

Annual Address to the University Community
President Richard L. McCormick
Friday, September 15, 2006

“Dealing with Adversity, Declaring our Ambitions”

Thank you, Martha, and thank you to the Senate for giving me this time and this audience. I appreciate these annual occasions, and I take seriously my responsibility to set forth the most important issues and opportunities facing Rutgers.

It is a pleasure to recognize and thank some of our special guests, including Jane Oates, executive director of the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education. We are honored to have you here, we appreciate your interest in Rutgers, and we salute your dedication to public service. My thanks also to the many members of the Rutgers governing boards who are here today, including Board of Governors chair Al Gamper, Board of Trustees vice chair Tony DePetris, and Board of Overseers chair Mark Hershorn.

I now have the pleasure of introducing some people who are new to their leadership positions at Rutgers, and I ask them to stand and be recognized:

- David Finegold, Dean of the School of Management and Labor Relations;
- Sybil James, Ombudsperson for Students;
- Mitchell Koza, Dean of the Rutgers Business School–Camden;
- Courtney McAnuff, Vice President for Enrollment Management;
- Michael Pazzani, Vice President for Research and Graduate and Professional Education;
- Barry Qualls, Vice President for Undergraduate Education; and
- Donna Thornton, Associate Vice President for Alumni Relations.

Earlier this week I had the pleasure of hosting a reception to welcome 73 new members of the Rutgers faculty. They represent the full range of our campuses, disciplines, and schools. Half of them are women, a third are minorities, and we are proud to have them here.

Despite the challenges we face, to which I will turn squarely in a moment, there is much to be proud of at Rutgers today because exciting things are happening on all of our campuses.

In Camden, we are recruiting students for our new Ph.D. in Childhood Studies, the first doctoral program ever on that campus and the first of its kind in the country. In Newark, Dean Marc Holzer and his colleagues are welcoming students to our new School of Public Affairs and Administration, the first new school to open on our Newark campus since 1972.

On the Busch campus, thanks to a \$15 million federal grant, Rutgers and three other universities are establishing an Engineering Research Center devoted to improving the manufacture of pharmaceuticals. Rutgers has just won the leadership of a research consortium on homeland security that is using advanced technologies to identify possible threats. And five days from now a major symposium at Rutgers will mark the first step of a multidisciplinary initiative on global climate change and its effects on the environment and society.

In all of these programs, and many more, Rutgers is making advances that will benefit our state and the world. These things are happening because of the men and women who give us such energy and potential: a remarkable and entrepreneurial faculty ...a staff committed to excellence ...governing bodies who keep Rutgers' best interests first ...talented alumni who are helping us to make Rutgers better. And at the center of it all are our students.

Students of achievement such as Stephanie Lazzaro of the Class of 2006 who, as Rutgers–Newark's first Fulbright Scholar, spent the summer in France conducting research on Parkinson's disease.

Students of achievement like Jeff Klamut, who saw a need in the city of Camden and helped establish the Immigration Pro Bono Program through which law students provide free assistance to South Jersey's immigrant population.

Students of achievement such as Danielle Josephs, who wants to use the power of women to make the world a better place. This year she founded the Middle East Coexistence House at Douglass, where Jewish and Israeli and Christian, Arab, and Muslim students live together and are enrolled together in a course on Middle East conflict resolution. Danielle's peacemaking has earned her national recognition as one of the top 10 college women of the year. Danielle, I might add, was a student in my undergraduate class last year.

Vibrant and engaged, curious and creative, well-spoken and passionate, our students are the reasons why we teach and create knowledge and serve with such dedication. On their preparation for lives of achievement rests our brightest hopes for Rutgers.

But for that to be true, we must remain a place of access and opportunity. Just as it always has, Rutgers educates many students who are the first in their family to attend college. And we celebrate with pride the ethnic, racial, and economic diversity of our community. For the 10th straight year, Rutgers–Newark has been recognized as the most diverse university campus in the country.

