



## Rutgers University-Newark: Where Opportunity Meets Excellence

Strategic Plan 2014





Rutgers University–Newark:  
Where Opportunity Meets Excellence

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SHOOT FOR THE MOON YOU EVEN IF YOU MISS YOU'LL LAND AMONG THE STARS

CJ 2014

Prudential Center

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## From the Chancellor

Dear Members of the Rutgers University–Newark Community:

If the Rutgers University–Newark strategic plan is, as suggested in the following pages, more akin to a jazz score than a blueprint, then its refrain must be “We are ready!” That active motif resonated throughout our multi-faceted, highly participatory, and democratic visioning process and it reflects the engagement that emerges repeatedly in this document. It is, simply, a clarion articulation of the optimism and sense of purpose that one finds across the constituencies of our university community—faculty, staff, students, and alumni, as well as friends, stakeholders, and partners—rooted in our shared sense that Rutgers University–Newark is ideally positioned at the intersection where society’s demands on higher education today meet the legacy, strengths, and trajectory of our university.

Mindful of the call to action embodied by the Rutgers-wide strategic plan, we started our visioning process from an “outside-in” view of what our state, nation, and world need from us, reflecting on the very real opportunities for our students, scholars, staff, and partners to serve the public good. This involved: accounting for demands that we rededicate ourselves to being an engine of innovation, social mobility, and individual and collective prosperity; re-connecting with and re-telling our story, because our strengths and promise have not been broadly known; and culminating in a serious commitment to push forward ambitiously and assertively to strengthen our legacy as a diverse urban research institution that leaves no stone unturned in seeking to amplify its impact—on scholarship, educational opportunity, and urban civic life.

Our optimism rings through the voices of our university community heard during the listening tour, structured group dialogues, and town hall meetings, echoing, among other sentiments, that “we have not scratched the surface of RU-N’s potential,” and our institutional tag line should be, “inclusive admissions, elite graduates.” At the same time, we are prepared to hold ourselves to account to do much more: “We need a deeper, richer, broader discussion about the meaning of the diversity of our university in relation to the university’s mission. How does it affect our classrooms, our research, our campus life, our relationships to our communities, our societal impact?”

Ultimately, our visioning process has shown that for Rutgers University–Newark, excellence lies at the intersection of commitments to boundary-crossing scholarship, diverse talent cultivation, and engagement as an anchor institution in the world through collaboration—all of which are precisely what the public increasingly is demanding of higher education in the 21st century. We believe that our strategic plan charts the way for us—faculty, staff, students, alumni, and stakeholders—to achieve our potential by leveraging that distinctive excellence, and to do so not by mechanistic implementation, but by mastering improvisation, continuing to listen to each other sensitively as we play the score we’ve composed together. We hope you will join us and play along!

Cordially,

Nancy Cantor  
Chancellor



## Executive Summary

Higher education is being called upon increasingly to fulfill its public mission ensconced more than 150 years ago in the Morrill Acts that established America’s land-grant universities. Now, even more so than then, we rely upon our colleges and universities to be engines of innovation and social mobility as well as educators of our democratic citizenry. We call upon them to think expansively and deeply about the pressing and increasingly interconnected challenges faced in every city, state, and nation; to prepare increasingly diverse generations of students for their roles in the workplaces of a “flat world” and in the many public squares that invigorate democratic dialogue; to partner beyond their gates to magnify societal impact and create two-way streets of access and opportunity.

## Establishing Strategic Priorities

The ambitious agenda we outline here resonates strongly with the historic new vision that the Rutgers-wide strategic plan creates for the system as a whole, particularly the system plan’s integrating themes of *Cultures, Diversity and Inequality—Local and Global, Educating Involved Citizens and Effective Leaders for a Dynamic World, Creative Expression and the Human Experience, Improving the Health and Wellness of Individuals and Populations, and Creating a Sustainable World*. At the same time, the RU-N planning process produced a set of eight strategic priorities that reaffirm RU-N’s identity and accomplishments, establish guideposts for both short- and long-term investments, and reflect our strong consensus and

*We believe that Rutgers University–Newark has been and continues to be a place of courage, well-practiced in examining itself and re-inventing itself to be better, rising to the challenges of ever-changing times.*



Over the course of the spring semester 2014, faculty, staff, students, alumni, and external stakeholders of Rutgers University–Newark (RU-N) wrestled

with these critical mandates and higher education’s abilities to respond, in the context of the Rutgers system strategic planning process under way this year. We at RU-N concluded that our university not only has not flagged in attending effectively to our public mission, but we are ready to do even more to fulfill the public trust we bear to produce high-impact scholarship and prepare students for an increasingly complex world, while living up to our potential as an anchor institution in our metropolitan community whose own true potential is yet to be fully realized.

We believe that Rutgers University–Newark has been and continues to be a place of courage, well-practiced in examining itself and re-inventing itself to be better, rising to the challenges of ever-changing times. Our highly participatory and highly democratic exercise in strategic visioning leaves us tremendously invigorated, recognizing RU-N’s deep and broad value as a place of excellence—a diverse, urban, public research university that is not merely *in*, but *of* its environment.

equally strong desire to have robust ongoing engagement across all stakeholder groups as we work to realize our vision to be a model urban research university serving the public good for the 21st century.

