took the National Counseling Examination passed the exam;
5. 100% of the mechanical, electrical, and computer engineering students of the 2002 class passed the Fundamentals of Engineering Examination (FE).

We also have indicators of broad institutional success. For instance, retention rate is an important indicator of student satisfaction. Last year, we confirmed that 96% of our freshmen from 2000 returned for their 2001 sophomore year. Preliminary information suggests that of the 2001 first year students 94% returned for their sophomore year.

The College of New Jersey continues to be recognized as a great value. For instance, we have just been informed that in this year's *Unofficial, Unbiased, Insider's Guide to the 320 Most Interesting Colleges* (Kaplan), we will again be listed as a top school in "schools that offer the best value for your tuition dollar."

Our most recent Survey of Graduates (Class of 2001), which had a 72% response rate, contains additional positive information:

1. 98% of respondents were either employed or in graduate school within a year of graduation;
2. graduates of the nursing school continue to have the highest average salary in first-time jobs (over \$49,000); however, the mid-range of salaries for over 50% of graduates was between \$30,000 and \$40,000;
3. the top employers of our non-education graduates last year were the State of New Jersey, Merck, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Prudential Financial, Lockheed Martin, Ernst and Young, Johnson and Johnson, and Robert Wood Johnson; in teaching

- positions, the top employers were Hamilton Township, Hillsborough Township, and the Union Board of Education;
4. in the survey of graduates, 20% were attending graduate/professional school; 14% on a full-time basis, with more than half pursuing degrees in professional programs in law, education, medicine, and business.
 5. fully 78% of the respondents were employed in the State of New Jersey and more than half received more than one job offer; 84% secured employment either prior to graduation or within the first six months after graduation.

Not only are our graduates employed well, but they also express great satisfaction with their TCNJ experience. In the 2001 Survey, 90% reported that they judged their TCNJ preparation as good or excellent; and 94% judged the quality of their academic experience as good or excellent.

This year's admissions statistics suggest that our past success will continue for the future. Some facts about our 2002-2003 first year class are:

1. we received 6,321 applications, a 5% increase over last year;
2. of the 1237 first-year students, 1192 are in residence;
3. the SAT for all enrolled students is 1240 (1222 last year); 1267 for all students, save those in the state-mandated admission program (1243 last year);
4. we increased the class rank by 1% to 89% average;
5. this year's class is 48% scholars (last year 41%);
6. we made substantial progress in increasing the ethnic diversity of the class:
 - a. we increased enrollment in every single category we tracked: EOF, African-American, Hispanic, Puerto Rican, and Asian;
 - b. particularly noteworthy are the following statistics that suggest we are becoming a school of choice by students from underrepresented populations:
 1. whereas we increased applications from African-American students by 15%; we increased enrollment of African-American students by 20%;
 2. whereas we increased applications by Puerto Rican students by 7%, we increased enrollment of Puerto Rican students by 21%; and
 3. whereas we increased applications by Asian students by 1%, we increased enrollment of Asian students by 8%.

These statistics give only a partial story of this extraordinary class. Easily, more than half of the incoming class are members of the National Honor Society; many are double and triple varsity athletes, All-Conference and All-State; a large portion are Girls State and Boys State participants. In this class, we have a student named "the most philosophical student in the nation," a junior Olympian in tennis, a member of the U.S. Civilian Air Patrol, a National Young Leader conference participant (Washington, DC), a student who earned his pilot license at 14 years old, a national cheerleading champion, a four-time class president, and a delegate to the Free the Children international conference in Ontario. Surely, this is a great group to continue our tradition of excellence.

