

President  
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey  
83 Somerset Street  
New Brunswick, New Jersey 08901

April 27, 2009

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Dear Rutgers President:

On behalf of the university community of 2009, I write this letter to you, the president of Rutgers in 2109, to express our good wishes and our enduring pride in this grand building, Old Queens, and in the history and future of Rutgers.

We are marking the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone of Old Queens, the oldest Rutgers building in use. Completed in 1825, at which time a cupola was added to hold the bell donated by Colonel Henry Rutgers, this building once served as home to the entire college as well as a preparatory school, theological seminary, and faculty residences. Today it houses the offices of the university president and other administrators. Old Queens has also been the starting point for a longstanding Rutgers commencement tradition: graduating students gather on its front lawn in their caps and gowns before processing through its ground floor hall on their way to the commencement ceremonies on the Voorhees Mall. We certainly hope that Old Queens remains a revered emblem of Rutgers' history and a vital part of university life in the coming hundred years.

At this moment in time, the world's population stands at six and a half billion people; 300 million live in the United States. Barack Obama has begun his tenure as the nation's first African American president, taking office at a time of great economic distress, and as our military continues its involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan. New Jersey, home to a richly diverse and well-educated population of nearly nine million people, has had its own recent fiscal challenges. Nevertheless, our state – in its location, wealth, and climate; in its colonial heritage and history of innovation; in the beauty of its shoreline and northwest highlands; and in the passion, individualism, energy, and brainpower of its people – is one of the world's best endowed locales. And as President Obama stated in his inaugural address, America remains the most prosperous, most powerful nation on earth.

As your predecessor and the 19<sup>th</sup> president of this institution, I am pleased to say that Rutgers today is building on its proud history and laying the groundwork for the achievements you are pursuing in the first years of the 22<sup>nd</sup> century. Our faculty members are conducting research on some of the most important global human challenges, including climate change, renewable energy, transportation, nutrition, AIDS, cancer, and regenerative medicine. The Rutgers staff has gained acclaim for leadership in environmentally sustainable practices (we are now installing the largest solar-energy facility in New Jersey on the Livingston Campus) and for innovation in student services, such as a residential program for students overcoming drug and alcohol addiction.

Rutgers students are pursuing undergraduate and graduate degrees in more than 100 academic fields, the newest of which include childhood studies, public service, and computational biology. Many of our students supplement their classroom learning with undergraduate research, internships, and other forms of experiential learning, and an increasing number are involved in learning communities within their residence halls, centered on themes such as video production, science and math, and world languages. Student athletes on our Camden, Newark, and New Brunswick campuses compete in a wide variety of intercollegiate and recreation sports, and our football and women's basketball teams in New Brunswick have enjoyed recent success on the national level.

Looking ahead to 2109, it is certain that new technologies, new ideas, and new challenges will continue to reshape higher education. We have already seen dramatic shifts in the past quarter-century, particularly the explosion of information instantly available over the internet, and we anticipate that by these means and others not yet even dreamed of, higher learning and research will undergo very significant changes over the coming century. Knowing what I do, however, about education and the human spirit, I hope and believe that a passion for learning, discovery, and service will still characterize Rutgers University in 2109, however differently these missions may be carried out. Indeed, it is my hope that Rutgers' reputation for excellence in education and research in service to the people of New Jersey and the world will only grow.

I hope you will enjoy examining the contents of this time capsule, which were selected by our undergraduate students to capture the times in which we are living and learning at Rutgers. You have my fondest wishes for success in your efforts as president—and my hope that some traditions embraced in 2009 carry on in 2109 “on the banks of the old Raritan.”

Sincerely yours,

Richard L. McCormick