

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE BOARD

President R. Barbara Gitenstein

December 5, 2002

[Because snow storm required public meeting to be conducted via teleconference, the report was not delivered at public session]

The fall semester has been a very successful one filled with the full range of student and faculty activities and with the institutional involvement in a broad series of public issues and external relations activities in which we have been involved.

Let me begin with the on-campus fall events:

1. Two art exhibits – Currently “A Painting for Over the Sofa.” There was a great review in the New Jersey section of the *New York Times* this past weekend. Earlier in semester we hosted “Evidencing: Drawing With Light and Pixels.”
2. We’ve had several excellent theatrical productions, including “Evening of Shorts,” *The Importance of Being Earnest* and *Pippin*.
3. Community Fest – Despite the rain, Community fest 2002 drew over 75 vendors and over 2,000 community members to Quimby's Prairie. The weather did not dampen the spirits of guests as they enjoyed shopping, local musical talent, concerts by TCNJ's chorale and wind ensemble, crafts and culinary delights from around the globe. Student organizations gave back to the community by hosting activity tables for children of all ages. Members of the student body along with the township and The College community came out in support of this important event.

Community Fest reached out to local business leaders for the first time, offering them a chance to "Partner with the Fest." As a result, 22 companies joined the Community Fest family and the event raised \$19,000 exemplifying the theme, "Building a Community Tradition."

#### 4. Homecoming, October 25-26

- a. Our Friday night programs were extremely successful this year. The Athletic Hall of Fame dinner had over 180 attendees, and the Young Alumni Party in the Rathskellar was consistently busy (approximately 300 visitors throughout the evening). According our records, these events were the largest in five years.
- b. On Saturday, approximately 4,500 alumni and friends attended various events throughout the day:
  1. Over 1,000 alumni visited the Pub Beer Garden.

2. Sixty members of the Class of 1952 celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> reunion (representing nearly 50% of the living 1952 graduates). One attendee made the trip from Hawaii. 70% of the Class of 1952 made a class gift back to The College.
  3. The Department of History, School of Business, School of Engineering and Women in Learning and Leadership each held receptions for alumni and guests.
  4. The Class of 1972, celebrating their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, raised over \$13,000 in class gift donations.
  5. Other popular events this year included: Miss Decker's Tea, campus tours provided by the Future Alumni Association and College Ambassadors, tailgating, and of course the football game.
  6. The weekend was capped with the Golden Anniversary dinner, held in the atrium of the Social Science Building where 78 Class of '52 attendees dined under the stars.
5. Despite the fact that we are at the end of the semester, this week is filled with events:
- a. Kwanzaa Celebration – kickoff with speech by Dr. Maulana Karenga, founder of Kwanzaa.
  - b. Tonight is TCNJ Holiday – the night we honor the winter celebrations of the members of our college community.
  - c. This weekend there is a full series of student concerts: vocal and wind ensemble, concert band, as well as a display of the fall's graphic design portfolios.

We had a very successful fall in athletics. Some highlights:

1. With an overall record of 13-3, our field hockey team finished 3<sup>rd</sup> in the nation after losing a 1-0 game in the semifinals of the NCAA championships.
2. Our men's cross country team took 9<sup>th</sup> place at the NCAA national championships a week after winning the NCAA regional championships which TCNJ hosted at Washington Cross State Park.
3. Our women's cross country team finished 11<sup>th</sup> at the NCAA national championships after placing 3<sup>rd</sup> in the NCAA regional hosted by TCNJ.

4. The women's soccer team ended the season at 17-1-2 and in 9<sup>th</sup> place nationally, losing to eventual national champion Messiah College 2-1 in the NCAA mid-Atlantic regional final.
5. In football, we ended a 6-3 season on a bright note with two big wins including a 21-7 victory at Brockport, the team that beat Rowan this past weekend to advance to the NCAA quarterfinal round.
6. Our men's soccer team completed a 10-7-3 season and fell one game short of advancing to the NCAA tournament when they lost in the NJAC tournament championship after upsetting nationally ranked Rowan in the semifinals.
7. At this point in the year, with results from a couple of other NCAA championships not yet factored in, TCNJ is in second place in the Sears Director's Cup, behind our perennial competitor, Williams College.

Our Athletics Department is distinctive not just because of its history of athletic prowess, but also because of its support of our institutional mission to develop students who will enhance the communities in which they live. This fall, the department hosted the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Walk/Run for charity this time with the American Heart Association as the recipient and raised just over \$7,000. Every third Wednesday of the month a different team serves an evening meal at the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen.

Our faculty are continuing to be recognized as regional, national and international leaders in their fields. A couple of recent examples include:

1. Dr. Allen Katz, professor of engineering, received the William Randolph Lovelace II Award from the American Aeronautical Society for his work on microwave linearizer technology.
2. Morton Winston, professor of philosophy, has been appointed to the American Philosophical Association's Committee on International Cooperation. He also has been awarded a Fulbright Alumni Initiative Award grant from the Council on International Education to develop new courses on human rights and international relations for The College of New Jersey and Mahidol University in Bangkok Thailand, where he was a Fulbright senior scholar in 1999-2000.
3. Robert Cunningham, associate professor of mathematics, is serving this academic year as president of the Associated Mathematics Teachers of New Jersey.