Many of our students would not be here without financial aid from the university or from state programs like the Tuition Aid Grants and the Educational Opportunity Fund. A recent federal commission report on higher education called for a renewed commitment to keeping college affordable and accessible, and indeed Rutgers must keep its doors wide open. Our public mission—to provide educational opportunity to talented women and men from all backgrounds—should always be at the core of every decision we make, especially about resources.

And that brings me to the difficult budget we face today. Everyone in this room knows that it's going to be a hard year for Rutgers. Our students' burden of tuition and fees is now heavier than ever. Hundreds of our colleagues have been laid off or not reappointed; hundreds of classes and sections have been cancelled; offices have been closed; six intercollegiate athletic programs are being eliminated; and the great majority of faculty and staff searches have been postponed. I appreciate your efforts to manage well and to minimize the impacts on our programs, but there's no denying the severity of the cuts or the painfulness of the decisions we have had to make.

On this point, I want particularly to recognize and applaud the staff employees of Rutgers who work so hard and upon whose efforts all our achievements depend. So frequently the kudos go to our faculty, and they deserve them, but too often we forget to thank the Rutgers staff. Many of them have now been laid off because of the budget, and as a result those who remain are working harder than ever. I thank you for your service to Rutgers, and I join with Martha Cotter in welcoming your representatives to membership in the University Senate so that at long last you will have a voice in our shared governance.

So why did these budget cuts happen, and what can we do to prevent them from happening again? I answer humbly, because I am deeply conscious that the worst budget cuts in Rutgers' history came on my watch and because I don't entirely know the answers to these questions. But I will tell you what I do know.

We have a governor of New Jersey who inherited a huge structural deficit in the state budget and who courageously determined that he would balance it honestly, without smoke and mirrors, by aligning expenditures with revenues. That meant budget reductions in many areas, and it meant tax increases. Higher education was cut more than most because, to many decision makers in Trenton, the colleges and universities represent a less immediate need compared with K-12 schools, health care, transportation, or reducing property taxes. And besides, it was believed that we could make up for some of our cut by raising tuition, which we did.

Contrary to a widespread impression, the Rutgers budget was not reduced any more than the budgets of the other colleges and universities; it's just that we are so large that we took a hit in every area where higher education was cut. Fortunately, the state's need-based financial aid programs were not reduced, for which we are grateful to Governor Corzine and the members of the Legislature.

After the budget cuts were proposed last March, the Rutgers community swung into action to advocate for a restoration. This was particularly true of our students, whom I thank for their leadership and their energy. But it was not our students alone who spoke for Rutgers: board members, faculty, and staff did, too. By the end of June, in addition to dozens of face-to-face meetings with lawmakers, some 90,000 email messages had been sent to elected officials asking for support for Rutgers. I thank everyone in the Rutgers family who communicated on our behalf in Trenton.

But here's the problem: Virtually all those email messages came from addresses that ended with *rutgers.edu*, and far too few people outside the immediate Rutgers community were speaking on our behalf—too few alumni, parents, business and civic leaders, or New Jersey citizens. That hurt.

And finally, there was the UMDNJ factor. The revelations of the past year hurt all of higher education in the state. No one ever claimed there is comparable behavior at Rutgers, and most assuredly there is not, but some elected officials, looking at UMDNJ, must have wondered from time to time if that's the way business is done at all the colleges and universities.

So that's my explanation: A governor who is determined to set right the state's finances, the relatively low priority placed upon funding for higher education, the lack of strong third-party advocacy for Rutgers, and the headlines about the health sciences university. Does it completely add up? No. Does it explain why we got the biggest budget cut in our history? No. Did we deserve it? No. But it happened, and we have to move forward.

Next week an ad hoc committee of board members and administrators will begin a comprehensive study of Rutgers' state relations. Under the leadership of the Vice Chair of the Board of Governors, Ron Giaconia, the committee will examine every strategy, question every assumption, and seek advice in every quarter of the state.

