

# PROVOST STEVEN J. DINER'S ANNUAL ADDRESS TO THE R-N COMMUNITY

October 10, 2005

## Introduction

The more things change, the more they remain the same, and this is especially true of Rutgers-Newark.

We are preparing to celebrate, in 2008, the 100th anniversary of the first of the institutions that ultimately became The University of Newark, while next year marks the 60th anniversary of the merger of the University of Newark with Rutgers. To gain some historical perspective on the evolution of our campus, I turned to a leading historian of American higher education, Professor Harold Wechsler of NYU. At my request, he prepared a history of The University of Newark, whose records he had already examined in detail for a study of the history of college access in America.

His history of the University of Newark revealed three dominant themes:

- Its commitment to opportunity for students of poor or modest backgrounds
- Its ethnic diversity
- Its distinctly urban mission

To anyone who has heard me speak about Rutgers-Newark, these are familiar themes, and I was fascinated to learn how deeply they are embedded in our institutional history.

There is, however, a fourth theme that describes Rutgers-Newark today. After the University of Newark's 1946 merger with Rutgers, cutting-edge research became a major purpose here, as it is in all of Rutgers.

So I have chosen to organize this year's annual report to the campus around these four familiar themes: opportunity, diversity, urban mission and research.



## DIVERSITY

### Student Diversity

We are very proud that U.S. News and World Report has ranked Rutgers-Newark first among national universities in diversity for the ninth year in a row. But the U.S. News rankings, based on the mix of five large racial/ethnic groupings, do not begin to capture the full extent of our student diversity. For example, in a survey completed last year by our first-year students, 12% indicated that their religion is Hindu, and 10% said they are Muslim. Forty-two percent said that English is not their native language.

Our student diversity makes the campus an extremely exciting place, but there are more essential benefits than excitement. Indeed, the leaders of the finest universities in America argued before the Supreme Court that diversity is a crucial element in a first-rate college education. Students attending Rutgers-Newark learn a great deal simply by mixing with fellow students of so many different backgrounds, and that experience is deeply valued by prospective employers.

But I believe we need to be more proactive in insuring that our students learn as much as possible from each other. Therefore, I have asked John Gunkel, director of our Honors College, to lead a project that will assist faculty in using leveraging the diversity in their classrooms as a tool for learning. The project will survey faculty to see how diversity is currently employed as a pedagogical strategy. We will offer grants to faculty to develop new approaches to teaching and learning that draw upon our students' diverse family backgrounds, and we will then organize seminars where faculty can share experiences.

There is also much in organized student life on our campus that fosters inter-cultural learning. One example: our Muslim and Jewish student organizations have been engaged in regular dialogues for over

three years. As useful as these have been, we know, however, that students learn the most about each other, and form their deepest relationships with those of different backgrounds, when they live together in our residence halls. These opportunities for co-existence will increase dramatically when we complete construction of University Square, which is slightly ahead of schedule, and will double our residential population when it opens in Fall 2006.

Let me also address two incidents last year that caused tensions on our campus. When a student alleged that a campus police officer used an ugly racial epithet while arresting her for disorderly conduct, demonstrations ensued, with protestors complaining that there was a widespread problem of racial insensitivity within our police force. When the incident occurred, we had already begun to bring about change in the campus police force by reorienting it to community policing, and we were already searching for a new director of public safety. I am delighted to report that Michael Lattimore, a leading exponent of community policing, is now our public safety director. Under his leadership, we will have a police force that is more visible and more oriented to serving our students, as well as a campus on which all of us will feel safe and secure.

Last spring, at the arts and sciences commencement, our student speaker presented a sectarian evangelical statement that offended many people on our campus. We have channeled the sometimes heated discussion sparked by this incident into organized campus forums exploring critical questions: What are the obligations of citizens in a religiously pluralistic society? What is the role of religion in public institutions? What is the nature of free speech? Of the free practice of religion? We will continue to address these vital issues.

#### Faculty and Staff Diversity

We all recognize that our faculty is not nearly as diverse as our student body. President McCormick and I are both deeply committed to increasing minority representation on our faculty. So I am pleased to report that of 24 tenured, tenure-track and clinical faculty appointments made on the Newark campus last year, 14 are women and 10 are men, 5 are Asian-American, 5 are African-American, 2 are Hispanic and 12 are white. In other words, 50% of our new faculty appointees are minorities and 58% are women.