1. **Invest in collaborative academic and research programs** – As an institution that always has been keenly attuned to the fact that the questions and problems of the world are not neatly defined and, therefore, demand approaches that integrate scholarship and teaching across disciplinary boundaries, Rutgers University–Newark places a high priority on increasing cross-unit, cross-sector, and cross-institutional collaboration in academic and research programs.
2. **Invest in our students** – Our distinctive excellence is exemplified by the range and diversity of the life experiences, talents, and aspirations of our undergraduate, graduate, and professional students. Ensuring support for them all along the continuum from recruitment to graduation and career success is mission-critical in this strategic plan.
3. **Invest in our faculty and graduate and professional students** – Strong consensus emerged for: expanding strength in cutting-edge areas; engaging the expertise of professionals; recognizing public scholarship; building a multi-dimensionally diverse faculty; and supporting flexible career trajectories.

4. **Value our professional and support staff as key to our success** – Rutgers University–Newark is fortunate to have a dedicated group of professional and support staff who believe in our mission and share the community-wide commitment to it. Many come from or live in Greater Newark; many have been students here, themselves. We are committed to finding ways to enhance their voice and solicit their guidance in the affairs of the institution.
5. **Invest in the spaces and places where we live, learn, create, and engage the world** – The quality of the built environment impacts so much in the life of an institution. We need to elevate the quality of our campus infrastructure and we must create new spaces and places in which to engage collaboratively with community partners. Both are central to our desire to be an excellent university and a partner in the life of the surrounding community.
6. **Invest in anchor institution collaboration** – Being *of* Newark, not just *in* Newark, emerged as a key element of RU-N’s identity, and enhancing even more our anchor institution agenda is one of the highest priorities emerging from our strategic visioning process. There are five major broad areas that capture much of the scholarly expertise and civic-oriented interests in anchor institution work: K-20 educational pipeline and pathways; strong, healthy, safe neighborhoods; arts and cultural districts and initiatives; regional economic development; and science and the urban environment.
7. **Leverage our diversity and building civic dialogue** – Diversity is an enduring value and practice for RU-N. The strategic planning process pushed for an enhanced and deeper role for diversity in the institution’s work and operations. Diversity enhances excellence of ideas, innovation, learning, teaching, civic dialogue, and engagement. Building on the strong base of diversity of people, RU-N intends to use diversity evermore as a value that creates new knowledge and partnerships in all that we do, including making space for new voices in our anchor institution partnership work.

8. **Tell the Rutgers University–Newark story more effectively** – Communicating effectively is a priority for students, faculty, staff, and stakeholders. Throughout the strategic planning process, building capacity to tell the RU-N story was a common aspiration. The distinctive excellence of Rutgers University–Newark as an institution—our “brand”—must be communicated to all audiences, emphasizing all aspects of our strengths (faculty, students, staff, anchor institution role, and national leadership roles).

## Stepping into Our Future

Our strategic plan for Rutgers University–Newark is not just a statement of our values. It is a plan that will proceed in various modes of action so as to ensure sustained engagement of students, faculty, staff, and stakeholders, toward fulfilling this agenda and assessing its progress:

### *Action Mode 1: The Responsibility of Rutgers University–Newark’s leadership*

In the coming months, RU-N leadership will convene their schools, departments, and units to engage in a conversation about the implications of this vision for their work. By thinking through the connection between their unit’s work and this strategic vision, our units will identify specific strategies to enable them to take this work forward creatively and rapidly. In keeping with the cross-cutting theme of

*We need to elevate the quality of our campus infrastructure and we must create new spaces and places in which to engage collaboratively with community partners.*





building bridges and breaking down silos, the leadership will be encouraged to look both within their units for effective ways to implement the vision and across RU-N (and beyond it) to find the appropriate collaborators and to create a community of experts and stakeholders working together on shared initiatives.

#### *Action Mode 2: Strategic seed-grants*

We anticipate an abundance of creative, promising ideas for addressing the priorities articulated in the strategic plan, many of which will require seed funding. To provide a fair mechanism for evaluating these opportunities, the Office of the Chancellor and the Newark Faculty Council will work together to appoint a standing Strategic Seed-Grant Committee comprising faculty, staff, and students. The committee will compose a Request for Proposals including the following criteria for funding: cross-cutting—proposals must address one or more of the priorities articulated in this strategic plan; sustainability—provide a plan for long-term funding; bridge building—involve multiple units; and innovation—create something new and different. A competitive advantage will be given to proposals that integrate one or more of our existing centers or institutes or programs, and/or provide support for graduate and professional fellows.

#### *Action Mode 3: Creating a sustained understanding of the challenge we face*

The strategic visioning process establishes a solid base to build on the strengths of RU-N while looking to the future. Four study groups will be formed, consisting of our various stakeholders, students, faculty, staff, and others to build out this strategic vision: supporting an exceptional faculty for RU-N; staffing for the new mission; optimizing an anchor institution; and leveraging diversity. The study groups will begin work in fall 2014, and will report on progress by mid-spring 2015, with “final reports” by fall 2015. Study group recommendations will be reviewed and implemented where feasible, but the accountability process will continue with

periodic reviews by the RU-N community for relevance and impact.

