

Report to the Board of Trustees  
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At its November 14, 2003 meeting, the executive committee of the board of trustees concluded that the focus of the board for this year was to be in three areas: enhancement of fundraising and development at the College, support and appreciation for the academic transformation occurring on the campus, and advocacy in the state for the interests of TCNJ. Beginning with this meeting, agendas of each board committee will be developed by the committee chair with staff support from the appropriate cabinet member(s). In order to facilitate the committee responsibilities, cabinet members are working with committee chairs to finalize a list of 10-15 performance indicators for committee discussion. These indicators are intended to provide the database for each committee to accomplish its work for the year.

I am pleased to report that the senate judiciary committee has acted on two of our prospective trustees: George Callas and Christopher Gibson. We are awaiting senate action on these candidates.

## **Updates**

### *Katzenbach Partnership*

As you will remember, the Department of Education approached the College sometime last spring to discuss the possibility of TCNJ's assuming administrative responsibility for the Katzenbach School for the Deaf. In early September, the provost, the dean of the School of Education and I met with representatives of the School and the Department of Education and set up an extensive review process that would cover issues of financing, facilities, human resources, program, and governance. On September 23, an open forum with the Katzenbach community was held at which Commissioner Librera, Superintendent Russell, Provost Briggs, Assistant Superintendent Bryant and I spoke, emphasizing the preliminary nature of the review. I underlined the fact that until I could be comfortable regarding financial and governance issues, I was not prepared to make any recommendation to the College's board. Unfortunately, a news story preceded this meeting, which largely overlooked the fact that the process was in its most preliminary stages. We are proceeding in the review, and will keep the board and community informed.

### *Academic Transformation*

The provost and I have been involved in a series of discussions with faculty regarding the definition and presentation of "faculty work" in the newly transformed curriculum. A faculty senate vote on October 8 rejected a proposed outline definition; the provost rescinded the document in question and since has been working with faculty leadership and the deans to craft a new document. Since the December board meeting, there have been extended conversations regarding the status of a class schedule that would support

the new curriculum at individual school meetings and the faculty senate meeting (December 10). In the spring semester, the schedule will be considered through the governance process.

The director of Records and Registration has produced an excellent ‘Frequently Asked Questions’ document for students and advisors to help them navigate the changing curriculum. It can be found at <http://www.tcnj.edu/%7Erecreg/faqs/index.html>.

The provost provided an educational overview of academic transformation for the full board in open session.

### *Development/Alumni Affairs*

Three very successful donor/development events have occurred in the last month: the golf and tennis outing, homecoming, and the “Medallion Society” reception. The fourth annual TCNJ Foundation Golf & Tennis Classic took place at Trenton Country Club on Monday, October 13. Under the leadership of co-chairs Pat Ryan of Hopewell Valley Community Bank and Jim Shissias of the TCNJ Foundation, this event was a sellout for both golf and tennis (120 paid golfers and 10 corporate doubles teams). Major sponsorships at the \$1,500 level and above grew from 12 corporate sponsors to 20, and helped the Foundation realize nearly \$35,000 in scholarship support, up from \$21,000 a year ago. The College’s annual donor recognition event (formerly the Medallion Society dinner) returned to campus this year. Fifty-five guests attended an elegant reception in the Social Sciences Building Atrium, where they were entertained by a Dixieland band and a TCNJ student harpist. Afterwards, they were treated to the second-night performance of *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, the first of two TCNJ Opera Theatre events this year. Homecoming was the most successful ever: an estimated 6,000 alumni and friends took part in various events during the day (compared to an estimated 4,500 alumni and friends in 2002); almost 1,500 celebrated at the Alumni Pub/Beer Garden and the attendance at the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary dinner was up almost 25% over last year. The attendance at the football game, President’s Reception and Alumni luncheon was exceptional. The weekend was filled with a range of events including Miss Decker’s Tea, a soccer game, a hospitality suite at the College’s Reunion Headquarters (Trenton Marriott), a 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary cocktail reception, a GridIron Pig Roast, and a series of academic alumni receptions (Department of History; School of Science; School of Nursing; School of Culture and Society; School of Art, Media and Music; All College Theatre; Leadership Development Program; WTSR radio station, and the EOF program).

Another successful alumni event this fall was the annual alumni reception at the NJEA convention. This year, the format was changed to an all-day reception held adjacent to the convention floor. As a consequence, 378 alumni and friends (rather than last year’s 78) took advantage of the change of venue.

### *State Advocacy*

The recent flurry of news reports on higher education in the state reaffirms my relief that the executive committee agreed with my recommendation to make state advocacy one of the areas of focus for the board for this year. I continue to be concerned about the impact of the proposed merger of the state research institutions on state financial support for other institutions of higher education in New Jersey. I am equally as concerned about the governor's insistence that his support of a general obligation bond for higher education is inextricably tied to the acceptance of the merger by the Rutgers boards. As you may have read in the *Star Ledger*, the consultant's report has projected that the cost for the merger would be \$1.3 billion over a 10 year period. The impact of the size of this cost and the willingness of the Rutgers boards to affirm the merger on the facilities bond is unknown.

