

President's Welcome Back Address
R. Barbara Gitenstein
August 30-31, 2006

The beginning of a new academic year is always an exciting time on campus, particularly at a place like The College of New Jersey, where brilliant students and faculty members come together to form such a vibrant community. I wish we could have been able to be together for these remarks, but we are still finishing a much needed ceiling repair in Kendall Hall. Therefore, these remarks will be the formal record of what I have shared in outline form in several sessions open to faculty and staff on August 30 and 31, 2006.

These remarks will begin with an overview of the challenges as well as the many achievements of the past academic year. Then, I will highlight the areas of institutional focus for the months ahead.

Last year our community was shaken to its core by the deaths of two freshman students—Brittany Brouillard and John Fiocco, Jr. The media attention, particularly in John's case, tested our campus beyond what any of us could have expected. Throughout it all, we directed our attention to the terrible sorrow felt by the entire college community, but particularly by Brittany's and John's families and closest friends. Though deeply saddened by both of these deaths, I was and remain extraordinarily proud of how our students and the entire TCNJ family supported one another throughout these ordeals—with compassion, courage, honesty and strength.

Last spring also saw extraordinary challenges for The College of New Jersey, as the financial difficulties of the State of New Jersey resulted in drastic cuts in state funding for higher education in the state. The more than 20-percent reduction to our state funding has unfortunately resulted in lost opportunities, reduced services, and escalating costs. Had it not been for the efforts of our students, alumni, faculty, staff members, and friends in lobbying on behalf of the College for restoration of some of the proposed cuts, the result would have been far worse. I am deeply grateful for the efforts of so many who took up our cause.

Because of the significant drop in state resources, we have had to make some very difficult decisions, including program closures, initiation of reviews that might lead to additional program closures, and several major reorganizations. After a thorough review, the Child Care Center was closed, effective August 18, 2006; the golf and cheerleading programs were closed, effective fall 2006; several masters programs in the Schools of Education and Culture and Society are being reviewed for consideration for closure. In order to create administrative and program efficiencies, several major reorganizations have been implemented. A full detailing of these reorganizations will be shared on the web in the near future; a campus wide email will be sent when it is ready for viewing. I would, however, like to underline a couple of the reorganizations here:

1. The Health and Exercise Science program will now report to Dean Susan Bakewell-Sachs in the newly formed School of Nursing, Health, and Exercise Science.
2. Lisa Angeloni, Dean of Admissions, will report to the president and will join the cabinet.
3. The positions of Director of Legal Affairs, Director of Equity and Diversity, Dean of Academic Services, and Director of the Civic Leadership Development Program have been eliminated.
4. Liaison with the Attorney General's Office and outside legal counsel will be shared by the treasurer and the president.
5. For the short term the general reporting responsibilities previously assigned to the Office of Equity and Diversity will be handled by the Office of Human Resources and the complaint review process will be handled by Heather Fehn in my office. By October 1, 2006, we will be able to share with the campus community any changes in these administrative responsibilities.
6. There was a realignment of International, Off Campus and Summer Programs under the direction of Karen Jenkins, Assistant Provost.
7. The department of Graduate Studies was divided into Graduate Admissions which now reports to Dean of Admissions and Graduate Global Programs which reports to the Assistant Provost. The Dean of Education will provide academic leadership for global graduate programs.
8. The Bonner Center for Civic and Community Engagement will serve as the campus nexus for community-engaged learning and service learning. The Civic Leadership Development Program has been consolidated with the Bonner Center.

Despite all these changes and closures, I am confident that we have been able to preserve the safety and security of our campus and the academic core of our institution. And while we will need to make more of these kinds of decisions this year, I firmly believe that the more we commit to wise decisions filtered through the College's mission, the more resources we will have to re-invest in the people and programs that make TCNJ the exceptional institution that it is and will be. I do not mean to minimize the pain of these changes, but I was relieved that we were able to achieve a balanced budget for FY 2007 while avoiding layoffs as well as the potential January closure.

Even in the light of these challenges and sorrow, the achievements of 2005-2006 should serve as great encouragement as we begin the work for the 2006-2007 year. The 2005

fall semester began on a very high note, with a gathering of renowned international scholars at our Walt Whitman symposium, deftly organized by professors Michael Robertson and David Blake. We also introduced a new hub for intellectual life on campus—our beautiful, state-of-the-art library. With 134,000 square-feet of floor space and five stories of awe-inspiring educational facilities, this building and its remarkable features were quickly embraced by our students and have added immensely to the educational experience offered at TCNJ.