#### *Action Mode 4: Cross-Cutting initiatives – taking a big step forward*

Even as we move forward with unit plans, seed grants, and study groups, we also want to put a stake in the ground for a special initiative that addresses a cross-cutting set of this vision’s priorities and involves multiple interventions, leaders, and units at RU-N. We propose to begin intensive and extensive conversations about the feasibility of designing and supporting a residential honors living-learning community, including a state-of-the-art facility (which might house upwards of 500 first- and second-year students, dining, recreational, and academic space); curricular offerings that center around themes of “Local Citizenship in a Global World;” and increased enrollment of the talented students from Greater Newark, as they live and learn at RU-N with students from all over the world – an education emblematic of our metaphor: “*All roads lead to Newark.*”

### **Assessing Our Excellence and Sharing Our Successes**

In the spirit of keeping this as a living document, we will assess our progress using metrics of fiscal health, operational health, research productivity, educational outcomes, and student satisfaction, as outlined in the Rutgers-wide strategic plan. At the same time, we will monitor our success on an array of measures being developed nationally for diverse, urban anchor institutions, including those that capture inclusive definitions of quality for students, a range of dimensions of productivity and excellence for scholarship, and multi-faceted indicators of societal impact.

*We anticipate an abundance of creative, promising ideas for addressing the priorities articulated in the strategic plan*



Among Rutgers University–Newark’s unique assets is the Institute of Jazz Studies, the world’s foremost jazz archive and research facility.

## Introduction

Prepare students for the world as it will be. Produce scholarship that makes a difference in our city, state, nation, and world. Increase access and affordability for increasingly diverse generations of students. Celebrate staff at all levels for the complex work of keeping the institution focused on its mission. Recognize and reward faculty for the full range of their roles. Get higher education out of its silo through collaborations locally and globally, and break down its silos within.

These are among the most urgent calls to higher education today, according to students, faculty, staff, and stakeholders at Rutgers University–Newark (RU-N). They frame an agenda for the university that became articulated through 90 days of strategic planning discussions during spring 2014, in which the voices of our stakeholders—faculty, staff, students, alumni, and external partners—were heard and engaged



and provided input in intense, cross-unit, cross-constituency dialogues<sup>1</sup> focused on three essential questions:

1. What is higher education being called upon to do right now?
2. What is our story at Rutgers University–Newark?
3. If this is our moment, what shall we do?

Rutgers University–Newark emerges from this intensive process with a robust agenda that responds to pressing global and local challenges. RU-N is a world-class, urban, public research university that is not merely in, but of its environment. In the great city of Newark, New Jersey, the state’s largest and among America’s oldest cities, and its broader metropolitan area, the great challenges facing the nation and around the world increasingly can be found, as can the assets needed to take on those challenges. The Rutgers-Newark community recognizes its location as both a defining influence in its story and a distinctive strength, especially as it serves to attract talent: generations of students hungry for the opportunities afforded by gaining a first-rate

higher education in a major American urban center, faculty who vigorously embrace the opportunity to produce high-impact scholarship, engage the community, and prepare these students for professional success and informed citizenship in an increasingly complex world, and staff committed to advancing an inclusive campus culture focused on excellence.

This document summarizes RU-N’s intensive visioning process, which has yielded a plan that is not so much a blueprint to be exactly executed, as a jazz music score demanding expert technique and synchrony to tightly carry the complex melody while also demanding improvisational



acuity that allows for each voice to be expressed, assuring that the song remains the same, but each rendition reflects its particular ensemble of players. Yet, no matter the particulars of the voices, as Jyl Josephson, faculty co-chair of the Strategic Planning Oversight Committee, describes: “one of the broad themes that has clearly come through in all kinds of venues in this process is that faculty, staff, and students are all deeply committed to Rutgers University–Newark.”

All of this occurred within the context of a Rutgers-wide strategic planning process that aims to unlock the full potential of each of its four constituent units, Rutgers University–New Brunswick, Rutgers University–Newark, Rutgers University–Camden, and Rutgers Biomedical and

Health Sciences. Thus, it is also important to consider how RU-N’s vision (and its implementation plan) fits within the impressive and ambitious road map for a new era of excellence for Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.<sup>2</sup> That plan sets as Rutgers’ aspiration *to be broadly recognized as among the nation’s leading public universities, preeminent in research, excellent in teaching, and committed to community.*

In every way we embrace that aspiration. While investment in research and teaching are, of course, key to our strategic vision, we would emphasize that these are intertwined with the “anchor institution” theme, giving a special and abiding importance to the phrase, “...and committed to community.” Thus, we are profoundly committed to all of these aspects of our mission as an urban research university within Rutgers.

The Rutgers-wide plan goes on to identify a series of five integrating themes and four strategic priorities. Readers of those portions of that document will recognize considerable resonance between the historic new vision it creates for the Rutgers system and the ambitious agenda we have outlined here. We are confident that the priorities we have outlined are not only consistent with the broader agenda announced earlier this year, they manifest that agenda in ways that specifically link to the history and mission of Rutgers University–Newark.

At the risk of stating the obvious, it is worth identifying some of the more cogent connections between the Rutgers system strategic plan and what we are now putting forth as the way in which RU-N contributes to that plan.

Among the *integrating themes*, all of which are represented in our work, several stand out as cornerstones of our identity:

- The theme of *Cultures, Diversity and Inequality—Local and Global* is pivotal at Rutgers–Newark, both as a “reading” of our history and a fundamental aspect of our scholarly, pedagogical, and publicly engaged future. As the title of one of our interdisciplinary centers –

“Migration and the Global City” – suggests, and as the organizing theme for our proposed new living learning community affirms, we believe that we are ideally positioned and located to make great progress in this rich arena.