I am actively involved in two important arenas on these matters; the Commission on Higher Education's planning process and the discussion regarding the possible 2004 general obligation bond for higher education. With regard to the planning process, the state colleges and universities were successful in negotiating a good platform for the plan to fund higher education in the future. While it is unlikely that the state will be able to fund our needs as presented in the plan, it was absolutely essential that we were courageous enough to be accurate about the real costs of higher education. With regard to the discussions on the general obligation bond, I continue to be concerned about our ability to maintain parity in our portion of the possible bond. At least 1 ½ years ago I shared with you that in one of the first meetings of the presidents of the public institutions of higher education with Governor McGreevey, he expressed interest in exploring a state-wide general obligation bond to support the "capacity" crunch for New Jersey's citizens who wished to attend institutions of higher education in the state. Since that time, the costs for enhancing research capacity at the senior research institutions, the proposed merger of the 3 state research institutions, and job development and economic recovery issues have been folded into the "capacity" issue as rationales for a general obligation bond for higher education. In addition, of course, the governor has been very clear in recent months that without the merger of the research institutions, there will be no bond for any higher education needs. On December 12, 2003, a joint statement released by the governor's office and the Rutgers board of governors indicates that the merger per se has been abandoned at this time. See

[http://ruweb.rutgers.edu/restructure/joint\\_statement.shtml](http://ruweb.rutgers.edu/restructure/joint_statement.shtml)

On another matter of concern, I again have heard rumblings regarding the vulnerability of the Outstanding Scholar Recruitment Program (OSRP). I believe that we have strong supporters for this program in the governor's office and the legislature and I am in contact with them all; however, the program might still be in jeopardy.

Finally, the regional and national discussion on college costs and college scandals will undoubtedly have negative impact on our industry's reputation. While TCNJ has not been tainted by any of these matters, our funding is intimately tied to the industry as a whole and to the reputation of the state's institutions of higher education in particular. I have been proactive in assuring that our special mission and values are heard at the state-wide level (through the Commission, the Presidents' Council, and legislative leadership).

### *Construction*

The prefabricated units for the new student apartments will begin to be delivered in mid December. We plan for September 2004 occupancy of all 600 units; however, we have a contingency plan, for occupancy of only 400 units.

The pre-cast for the new garage will begin to be delivered in the first week of December and completed by the first of March. It will take another 4 to 6 weeks to finish; our goal is to have the garage completed by commencement.

The Spiritual Center should be finished in May or June and open for the fall semester.

The Library project is currently about 2-3 weeks behind schedule because of some rather typical issues (rain delays, asbestos in pipes). The goal with our national contractor is to catch up to schedule, with completion in the summer of 2005.

We are bidding the punch list on the Science Complex. The link between the complex and the biology building should be operable by December. The walks in the center of the complex should be completed for the opening of the second semester, but the planting will not occur until the spring.

### **Recent Utilities Emergencies**

On Friday, September 19, at 9:35 am, a broken tree limb short-circuited the main electric utility line to campus. The weather at that time was clear and calm, but apparently the limb was weakened by severe weather the previous day. This short circuit caused TCNJ's cogeneration plant to shut down and damaged some of its electrical controls. The campus experienced total power outage at this time. The central utilities staff was unable to start the cogeneration plant due to the damaged controls. The staff immediately initiated contact with PSE&G. Emergency generators were automatically activated and portable units were deployed to essential locations on campus. With this support, necessary operations were maintained (dining halls, health services, etc.) A PSE&G evaluation team arrived at about noon. Based on the preliminary assessment, academic buildings were closed and classes were cancelled for the remainder of the day. As darkness approached, precautionary plans were made to close some residence halls and relocate students to areas with portable generators. PSE&G crews completed their work on the lines by 7:30 pm and all power was restored to the campus by 8:00 pm.

Due to expected high winds on November 13, 2003, the central utilities staff decided to go into "island mode" (the College disconnects from the PSE&G power source and is the sole source of electric power for the campus) at approximately 6:30 am. About an hour later, a large tree fell onto the College's main electric utility line and caused three utility poles to snap. Because the College was operating in "island mode" the interruption of power from PSE&G did not result in a power outage on the campus. PSE&G was called

immediately and responded promptly. When their evaluation crew initially determined that the lines would require three days to repair, the College began a process to activate the Bliss substation on the opposite of campus. This emergency solution had been studied and proposed as a result of the September 19<sup>th</sup> incident. Consultants and contractors were able to establish this connection and bring the campus to full emergency power by 4:00 pm. Two academic buildings were without power for 2 hours while the conversion was completed. Due to a power surge at 11:15 am, the cogeneration plant shut down for approximately 25 minute and the whole campus was without power (except emergency lights) during this time. The cogeneration was successfully restarted. PSE&G crews worked continuously and completed the work on the lines well ahead of schedule at approximately midnight. The campus stayed on “island mode” throughout the weekend due to continued high winds and reconnected to the main line on Sunday, November 15, 2003.