Our faculty, again, were instrumental in the enhancement of our institutional reputation:

1. Two faculty in computer science, three faculty in engineering, and one faculty member in business received National Science Foundation research and instrumental awards.
2. The Commission on Higher Education awarded \$750,000 to Amy Dell, Sharon Sherman, and Ron Todd for a project to prepare special education and elementary educations to use inquiry and design-based learning in their classrooms.
3. Deb Knox partnered with faculty at four other institutions on a two-year \$800,000 NSF grant for a digital library project.
4. Mort Winston was awarded a Fulbright Alumni Initiative Award; Michael Robertson and Derek Peterson received National Endowment for the Humanities Grants; Carlos Alves was named an American Council on Education Fellow; and Tom Allsen was awarded the prestigious Guggenheim award (only 184 out of 2845 applications were awarded).

As has been true in years past, some of our most impressive successes in 2001-2002 were in our ability to respond to unplanned events and crises. Within only two weeks of the first day of classes last year, America's worldview was transformed forever – that national horror stunned the TCNJ community personally and profoundly. The way our institution responded to the needs of other community members and those nearby continues to humble me. We proved ourselves to be a caring and engaged community: freshmen students raised over \$1000 in one night; students provided "help packages" for workers at "ground zero" of the World Trade Center; over a two-week period, two blood drives were fully booked on the campus; friends, faculty, and staff reached out in personal and powerful ways to members of our community most devastated by the events of 9-11; the executive staff raised \$10,000 for a special fund to support room and board costs for dependents of 9-11 victims; and our faculty provided exceptional leadership in helping us understand the complexity of the events of September 11, 2001 and the history that led to these actions.

Only a month later, we in central New Jersey were thrust into the national confusion and fear caused by the anthrax mailings that passed through the nearby Hamilton post office facility. The environmental services and college relations staffs were superb in gathering accurate information and suggesting appropriate plans of action for The College, and our health service professionals, maintenance staff, security, mail handlers and secretaries were extraordinary in all that they did to help us remain safe.

And then, almost as an anti-climax, beginning in January, because of the state's budget crisis, we experienced a series of the most draconian budget cuts that The College has ever sustained. Without minimizing the struggle, I know that our years of mission-based planning and broad community discussion of priority-setting stood us in good stead as we moved through the necessary budget reductions and necessary tuition/fee increases to assure that institutional momentum towards excellence continued.

Any one of these crises would have challenged a community, but our institutional agility in recovery from these three, so quickly on the heels of one another, was nothing short of astonishing.

In 2001, Dr. Frank Rhodes, president emeritus of Cornell University, published *The Creation of the Future: The Role of the American University*. While his focus is the research university in America, his description of the paradox of leadership expected of higher education in the twenty-first century suggests some very effective guidelines for our future. He asserts that in this new century, institutions of higher education must be:

1. "... increasingly privately supported but increasingly publicly accountable and socially committed"
2. "... campus rooted but internationally oriented"
3. "... academically independent but constructively partnered"
4. "... knowledge based but student centered, ... research driven but learning focused"
5. "... quality obsessed but procedurally efficient" and
6. "... professionally attuned but humanely informed."

(*The Creation of the Future: The Role of the American University*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2001, pp. 235-239)

For the last several years, we at The College have expressed our aspiration to provide the very best in the undergraduate experience at a "public school" price. This aspiration has led us to affirm those paradoxes asserted in Rhodes' description: dedication to accountability and community responsiveness, planful allocation of institutional resources to strategic priorities, new appreciation of the teacher-scholar, renewed commitment to diversity and a global perspective, and aspiration toward premiership.

In order to align our energies and resources with a growing need to position ourselves in the eyes of the public as the exemplar of public higher education, we must continue to refine how we articulate institutional commitments. We will be known not only in the culminating description of what we become but also in our path to realizing those dreams. Growing out of our discussions on mission in 2000, we commit to the following:

- to provide an intellectually and artistically challenging environment for learning,
- to celebrate human diversity and a global outlook,
- to develop leaders for an engaged and accountable community,
- to create community across cultural and social boundaries,
- to communicate in an inclusive and civil manner,
- to sustain a welcoming and aesthetically pleasing environment,
- to manage with accountability, transparency, and flexibility, and
- to expand the pool of stakeholders, advocates, and supporters.