We will ask how effectively Rutgers, The State University, is using its resources to meet the needs of New Jerseyans and how well or badly we are telling our university's story in Trenton. We will leave no element of the subject untouched until we have completed an utterly thorough rethinking of Rutgers' relationship to the state of New Jersey.

We will ask each constituency within the university to join in this effort: every student government association, every staff and faculty body, and, of course, the University Senate. We urgently need more support from the people of New Jersey, and together we will figure out how to win it.

But while we are doing that, you must know this: We at Rutgers are not going to walk away from our goals and dreams—in teaching and learning, in the creation of new knowledge, and in service to the state and the world. The budget cuts have caused us to make some difficult choices, and more will follow, but they have not broken our Rutgers spirit, or cancelled our bold plans, or deterred us from earning a place among the best research universities in the nation.

When money is tight, it is natural for people to hunker down and maintain the status quo. But I don't subscribe to that way of thinking, and I don't think you do either. While we have to deal with the challenges at hand, this is also a time for big dreams and a time to come together as a university on behalf of our most ambitious goals for Rutgers. We must not be afraid to talk about these goals, or to express that vision, or to declare these ambitions. By doing so, we will assure that Rutgers is ready and prepared when the resources return. Just as important, our dreams will help us to gain the funds we need from others who share our goals and will invest in us to attain them.

To see what can happen when you think big, just look what we did together last year when students, faculty, and staff came together to improve undergraduate education here in New Brunswick. We didn't just nibble at the problem; we dared to imagine a whole new way to organize education at Rutgers. We didn't just think about fixing some bureaucratic glitches; we worked to give every student the opportunity to take full advantage of the resources of this great university. Our ambitious work, about which I'll have more to say in a few minutes, will truly transform a Rutgers education.

So let's not be shy about seeking our highest and best hopes for Rutgers. Let me talk to you, then, not about doom and gloom but about our future: about improving efficiency and generating new revenue, about a bold capital campaign and an aggressive communications strategy, about our plans for undergraduate and graduate education, about enhancing our campuses and inspiring our alumni, and about connecting Rutgers more closely to New Jersey's own ambitions.

I will start with the improvement of our finances.

One approach is to find more cost-effective ways to accomplish our work; another approach is to increase our resources. At Rutgers we must do both of these things. Therefore I will soon establish a permanent Committee on Efficiency and Entrepreneurship at Rutgers, to be chaired by Senior Vice President Jeff Apfel. Let me tell you about both parts of the charge to the committee.

Any big institution can, if it exercises sufficient discipline, identify ways to change and reorganize to achieve the same or better levels of service and quality while spending less money. Certainly Rutgers can. I don't mean to suggest there is fat in our budgets. There never has been. But I do believe that we must take an unsparing look at every element of our organization and ask where we can change and save. Most of the scrutiny will be focused on the administrative side of the house, but our academic programs must also be part of this effort.

Just because we do something a certain way now doesn't mean that's the way we have to continue to do it; just because a certain office or program has been here for years doesn't mean it has to stay forever. Remember the changes we're making in undergraduate education. We should consider making comparably great changes everywhere at Rutgers. That's the efficiency part of the committee's work.

Equally important is entrepreneurship—the zealous spirit that leads people to identify challenging goals and achieve them. We need to apply the entrepreneurial spirit to improving Rutgers' revenues in every conceivable area: federal research support, self-supporting and executive education programs, technology transfer, partnerships with the business sector, and private giving. We can do a lot better than we are currently doing to bring in revenues other than state support.

Under the leadership of Vice President Pazzani, Rutgers will expand its efforts to win grant funding from federal sources such as the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health. Dr. Pazzani and his colleagues are also working to strengthen a closely related source of revenue at Rutgers—our potential for technology transfer, as well as research partnerships with business and industry. Rutgers faculty are already conducting amazing research—from helping to rehabilitate stroke victims using virtual reality games, to converting coal into diesel fuel to reduce dependency on foreign oil, to identifying a human gene that determines how the body processes fat. Rutgers can achieve a greater return on discoveries like these for the good of all.