Our staff has had a large representation of minorities for many years, but the number of minorities and women in the higher administrative positions has not been as great as we would like. We are making significant process here as well. Since July 2003, the proportion of minorities hired for positions classified as "executive, administrative and managerial" (provost staff, associate and assistant deans, and directors) has increased from 16% to 28%. Since July 2002, seven Asian-Americans, 34 African-Americans and ten Hispanics have been hired in these positions.

I want to note that the Organization of Black Faculty and Staff, which will be celebrating its 35th anniversary in October 2005, has played an enormously constructive role in addressing issues of equity on campus. Under Gerard Drinkard's excellent leadership, the group's officers have met regularly with me and associate provost Carol Martancik regularly. The OBFSS has worked with us to increase opportunity at Rutgers-Newark. I would be happy to have similar meetings with other faculty-staff groups.

#### **OPPORTUNITY**

Our annual survey of first-year students also demonstrates that we continue to fulfill our historic mission of educating bright and ambitious students from poor and modest and low-income backgrounds. Fourteen percent of first-year students last year came from families with an annual income of less than \$25,000; the national average for public universities is 7.6%. And 53% of all of our first-year students come from families earning less than \$50,000, compared with a national average for public universities of 28%.

In the last several years, the number of Rutgers-Newark undergraduates with top academic records has increased substantially, due largely to the growth and success of our Honors College. We are thrilled by this success, but we cannot allow the growing popularity of our campus to interfere with our mission of making opportunity available to students of limited means. A study group on admissions, co-chaired by Associate Dean Cary Booker and Professor John Graham, looked carefully at these issues. Its excellent report concluded that we continue to enroll to the kinds of first-generation undergraduates whom we have traditionally served. But, it warned, that we must do more to provide support services to students who have great promise but might lack the strongest possible preparation for Rutgers' demanding academic program. We are taking steps to implement this important recommendation.

We are also making special efforts to attract students from the public schools of Newark, Irvington, East Orange and other low-income communities close to campus. Under the leadership of Vice Provost Marcia Brown, Rutgers-Newark student ambassadors, who themselves come from inner-city communities, visit Newark public high schools and encourage the students there to attend college, and specifically to attend Rutgers-Newark.

Our commitment to educational opportunity extends beyond our own students to an extraordinary range of pre-college programs; at last count we had 20 different ones. These include the Abbott Leadership Institute, directed by Junius Williams, which helps parents play a larger role in the management of their children's schools; the work of Professor Roberta Schorr to bring about system-wide improvement of mathematics education in the Newark public schools; the support for charter schools provided by our Community Law Clinic headed by Professor Robert Holmes; the tutoring of Newark students by students in our Honors College; and the efforts of the Institute on Ethnicity, Culture and the Modern Experience, headed by Professors Clement Price and Charles Russell, to bring cutting-edge scholarship to Newark teachers through the Teachers As Scholars program.

I am also pleased to announce two major new initiatives. First, Cary Booker and Marcia Brown have negotiated the single-largest grant ever for a pre-college program here, over \$1 million, for the Academic Foundations Center to assume oversight of the READY program over the next eight years. The program provides counseling, tutoring, scholarships and other kinds of assistance to low-income youth. Second, the Department of History and the Institute on Ethnicity, Culture and the Modern Experience are collaborating with the New Jersey Historical Society to establish a new history high school by next fall. It will be operated by the Newark Public Schools.

This commitment to opportunity is shared not only by our faculty and staff but by our student leadership. More than 30 student organizations, groups as diverse as the History Club, the Christian Fellowship, and the Gay and Lesbian Alliance, have signed up to work in projects that provide services to low-income people in our surrounding community. Supported by Dean Daryl Holloman, these students greeted arriving Central High School students on the first day of school, and are working with Habitat for Humanity to build a house three blocks from campus.

## **URBAN OPPORTUNITIES AND OUR STRATEGIC LOCATION**

### Academic Impacts

Much of what I have discussed already speaks to our urban mission. As proud as we are of our outreach activities, our urban mission is reflected first and foremost in our academic programs. Our location in New Jersey's largest and most important city, and only 10 miles from the center of New York City, provides extraordinary opportunities for teaching, learning and research, opportunities that we are exploiting.



Newark is arguably the state's major business center. It is home to the port of Newark, a major international airport, several major rail systems that converge here, and a cluster of major corporations: Prudential, Verizon, PSE&G, IDT, Horizon Blue Cross/Blue Shield, MBNA, and others. These provide splendid opportunities for Rutgers Business School, as does our proximity to Wall Street, midtown Manhattan, and the global economy that has such a large presence in New York. There is no better location in New Jersey for a great business school.