- Given the way diversity, social impact, and excellence intertwine to form the most energizing aspects of our work, *Educating Involved Citizens and Effective Leaders for a Dynamic World* is easily seen as a guiding idea for RU-N, given that tomorrow’s leaders will live in a world ever less homogenous and ever more challenged by the task of connecting across difference to build community, solve problems, and ensure prosperity.
- The integrating theme of *Creative Expression and the Human Experience* is especially relevant. The Newark within which we build our university is noted for its tapestry of cultures and its voice derived from creative expression. We have created a plan that builds on that central animating identity, ensconced in the title of one of our most important and longest-standing interdisciplinary institutes – The Institute for the Study of Ethnicity, Culture, and the Modern Experience – and propelled in very real terms by our ever-expanding partnerships with the rich array of cultural institutions and community-based arts and cultural organizations in Newark.
- Our science initiatives and action research on community, business, and economic development also link directly to the theme of *Improving the Health and Wellness of Individuals and Populations*, as well as to that of *Creating a Sustainable World*. This anchor institution scholarship and engagement draws on a wide range of expertise at RU-N, from the sciences to our professional schools.

*“Neighbor is not a geographic term. It is a moral concept. It means our collective responsibility for the preservation of man’s dignity and integrity.”*

[Rabbi Joachim Prinz, Congregation B’nai Abraham, Newark, from his speech at the March on Washington, August 28, 1963]



Leaders of the historic 1963 March on Washington, including Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (third from left) and Newark Rabbi Joachim Prinz (fifth from left), meet with President John F. Kennedy. (Photo credit: National Archives)



The four *strategic priorities* for the Rutgers-wide strategic plan are mirrored in our work, as well. Indeed, the first three – focusing on *Tomorrow’s University*, *Faculty Excellence*, and the *Student Experience* are given very specific meaning in our vision, even as we also take part in the initiatives presented in President Robert Barchi’s *Initiatives for the First 100 Days of the Strategic Plan*. Complementing those investments, we will be investing in specific initiatives central to our vision, such as advancing the value of our faculty’s publicly engaged scholarship and establishing a focus on access-affordability-success for our students. These Rutgers University–Newark investments will support not only the Rutgers strategic priorities internally, but also provide demonstrable evidence of how we serve an ever-increasing variety of New Jersey’s pressing needs and cherished aspirations.

The fourth priority, *Enhance our Public Prominence*, is strongly advanced in our vision for Rutgers University–Newark. We seek no less than to become the very embodiment of the aspiration: a great urban university noted for the quality of its research, the diversity of its graduates, and the broad community impact of its presence as an anchor institution.

## 1. What is higher education being called upon to do right now?

Higher education’s impact on individual and collective prosperity has never been greater. At the dawn of World War II, merely 4.6 percent of Americans 25 years old or higher had completed four or more years of college; today that percentage has grown almost tenfold. As different as the nation is now compared to then, so too has higher education become increasingly important as a mechanism of social mobility for individuals and a driver of economic growth for us collectively.

As these stakes have risen dramatically, so have the stakes for colleges and universities to respond to changes in our rapidly shifting landscape with increasing speed and agility, to educate people and find answers for a world defined by our constant transcendence of boundaries—across countries and cultures, social hierarchies, natural and physical frontiers, philosophies and psychological constructs, time, and space. There is an increasing sense of urgency for humanity to fully exercise its capacity to do good in the world—from cracking the code on life-threatening diseases and finding sustainable ways of living on our planet to stimulating meaningful and rewarding employment opportunities for all and bringing peace and justice to people suffering locally and globally. But symptomatic of so many institutions today, attempts to unlock the capacity of our colleges and universities too often

are thwarted by outmoded traditions, rigid organizational structures, and anachronistic conceptions of problem solving that frustrate our best intentions. This is nowhere more frustrating than in metropolitan America, where 80 percent of our population already live, but where educational opportunity remains disproportionately and tragically scarce, especially among those already disadvantaged in achieving social mobility—first-generation, minority (soon to be majority), and poor Americans frequently clustered in under-resourced urban school districts. It can be overwhelming to even think about how to begin to encourage change.

And yet, there are promising efforts to rethink higher education’s role today and we can draw inspiration as we set about the hard work of reinventing ourselves “for the times that are emerging instead of the times that have passed,” as the Kellogg Commission put it 15 years ago.<sup>3</sup> The National Science Foundation, for example, is investing significantly to move academic science toward more systematically realizing its potential to make an impact on society, using what it calls “Broader Impact” evaluative criteria in the merit review process, a central aspect of which is recognizing the need to be “Broadly Inclusive—seeking and including contributions from all sources while reaching out, especially to groups that are underrepresented, serving scientists, engineers, educators, students, and the public across the nation, and exploring opportunities for partnerships, both nationally and internationally.”<sup>4</sup>

Likewise, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences calls upon colleges and universities to address the need for education that transcends traditional boundaries by promoting “greater integration across curricular domains,”



Rutgers University–Newark’s debate team is the reigning champion of the Northeast and includes a previous individual national champion.