We can also expand educational offerings that generate revenue for Rutgers, including programs that are targeted to people with full-time jobs who want to advance their careers. For example, we have joined with the National Minority Supplier Development Council to develop a rigorous online course for corporate executives. Anyone responsible for ensuring the diversity of his or her company's supplier chain will be able to take this Rutgers course, whether that company is located in Secaucus or Sacramento. Led by our faculty, this is a model we can build upon in other professional fields.

These efforts must be entrepreneurial in spirit. We are going to have to work hard for every new dollar we bring to Rutgers. But I believe we can tap that spirit and grow those resources.

Now is the time to move ahead on Rutgers' next capital campaign, an essential component of our drive for new revenue. You and I have ambitious plans for Rutgers, and our fund-raising goals must be equally ambitious. Specifically, we need to raise \$1 billion. That's twice as much as our last campaign goal—and more than twice the challenge. But let's dream big dreams as we decide, together as a Rutgers community, just what we want to raise the money for. Certainly we want to support more students; endow professorships; launch or expand signature academic initiatives in the arts, humanities, and sciences; and construct or renovate facilities.

But simply a list of goals like that won't cut it. We need a campaign vision that will inspire donors and a campaign plan that can actually succeed. We are forming a Committee on Campaign Priorities, led by Executive Vice President Phil Furmanski. Working in collaboration with the Rutgers Foundation and its president, Carol Herring, the committee has asked for proposals this fall, through the deans, and will make recommendations for specific campaign targets next spring. Much more than in the past, the establishment of priorities and the campaign itself will be communitywide endeavors. They will draw upon the ideas of faculty, students, staff, and board members and will depend for their success upon everyone.

Setting campaign priorities isn't just about toting up the things you want money for, although that's important. It's also about working together to develop a shared view of what we want Rutgers to be. If we raised a billion or more dollars, how would this university be different from what it is now? So in that spirit, I have charged Dr. Furmanski to use his committee as an instrument not just of list making but of collaborative vision making.

We must also inspire the deepest feelings of philanthropy among those whom we will ask to support us. Consider the recent example of alumnus Richard Shindell, who told us he wanted to make a contribution that would truly benefit humankind. At just that point he met with Dr. Wise Young and learned about the research being done on spinal cord injury here at Rutgers, research that has the potential to cure neurological disorders and save lives around the world.

The experience was transforming. Mr. Shindell decided to give \$3 million to Rutgers to endow a chair in neuroscience, with Wise Young as the first holder of that chair. At the small dinner celebrating his gift last spring, Richard Shindell spoke movingly about how much more he got back than he gave because he knew he was part of something that would truly make a difference. We have got to inspire hundreds of donors to recognize that they get more than they give when they give to Rutgers.

Raising more money from public and private sources will require lots of hard work, as I have already said. It will also require improving the way Rutgers presents itself, both internally and externally. Like it or not, public perceptions matter. They can affect the most important work we do—attracting talented students, appointing a distinguished scholar, winning a federal grant, earning a national fellowship.

We know from our research that we need to replace the vague image that Rutgers occupies in the public mind with the sharpened identity of a university that is distinctive, valuable, and worthy of a personal investment. Later this year, under the leadership of Vice President Kim Manning-Lewis, we will launch a unified, multiyear plan to improve in this area.

The plan will utilize every avenue of communication across the university, even the way we visually portray the name Rutgers, to reinforce with students, citizens, alumni, business leaders, and policy makers that Rutgers is in a category of one. Rutgers is the only institution that has the critical mass, scope, and quality to meet the knowledge needs of the people of this state. That's what makes Rutgers unique and so vital to New Jersey.

Resources and reputation, subjects to which I have devoted many minutes of this speech, are only means to ends. Our true goals are in education and research, and there is nothing to which Rutgers has devoted as much time and thought during the past year as the education of our undergraduates.

