

**The College of New Jersey  
Welcome Back Address 2010  
President R. Barbara Gitenstein  
Delivered September 1, 2010**

The 2009-2010 academic year, as has become the norm, was a year of challenge and accomplishment for The College of New Jersey. I will highlight only a few of the many noteworthy achievements.

Construction continued on campus with the opening of Hausdoerffer and Phelps Halls last fall, on time and under budget. The same was true of the Art and Interactive Multimedia Building that began hosting classes this past spring. The demolition of the Forcina Wing has been completed and we are making plans for the ground breaking and start of construction on the new Education Building. We are also taking the next steps in planning for the public-private partnership to develop a Campus Town. Facilities and construction staff have been exceptionally busy this summer, particularly in upgrading projects for student affairs, and the results have been extraordinary—the Decker renovation is wonderful and the new Eickhoff dining facility is simply awe-inspiring. My only worry is whether the students will ever leave the space.

We finished the FY10 year having received over \$3 million in private gifts for the fourth consecutive year. Included in this figure is \$576,000 from alumni, a decrease in dollars from the year before; however, we received over 5,000 contributions from our alumni for only the third time in the College's history. To be growing alumni participation in this economic environment is a testament to the connection we continue to strengthen with our graduates and to their warm feelings toward their alma mater.

In addition, I am pleased to report that endowment in the TCNJ Foundation has reached over \$18 million. While we have a long, long way to go to catch up to our peer institutions, our endowment is three times the size it was just ten years ago. Through the continued generosity of donors and the oversight of Foundation directors, we expect this progress to continue.

One of the most noteworthy and strategic gifts we received this year is the David Sarnoff Collection. It is no exaggeration to describe David Sarnoff as one of the primary catalysts for the exponential growth and development of communications in the 20th Century. His pioneering work in electronic communication, mass media, the recording industry, and digital technology helped define the American Century, and the incubator for this advancement was New Jersey. Through the diligent work of faculty in communication studies, the dean of the arts and communication, the provost's office and others, the family of David Sarnoff has chosen to contribute his entire collection of memorabilia to TCNJ to create the Sarnoff Museum. The family has also helped raise funds to support this endeavor. The Museum will be housed in the '68 Wing of West Hall, and we are already looking forward to integrating the collection into our academic program, as well as presenting it to the public.

In May, TCNJ graduated 1,896 students, including the first ever class from the College's Career and Community Studies Program. While we do not yet have post-graduation

information on the class of 2010, we do have reassuring results from the post graduation survey of the class of 2009. As would be expected in this economy, there was a small increase in the recent graduates who were unemployed or not attending graduate school compared to the class of 2008, but that 6% of the 2009 class is almost 4% lower than the state average for unemployment. The average salary for the class of 2009 was almost \$46,000, a 2% increase from the average salary of the year before. Fewer of the class of 2009 attended graduate school immediately upon graduation than the class of 2008, but their attendance is in keeping with the class of 2007. Top employers included Johnson and Johnson, Bank of America, and PricewaterhouseCooper. The top receiving graduate schools were TCNJ, Rutgers, UMDNJ, University of Pennsylvania, Seton Hall, and New York University. The 2009 graduates continue to rate their education at The College highly: with 79% of the respondents rating their College education as excellent or above average in preparation for their careers and 91% rating the quality of the academic experience as excellent or above average.

Our incoming freshman class will undoubtedly replace the energy, intellect and creativity of those who recently graduated. For academic year 2010-2011, we received our largest ever number of applications for first-year admission. Nearly 10,000 students applied for acceptance into this year's freshman class. That represented a 7.5 percent increase over the previous year overall and double digit increases in every sub-population except out of state applications (13% increases in black applicants, 14% for Hispanic, 15% for Asian, and 10% for EOF). We also experienced an increase in qualitative measures of applicants (both in SAT's and in class rank). The profile of the generally admitted students is a 1280 SAT and a class rank of 90%. There was an increase of 4% in enrolled Black students, 19% in Hispanic students, and 22% in Asian students. Unfortunately, we did see a drop in out of state enrollment (85, down from 98 for Fall 2009). A snapshot of this class gives a sense of their wonderful talents and interests:

- 15 different languages are spoken by the Class of 2014--including Korean, Arabic, German, Hindi, Portuguese, Japanese, Spanish, and French;
- Class members have visited 37 countries;
- The class includes 710 varsity athletes and 267 varsity team captains;
- More than 300 students in this freshman class play a musical instrument;
- And 508 of these students are actively engaged in community service.

