

A Message

FROM THE PRESIDENT

THE IMAGE OF THE "IVORY TOWER" INSTITUTION OF HIGHER LEARNING HAS NEVER TRULY FIT NJIT. OUR PREDECESSOR INSTITUTION, NEWARK TECHNICAL SCHOOL, WAS FOUNDED IN 1881 FOR THE SPECIFIC PURPOSE OF PROVIDING NEWARK'S BURGEONING MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY WITH A SKILLED TECHNICAL WORKFORCE. OVER THE YEARS, OUR CONNECTIONS TO MANY COMMUNITIES AND CONSTITUENCIES HAVE GROWN ALONG WITH OUR CAMPUS, OUR PROGRAMS AND OUR OVERALL MISSION.

In recent years, NJIT has evolved as a nexus for diverse ideas and initiatives that will shape the knowledge-based 21st century economy. We see it as our role, for instance, to guarantee the state a sufficient workforce of technological professionals to keep our high-tech industries growing and thriving. At the same time, we believe we have a mission to ensure an inclusive technological workforce that encourages women and other underrepresented groups to participate in the new industries that science and engineering are creating. To these ends, we work continually with leaders in industry, government and education to create an array of educational offerings. Recent innovations include programs designed to bring cutting-edge science into urban high schools, a project to help handicapped adults gain computer skills, and an initiative to evaluate the needs of the financial services industry and tailor curricula to meet them.

Our research programs link to economic development so that new technologies developed in our laboratories benefit existing companies and play a role in the development of new businesses. We also bring our students into the most advanced research initiatives so that our graduates are prepared to work in such emerging fields as bio-MEMS, nanotechnology and engineered particulates, neural engineering, and wireless network security.

Our impact in these areas often goes far beyond Newark and New Jersey. One of the companies in our Enterprise Development Center is working with a university researcher on technology that will be used

in factories in China. A team of researchers in biomedical engineering is working with the Iowa Corn Promotion Board to develop corn-based polymers that are non-toxic and biodegradable. Our School of Architecture students and faculty are playing a major role in the rebuilding of New Orleans and developing storm-resistant designs and techniques that will apply in high-risk areas around the globe.

At the same time, we are more involved than ever in our immediate community and its potential as a vibrant cultural center. Enhancing campus life and the neighborhood around NJIT is important to the growth of NJIT as an urban university. In just the past few years, we've seen major revitalization coming as a result of the opening of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center and Bears and Eagles Riverfront Stadium, the home field of our Highlander baseball team. We are looking forward to a similar positive impact with the opening in the fall of the Prudential Center, which will be home to the New Jersey Devils professional hockey team as well as Highlander basketball. We also expect to see construction of a \$50 million world-class stem cell research center next year, and further down the road, we hope to see the Campus Gateway Project improve the amenities available to the campus and local community.

When Newark Mayor Cory Booker addressed the university convocation last fall, he challenged us to "break down the walls that separate person from person, institution from institution, science from science." At NJIT, we strive to do just that every day.



Robert A. Altenkirch

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President of NJIT