At Newark, following a year of effort, the faculty, staff, and student committee on undergraduate education has now completed its work. I want to thank the committee and its chair, Professor John Sheridan, for a thoughtful report and for farsighted recommendations on core competencies and a core curriculum, deepening faculty engagement in undergraduate teaching, and integrating classroom activities with campus life. Provost Steve Diner and Dean Ned Kirby will now engage the campus in a discussion of the recommendations, and implementation will follow.

In Camden, Dean Margaret Marsh has convened a task force to craft a comprehensive strategy for the Camden Faculty of Arts and Sciences, including a thorough examination of undergraduate education. Our new business dean, Mitchell Koza, is embarking with his colleagues on a thorough exploration of how Rutgers provides undergraduate business education across South Jersey and the Delaware Valley. Their strategic planning will enhance Camden's already strong reputation for excellence in the undergraduate experience.

A year ago on the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus, Rutgers entered into one of the most comprehensive and participatory examinations of undergraduate education that was ever attempted by any university. Let me thank again the Task Force on Undergraduate Education, the New Brunswick Faculty Council, and the University Senate for their extraordinary leadership.

The recommendations adopted in March by the Board of Governors bore the imprint of a remarkable conversation about the undergraduate experience at a major public research university. The changes speak to greater access and academic opportunity for all students; a deeper engagement by our faculty in undergraduate teaching and learning; and a far better, more efficient academic organization.

A little under a year from now, we will welcome the first students to a reorganized Rutgers. Thanks to the chairs of the Steering Committee on Implementation, Professors Michael Beals and Cheryl Wall; to Vice Presidents Barry Qualls and Greg Blimling; and to nearly 300 members of over a dozen implementation committees, the plans are right on target.

Some changes are already in place. We have consolidated our residence life programs. The School of Arts and Sciences has approved core requirements and a unified honors program. Cook College is now the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences. And our admissions materials now describe the new Rutgers.

Each first-year student will be encouraged to take a small-enrollment seminar with a member of our faculty on a topic of mutual interest. That seminar will begin to open up for new students the full possibilities of the Rutgers experience: a wide choice of campuses on which to live; a common educational core; equal access to all academic programs and student services; opportunities in research and experiential learning; and, in the senior year, a capstone course in the major field that draws upon everything he or she has learned at Rutgers.

Rutgers' historic commitment to the education of women will continue to be expressed in countless ways, including nationally regarded programs, departments, and centers focused on women, and, most recently, the appointment of Dr. Joan Bennett, a distinguished biologist, to head the new Office to Advance Women in the Sciences.

Building upon the historic mission and values of Douglass College, the new Douglass Residential College will offer the women who choose it a four-year curricular and cocurricular living and learning experience that prepares them for leadership in a global society. One of the implementation committees is now at work making sure that women who enroll in the Douglass Residential College will have the resources and opportunities they need to achieve these goals. This college has my strong commitment and support.

Literally hundreds of faculty, staff, and students are involved in planning and creating the new system of undergraduate education. Their efforts, of which I am deeply proud, exemplify Rutgers at its best: a research university environment that enables every undergraduate to benefit from the full resources of this institution.

Rutgers also wants the best for its graduate students. As they pursue their advanced degrees, frequently while teaching our undergraduates, these women and men add so much to Rutgers' academic strengths. Even at a time of budgetary constraint, we will find ways to maintain and enhance our commitment to excellence in graduate education. I am pleased, therefore, to announce today the establishment of the President's Fellows Program, our first new graduate fellowship program in two decades. Each year Rutgers will offer up to 10 incoming students, competitively selected from across our graduate schools, a package of approximately \$50,000, which will include an annual stipend. Our goal is to attract the very best graduate students to Rutgers.

More than ever, we must also train our attention on those who have completed their Rutgers degrees, our alumni. Many of them are here now for Homecoming Weekend, and we welcome them back. Our graduates have a stake in the dreams we dream for Rutgers—and we, in turn, depend on them.

