

Report to the Board of Trustees
President R. Barbara Gitenstein
October 2, 2003

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me begin my report today by citing a couple of major institutional successes that have occurred since my welcome back address and the last publication of Fourth Friday:

1. This week the School of Engineering was visited again by an ABET visiting team to review their programs now that the degrees are separately standing degrees. While the decision by the commission will not be until next summer, the exit interview indicates the foundation on which any commission decision will be based, and that exit interview was a very good one. We were fortunate to have an excellent and very experienced team visiting and they did raise a couple of issues; however, Dean Facas and Professor Czeto feel quite confident that we will be able to address all issues in a timely fashion and to the satisfaction of the agency. Indeed Dean Facas believes that accreditation is assured. George and Alex also report very positive comments from the members regarding our campus, our students, our faculty, and our facilities.
2. We have just received an accounting of our newly enhanced partnership with businesses in Ewing in the use of campus Gold Cards with local businesses. The gold card partnership with the four businesses at the corner of Ewingville Road and Route 31 has netted \$15k to the College during the month of September, which also means that our students and faculty are patronizing these businesses a lot.
3. We have just been informed that the United States Department of Energy (USDOE) has awarded TCNJ a grant in the amount of \$600,000. This is in addition to the \$1.6 million grant from USDOE to TCNJ under the NJ Clean Energy Program.
4. Several faculty members have been recognized in national and regional arenas: one being cited twice in this last month's Smithsonian Magazine and one of our recent emeriti being appointed to a 3 year fellowship at the University of Pittsburgh.
5. The most recent report from the Office of Academic Grants and Sponsored Research, which is in your folder at your places, indicates a steady growth at the College in funding for sponsored research at the College: from a little over \$200,000 in FY'01 to \$1.2 million in FY'03

It would also be useful for me to describe the status of our discussions with the Department of Education regarding a partnership with the Marie Katzenbach School for the Deaf. After being approached by the Department of Education, we agreed to participate in an 8-month study to assure that this is not only an improvement for the services being offered to the students at the School and other deaf students in the state, but also that it will support TCNJ's mission and future development. Provost Briggs and Dean O'Connor will continue to be actively engaged in these discussions and I will keep

the board informed as the discussions proceed. Right now, the possibility seems promising enough to expend human resources to investigate, but there remain a lot of issues to consider and questions to answer – regarding structure, finances, facilities, human resources, and of course program.

There are a number of very important discussions occurring in the state with regard to higher education – and they are all related to one another and to resources. As you have probably read in newspapers, there is much discussion of (and a great deal of interest in) the possibility of a general obligation bond to provide state support for investment in higher education. The needs for higher education will surely exceed the state's possible resources – but the kinds of things being considered include capital construction for capacity building, increase in research capability, improvement in partnerships with business and industry and the restructuring of the state's research institutions. We will continue to monitor and engage in this conversation as it has major ramifications for TCNJ. In addition, The Commission on Higher Education is coming to closure on its almost year-long planning process for higher education in New Jersey. The plan as it stands today provides opportunity for improvement in planning, resources, and excellence; however, I do think it can be improved. I hope that we will be able to assure that this plan, which came as the result of an open and inclusive process, will be vetted and informed by priorities set by the higher education leaders who have the most expertise to set the direction for higher education in the state

An emphasis on excellence and challenge, not merely on growth in numbers and size, must be the centerpiece – not merely for the good of TCNJ, but for the good of New Jersey. TCNJ, as we know, continues to be viewed as one of the best undergraduate institutions in the nation and we cannot allow, through any process of reallocation of resources, this position to be lost. As we all know, we were recently ranked in U.S. News and World Report as the #1 public in the northeast regional institutions, #5 overall in the northeast; and #1 of all regional institutions in retention rate from freshman to sophomore year. Last year, we were ranked #19 in the nation by Kiplinger's biennial listing of "baccalaureate bargains." This year we were included in the Best College listings of Fiske and the Princeton Review. In Fiske, we were listed as one of 10 best public buys in the country.

My concern for continued support for the kind of education we offer, the kind of education our students seek, the kind of education New Jersey deserves, is made even greater by the continued stagnation of the nation and the state's economy. Despite the fact that New Jersey has been leading the nation in job creation, the state is facing substantial financial problems in the coming year and the discussions surrounding the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act in Congress are somewhat disturbing. Regional accreditation is under attack by some congressmen and the fear of growing costs for families has led some well-intentioned congressmen to suggest solutions that would be tremendously damaging. Tuition caps with no corresponding assurance of continued state support might be politically attractive, but would be educationally devastating. What was most reassuring in last spring's negotiations with the New Jersey legislature was a clear recognition by our friends there that without a substantial

reinstatement of state resources, institutions of higher education simply could not responsibly hold tuition below double digits. The discussion in the U.S. Congress, however, only has focused on tuition without sufficient attention to state budget cuts. We are fortunate in this state that several of our representatives have indicated great interest and concern about these matters and three of them sit on the education committee: Rush Holt, Robert Andrews, and Donald Payne.

These worries make clear all the more reason why our attention must be more and more focused on the possibilities of additional funding – from federal funds, from private funds, from partnerships. As you have heard from the grants report, we have significantly increased our grant dollars. In addition, as I announced in September, we have 5 new partnerships/centers that are up and running this year and several others are being discussed (including the possibility of the Katzenbach partnership). But we also must turn our attention to private, individual contributions and we have the perfect platform – the sesquicentennial. Thanks to the great leadership of Bob Gladstone and Barbara Pelson, there has been much planning put into this exciting year, beginning with next year's Welcome Back, but the sesquicentennial cannot be just a fun, great year. It has to be the platform for our future, for a greater self-reliance. We must use the year and the events to make substantial progress in our efforts to grow private dollars for TCNJ, increase the major donor list, and substantially increase the pool of institutional friends. We have been very successful over the last five years – growing our fundraising from barely covering the costs of the development office to a ratio of dollars raised to expenditure for office operations of almost 2:1. But much more has to be done – and the good thing about this work is it is fun – the story is great. The students, faculty, staff, and facilities provide the data – but we must make the case. I know that I can count on Board members and friends both on the campus and off to assure the success not only of the 2004-2005 sesquicentennial year, but also the durable projects that grow from that year's success. There is in your folder a full listing of the events/programs planned for next year. I know that Bob will be giving a full report later in the meeting.

Mr. Chairman, that's ALMOST my report. I would be remiss if I did not make some comments regarding you today – TCNJ's great good friend – and mine as well! You were the first voice I heard from the College, some 5 ½ years ago. I have always considered you to BE The College of New Jersey – and what a wonderful representative you are. The concept that you won't be at Board meetings in the future is quite foreign to me – but I know that I will think of ways to keep you engaged, to keep you as part of our family. The institution is deeply appreciative of your extraordinary leadership and support over the years – and no one more so than I. You have made my first years at TCNJ a joy.

I looked through all of Emily Dickinson to find just the right poem – but it would not be – but I did find a poem by a contemporary poet, May Miller, who was celebrating the significance of the poet Robert Hayden to the African-American poets who followed him. She writes of Hayden that:

He extended to truths

he believed abide
and called to comrades,
those faltering in the run
(the hopeless and the doomed)
and to those who, gifted,
lighted their flares
at his larger flame.
He had known them all,
...
while tracking the path
to a high green garden
where honor etches
a crystalline goal:
love of all mankind and art.

Walter, most of us in this room have lighted our flares by your larger flame and many of us will admit that you were there to call to us when we faltered; we all have in some small way come to accept your view of the honorable humanistic goals that are embodied in this wonderful institution.

Thank you for all of us.