Later in the fall, we hosted two gubernatorial debates, the second of which was carried live during prime time by ABC television in Philadelphia. TCNJ students played a substantial role in those events, questioning the candidates on a range of serious issues. Dr. Bill Ball assured that our student participants were well versed on the topics and represented TCNJ extremely well to a broad audience. Staff across the campus, but particularly those from the Offices of Public Affairs, Information Technology, Campus Police, and Facilities put forth tremendous efforts to pull off an extremely complicated production.

In late autumn we celebrated homecoming and the Sesquicentennial Grand Finale with thousands of alumni and friends. The weekend included the dedication of our Science Complex, Library, and Alumni Grove, as well as the fireworks that marked the Sesquicentennial's end. Over Thanksgiving weekend, our women's soccer team reached the NCAA title game.

In the winter, the College was recognized as one of the top 20 values in public higher education by *Kiplinger's Personal Finance* magazine. TCNJ topped the list of public institutions in New Jersey and was regarded as a particularly good value for out-of-state students, ranking fourth nationally in that category. We also began a partnership with Kidsbridge and are temporarily providing the venue for a mini-museum that offers character education to children from local school districts. This venture is the first of its kind on a college campus and has enabled us to build on TCNJ's tradition of community engagement.

There were several great accomplishments during the spring and summer. Our women's lacrosse team won the Division III National Championship, again, and our baseball team spent most of the season ranked number 1 in the nation. Alumnus Joe Ecker was elected to the National Academy of Sciences. Professor Lincoln Konkle brought the Thornton Wilder Society to campus and introduced such literary giants as Joyce Carol Oates and Edward Albee to TCNJ in the process. In addition, Professor Teresa Nakra's novel research on "sensing music" earned widespread acclaim, including feature coverage in *The Boston Globe*. We also learned that this was a banner year for the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs, with the number of alumni giving up 18% over 2004-2005. Our new athletic playfields consisting of a soccer stadium, softball stadium, support facilities and parking was completed.

In the last week or so, we have learned that, for the 13th consecutive year, TCNJ is the top-rated public master's college in the northern region of the United States, according to

U.S. News and World Report. We were again included in the Princeton Review's *Best 361 Colleges*, with special rankings for "happy" students and "beautiful campus." We are no longer, however, one of just seven state-supported institutions ranked by *Barron's Profiles of American Colleges* among the top 75 "most competitive" nationally. We are now one of only five to earn that distinction, the others being the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the University of Virginia, the College of William and Mary, and the University of California at Los Angeles.

We are poised to continue our tradition of academic excellence as we welcome a remarkable freshman class. TCNJ's largest first-year group in more than a decade, they boast average high school class rankings and SAT scores of top 7 percent and 1306, respectively, for the generally admitted. Their accomplishments include distinction in athletics, the performing arts, and community service, and we are fortunate to have them join our college family. In addition, the class is very diverse with some 32% of the freshman self-identifying as non-Caucasian.

Our freshmen are not the only ones thriving. The most recent survey of TCNJ graduates from the Class of 2005 indicated that 96 percent of respondents were either employed or attending graduate school within 12 months of graduation. Of those working, 82 percent rated the career preparation they received at TCNJ to be excellent or above average. And 90 percent of total respondents rated their undergraduate academic experience as excellent or above average. 22 percent of our graduates reported they enrolled in graduate school within a year of graduation. This number is down from 23 percent last year.

It is in the context of the wisdom learned from last year's challenges and the joy felt in the celebration of our past accomplishments that I set the 2006-2007 goals and areas of focus. As in years past, the priorities and the recommendations for action have been informed by the thoughtful analysis and input of the Committee on Planning and Priorities and the Presidents Advisory Council. These discussions were founded on the mission of the college and the three principles approved by the Committee on Planning and Priorities and the Board of Trustees for budget decisions. These principles are:

1. protection of the health, safety, and security of the students, faculty, staff, and visitors of the campus
2. preservation of the academic core
3. maintaining of our promises to our students, faculty, and staff.

This year we will continue to depend on the mission as well as these three principles for our self-reflection and decision-making; however, I will be asking the community to consider adding a fourth principle:

4. investment in revenue producing enterprises that directly serve the mission of the College and provide budget relief.

The bulk of our work for the coming year will be follow up on discussions of last year, not new initiatives. This work of consolidation must create more institutional self-sufficiency in order to begin to protect the institution from negative impact of any limitation in state support.

On the heels of the many conversations I have had on budget matters in the last 5 months, I have concluded that there must be two broad-based campus educational initiatives: one on budget, budget planning, and fund management and the other on the Trenton State College Corporation. Treasurer Barbara Wineberg will refine the material that she has produced for the campus Budget Planning Council to be shared broadly with all campus constituencies. The goal is to assure that the community is clear on

1. what are the sources of institutional funding and to what purposes we may allocate resources (for instance, bond dollars can only be used for capital purposes);
2. our conservative budgeting process which segregates revenue from fees, tuition, housing, and board income to be used for the purpose designated by the fee (for instance, the general service fee income is entirely attributed to the construction, renewal and replacement of academic, administrative and student recreational facilities.);
3. the use of reserves.