Is Rutgers doing enough to serve our more than 300,000 living alumni and to inspire their loyalty? How can we strengthen the bonds between Rutgers and its graduates? Can we create an alumni program that is a model for the nation? How can we encourage alumni to become even more supportive of their university? These are the questions I have recently put to a small task force of Rutgers alumni, to be led by Rutgers–Newark alumnus Gene O'Hara, a former chair of the Board of Governors. There is no doubt that well-connected, deeply engaged, well-organized alumni can make a world of difference in shaping Rutgers' future.

Both the quality of our education and the loyalty of our alumni depend upon our campus environments. For too long, Rutgers has paid insufficient attention to its facilities and its campuses. They are essential to the excellence of our university, and they should never be just afterthoughts.

This year Rutgers takes pride in the completion of Newark's Life Sciences building and in the opening of the University Square residence hall. That beautiful facility, for more than 600 students, is helping to transform Rutgers–Newark into a truly residential campus, a dream expressed most eloquently by Provost Steve Diner.

In Camden, construction is under way to expand the Law School, and we will also be improving the dining and recreational facilities. But Provost Roger Dennis has an even bigger vision for Rutgers–Camden—a campus that shines as a beacon of promise for its host city, an anchor of that city's long sought renewal, and a destination of excellence for the people of South Jersey.

Here in New Brunswick, the basic goals are the same: well-designed buildings and beautiful campuses that attract the best faculty, students, and staff and instill pride in our alumni and citizens.

This is far from true of our Livingston campus. The Task Force on Undergraduate Education affirmed what we all know: the neglect of the Livingston campus has produced a 1960s castoff—architecture that does not invite learning and a landscape that doesn't suggest nature. Livingston has suffered long enough. I have already pledged, even in these difficult times, to begin the expansion of the Livingston Student Center ahead of schedule. But that's only a small part of fulfilling the promise of Livingston as a magnet campus that students will seek not for its ample parking spaces but for its distinctive academic character and its vibrant life.

We have got to do more for Livingston than offer a collection of long-overdue renovations and expansions. Let us come together to develop a unique academic identity for that campus, grounded in history but also focused on new horizons and opportunities. Much as the Busch campus has become our place of math, science, and engineering, Livingston should be not only physically attractive but academically compelling. Vice Presidents Furmanski and Apfel, working together with representatives of all of the relevant groups, will take the lead in developing plans for turning a neglected campus into a hub of university activity.

Last year, I set forth in broad terms a vision for our oldest campus here on College Avenue. We announced a competition to redesign it, and five teams of the world's best architects and planners have now proposed bold and sweeping plans for the campus. Those plans will be on brilliant, public display in the Zimmerli Museum beginning on September 26.

Even more important than the plans themselves will be a universitywide discussion of the ideas they contain. Because this is a competition, we will ultimately select a winning team with whom to work. Yet different as they are, the plans actually share some common themes about the College Avenue campus. Each of them connects the campus with the Raritan River waterfront. Each presents captivating ideas about pedestrian spaces and about ways to bring people together within them. They all agree that College Avenue needs a signature academic building as its distinctive campus landmark.

We are unlikely to adopt and build any one of the plans in its entirety, but we will, as I have said, pick a winning team to be our partner. When you see the plans you will be in awe, but to honor this campus's 240-year history we need to dream and plan for its future. That means a learning environment at Rutgers that stands among the best, and the most beautiful, in the nation.

And why should we not aspire to that lofty status? Fifty years ago, in 1956, by action of the State Legislature and the Rutgers Trustees, Rutgers became The State University of New Jersey. That joint action implied mutual responsibilities—of Rutgers to the state and of the state to Rutgers. It suggested that Rutgers would serve New Jersey in the ways of the finest public universities in the land—advancing economic growth, discovering and applying new ideas, and finding solutions to the toughest social problems.

The action taken 50 years ago also suggested that there would be a significant measure of state support for Rutgers. It is probably fair to say that for both Rutgers and New Jersey the relationship is still a work in progress. But I am determined that Rutgers should fully embrace its responsibilities as the state university. Do you doubt for a second that any other institution in the state would love to have that designation and that duty?

