**Who is NJIT's Alumni Association?**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**First, what is an Alumni Association and what does it do?**

An alumni association is a network of alumni. It works in partnership with the University in engaging as many alumni as possible in the life of the University to support the University in alumni recognition efforts, student recruitment, visibility, financially, career networking, and all activities in which alumni partner with the University in advancing its mission.

**What is NJIT's Alumni Association?**

The name of NJIT's Alumni Association is the "Alumni Association of NJIT," and it is the only officially recognized University-wide alumni association for NJIT and its alumni (http://www.njit.edu/alumni/organization/alumniassociation/index.php). Its mission is "to advance the interests of NJIT, expand our alumni network, and continue the development of volunteer opportunities for alumni to be active in the affairs of the University and its future." The Association is organized as a network of alumni clubs under the leadership and guidance of a Board of Directors.

**Wasn't or isn't there another Alumni Association of NJIT?**

For a number of years, the former Alumni Association of New Jersey Institute of Technology, Inc. served as NJIT's Alumni Association. Unfortunately, leadership of this alumni association devolved into an "exclusive club" of just a few individuals isolating themselves from the alumni body at large, as noted by an expert consultant engaged to recommend steps to improve alumni relations at NJIT, and became antagonistic to the University's efforts to engage its alumni and to assist the community in neighborhood redevelopment efforts.

After many years of attempting to work in partnership with the leadership of the former Alumni Association of New Jersey Institute of Technology, Inc. (i.e., its Board of Trustees) on implementing best practices in alumni relations proved unsuccessful, NJIT formed a new association and governance structure in the spring of 2008, and that is the University's current Alumni Association, the Alumni Association of NJIT. NJIT notified the Board of Trustees of the former Alumni Association of New Jersey Institute of Technology, Inc. in May 2008 that the University was disaffiliating with it. The response of the Board of Trustees of the former Alumni Association of New Jersey Institute of Technology, Inc. was to file a lawsuit in June 2008 seeking to prevent NJIT from enforcing the notice of disaffiliation. NJIT responded to the complaint, and also filed a counterclaim, moving to prohibit the Board of Trustees of the former Alumni Association of New Jersey Institute of Technology, Inc. from using NJIT's name and logo and otherwise representing itself as NJIT's recognized alumni association.

**So what is the status of the lawsuit against NJIT filed by the Alumni Association of New Jersey Institute of Technology, Inc.?**

Last September, after a hearing before the Chancery Division of the Superior Court, the Court entered an order denying the Association's requests and granting the University's requests, allowing NJIT to proceed with the disaffiliation, and further ordering the association, until final disposition, to stop using NJIT's trademarks and logos. There is a trial anticipated to be scheduled this October with respect to all remaining issues, including the parties' respective damage claims.

**So if the Alumni Association of New Jersey Institute of Technology, Inc. is barred from using New Jersey Institute of Technology, what is their name?**

Last fall, the Alumni Association of New Jersey Institute of Technology, Inc., having to change its name, asked NJIT if they could use the name New Jersey Tech Alumni Association, Inc. The University's response was no because of the confusion that would likely result as to whether or not the corporation was affiliated with NJIT, which it is not. This past June, the former Alumni Association of New Jersey Institute of Technology, Inc. began using New Jersey Tech Alumni Association, Inc. anyway. NJIT is seeking a final order to prevent the use of this name, as it is confusing to alumni and the public.

**Why do we have to be in this lawsuit anyway?**

NJIT did not institute the lawsuit, and in fact spent a great deal of time and effort over a number of years to explore ways to engage the leadership of the former Alumni Association of New Jersey Institute of Technology, Inc. to strengthen alumni relations at NJIT. But their leadership group refused to cooperate, remained isolated from alumni, and developed an animosity toward the University that, in the words of the Court, "may irreparably harm NJIT's good will and reputation in the community of the Association were [it] allowed to continue the use of the NJIT name and marks, continue as their alumni association while essentially sabotaging much of what the University wants to do." As the University described in the papers filed in this litigation, it took action to disaffiliate from the former Alumni Association of New Jersey Institute of Technology, Inc., and to end all support to that organization, only after it became clear that its relationship with the University had become dysfunctional, and real harm was being done to initiatives important to the future of the University.

**It has been stated that NJIT is fighting with its alumni. Is this true?**

No, nothing could be further from the truth. NJIT has a robust Alumni Relations program (see http://www.njit.edu/alumni/) including activities of many alumni clubs and extensive class reunions under the overall leadership of the Board of Directors of the current Alumni Association of NJIT in partnership with the University's Office of Alumni Relations. The current dispute is not with NJIT alumni but with a small group of members of the Board of Trustees of the former Alumni Association of New Jersey

Institute of Technology, Inc., who have been working counter to the interests of the University and the alumni generally.

**Doesn't this lawsuit cost a lot?**

It is unfortunate that the small, isolated leadership group of the former Alumni Association of New Jersey Institute of Technology, Inc. have caused the University to spend considerable time and money defending the Association's complaint, which we believe is wholly without merit. While most of our defensive costs in the lawsuit have been, and will be, covered by the University's insurance policies, funds spent in the litigation could have been used more productively, e.g., for scholarships, for student research projects, etc. rather than legal defense against a small number of individuals whose intent is to protect their "exclusive club," "harm NJIT's good will and reputation…..while essentially sabotaging what the University wants to do," while using University trademarks to do so. We must defend our right to ensure that use of our trademarks is authorized and in support of the University, and so we look forward to final resolution through the legal process so that we can focus on working in partnership with our current alumni association, the Alumni Association of NJIT, the leadership of which is enthusiastic about the future of alumni relations at NJIT.