Individual accomplishments include:

- A student who worked on a PBS special "Remixing Shakespeare,"
- One who danced in the Nutcracker with the Moscow Ballet,
- A Junior Olympic Gold Medalist in Karate,
- A student who worked as a farmer in Niger,
- A Guinness World Record holder for Indian Dance, and
- A student who taught English in Slovakia.

Clearly, this is a group of students who will add tremendously to our community—a community that accomplished extraordinary things without these wonderful new community members.

I will mention only a few of the many examples of exceptional achievement last year by individual students, faculty and staff. For instance, a senior history major from TCNJ was among only 20 of 5,000 applicants selected for the Trials program (a residential scholarship effort administered by Harvard and New York University that helps talented and motivated college students gain admission to the nation's leading law schools); a TCNJ student was named one of 60 students nationwide to receive a graduate fellowship from Phi Kappa Phi; a sophomore chemistry and math double major received the prestigious Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship; a senior biology major was awarded a National Science Foundation pre-doctoral fellowship, which offers three years of support for students pursuing graduate degrees in science, engineering, and math; and a senior international studies major with a concentration in Middle Eastern studies and a minor in Arabic, won the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship to attend The American University in Cairo. Our student athletes produced an eighth-place finish in the race for the 2009-2010 U.S. Sports Academy Directors' Cup, making this the 15th consecutive year that TCNJ has finished in the top 10.

Our students' pass rates on their professional exams have also been extraordinary. 81% of our 2010 Engineering students passed the Fundamentals of Engineering Exam, well above the state and national average. The 2008-2009 (the most recently reported information) pass rate for the PRAXIS (for prospective teachers) was 100% and the 2009 National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX, the Nursing exam) pass rate was 98%. These statistics are inspiring and speak to the preparation of our students to meet the demands of their professions.

We had two Fulbright Scholarship winners last year: one of our senior students won a Fulbright to study in Poland, and one of our professors will be lecturing and conducting research in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

A team made up of faculty from engineering, sociology, anthropology, and mathematics, along with the provost, garnered a \$688,132 grant from the National Science Foundation to establish a program for the advancement of women in the sciences and social sciences. Faculty from international business and history were awarded a two-year Business and International Education grant from the U.S. Department of Education worth \$163,691 to help develop three new business, foreign language, and history courses related to China. ABC's Extreme Makeover will highlight the virtual conducting project of one of our music faculty members and the Tate Modern in London, England displayed the art of one of our art faculty.

Ten members of TCNJ's police department were recognized for outstanding service by the New Jersey College and University Public Safety Association, receiving the Meritorious Service Medal nomination, the Campus Career Award and the Life Saving award.

Please join me in a round of applause for the great recognition these individuals and so many others brought to The College of New Jersey last year.

This July the Board of Trustees took action to award tenure to 20 of our faculty

colleagues from Management, Marketing and International Business; History; Psychology; Electrical and Computer Engineering; Finance and International Business; Chemistry; Modern Languages; Mathematics and Statistics; Civil Engineering; Biology; Technological Studies; Mechanical Engineering; and Electrical Engineering.