During this summer's executive staff retreat, we sought to articulate a series of initiatives that would implement these commitments. While the discussions were broad-ranging and diverse, a couple of main themes surfaced in almost every break-out group:

1. the importance of continuing the campus discussion on the academic transformation, and beginning its implementation as recommended by the committee on academic programs in May. That will include: revising majors and focusing on interdisciplinary programs, community-based research, global education, and leadership development;
2. the advisement, mentoring, and academic counseling programs and the first-year experience must be modified to support the new curriculum;
3. the philosophy of communication with internal and external stakeholders must be reviewed and a more open communication style valued in the staff and administrative evaluation system;
4. the stakeholders, advocates, and supporters of The College must be expanded.

This year's institutional goals grow out of this staff retreat. In the articulation of the strategies and projects listed below, I will identify appropriate leadership for on-going projects and cabinet and executive staff members as conveners of task forces for new initiatives. Membership for individual task forces will be cross-functional and will always include membership from the faculty and student body and in appropriate circumstances, members of the board of trustees, the foundation, the alumni association, and the Ewing community. I invite anyone interested in participating in any of these discussions to contact my office. I will consult with faculty, staff, and student leadership to assure broad participation on these task forces. I plan to publicize membership and specific charges within a week or ten days.

First five on-going goals from past years:

1. Our commitment to increasing the diversity of our community must continue. Our recruitment goal for tenure-track faculty appointments should continue to be at least 20% (we will be very pleased to exceed it, as we did this year); our goal for first-year enrollment of underrepresented students should be at least 25%. A new reorganization of the affirmative action and EEO office should facilitate our employment successes in this area but everyone must claim responsibility for this enhancement.
2. We will continue to augment partnerships with businesses, corporations, and local and state government agencies. These include programs with special corporate and government support (such as the non-profit management program, the partnership with PTC, an international leader in engineering software, and economic development initiatives), community-based research (especially evident in the departments of sociology, political science, and psychology), and programs in leadership development and the appreciation of social justice (such as Women in Learning and Leadership program, the work of the Committee on the Cultural and Intellectual Community, the multi-cultural lecture series and the Center for the Study of Social Justice). All are prime candidates for attracting non-state dollars through additional corporate sponsorships, grants, and private fund raising, and they provide excellent vehicles for the investigation of public policy issues to support government/local needs.

3. We will continue our institutional decision-making process through the sustained commitment to the revised governance system and to the appointment of a full range of stakeholders to any *ad hoc* task forces, search committees, and institutional study groups.
4. We will continue to improve on-campus communication. We will continue the publication of Fourth Friday and the placement of my reports to the board, as well as important documents regarding academic transformation and the PeopleSoft implementation, on the web. We will add two new websites: one for updates on administrative and important program changes, and one on the current status of campus construction. We will continue to enhance opportunities for public celebrations of faculty and student achievements. The Office of College Relations and the webmaster will be responsible for leadership in the improved communications vehicles, and the major events coordinator and the Office of the President will be largely responsible for the continued attention to major events.
5. We will continue our information technology planning, including such major initiatives as the desktop replacement cycle, network upgrades, and replacement of legacy administrative applications. In this next year, we hope to select and plan for the implementation of a new Student Information System to support our new course structure and academic transformation. Associate Vice President Nadine Stern will continue to provide the leadership in these matters. As part of the improvement for on-campus administrative and budget reports to enhance decision-making, we will develop additional web-based financial reports. Treasurer Barbara Wineberg will continue to work with the information technology leadership to develop these products.