“experimenting with new interdisciplinary majors,” “promoting humanities and social science opportunities for students whose major attention is elsewhere,” and cultivating “interdisciplinary research centers, which often stand at the crossroads of the arts and sciences.”<sup>5</sup>

Another promising direction for achieving integration across disciplines while modeling democratic practice is through promoting and rewarding public scholarship, which the national consortium Imagining America: Artists and Scholars in Public Life defines as “scholarly or creative activity integral to a faculty member’s academic area. It encompasses different forms of making knowledge ‘about, for, and with’ diverse publics and communities. Through a coherent, purposeful sequence of activities, it contributes to the public good and yields artifacts of public and intellectual value.”<sup>6</sup> Among the benefits of such academic work is that it broadens the pool of expertise brought to bear on problem solving, bringing faculty and students together with professionals, businesspeople, public servants, and everyday citizens from diverse backgrounds whose collective experiences and insights increase the chances of finding creative and effective solutions to what may appear to be intractable problems, as documented by the work of Scott Page, director of the Center for the Study of Complex Systems at the University of Michigan.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, not only can this kind of cross-sector, collaborative problem solving yield better scholarship, but it enables faculty to create learning environments where their students gain invaluable experience in testing their knowledge in the messy conditions of the world and navigating difference as they learn to work productively in teams with people from diverse backgrounds—all skills that employers consistently say they expect to see in college graduates.<sup>8</sup>

Joyous members of the RU-N class of 2014 celebrate outside the Prudential Center following the university’s first multi-college commencement.



## What is higher education being called upon to do?

*Put scholarship in action by bringing expertise to and also from the community!*

*Excellence is often relegated to the three university-defined categories of teaching, scholarship, service, meaning community involvement. There has to be an inherent integration of the three.*

*Universities must also focus on generating, teaching, and transmitting knowledge and innovation in ways that make the world a better place for everyone.*

*The best universities create local to global connections that expand socially relevant scholarship.*

*We need to eliminate the perceived division between the high standard of scholarship and of community engagement. They need to be in constant conversation.*

*Higher education is a provider of social mobility.*

*Higher education has not communicated with the world well enough about how it prepares student for life after graduation.*

*A role of higher education is to teach the value of difference.*

*Teachers must be empowering. Teachers must be available. Teachers must be content experts and educator experts.*

[Notes from student, faculty, and staff comments in charrettes.]

While college always has been a place that pushes the boundaries of knowledge and lifts the human spirit, attentiveness to what the noted scholar Charles Linblom called “usable knowledge” is essential because of the role of educational opportunity in ensuring social mobility.<sup>9</sup> This is especially true as economic inequality has been increasing, exacerbating educational inequalities and problems of ethnic and racial isolation, in the context of shifting patterns of migration. As the Obama White House commented:

Earning a postsecondary degree or credential is no longer just a pathway to opportunity for a talented few; rather, it is a prerequisite for the growing jobs of the new economy. Over this decade, employment in jobs requiring education beyond a high school diploma will grow more rapidly than employment in jobs that do not; of the 30 fastest growing occupations, more than half require postsecondary education. With the average earnings of college graduates at a level that is twice as high as that of workers with only a high school diploma, higher education is now the clearest pathway into the middle class.<sup>10</sup>

By increasing access to and affordability of higher education, we can extend educational opportunity across groups for whom it is too often in short supply, including African Americans (particularly men), Latinos, Native Americans, veterans, individuals who have been incarcerated, and the most recent arrivals to our nation who, just as many generations before them, have come looking for the American dream. The need to achieve these goals is especially acute in Greater Newark, which is among the urban metropolitan regions that always have served as a gateway for new arrivals, documented and undocumented. As the Immigration Policy Center notes about New Jersey, for example:

Immigrants, Latinos, and Asians account for large and growing shares of the economy and electorate in New Jersey. Immigrants (the foreign-born) make up 1 in 5 Garden Staters, and half of them are naturalized U.S.

citizens who are eligible to vote. “New Americans”—immigrants and the children of immigrants—account for 18.8 percent of all registered voters in the state. Moreover, Latinos and Asians (both foreign-born and native-born) wield \$87.7 billion in consumer purchasing power, and the businesses they own had sales and receipts of \$40.1 billion and employed more than 160,000 people at last count. Immigrant workers contributed at least \$47 billion to the state economy in 2006. At a time when the economy is still recovering, New Jersey can ill-afford to alienate such a critical component of its labor force, tax base, and business community.<sup>11</sup>

A pivotal aspect of increasing access and affordability for all groups is multiplying and broadening the educational pathways leading to higher education, which has been identified as a national priority in a number of major reports issued in recent years.<sup>12</sup> This requires building stronger connections across the complete educational pipeline from pre-K through graduate school, including a focus on graduate and professional degree recipients who constitute the future professoriate. This demands particular emphasis on the need for direct collaboration among K-12, vocational programs, community colleges, and four-year institutions. It behooves us to do better at interesting a wider range of young students in subject matter areas like science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), as well as improving our understanding of how to recognize talent and potential in young people, a vital task that is at the base of the College Board’s new, multi-faceted project involving not only the redesign of the SAT exams, but a range of new programs that they are creating to increase educational opportunity.<sup>13</sup> That work is informed by the successful track record of national organizations such as the Posse Foundation in developing and applying innovative indicators of success in higher education and constructing multi-stage programs to increase recruitment, retention, and graduation rates.<sup>14</sup> As Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Tina Rosenberg put it:

The Posse program reveals the poverty of the conventional wisdom governing academic success.