On December 11, at approximately 8:45 a.m., a torrential downpour caused erosion of a steep dirt wall on the west end of the new library excavation. A concrete-encased conduit was exposed, which then collapsed under its own weight. One of the campus electrical feeders was destroyed along with the primary fiber optic telecommunications line. Six academic buildings were without power for several hours. External internet and phone connections were restored later in the day.

The immediate repairs provided a temporary solution. The College will work with Hunt Construction, which is responsible for the mishap, to stabilize the site and replace the destroyed duct bank. The College may elect to upgrade the duct bank by adding additional conduits. All College costs are being compiled for submission to Hunt Construction along with an estimate for the conduit upgrade.

### **Recent Grants**

I am pleased to announce that The College of New Jersey has been awarded a \$270,000 grant from the New Jersey Department of Education to evaluate the implementation of a standards-based system of teacher education, mentoring, and certification. A team of seven educators from the College and two professional independent evaluators will study the standards-based system that strives for increased student achievement by ensuring that all teachers receive high quality preparation and support that is comprehensive, coherent and aligned with state and national standards. Receipt of this grant acknowledges the College’s ongoing leadership role in shaping the future of teaching and learning in New Jersey and the nation.

Through the help of two of our congressmen (Chris Smith and Rush Holt), \$225,000 of federal dollars have been earmarked in the Omnibus Appropriations bill for our Forensic Science program.

### **Minority Recruitment Initiatives**

You will remember that in the fall, I charged the Admissions Office to develop a series of initiatives to improve our success in attracting minority applications and admissions. While we do not know the final results of these strategies, I can report on a series of productive initiatives:

1. We strengthened our partnerships with targeted feeder high schools, including Brimm Medical Arts, Perth Amboy, McNair Academic. Seniors and juniors from these target schools visited our campus this fall; TCNJ provided bus transportation and lunch. Holiday greetings will be mailed to all who visited this December.
2. We conducted a series of targeted off campus college information/financial strategy information sessions specifically designed for students of color. (In October, we partnered with The Wight Foundation in Newark; this spring, we are targeting junior through the McNair partnership, Hudson County.)
3. We are partnering with the Venture Scholars Program, e-mailing the sophomore scholars to elicit interest in TCNJ (we have already received significant response from New Jersey scholars), advertising on their website; 1300 senior Venture Scholars from New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland and Connecticut received a fee waiver voucher with a letter, our application, and an invitation to our Multi-cultural Scholars reception. All Venture Scholars with e-mail addresses received a Thanksgiving greeting in November. Our events have been posted on their monthly e-mail correspondence with their students.
4. We are highly recommending that students interview on campus. This outreach has already yielded success with an encouraging number of qualified students of color visiting this summer for personal interviews and campus tours. We are also participating in on-site decision days at high schools to interview and gather information on our multi-cultural students. Our first event was held at Dickinson High School which yielded 8 applications (last year we only received 3 applications from this school) and a second at Orange High School which yielded 12 applications.
5. We have enhanced our outreach to statewide College Bound programs by developing stronger working relationships with those who serve in our primary feeder locations, including the programs at TCNJ, CHAMP at Rowan, College Bound at Kean University and Pre-College Consortium which serves NJIT/Rutgers-Newark and UMDNJ. The following programs visited campus this fall: NJIT Upward Bound College Program, CHAMP and BCC College Bound Program. Directors and counselors from these programs were invited to attend our EOF guidance counselor luncheon which was held on our campus. Students from the TCNJ College Bound program were invited to attend our Multi-cultural reception. Within the coming weeks, admissions will present to the TCNJ College Bound program.
6. We have increased our efforts in providing transportation to the TCNJ campus for both weekday and major weekend recruitment events from selected Abbott school districts. Transportation was provided to students from Jersey City, Newark, East

Orange and Willingboro to attend our Multi-cultural Scholars reception. Over 100 students were serviced. Transportation was provided to all our partnership schools who attended a campus visit.

7. We have increased the involvement from our current students from both the Minority Mentoring Program and EOF to assist in our recruiting efforts. Students from these programs helped the Office of Admissions during our on-campus Multi-cultural scholars reception and the EOF Guidance Counselor luncheon, provided campus tours, and spoke to students who were currently attending the high schools that the TCNJ student attended. Our students will be visiting their alma maters over winter break to provide information and insights for prospective students and high school counselors.
8. Faculty and staff have become increasingly engaged through participation in workshops, panels and both on and off-campus specialized recruitment programs.

This has been a busy and productive fall. Best wishes for a joyous holiday season and a promising new year.