We have enhanced our community with fourteen new tenure track faculty. They represent a wide range of disciplines, including the library, Women and Gender Studies, Political Science, Educational Administration, Chemistry, Health and Exercise Science, Criminology, Elementary Education and Early Childhood Education, Physics, Mechanical Engineering, and Electrical and Computer Engineering. These new members of our community have terminal degrees from the University of Virginia, University of Massachusetts, Iowa, Temple, Drexel, Michigan, Delaware, Princeton and Yale. For the third year in a row, we are welcoming back a former TCNJ undergraduate as a newly minted faculty member. Some of these new faculty developed their expertise in post docs in pharmaceutical and engineering companies and one joins us after 24 years at another institution of higher education. These are wonderful additions to our community of learners.

During 2009-2010, our institution, again, received accolades from a range of external sources.

TCNJ was named one of the country's best institutions for undergraduate education, according to *The Princeton Review*. In addition to its place on the list of the best 373 colleges, TCNJ also earned recognition as one of the "Best Northeastern Colleges." *The Princeton Review* further heralded TCNJ as one of the nation's 50 "Best Value" public colleges and universities and ranked us among the country's most environmentally responsible institutions.

The 2011 Fiske Guide to Colleges named TCNJ among the nation's 300 best and most interesting schools; Forbes included TCNJ in its list of best 500 colleges and universities in the nation and ranked TCNJ as the top public institution in New Jersey; *Kiplinger's Personal Finance* ranked TCNJ 23rd among America's best value public colleges; and *Parade Magazine* included TCNJ as one of seven small public institutions nation-wide on an "A" list as determined by high school guidance counselors. For the 19<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, *U.S. News & World Report* named TCNJ the top public institution in the Best Regional Universities category for the northern region of the United States. The publication again described TCNJ as an "up-and-comer."

Additionally, the College was named to the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, the highest federal recognition a college or university can receive for its commitment to volunteering, service-learning, and civic engagement.

Other media have certainly taken note of our successes, as well. Let me cite two examples.

CNN visited the campus late in the spring to film a segment on college costs. The segment highlighted the trend of high achieving students making the decision to enroll at institutions like TCNJ rather than some of the nation's better known private colleges and

universities. Our prospective student was choosing us over Boston College. The way I knew TCNJ had really made it in PR circles was when my sister, a publicist in Arizona, emailed to congratulate us on the CNN placement.

There has also been a series of absolutely glowing profiles of TCNJ faculty members that ran on the front page of the Times of Trenton. These stories focused on the exciting research being conducted by professors in disciplines ranging from forensic sciences and education to statistical analysis and bio-ethics. The articles also underscored the contributions of these wonderful colleagues to our campus and local communities.

As you all remember, last year was not without its share of challenges. Once again, we were required to do more with less, both institutionally and individually. Last year's state budget began with the College's state funding held flat, but only because federal stabilization funds substituted for an originally proposed 5% cut to our appropriation. With only four months left in the fiscal year, the state cut our appropriation by 6.3% for FY10; and for this current year's budget FY11, the state cut another 15% from our state appropriation. These cuts result in TCNJ's state appropriation having been reduced in eight of the last 11 years; we currently receive approximately 28% for general operations from the state and \$9 million less in appropriation than we received in FY2001. State actions in spring 2009 forced our employees to take furloughs and pay cuts last year. I want to acknowledge your individual sacrifices during these very difficult times and thank you for rising above circumstances and continuing to serve TCNJ in such an exemplary fashion.

In response to the challenges we have faced, TCNJ has taken steps to preserve and enhance its ability to pursue its core mission. Achieving this goal has required both initiative and sacrifice. Just to list some of these actions taken over the years:

- We have made permanent expenditure reductions in graduate assistant waivers, non-salary departmental allocations, and administrative staff.
- We have made temporary reductions in information technology as well as maintenance and renovation projects.
- There have been base budget cuts to athletics.
- There have been no inflationary adjustments to any non-salary operating budgets in departments and schools.
- The energy savings program which had included campus closure for a week during mid-winter break and a number of summer Fridays was extended to include closure on almost every summer Friday.
- We turned to reserves to cover former state obligations (e.g., for the cohort of students who were awarded Outstanding Scholar Recruitment Program scholarships in FY2007 and for Bloustein Scholars who were awarded scholarships in FY 2011).

