

Convocation Remarks
Robert A. Altenkirch
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Good afternoon and welcome to NJIT's University Convocation marking the beginning of the 2011– 2012 Academic Year.

University Convocation brings the NJIT community together: to celebrate the new academic year; to welcome those who are joining us; to reflect on our achievements and awards and honors; and to assess our goals and aspirations.

As we consider what we have accomplished and what we plan to do, it is also an opportunity to rededicate ourselves with renewed commitment to our core values, including: serving the communities in which we live; being satisfied with nothing less than excellence; acting with integrity; caring for students as individuals; treating each other with respect and dignity; and being sensitive to the cultural and personal differences among members of our university community.

We have many achievements of which we can be justifiably proud:

For the sixth year in a row, NJIT has just been named by *U.S. News & World Report* to the top tier of national research universities.

Additionally, your university was named to the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Role and is included in Princeton Review's Second Annual Guide to 311 Green Colleges, which recognizes the most environmentally responsible colleges in the U.S. and Canada.

NJIT was included too in Princeton Review's Best 376 Colleges for 2012 as well as the 2012 Edition of Fiske Guide to Colleges, a selective, subjective, and systematic look at some 300 hundred colleges and universities in the U.S., Canada and Great Britain.

Most recent data collected by the National Science Foundation on research and development expenditures in science and engineering put NJIT in the top 100 of U.S. public universities

The NJIT community continues to be recognized. Professor Carol Johnson, Department of Humanities, won the 2010 National Council of Teachers of English Best Book Award in Technical and Scientific Communication. An NJIT alumnus was named by President Obama to be Chief Information Officer in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. And Team New Jersey, a student led collaboration between Rutgers and NJIT, was one of twenty teams selected World-wide to compete next week in the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon in

Washington, DC.

The physical facilities of the campus continue to improve and expand. We began renovation of the Central King Building, formerly Central High School, this past year, and architects are on board designing a complete renovation involving conversion of the two floors surrounding the central auditorium into a showcase of discovery about NJIT. Implementation of the NJIT Campus Gateway Plan, a mixed-use, residential and retail redevelopment of properties north of campus, plus the NJIT parking lot bounded by Raymond Blvd. and Colden and Warren Sts., took some major steps forward. The fraternity and sorority housing and residence hall complex to be built on the Raymond/Colden/Warren parking lot is slated for ground breaking in the spring and opening for the 2013-14 academic year. And, the Naimoli Facility, in which we are gathered today, was completed this past year. This facility was made possible in part by a generous gift from Vincent Naimoli, a '62 NJIT graduate, and Founder and Chairman Emeritus of the Tampa Bay Rays of Major League Baseball. Significant is that this multipurpose facility is home to NJIT's tennis teams, the women's team last year winning the conference championship, our first in Division I.

Freshmen in the audience are the first ever to join an incoming class of over 1,000 and a university student body of over 9,000. Almost 90% of you ranked in the top half of your high school class, and almost 30% of you in the top tenth. Over 50% of you are pursuing programs in the Newark College of Engineering with the next largest incoming group enrolled in the College of Architecture and Design. The largest population of you comes from New Jersey, but states from Hawaii to New York, from California to Florida are represented. We have freshman student-athletes from Slovenia, from England, as well as NJ and states throughout the U.S. And, your freshman class is the first to participate in organized learning communities, network and support groups formed to enhance your learning experience.

But what of the future, what does it hold for NJIT and its graduates?

NJIT will continue to be held in high regard. Our graduates will continue to command respect and be well rewarded in their professions for which an NJIT degree will continue to be recognized as an excellent return on investment.

Within the Newark community, NJIT will continue to be recognized as a leader in community involvement, from students volunteering in the community to implementation of the Gateway Plan, which will be a major component of the ongoing renaissance of the City of Newark.

This ceremony will introduce you to many successful members of the NJIT community. Get to know them. They will assist you in accomplishing much in your four years at NJIT, and you will be well prepared for the future.

It is now my distinct pleasure to introduce our Keynote speaker.