*“If we want America to invest in science, in human capital, in communities, in education, we need to create a community of experts which can move away from the old ivory towers...”*

*“We need to be what we say we should be, to move real knowledge forward and practice democracy in action.”*

*“Higher education at its best, bridges the divide of place and people.”*

[Comments from participants in RU-N Advisory Board Retreat, March 21, 2014]

Our rules for college admission, and ideas about college achievement, are linear, but in reality, college achievement is complex. The factors are much more diverse than our educational system is built to accommodate. So are the people who succeed.<sup>15</sup>

The centrality of higher education to individual and collective success is seen most vividly in the places that colleges and universities call home, where they are anchor institutions, place-based organizations that persist in communities over generations, serving as social glue and economic engines.<sup>16</sup> With the vast majority of our population living in metropolitan areas, the greatest challenges we face increasingly are found there, making it critical to the prosperity of our cities, their regions, and our nation that urban universities fulfill their potential as anchor institutions. This role for universities harkens back more than 150 years to the public mission ascribed to higher education in the Morrill Acts of the 19th century, but the stakes for colleges and universities to fulfill this role are the highest they ever have been, which has been underlined by the work of major national think tanks, agencies, and organizations from the Brookings Institution, Kettering Foundation, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to the Department of Education and Social Science Research Council.

We are called upon today to be effective conveners and partnership builders, bringing the interests of our communities into focus for collective action, contributing to and

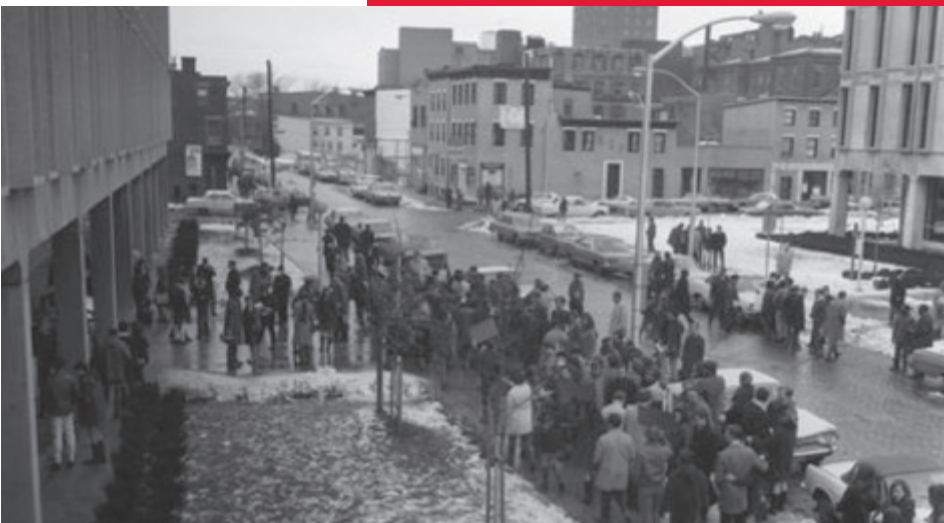
catalyzing the development of intellectual, human, and social capital as part of wide-ranging and diverse communities of experts drawing people together across sectors, public and private, government, industry, and civil society to re-chart our future.<sup>17</sup> This includes making wise choices in decisions that have ripple effects in our local and regional economies, from employment and purchasing to real estate development and design.<sup>18</sup> And it requires the commitment of leadership, staff, faculty, and students acting as true partners and active agents for change locally that resonates nationally and globally, while rising to the challenge to build an “architecture of inclusion” to facilitate achieving the full participation of our magnificently diverse talent pool.<sup>19</sup>

## 2. What is our story at Rutgers University–Newark?

From its founding more than 100 years ago, the story of Rutgers University–Newark has been written through its roles as a generator of knowledge and innovation that are deeply connected to the challenges of the world, especially those of its metropolitan environment; a gateway of

*“The Conklin Hall takeover really looms in my mind as the watershed event that transformed this campus to what it is today. Those courageous young men and women couldn’t possibly have imagined the chain of events that they would set into motion, or the transformation that they would bring about through their efforts to correct a profound injustice on this campus.”*

- Former RU-N Chancellor Steven J. Diner



University Avenue sidewalk scene during the student takeover of Conklin Hall (far left) in 1969.

educational opportunity and an engine of social mobility for the full diversity of New Jersey's population, the richest tapestry of people one can imagine; and an anchor institution that interweaves its strengths with those of public, private, and nonprofit sector partners to strengthen the social and economic fabric of its city, region, and state.<sup>20</sup> In short, Rutgers University–Newark's history, strengths, and ethos position it perfectly to respond directly and effectively to the urgent needs that the world is calling upon higher education to meet.

Perhaps most importantly, Rutgers University–Newark has been and we believe continues to be a place of courage, examining itself and re-inventing itself to be better. In this regard, no narrative about who we are can proceed without discussing the Conklin Hall takeover.<sup>21</sup> It is the story of a few students who opened doors for the many to come.<sup>22</sup> Today, we are on the eve of the 45th anniversary of that pivotal event in 1969, following the civil rebellions in Newark, in which a group of black students occupied the Conklin Hall building on campus and demanded transformative changes in admissions and the hiring of black faculty and other faculty of color and created a new history for this campus grounded in social justice.<sup>23</sup> Today, we are a profoundly different institution, as Conklin has come to represent the gateway to opportunity for RU-N. Indeed, it is a part of the continuing 100 years story of Rutgers Newark as continually being “reborn,” guided by the transformative leadership of Norman Samuels and Steven Diner, as a place that is pursuing a vigorous commitment to diversity, public service,

and excellence, the true foundation of American democracy. Our fidelity to this legacy is evident in our student body today, as we are no longer a predominantly white institution, with 18 percent African Americans, 23 percent Asian Americans, and 22 percent Latino/as among 7,600 undergraduates. And it is in the traditions of this history, and the possibilities it demonstrates, that we shape this strategic plan, including a particular commitment to the people and the neighborhoods of Greater Newark.