- We continue to develop and implement a wide-range of cost-containment strategies throughout campus, including:
  - Adjusting thermostats in our offices and classrooms in order to reduce energy costs.
  - Replacing approximately 100 copiers and installing an additional 20 multi-function printers on campus. As a result of the new features available with these machines, we expect to reduce College supported local desktop printers by about 80%, which will result in an annual savings of approximately \$132,000. Additional savings will be realized by not purchasing replacement desktop printers in the future. Environmentally, the multi-function printers will help reduce our carbon footprint. The new units reduce power consumption by 80% during standard daily operations and allow for the use of recycled paper and double-sided printing.
  
- While we were not able to budget increases for non-union staff members for their performance last year, we have budgeted merit increases for their performance for the previous year. These will be implemented only after confirmation of meeting revenue targets for this year.
  
- We have enrolled a larger freshman class this year. While this does generate needed revenue, it will also increase freshman class sizes moderately as well as the demand for student services, housing, and dining. Just to confirm, the plan was to increase the freshman class by 50; however, because of the attractiveness of a TCNJ education, we are more likely to realize an increase of over 100 in the freshman class. The pressures of this very large class will be felt in every office and every program across the campus, and I thank you in advance for doing your best to provide for these students the extraordinary opportunities we associate with the TCNJ experience.
  
- In order to manage instructional costs, particularly an adjunct budget that has been significantly over-expended for the past several years, the academic deans and the provost will closely monitor adjunct assignment and individual class enrollment, to assure that we no longer over-expend what is budgeted even as we address the additional pressures in the freshman class.
  
- Whereas last year we searched for and filled 14 tenure track faculty positions for this year, we plan to search for only 4 tenure track faculty positions during FY11.
  
- Travel policy changes have resulted in a savings of approximately \$100,000 in the annual budget.
  
- While I continue to believe it is important for us to celebrate together as a community, we will make modifications in these social gatherings. For instance, this afternoon our picnic has been scaled back, as was our campus leaders' breakfast this morning.

Some of the actions detailed above have been very difficult and stressful for the institution as a whole and for the college's employees. I particularly regret the limitation of compensation for our highly regarded employees, as a result of last year's furloughs and pay cuts and this year's deferral of merit increase for non unit employees. However, I am gratified that despite the long history of disinvestment by the state in higher education, TCNJ has met these budget challenges with no layoffs, no "reductions in force" and only minimal negative impact on services for students. This has been no small task. We have been able to continue to allocate financial resources to primary purpose (i.e., student services, academic support, and instruction) and institutional priorities and to honor the kind of budget management for which we have been lauded by all the bond rating agencies. But sacrifice alone will not enable us to move this institution forward. We must also pursue and invest in new initiatives if we are to avoid stagnation. Last spring, we began a process to refine the identification of and the planning and funding for key strategic initiatives. That process continued through the summer and involved leadership from throughout the campus, including the Committee on Planning and Priorities, the Faculty and Staff Senates, the Board of Trustees, the President's Advisory Council, and the Student Government Association.

This next year's focus on planning tied to mission and budget allocations is entirely in keeping with the recommendations that have been included in the readers' reports from our Periodic Review Report for our Middle States Commission on Higher Education. The focus on planning and transparent allocation of financial resources to primary purpose and institutional priorities will be grounded in a commitment to enhance a College-wide culture of assessment and continuous improvement. I would hope that most of the initiatives and plans cited below can be funded by careful attention to the use of additional resources; however, it is likely some will come from reallocation of current resources. In other words, we must prioritize investment of our limited resources. Program review and possible program closure should be a means to assure programmatic excellence and could be a means to identify resources for reallocation for new initiatives. Any program closure will follow the process and procedures approved by governance in the past and the further articulation of priority setting developed by the Committee on Planning and Priorities.