Vice President Heuring will provide a document which summarizes the business plan for the TSC Corporation, including a property ownership plan, and an explication of the appropriate uses of corporation housing and corporation income. These educational initiatives may entail meetings with individual schools and divisions as requested by the appropriate administrator.

One of the ways to identify resources to reinvest in our core programs is through reallocation of resources as we have done for the last several years. As a consequence, we will need to continue to make some difficult decisions through this year and continue our efforts to identify efficiencies.

1. One area for further in-depth study this year will be graduate studies. The continuation of the process that we began last year is not based on a questioning of the quality or positive outcomes of these programs. Rather, we must develop resources for re-investment and some of those resources will necessarily come from reallocation from existing programs that are not squarely at the center of our mission. In addition to the graduate program focus, we must ensure that our undergraduate programs are structured effectively and efficiently so that they are, indeed, high quality programs.

2. Any of the recommendations from this review and all recommendations regarding closure of programs currently under discussion will go through the Board approved program closure procedure.
3. In response to rising energy costs over the past year, the College has implemented a very successful energy conservation and cost control program. In third quarter of FY 06 the College saved approximately \$150,000 through these conservation efforts. For FY 07 we have targeted over \$500,000 in savings resulting from consolidating the use of residence halls this summer, the ongoing energy conservation initiatives and a natural gas hedge program.
4. We will continue to pursue reorganizations and reassignments when personnel openings occur in order to achieve reductions in personnel expenditure.

However, reallocation can only go so far. We simply must become better at diversifying our revenue streams beyond state support and increase in student tuition and fees. To that end, next year

1. We will begin the implementation of recommendations regarding enhancement of summer programs and increase in revenue generation to support the general fund. These implementations will be based on the recommendations from the Summer Utilization Task Force.
2. We will continue to improve private fund-raising, focusing this coming year, on alumni participation and major donor giving. The Target 10,000 campaign is a bold initiative to bring the number of alumni donors to 10,000. This would more than double the number of alumni donors this past year (which was already an 18% increase over the prior year), and should lead to a cash total of \$1 million from alumni alone. Last year, we received seventeen gifts ranging from \$5,000 to \$300,000 from individuals. We intend to triple that number this year through a well coordinated major donor cultivation program. In order to succeed in these ambitious goals, the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs (ODAA) has made several important changes in its procedures and policies. The office has moved away from special event fundraising, begun to transition the Board of the TCNJ Foundation, and developed a coherent approach to all donors that is based on a campus fundraising process that is centralized in and coordinated by ODAA.
3. While we have been successful in the last 3 years in attracting federal earmark dollars, we must refine our process for seeking federal investments, through earmarks. As in the past, the Provost in consultation with the Vice President for Development and Alumni Affairs and the Associate Vice President for Public Affairs will identify the most apt projects for pitching to the New Jersey delegation. In years past, we have received support for the Forensic Science program and the Bonner Center. This year we hope to receive

funding for additional summer programs for Educational Opportunity Fund students.

4. I am also pleased to report that the reorganized Office of Academic Grants and Sponsored Research, now part of the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs, has accomplished quite a bit in the past year. In Fiscal Year 2006, the cash received by the College in state, federal, and private grants was just under \$5.5 million. Angela Sgroi, Keith Dewey, and Fran Bradley are continuing to streamline the processes for developing and approving grants, and expect to have the electronic proposal development and approval system fully refined within the next six months. This system has been key to maintaining a highly informative, interactive, and efficient internal proposal development and approval process. By working in tandem with the development office, the staff has been able to identify private funding sources, as well, that often have augmented the work being done through public grants. I will be asking Interim Provost Paul and Vice President Marcy to review this year's processes to assure that we are meeting our goal to increase resources in supporting faculty and staff initiatives.

Without continued emphasis on advocacy and communication efforts with external supporters, the College will not be as successful in diversifying revenue streams or increasing state support as we must be. There will be three areas of focus that will be a partnership between the offices of Public Affairs and Alumni Affairs. Two are continuations of past efforts; one is a new initiative:

1. We must continue to improve our communication with alumni through the On Line Community and publications directed at the alumni audience.
2. We must continue to improve our communications and outreach efforts to our local community through membership in TACT (Town and College Together) and partnerships with Ewing and Trenton municipalities.
3. We will mount a focused advocacy effort with New Jersey opinion leaders (including business and elected leaders) with special focus on the restoration of the Outstanding Scholarship Recruitment Program (OSRP) and the special mission of the College.