### *Excellence through Boundary Crossing: Scholarship, Generations, Place*

Throughout the strategic planning process, faculty, students, staff, and stakeholders identified the distinctive excellence of our scholarship as being at the core of our identity, characterized not only in popular terms, but in terms of its inventiveness in drawing together ideas across disciplines, expertise across the professions, and collaborators across institutions and across sectors. Already evident in the multi-disciplinary collection of colleges that coalesced to become the University of Newark in the earliest phases of our history, this strength has been cultivated over the past century by creating synergies among different units across the arts, humanities, sciences, and the professions. It is embodied today in our signature interdisciplinary centers and institutes, where the messy problems of the world are taken on, as they are found in real life; among the many such places at RU-N are the Cornwall Center for Metropolitan Studies; Institute on Ethnicity, Culture, and the Modern Experience; Center for Urban Entrepreneurship and Economic Development;

*The phrase Newark is a 'gold mine' of opportunity ...gives me a strong feeling of the potential of Newark, the sense – promise – that we are on the precipice of a new era; the feeling that we are on the brink of something important. There are 'gems' hidden here.*

*The general feeling was that we have not scratched the surface of RU-N's potential. Change is upon us and we must seize the moment. We all must be active participants in finding solutions, to be forward thinking, not negative.*

*We must think boldly about the future; engage in self-study and inform ourselves about what other people are doing here that is working.*

*RU-N is in an urban setting, comprised of a diverse population, of a “manageable” size, with a faculty committed to both research and teaching. It is also a focus for social mobility, and a place where faculty and staff can make a difference.*

[Notes from student, faculty, and staff comments in charrettes.]



Institute of Jazz Studies; National Center for Public Performance/E-Governance Institute; Center on Public Security; Center for Molecular and Behavioral Neuroscience; and Center on Law in Metropolitan Equity as well as in the broad range of clinical programs in the School of Law–Newark, from child advocacy, civil justice, intellectual property, and international human rights, to the Health, Education, Advocacy & Law (HEAL) Collaborative.

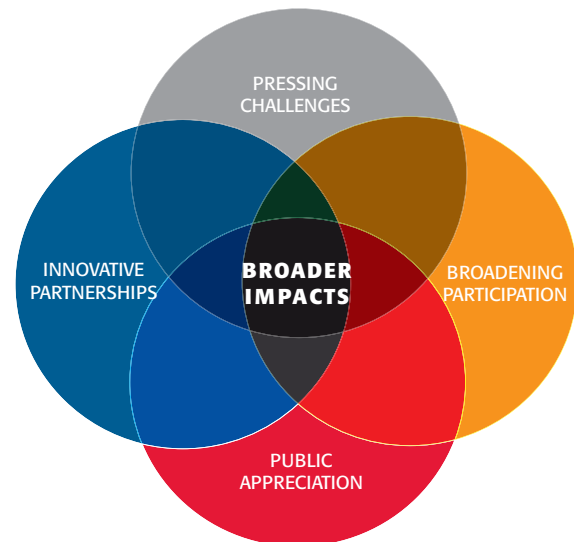
Our growth, effectiveness, and reach as a major, urban research university adept at connecting the dots across boundaries—and our aspirations to excel further as such—have been enhanced through our close proximity to and working partnerships with other research institutions, including Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences (RBHS) and the New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT). Even more so, being an integral part of The State University of New Jersey, with its broad array of research-focused disciplines and associated infrastructure—physical, technical, and library, among others—has increased our scholarly capacities and elevated the visibility of our work, at the same time contributing significantly to the growth, development, comprehensiveness, and quality of the Rutgers University system. Ultimately, our scholarly excellence is embodied in our faculty members, who dedicate their lives to being first-rate scholars sharing a profound commitment to advancing our understanding of the physical and social worlds, as well as a commitment to working in our classrooms, studios, labs, and sites across our community and the world to cultivate that understanding in succeeding generations of students who are hungry for educational opportunity—a student body widely recognized as the most diverse such body at a research university in the United States.

Our graduate students, whether preparing to launch professional or academic careers, deftly navigate this intersection of scholarship, learning, and leadership. Empowered by our outstanding and engaged faculty and by our location in the largest metropolitan region in the nation, they find at Rutgers University–Newark an extraordinarily diverse set of high-quality graduate programs. Rutgers School of Law–Newark has been the state of New Jersey’s leading legal educator since its founding in 1908. Our graduate programs in public administration and criminal justice stand among the best in their fields. In addition to the leading public MBA program in the New York metropolitan region and the largest doctoral program in any public university in the nation, the business school offers a range of specialty master’s programs; its online program in governmental accounting is helping raise standards of accountability in local governments across the nation. Outstanding graduate programs in the sciences

and humanities cover traditional disciplines and branch to cross-cutting programs in creative writing, American studies, neuroscience, jazz history, and peace and conflict studies. These programs literally bring the world to Rutgers University–Newark—a parade of leaders from business, academia, government, and the professions, whose engagement enriches not only the academic seminars held by faculty and graduate students but also the opportunities for mentoring and learning available to our undergraduates.