Next year's institutional plan focuses on the four priorities developed by the Committee on Planning and Priorities. The CPP priorities for FY11 are improving the learning environment, imparting institutional identity, planning and assessment for continuous improvement, and diversifying and enhancing revenue streams. These annual priorities are derived from the six strategic initiatives endorsed by the Board of Trustees. These initiatives are positioning the College, diversifying and enhancing revenue streams, developing facilities to support the College's mission, providing transparent information and being accountable to our publics, participating in the educational pipeline from pre-kindergarten to lifelong learning, and enhancing the educational and professional development of our faculty and staff. I will not detail all the projects or action items that will be included in our annual plan, but merely provide highlights. The full plan will be available on the College website.

One of the most exciting of our projects is TCNJ's plan to take advantage of new legislation that allows the College to establish public-private partnerships. These

partnerships may in some instances provide revenue, but the major goal is to improve the experience of our college community members with little or no institutional financial investment. Our first public-private partnership proposal is a Campus Town on the perimeter of campus along Pennington Road. This development could offer amenities, such as shops and services, as well as facilities useful to the campus, including housing, an expanded bookstore, and perhaps a health club. We have completed a preliminary study and distributed a request for expressions of interest from developers. As we move forward, I will continue to share with the community updates about this project. The financial model for this type of public-private partnership is one we continue to explore for other facilities projects, including housing and renewable energy.

We have identified student advising and mentoring as a critical area for improvement and will take several steps to address that need. The Academic Advisement module improvements in PAWS will be implemented, including a one-page replacement for the Program Planner. Additionally, the Center for Institutional Effectiveness will conduct an assessment of advising services on campus, and the results will form the foundation for recommendations for further action.

In order to improve TCNJ's learning environment, we will implement additional elements of the Student Affairs transformation, establish targeted learning outcomes for the Division of Student Affairs, and continue the physical development of residence and dining halls, the student center, and other programming spaces.

We will focus attention on programs to assure academic success in special populations. Particularly, we will seek to lessen the graduation gap between African-Americans and white students at The College. This is a gap that we had noted some five years ago as a focus of attention and as a consequence had developed a series of initiatives, including the EOF Promise Award. We have seen some positive impact on retention of EOF students after the implementation of Promise, but the performance of African-American students has become highlighted in the last month by the publication of two reports by The Education Trust. These reports listed institutions with small achievement gaps and those with large achievement gaps between white and Hispanic students and between white and African Americans. TCNJ was cited as a public institution with a very large graduation gap between whites and Blacks: 87.5% for whites and 58.7% for Blacks. It is important to put these statistics in context: first, nationwide the graduation rate for whites is 60% and for Blacks is 40%, and second, of the 29 public institutions cited by Education Trust for having a small gap between white and Black graduation rates, only 9 had graduation rates for their Black student population higher than graduation rates for Blacks at TCNJ. While a gap of over 28.8% is not acceptable and requires a comprehensive response, until a careful analysis of the data is completed, the remedy is not immediately apparent; however, the development of an action plan based on this analysis is a priority for the year.

One of the signature enhancements of the College over the last decade has been the "academic transformation." We have recognized from the beginning of this long journey in transformation of the learning experience for our students (which has now extended into the transformation of student affairs), that until a thorough and self-reflective assessment program was in place, transformation would not be achieved. This year, we

are engaging governance in identifying the common elements of academic transformation and are developing assessment tools to evaluate our progress.

One of the strategies used this year for addressing the budget challenge was the plan to increase the freshman class by 50. This growth would have followed the pattern we have been following over the last decade: to grow modestly, thoughtfully, and slowly (i.e., the freshman class in Fall 2000 was 1207; the freshman class in Fall 2009 was 1300). The surprising yield in the freshman class for this year simply cannot be maintained if we wish to provide the kind of educational experience we value; thus, we must develop a strategic enrollment management plan consistent with our institutional mission and distinctiveness. The first decision in such a plan is the ‘right-sizing’ of our annual entering class, not just at the institutional level, but also at the programmatic level. That decision must take into consideration issues such as classroom capacity and utilization, laboratory needs, housing and dining facilities, auxiliary needs, (e.g., parking, steam, chilled water, electricity) program enrollment trends and projections, and the impact on support programs and majors. The enrollment plan must also consider retention and graduation rates by discipline and by subpopulations, and must include a plan for growing out of state enrollment. Once that enrollment management plan is in place, we will review our student recruitment efforts and modify our facilities master plan as well as our faculty and staff hiring plans. These modifications and refinements will likely result in new program development and necessitate budget re-allocations.