These opportunities have been recognized by Governor Codey and the state legislature, who included \$18 million in this year's budget to enable Rutgers to acquire 11 floors of the office building at One Washington Park for a new, state-of-the-art facility for RBS. We are seeking additional public support for this exciting project, which already has sparked great interest from outside Rutgers because government and corporate leaders recognize our business school's important role in New Jersey's economic development. The momentum on this project comes as we begin an international search for a new dean of RBS, to succeed Dean Howard Tuckman who will be returning to faculty after more than seven years of highly effective leadership.

Our location as part of the world's most important global metropolis has helped us build an outstanding and unique graduate program in global affairs, the first of its kind in the nation, under the dynamic leadership of Richard Langhorne and Yale Ferguson. Our graduate global affairs programs now have more than over 120 students, about half at the doctoral level, with very strong ties to the United Nations and various nongovernmental organizations. This unique, multi-disciplinary program has enabled us to recruit

several superb new scholars to our faculty, including some of the world's leaders in global studies. Having outgrown its original structure as the Center for Global Change and Governance, it has now been reorganized into the Division of Global Affairs within the Graduate School, with a core faculty who hold formal appointments, and an enhanced budget and greater autonomy. We are now undertaking an international search for a new director to build on this superb foundation.

Education and research on the administration of municipal, county, state and federal government agencies is a vital role of an urban university, and all levels of government have a major presence in Newark. Our Graduate Department of Public administration has risen rapidly in national rankings, and is well known for work in public performance measurement, diversity in public sector management, and other areas. Other highly ranked programs in public management have school status. A committee chaired by Professor Marc Holzer has recommended the establishment of a School of Public Affairs and Administration, which I have endorsed and submitted to President McCormick. I expect this proposal to be considered by the Board of Governors this year.

I have also appointed a faculty committee, chaired by Professor Norma Riccucci, to develop an innovative new interdisciplinary undergraduate major in public service. This program could draw upon our excellent public administration faculty as well as faculty in political science, sociology, economics, social work, criminal justice and other fields. Students could take advantage of the extraordinary internship and experiential learning opportunities in public and non-for-profit agencies in the city of Newark and surrounding communities. I believe this could be a signature program for our campus, the only one in New Jersey and one of the few in the country. I look forward to receiving the committee's report.

Our School of Criminal Justice has become a national model for the application of cutting-edge research to the reduction of crime. The department's Ph.D. program was recently ranked fourth in the country. The Police Institute, headed by George Kelling, is well known for its highly effective work with communities throughout the state in reducing crime and violence. The School will be making several new faculty appointments in the next three years, due to retirements and strategic investments in homeland security and police research. This gives a relatively small school a unique opportunity to recruit the very best senior and junior scholars in crime reduction who will make it the undisputed leader in this field. The School has also taken full responsibility for the undergraduate criminal justice major, and the program will now be offered as a joint degree with the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. It can become another signature undergraduate major of our urban campus, attracting the very best students from across the state and even nationally.

Our Law School has capitalized on its location in Newark in many ways, ranging from its extensive clinical programs to its growing strength in global legal studies. Newark is a splendid location for a Law School. There are more lawyers practicing in Newark than in any other city or municipality in New Jersey. McCarter and English, one of the oldest and largest law firms in the state, recently announced that it will expand its Newark office and move into 250,000 square feet of new office space to be built on the riverfront by Matrix Development. Therefore, it is particularly gratifying to see the superb quality of faculty recruited to the law school in the last several years.

In a similar way, Rutgers College of Nursing is capitalizing on our urban location with a focus on urban health and health disparities. Under Dean Lashley's leadership, the nursing college in just one year has surpassed 21 other nursing schools in total research dollars from the National Institutes of Health.

Several other recent academic initiatives also take special advantage of our urban location. Excellent students with outstanding backgrounds are enrolling in our new Ph.D. concentration in urban education within the Ph.D. in Urban Systems, directed by Alan Sadovnik. Under Charles Russell's leadership, our new Ph.D. program in American Studies will begin in fall 2006, with its focus on urban culture, ethnicity, and the relationship of American Studies scholarship to public audiences. The Cornwall Center for Metropolitan Studies is thriving under the leadership of Stephanie Bush-Baskette, and our English Department is developing a proposal for an MFA in writing that will capitalize on our proximity to the literary and publishing world of New York. Novelist Jane Ann Phillips has been appointed to our faculty to spearhead this effort.