In addition to these on-going goals, eleven new goals and initiatives will receive our attention this year:

1. The provost, deans, and faculty will begin the process of transforming individual courses in order to promote "deep understandings" of disciplinary and interdisciplinary investigation. These courses will become the central focus for an intensive review and revision of majors. All core courses in each major will be revised by May 2003. The provost, deans, and faculty will continue the study of the system of faculty weighted hours to assure that faculty time supports the new system of a transformative learning-centered environment. This new system will continue to be informed by previous campus discussions on the accomplished and engaged learner and the accomplished and engaged teacher-scholar. Part of this discussion should include a faculty development program to provide support for faculty engaging in transformative learning.
2. This new system will require different and more intensive attention to advisement, mentoring, and career counseling. A task force on developmental advisement will be charged with drafting a proposal for guiding students through the new learning-centered experience. Associate Vice President Nadine Stern will serve as convener.
3. I will charge a task force on cross-cultural experience to develop a plan for affording every undergraduate student at The College of New Jersey a substantial

- cross-cultural experience, including opportunities for study abroad, second language acquisition, and appropriate community service. This plan must consider the differing challenges of the various curricula on campus and provide information on costs. Vice Provost Suzanne Pasch will serve as convener.
4. We shall develop a comprehensive first-year college experience that supports the revised curriculum. A task force will review our current first-year program to recommend modifications to meet the ideals and expectations of the new curriculum. Dean Mary-Elaine Perry will serve as convener.
 5. We will accomplish the 2002-2003 expectations of the "Conceptual Framework for the Campus Facilities Master Plan," including the completion of the science complex, the completion of the chapel, the completion of the third parking garage, breaking ground for the library, beginning construction on the three new residence halls (to add some 600 beds), and the program planning for the art building, and the events center. In these construction developments, we will ensure that we create both interior and exterior space where community members can gather for public discourse and socialization, particularly through the use of outside sculpture and inside art.
 6. This year, we will conduct an extensive review of non-academic administrative organization structure to effect financial efficiencies and preserve administrative effectiveness. We will intensify our examination of budget and expenditure strategies to assure allocation of finances to institutional priorities. Vice President Drake and Treasurer Wineberg will lead this effort; however, the entire cabinet will be engaged in the recommendation process.
 7. In order to foster a shared institutional perspective, I will request that the Committee on Student and Campus Community assume, as part of this year's charge, to lead campus discussions on the "ethics of service," particularly considering individual responsibilities in supporting the institutional mission, working across divisional boundaries, and supporting institutional commitments.
 8. We must continue to improve our relationship with Ewing Township. There are three specific projects already underway, but I am sure others will develop over the year. These current projects are:
 - a partnership with the Ewing Public Schools in the "Ewing Excellence" initiative (including faculty and academic support for "Kids Voting"),
 - a partnership with the Ewing town council on the joint committee on Ewing township and college affairs
 - and a college publication specifically showcasing events, facilities, and academic expertise, expressly for Mercer County residents.

Presidential Assistant for Community Relations Pat Coleman-Boatwright will be the on-campus liaison for the two partnerships and The Office of College Relations will produce the publication.

9. We must transform the culture of communication from reactive to active and interactive (both with on-campus and off-campus stakeholders). I will charge a task force with developing a process for soliciting feedback and productive

- comment on major issues that would have substantive impact on the campus or surrounding community and effective incorporation of such suggestions into institutional decision-making. The process must be predicated on a shared definition of what we mean by such communication and a shared commitment to its value. In addition, this process would include a revision of the staff and administrative evaluation procedures to assure support of the institutional commitments. Vice President Robert Drake will serve as convener.
10. I will charge a task force on positioning The College to provide a proposed implementation plan in response to the Lipman Hearne Integrated Marketing Plan for The College of New Jersey. Specifically, the task force should develop a "case statement for institutional premiership" (What do we mean by it? Why do we want to be seen as such?); it should make recommendations on public relations strategies that highlight student, faculty, and staff successes, author a monograph on the "Transformation of Trenton State College to The College of New Jersey," and develop strategies for national placement of institutional spokesmen in defining our model of higher education. Associate Vice President Jesse Rosenblum will serve as convener.
 11. We will increase private giving for FY '03 both in terms of total dollars and stakeholder participation. Foundation support of The College's scholarship program will be \$900,000. We will raise a total of \$2,000,000 in private dollars next year. We will increase the percentage of alumni annual giving to 10%. A very important foundation for enhancing this participation must be better involvement of the alumni in the life of the campus. The Office of Development and Alumni Affairs will craft a strategic plan for increasing alumni engagement in the life of the campus, including a challenge to individual sponsoring departments, programs and units to increase interaction among students, faculty and alumni.