In our consideration of the faculty/staff hiring plan, we must take into account not just the instructional needs of the campus, but also the impact on non-instructional staff, as more and more sophisticated facilities are built, as our residential population grows and as reporting requirements to meet state and federal regulations grow. We will continue to monitor our focus on budget allocation to primary purpose; however, we cannot overlook these administrative pressures.

In addition to support in the development of a long term hiring plan, Human Resources will conduct a compensation review for non-unit staff positions to assure that our compensation program is adequate to recruit and retain talented staff members. Because of budget constraints, the plan based on that review’s findings will likely be phased in over time. Human Resources will also be developing a long-term plan to address training and professional development of all staff and will be taking interim steps in providing seminars in vital areas during the upcoming year. One particular area of training this year will be EEO training for all TCNJ employees.

As we have recognized for years, private support will become more and more important in assuring the future health of the College. We will continue to enhance and improve programs to engage more alumni in their alma mater, including but not limited to increasing alumni giving. We are currently in the midst of planning TCNJ’s first major fundraising campaign. In doing so, we are establishing and articulating individual school and major programmatic funding priorities that have overarching themes and that underscore college-wide needs. During the fall semester, a campaign steering committee will be named and a case for giving drafted, reviewed and approved by the steering committee and the several volunteer boards of the College.

In support of our efforts in student recruitment, institutional positioning, fundraising, and the enhancement of the success of our graduates in graduate school admission and employment, we must modify marketing our institution. We have begun developing a marketing plan that will identify and communicate the elements of TCNJ's distinctiveness and purpose. This "identity" project began with a more intentional engagement of on-campus stakeholders and alumni. The results of these discussions will be validated by these stakeholders, and other volunteer supporters.

Further areas of focus for diversifying revenue streams include increasing grant activity, improving the revenue generation of Conference and Meeting services, and better utilization of campus facilities. We are seeking to increase grant activity by implementing eGrants, which enhances the grant-seeking and project implementation process for faculty and staff. We will be assessing the operations of the Office of Conference and Meeting Services and its roles in serving the campus and generating revenue from external sources. We hope to improve the utilization of our campus facilities, including the use by revenue-generating clients, and an action plan to increase summer enrollment, in order to be more efficient and to grow resources to support our core mission. These efforts are extremely important in the current economic climate, but they will require changes in current campus operations and culture if they are to be successful.

This is a year for reflection and self-evaluation. We must ask ourselves hard questions about how and where we need to improve, what programs and projects we need to grow, change or leave alone, and what programs and projects we need to abandon. The answers and responses will require more self-sufficiency, more creativity, and more flexibility than ever before. Many of the strategies we develop will challenge us, and some will make us uncomfortable, but they are absolutely necessary. If we do not adapt to the circumstances with which we have been presented, TCNJ will not flourish. And, I for one will not accept that.

As Emily Dickinson writes, at the moment of self-reflection, we stop before we plunge into the future:

What Twigs We held by—  
Oh the View  
When Life's swift River striven through  
We pause before a further plunge  
To Take Momentum

And as we look back, we realize that what we had held so dear is inadequate for the future:

How scant, by everlasting Light  
The Discs that satisfied Our Sight—  
How dimmer than a Saturn's Bar  
The Things esteemed, for Things that are. (#1086)

Together we will imagine and create Discs of great brilliance, Discs that will sustain us through the challenges foisted on us by the economic trauma of the times and the growing mistrust of higher education by the public and public officials, Discs that will light our way into a brilliant future.

Thank you for being here today and for your contributions to this splendid college.