Academic programs in the sciences do not have the same types of connections to our urban location, but nonetheless are integral to Newark's new economy. The sciences are involved in the creation and sharing of new knowledge, and knowledge creation has been singled out as one of four areas in which the city of Newark has unique and highly competitive assets. In fact, the Newark Alliance is developing systematic strategies to attract businesses that are interested in knowledge creation and realize that new knowledge overwhelmingly flows from the scientific and medical research of the universities. Science Park, formed by

the higher education institutions of Newark, already is engaged in attracting businesses to University Heights that want to interact with the science, health and technology research ongoing at Rutgers-Newark, UMDNJ and NJIT. Science's Park's next major project, the digital century building, is progressing rapidly.

### Impact on Revitalization

As a downtown urban campus, Rutgers-Newark is also deeply involved in Newark's continuing revitalization. The NJ Devils arena and core redevelopment project has now broken ground. Market-rate housing is under construction at 1180 Raymond Boulevard, and is being planned for the Haynes and Griffiths buildings (Cogswell Realty), along the riverfront (Matrix Development), across from the Performing Arts Center (NJPAC), and at the Westinghouse building site adjacent to Broad Street Train Station (Gale Company.) The light rail connecting the Broad Street station with Penn Station is well underway, and plans for development of a park and boathouse along the Passaic River are proceeding. Both the Newark Museum and the Newark Public Library have plans for new wings.

We are both beneficiaries of these developments, and agents of revitalization, through our own construction and planning. The growth in campus student housing will contribute to the development of a lively, 24/7 campus neighborhood, and the opening of University Square this summer will be a major step forward. Our plans to acquire 11 floors of One Washington Park for Rutgers Business School will spur the revitalization of the James Street neighborhood adjacent to Broad Street station. Two other projects in the planning stage will dramatically enhance activity in that neighborhood. We are soliciting proposals from developers to convert 15 Washington Street, our old law school building, to graduate student apartments and/or a hotel. We are also exploring development, in partnership with other institutions, of a major parking structure, with retail on the street level on the Essex Street parking lot behind 15 Washington Street. And we are preparing an RFP for development of the parking lot across from the Center for Law and Justice as graduate student and possibly faculty/staff apartments, parking and retail space.

Even as we plan for greatly expanded campus housing, Marcia Brown, Gerald Massenburg and the student life staff are working vigorously to create a livelier campus life by engaging more and more students in activities beyond the classroom. A committee has developed excellent suggestions on how we can begin to provide childcare for students, faculty and staff. Another committee is planning ways in which the Dana Library can serve the educational and social needs of students in today's digital environment. And I would be remiss if I did not point out that Starbucks and Quiznos are now on campus in the Paul Robeson Campus Center.

### **RESEARCH**



I have already talked a good deal about the research strengths of our campus, and how much of our cutting-edge research draws up our urban location. But there are many other areas of research distinction on our campus that do not grow out of our urban location, but are nonetheless extremely important. These include cognitive science and neuroscience, biological and materials chemistry, mathematics, and management of technology, to name only a few. Basic research in all fields is an essential part of our mission as a research university.

One important measure of the research productivity of our faculty is externally funded research support. I am pleased to report that funded research on this campus has increased 33% since 2001, and now stands at \$22.8 million. We also award approximately 60 doctoral degrees a year.

Expanding research activity on the campus is extremely important. To further this goal, we are conducting a national search for a new Vice Provost for Research and Dean of the Graduate School. This person will be charged with increasing research on campus, especially funded research, and further advancing our graduate programs.

Our research efforts will be greatly enhanced by the completion of our new Life Sciences building by the end of this year. The building will provide new instructional and research laboratories for faculty in biology, chemistry and biophysics, and will offer us the opportunity to build a distinguished multidisciplinary cluster of scientists in cellular dynamics.

## **THE ROAD AHEAD**

Three years ago, Rutgers engaged a firm to draft a physical master plan for each of the Rutgers' three campuses. The firm specialized in university planning, and therefore knew a lot about American higher education. The planner who oversaw the Rutgers project began his presentation of the Newark plan by saying, "You have a location most universities in the country would kill for." Fifteen years ago, most people would have found that an unlikely characterization of our location in downtown Newark. But today, it is clear that, although Newark has not yet reached its full potential, it is a city with extraordinary assets for teaching, learning and research. We must continue to take fullest advantage of the opportunities offered by our location. At the same time, we must maintain our commitment to opportunity and diversity as we pursue research and academic excellence at the highest levels.

This campus and the city of Newark have come a long way together, but I am convinced that the best is yet to come, for both of us.

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**Steven J. Diner**, Provost