Last week Governor Corzine outlined his strategy for the economic development of New Jersey, and he made clear the great reliance he was placing upon higher education. I immediately offered the resources of Rutgers to achieve his vision. Rutgers already has a strong record of preparing women and men for highly skilled, knowledge-based careers, and we are prepared to enhance our programs to meet the state's most important needs.

Rutgers already does basic and applied research in areas that are essential to the state's economic growth. This research can be even more effectively harnessed to produce still greater benefits. It is estimated, for example, that the economic benefits to New Jersey of the proposed stem cell initiative would be nearly \$1.5 billion in new economic activity, close to 20,000 new jobs, and over \$70 million in new state revenues in the next 20 years.

To encourage Rutgers' commitment to meeting the needs of the people of our state, last year I created the President's Award for Research in Service to New Jersey. This year's recipient of that award is Professor Joel Cantor for his leadership in shaping health care policy and health insurance reform in our state.

Rutgers also fulfills its responsibilities to New Jersey through our many agreements and partnerships with the community colleges throughout the state. Each year, the community colleges send us some 1,700 transfer students, whose academic achievements and graduation rates at Rutgers are the equal of students who start college here.

We are also beginning to offer the opportunity to earn Rutgers degrees through courses that are given on community college campuses. Two weeks ago, I joined in celebrating the establishment of such a program at Atlantic Cape Community College. Many of those who were present on that occasion praised the initiative and urged Rutgers to develop similar programs in partnership with other community colleges. And you can be sure that we will.

Our very best higher educational partner, of course, should be the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. And many of you may be surprised to know that it already is. Our two universities share the goal of strengthening biomedical research in New Jersey and bringing the benefits of medical science to the citizens of our state.

For more than 20 years, Rutgers and UMDNJ have been doing that together through two of New Jersey's premier research institutes: the Center for Advanced Biotechnology and Medicine and the Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences Institute. The Cancer Institute of New Jersey, our state's only comprehensive cancer research and care center, is formally part of UMDNJ, but 45 percent of its participating faculty are from Rutgers. Nearly all of the New Brunswick-based graduate programs in the biomedical sciences are collaborative between the two universities. The newly established Stem Cell Institute of New Jersey is also jointly managed by Rutgers and UMDNJ. In biomaterials, human genetics, molecular pathology, and nutrition, among other disciplines, the two universities are also collaborating effectively. To be sure, there are administrative barriers to overcome, but together with our counterparts at UMDNJ we are working to remove these obstacles.

Could it be better if, somehow, these research universities were combined? And specifically, would it be better if the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School was part of Rutgers? You bet it would. In almost every other state, the health sciences disciplines are part of the comprehensive research university, with enormous benefits for education, for research, and for health care delivery. But these subjects are hugely complicated, especially in today's environment.

Everyone should know that Rutgers stands ready to continue and expand our already significant collaborations with UMDNJ and, when the time comes to take the next steps, to be an active, constructive, and unselfish participant in figuring out what to do. The only goal here is to achieve what's best for the health and well-being of the people of New Jersey and to make at least our share of contributions to the improvement of human health around the world.

These, then, are our plans for Rutgers in the year and years to come. They are dreams of greater opportunities for our students and deeper connections with our alumni. They are plans for envisioning what our campuses should be and for beginning the long quest to make them so. They are bold hopes for stronger bonds with the citizens whom we have served for a half century as The State University of New Jersey and as a place of opportunity for 240 years.

In outlining these ambitions, I do not take lightly our budgetary shortfall, nor do I minimize the challenges we face. Rather, in making the case for these ambitions, I affirm without hesitation that Rutgers will maintain its core missions and will realize its highest goals. Rutgers will never turn its back on those whom we serve—especially our students—nor will we abandon our dreams for their highest achievement. And Rutgers will not give up on gaining the full support of the people of New Jersey. That is my pledge and our shared responsibility.