

*A Public  
Research University*

October 25, 2002

Dear Alumna or Alumnus:

The beginning of the fall semester 2002 marks an exciting beginning for me as the 7<sup>th</sup> president of the New Jersey Institute of Technology. Our applied research partnerships with industry and state and federal governments continue to thrive. Today they include exciting and high-profile projects to improve our nation's environment, security, and applications of nanotechnology. Our student body continues to grow larger and more diverse in background and achievement. NJIT's national academic reputation and the value of the NJIT degree have never been greater.

Indeed, NJIT's success and growth as a leading center of education and research excellence in New Jersey led to its inclusion in the report of Governor James E. McGreevey's Commission on Health Science, Education, and Training concerning the structure of public higher education in New Jersey. Those of you who live and work in the state have undoubtedly heard much about the debate that has begun about recommendations contained in the report, and much more will be said about implementation in the coming months if the proposed restructuring takes place.

I believe that the public and legislative process concerning any proposed restructuring of higher education ultimately will reinforce the importance of NJIT's role in the future of a top-tier scientific technological research university in the state. Our alumni — those of you whose ties to the institution are personal and strong, and whose careers are premised on NJIT's national reputation for excellence in education and research — are right to take an interest, and to have a voice, in these discussions as they develop over the coming months, when they are sure to focus on substantive issues concerning any potential realignment of resources in Newark.

By way of background, the Commission envisions a New Jersey state research university system with geographically distinct campuses with particular focus in Newark, Camden and New Brunswick, joined together under one umbrella in what I would call a coherent system of "managed autonomy." The Newark-based university would consist of NJIT, Rutgers-Newark, and the components of University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) in Newark. The proposal is thoughtful and worth consideration. It is based on successful structures for public research universities as they have evolved in other states, including California and Texas, to address unique needs.

While much of the Commission's report is an analysis of the Newark-based UMDNJ and the three campuses of Rutgers University, it is the existence and presence of NJIT that could help forge emerging synergies among the applied physical, mathematical, computing, and engineering sciences with the biological and biomedical sciences and medicine here in Newark. These synergies are at the foundation of NJIT's mission to provide for job creation through technology innovation, and they will accelerate scientific and technological progress in biology and its applications to parallel those in the

physical sciences and its applications of the past century. Coupling this with existing strength in the liberal arts and social sciences in Newark-based programs sets the stage for establishing a major, comprehensive, academic setting of national stature.

Today there is logic in leveraging existing strengths to develop a major center of academic and research excellence in Newark that complements and supports the state's health-related industries, and will have the potential to grow to be a national leader in the applied physical, biological and biomedical sciences and new technology development, impacting the economy and the built environment. A major component of realizing this potential is the "transfer of technology" from the physical, mathematical, and computing sciences and engineering to the biological sciences.

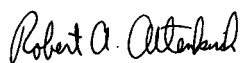
Further discussion is warranted as to whether the Commission's proposed structure best fits the needs of Newark, the past, present and future students of NJIT, and the economy of this state and region. However, leveraging the convergence of engineering and the biological sciences could prove a catalyst for extraordinary progress and growth for the existing medical and technological resources in Newark. The opportunity exists to ignite innovation, drive economic development, and improve the quality of life for New Jerseyans.

The right vision and leadership — primarily established in science and technology — would have the potential to preserve and strengthen public higher education in Newark. There are strong opportunities for New Jersey to take a lead role in accelerating the convergence mentioned above and for NJIT to provide leadership in the establishment of a forward-oriented, comprehensive center of academic and research excellence in Newark, which will carry forward the hallmark names of several of the schools/colleges of NJIT.

My dialogue with Governor McGreevey and the Commission's chairman, former Merck & Co. CEO Dr. P. Roy Vagelos, has been productive. Both appreciate the potential that NJIT makes possible for whatever realignment of resources might emerge in Newark, and they are to be commended for taking on the challenge of proposing for further discussion and consideration a forward-looking new structure for New Jersey's state scientific research universities.

But, I feel strongly that it is the reputation and visible success of those who carry the mantle of NJIT as alumni that are the reason such strong opportunities exist. I will remain vigilant in my advocacy for NJIT and its unique reputation and entrepreneurial culture as this process continues, and invite you to take an active role as alumni by periodically visiting our Web site at <http://www.njit.edu/> and following the public debate as it develops.

Sincerely,



Robert A. Altenkirch  
President