Our faculty and students were fully engaged in the important political and social issues of the day – issues that played out in the November elections and the conflicts in the Middle East and around the world. Faculty and students sponsored a series of panels and talks on

the impending war in Iraq and we heard from a number of national experts on these matters. For instance:

1. This year's Community Learning Day was titled "Should we Sacrifice Liberty for Security." The keynote event was a debate between Bill Schulz of Amnesty International and Richard Lowry of the National Review.
2. Benjamin Barber was the fall Multicultural Lecturer, the title of his talk "Jihad vs. McWorld."

Some of the best news recently has been the state's ability to sell the bonds that include the funding to support the building of the new library. Finally, we can proceed on this very important construction, the heart of our campus.

The College has received some important public validations of our success, including a wonderful article in the New Jersey section of the New York *Times* by Neil Genzlinger (October 6, 2002), another successful ranking in this fall's *U.S. News and World Report*, and in this fall's Kiplinger ranking of public baccalaureate education.

*US News and World Report*, again, ranked The College of New Jersey the #1 public in the northeast, and #6 in overall rankings in the northeast. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that this year we were the only public institution in the top 10 of the northeast region. Further analysis of the *US News and World Report* rankings confirm our competitive stance with regional peers across the nation. For instance, this year, we can boast the highest retention rate for any regional institution in the country.

Our indicator of selectivity (SAT scores) placed us behind only three private institutions in the country (Villanova, University of Richmond and Trinity; we were the top public regional institution in this selectivity measure). We had the highest percentage of the freshman class in the top 25% of their class in our region, and were second only to University of Richmond in this characteristic compared to all other regional institutions across the country.

The second confirmation is, I think, even more impressive. The Kiplinger Report, "Best Public Institutions in the County," ranks all types of public institutions, major research and masters regional. The process begins with a determination by the use of published data of the 200 most selective public institutions in the United States. In order to prune the list to 100, Kiplinger considers graduation rates, freshman-to-sophomore retention rates, faculty-to-student ratios, and institutional allocation of resources for instruction and for library resources.

To rank within the top 100, Kiplinger considers cost, financial aid, and debt load issues. In the publication's judgment: "Overall, the formula place[s] greater weight on quality (two-thirds) than on cost (one-third) because 'value' is not synonymous with 'cheap.'" In this ranking, we are competing with institutions such as University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and University of Virginia. The last time the report was

published in 2000, we were ranked an impressive #35. And this fall, we were ranked #19 – ahead of every other public institution in the state of New Jersey.

This fall we have been pleased to serve as the site for a number of statewide conferences and summits sponsored by Governor James McGreevey:

1. on October 22, 350-375 business and political leaders attended the Governor's SMART Growth Summit;
2. on November 11, 175-200 stakeholders in higher education attended the Governor's Higher Education Summit; and
3. on October 29, 50 trustees and presidents from NJASCU institutions attended the NJASCU Trustees Conference.

While we have a way to go, I think we have made progress in improving our relationship with the local community:

1. We have enhanced our coordination with the Ewing schools, including the establishment of several new programs, such as "KIDSVOTING."
2. On Tuesday night, the first public forum of the joint committee with township individuals was held. It was an honest and vocal sharing of concerns by local community members, much surrounding the continuing ambiguity about our revised plans to meet the planning board recommendations. As you are aware, we are continuing to work on these changes to present to you and to the planning board and neighbors. As we have said already, we will not be building the garage on the outside perimeter of Metzger Drive; however, that change has caused a cascading of facilities changes and possible costs. Before I can share these changes with you (for your approval and/or endorsement), and then the planning board and the public, I must have a clearer sense of the costs and the full range of changes. We learned a great deal from the interaction and I know that the experience will produce additional positive results as well as inform the work of our on-campus "Interactive Communication Task Force." Many of the on-campus task force members were also in attendance at the meeting.

The best example of the improvement of our informal relationship with the local community was evidenced in the first of several "Breakfasts with Barbara." Business executives, elected officials, representatives from candidates, education and non-profit leadership came together to discuss ways of partnering and cooperating with TCNJ. Some 28 individuals attended the first breakfast; 32 are scheduled to attend the second breakfast next week.

We continue to be recognized by national accreditations of our academic programs. On October 29, we received a very positive exit interview regarding the re-accreditation of our computer science program. The final decision on the matter will occur sometime next semester.

As you know, I have been spending a great deal of time in conversations associated with statewide higher education planning, including appropriate consideration of the recommendations of the Vagelos Commission. In the commission report, for instance, there are important principles that support our institutional direction: commitment to excellence, autonomy, mission-differentiation, and strong campus-based presidential leadership.

In order to realize our dreams as an exemplar in public undergraduate education, it is essential that we retain a high and positive profile. Dr. Tiffany's significant enhancement of the structure and functioning of the Foundation promises great things. And clearly, things have been happening: three nice bequests have come our way quite recently. Earlier this fall we received \$180,000 from the estate of Helen Dickman Shaw; we expect to receive about \$150,000 from the estate of Dena Dodson; and Tuesday we received confirmation that we will be receiving \$465,000 from the estate of Mildred Dahne. In addition, we have recently seen the enrichment of wonderful partnerships with national foundations, such as the Harcourt Foundation and the Bonner Foundation, as well as with local agencies such as the Small Business Development Center and the New Jersey Chamber.

A sort of emblematic event was my experience teaching a third grade class in Patterson, New Jersey on October 23. I was invited to participate by one of last year's graduates working in the public relations office of New Jersey's arm of Teach for America. The class I visited was being taught by another one of our graduates, with a B.S. in psychology. Two young women who had learned from The College not only information and intellectual engagement, but social commitment and the power of transformative engagement. I was very proud of them