In the past, we have proven that we can be very successful with articulating goals and actually realizing them; however, this year's goals will provide us the additional challenge of realizing more ambitious, more institutionally directed and much more externally attentive goals. I know we can rise to the challenge and I have two particular spurs to our success.

First, a couple of very important updates on our progress on plans for our 2004-2005 sesquicentennial celebration. A committee of faculty, staff and students, co-chaired by two of our valued trustees, Mr. Robert Gladstone and Ms. Barbara Pelson, has been working hard over the last couple of years to plan an extensive series of celebrations to honor our college, an institution that began with what seemed a modest experiment by ten women and five men, almost 150 years ago. While I am not in a position to make a specific announcement today, I am very pleased to inform you that by the end of this semester we should be able to announce our first corporate sponsorships for the sesquicentennial celebration. In addition, today I am very pleased to unveil The College of New Jersey's sesquicentennial logo. This logo will appear on all merchandise and publications associated with the celebration and will be printed on college-wide materials during the sesquicentennial year. The theme for the year comes from an Emily Dickinson

letter: "We turn not older with years, but newer every day." How apt for TCNJ, an institution attentive to its past and confident of its future! You will be hearing much more in the years to come about the sesquicentennial plans. In fact, you can keep up to date yourself by checking on the sesquicentennial website. Thank you Robert Gladstone and Barbara Pelson, co-chairs, and all the rest of the committee for all your work on The College's behalf.

A second spur to our year's challenges: we have exciting news about three major bequests to The College, totaling close to \$800,000. The specific details will be announced later this fall; however, I am very pleased to announce today that a substantial portion of the largest bequest will establish an endowment for an annual "Department of Excellence Award." Provost Briggs and Vice President Tiffany will oversee a process that will encourage faculty participation in shaping the award process and criteria for this first ever "Department of Excellence Award" at The College of New Jersey. The purpose of the endowment is to honor a department's excellence in realizing The College's academic mission, by adding significant financial support to the department's operating budget, and thus allowing the department to progress even further in its goals.

We also will be developing a parallel recognition program for outstanding administrative and staff service to The College and its students, supported by this bequest. Both of these will honor excellent group service on behalf of The College. What a pleasure it will be to celebrate those who make TCNJ exemplary!

Personally, I will continue to be engaged in the advocacy in the state for public higher education in general and TCNJ in particular. It is a major portion of my responsibility to help political and business leaders appreciate the importance of mission differentiation in higher education in the state and the distinctive nature and responsibility of The College of New Jersey in supporting the economic, intellectual, and cultural health of New Jersey.

As Emily Dickinson says:

Each Life Converges to some Centre –
Expressed – or still –
Exists in every Human Nature
A Goal –
...
Adored with caution – as a Brittle Heaven –
To reach
Were hopeless, as the Rainbow's Raiment
To touch –

Yet persevered toward – sure – for the Distance –
How high –
Unto the Saints' slow diligence –
The Sky –

(#680, c.1863; 1891)

Let's continue to work together to assure that The College of New Jersey converges on our shared goal to be and to be seen as premier, the best public undergraduate institution in the country, a resource for our state, a challenging learning community for our students and faculty, and a cherished *alma mater* for our alumni.

Thank you.

Please join me in the Student Center for the fall picnic to celebrate our new year.