Just as there needs to be attention paid to our communications off campus, so must we focus on improvements in internal communication. While this is a generic need, there are four specific areas of focus for next year:

1. Treasurer Wineberg and Anne MacMorris, the campus Ethics Liaison Officer, will be charged with developing and implementing communication programs for the campus community on our Code of Ethics, expectations of the state Ethics Commission, and our campus compliance programs.

2. Vice President Nadine Stern will be responsible for developing and implementing initiatives in the areas of identity management and information technology security. We must continue to reduce the use of social security numbers in our systems and we will explore new technologies that will help protect our institutional and personal data.
4. Vice President Heuring will be charged with a review of the College's Critical Incident Plan and the development and implementation of a training program on the plan for the entire college community.
5. The Office of Public Affairs will be implementing enhancements to internal communications vehicles and services, including websites and podcasting.

There are five important infrastructure and facilities projects which have been in the works for a number of years that will receive significant attention next year. All of these projects are being or have been funded by bonded money or by reserves:

1. We will be completing phase 1A of the new Student Administration system implementation project, which includes the Admissions, Campus Community and Student Records modules. This phase of the project will provide a more flexible, user-friendly system with improved online tools for academic advising, scheduling, grading, and reporting. We are also improving our underlying technology, business processes and data integration between systems.
2. After negotiating a very favorable settlement with the surety on the Student Apartments, we are ready to demolish and reconstruct a portion of the student apartment project. A consultant team has been hired to engineer the demolition. Demolition should begin in December and be complete by February. In addition, we are in the midst of a process to select the architect to design the new student apartment complex. The design process should begin in November; construction will start in the late December 2007 with occupancy in the fall of 2009.
3. There have been two ongoing capital planning initiatives underway in 2006: the Academic and Administrative Space Master Plan and the Residential Master Plan. These master plans have involved a broad constituency of the campus. These planning efforts will wrap up this December and will provide us with a framework for addressing space needs of the College for the foreseeable future.
4. The programming of the new Art and Interactive Multimedia building was completed in the spring of this year. A selection committee consisting of faculty, staff and trustees chose architect Einhorn, Yaffee, Prescott and Associates for the design of the new building. The Board approved this

selection in August and the design process is about to begin. Construction will start in the spring of 2008 with occupancy in the fall of 2009.

5. Not all capital resources are being directed towards new buildings. Facilities has prepared a preliminary asset renewal plan to address deficiencies in existing College buildings. Work is already underway on a number of projects designed to protect our existing assets including new roofs, utility replacements and interior repairs (e.g., Biology and Science Roofs, Kendall ceiling).

Our most important points for re-investment of course will be in the academic and student support programs. To that end, there will be much work in planning for appropriate follow up on recommendations from previous task forces and work groups:

1. In follow up to the excellent work of last year's Teacher-Scholar Task Force, I will be charging Interim Provost Paul to explore and implement Task Force recommendations for supporting faculty professional development and advancing a vibrant intellectual community.
2. Drawing upon the study of Support Services for Students last year, actions will be taken to coordinate the range of services offered to students by Student Services and Student Life, including continued improvements in advisement which are based on recommendations of the Developmental Advisement Task Force (2003) and the ongoing work of the Advising Planning Council.
3. As a follow up to last year's alcohol summits, I will be asking Vice President Norfleet and Interim Provost Paul to convene a Commission on the Prevention of Alcohol and other Drug Abuse. The Commission will respond to recommendations derived from the summit discussions and look for additional solutions to preventing underage and high-risk drinking among TCNJ students.

The members of last year's Task Force on Inclusive Selectivity are continuing to finalize their report to share with the larger community; however, the task force reviewed and discussed many recruitment strategies already in place for increasing the diversity of our applicant pool. The success of these strategies has been proven in the increasing diversity of our freshman classes. They have also suggested using the terminology "Inclusive Excellence" to best describe their work. I look forward to the recommendations on other matters which will enrich our community experience for all students.

Finally, we will take advantage of the new perspective of Vice President Norfleet. He will lead the Student Life division in the development of a new student affairs model in which the division's strategic aspirations and goals are based on the College's mission. The process will begin with the formulating of guidelines for the assessment of the

effectiveness of all student life programs and services. The process will be piloted later this year with the review of two program areas, namely athletics and campus activities.

There is much work to do and we will need the good offices and good will of the community to accomplish the goal of preserving this exceptional institution from the unpredictable winds that buffet any public institutional of higher education—particularly in New Jersey. But we can do no less; TCNJ deserves so much more.

Thank you.