

Freshman Convocation 2007

Welcome to NJIT and the start of a new academic year, your first.

NJIT's vision is to be recognized as a preeminent technological research university known for innovation, entrepreneurship, and engagement. This vision is achieved through the work we do, of which you will have an opportunity to be a part, from capstone courses in a number of academic areas, to operation of the soon-to-be-completed largest land-based solar telescope at Big Bear Solar Observatory in California, to the first-in-the-nation project to store all student work in Architecture electronically, to operation of one of the largest business incubators in which we assist small technology-based companies grow to be economically viable businesses on their own.

Being new to NJIT, you of course may not be able to picture the campus of a few years ago, but it has undergone a physical transformation, one that is continuing and improving the quality of campus life.

We continue efforts to provide more of what is traditionally present on a residential campus, including the enhancement of recreational facilities, student clubs activities, and Greek life to name a few. I would encourage you to become involved in some aspects of campus life beyond the classroom.

We are also working closely with the City of Newark and the surrounding community as well, as the City embarks on a number of redevelopment projects. We have been involved in the redevelopment of downtown, including the Newark Arena to house the National Hockey League team the New Jersey Devils, serve as a venue for concerts and other events, and provide a facility for commencement and some home basketball games.

The NJIT Campus Gateway Plan is a plan for redevelopment of the neighborhood north of the campus, which also includes a town house village component for fraternities and sororities on the south edge of campus. This past spring, we engaged a Master Developer and Master Planner to plan the redevelopment project, which includes enhanced residential options as well as retail amenities. The Gateway plan is in the final stage of development at this point, and we anticipate being able to move toward the first phase of implementation in the months ahead. A public, "Town Hall" meeting presentation on the status of the plan will be held September 17 at 7:00 pm in the Campus Center Atrium, and I would encourage you to attend if you get a chance.

Our academic programs are challenging, yet rewarding. Your degree will have value in the marketplace in which you work. The more highly valued your degree becomes, the more doors of opportunity it opens for you. It is important then that you stay connected and involved while a student and as an alumnus to work toward constant improvement of NJIT and raise its stature even further.

Part of the team that assists you as first year students in adjusting to college life are the Freshman Seminar instructors. These instructors volunteer to teach a Freshman Seminar course, and I want to thank them now for their efforts on your behalf. Would the Freshman Seminar instructors please stand so that we can recognize them with a round of applause?

I'll look forward to seeing you on campus and at the various campus events throughout the year. There are a lot of opportunities for you to be involved in a variety of

activities. Take a look at the NJIT web site often and read the e-mail messages that come out periodically so you can keep current on campus news.

Have a good year.