It is no coincidence, then, that so often our faculty, joined

### Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) SUCCESS



by their graduate and professional students, achieve in their scholarship and creativity what is effectively a double bottom line—what the National Science Foundation, for example, would consider broader impacts, the advancement of scientific knowledge and activities that contribute to the achievement of societally relevant outcomes. Vivid illustrations include groundbreaking research by faculty members at the Center for Molecular and Behavioral Neuroscience who partner with numerous organizations across Newark to study how to reduce the incidence of Alzheimer’s disease among African Americans, and the research of faculty from our Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences on the transport of harmful chemicals through soils in the New Jersey Meadowlands. It also is no coincidence that our faculty is leveraging the exceptional diversity of our student body to encourage a wider range of people participating in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, which is considered among the highest of national priorities for education at all levels. In fact, these goals of broader impact and broader participation

go hand in hand with the growth of excellence in our STEM departments and research laboratories. We see this in so many instances, as when our biologists take our students with them as they trace the shifting roles of insects in our urban ecosystem, as the faculty of our highly regarded neuroscience program brings students onto their lab staffs through summer research experience programs, and as the faculty of our Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences—whose national reputation is strengthening rapidly—provides close mentoring and professional development for their doctoral students, whose diversity far exceeds national averages. Not surprisingly, we also see it in our graduate students when they ply the nexus of disciplines to explore connections in burgeoning areas of research from autism to electronic commerce.

Indeed, it is in these kinds of vital connections between our faculty and our students—where excellence tested meets excellence emerging—where we find what truly distinguishes Rutgers University–Newark. How many first-rate American research universities are there where the student body has no ethnic or racial majority group, where so many students are first-generation college-going, where half the undergraduates are Pell-eligible, where the vast majority of students commute to campus from communities across the state, many working while enrolled, and where classes may have 17 different native languages spoken among 40 students? This is a university where sacrifice for the sake of earning a degree is lived day in and day out by many students and their families, and educational opportunity is preciously guarded, not to be taken for granted. This combination of characteristics fuels in

our students a palpable drive to excel, leading one campus community member to suggest during a charrette that we adopt the tag line: “Inclusive admissions; elite graduates.”

*We are the premiere urban institution for opportunity.*

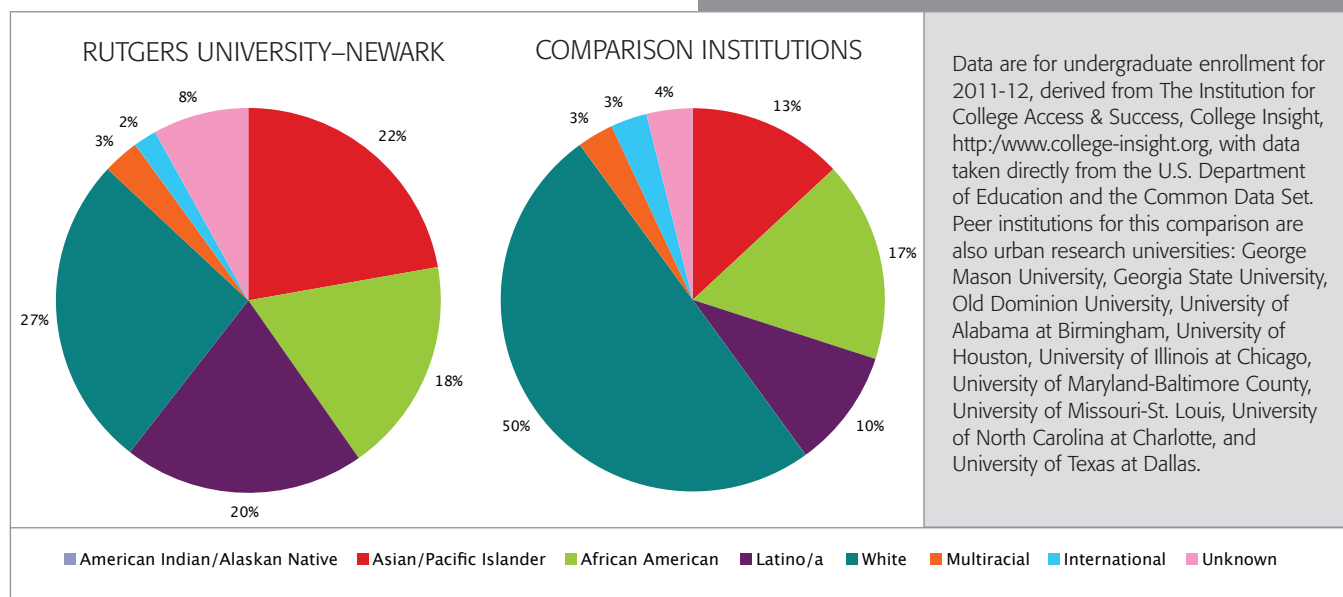
*The diversity of Rutgers Newark must be made a part of the public conscience; that's the real strength of the RU-N story.*

*Rutgers-Newark campus—a migratory hub that has been designated the most diverse national university in the United States for the past 16 years by U.S. News & World Report.*

*We offer the city, state and the world an incredible diversity that will generate more innovation, more creativity, more engagement, and more scholarship in real world time.*

*The immigrant communities that created Newark's past, and the immigrant communities represented by the university's student body, will, together, shape the future of the city and the state.*

[Notes of student, faculty, and staff comments in charrettes.]



It also fuels intense interest among our students in testing their knowledge in the world as soon as they can, and not having to wait until they graduate to make an impact with what they know. For example, in roundtable discussions among students participating in a donor “thank you” event, every one of them spoke vividly of the challenges and rewards of such work, whether as an intern at a major accounting firm, a chemistry lab assistant on a team seeking to improve the effectiveness of cancer-fighting drugs, or a legal intern helping newly arrived immigrants navigate the process of seeking citizenship.

Faculty and students alike speak of the transformative effects—socially and intellectually—of this extraordinary diversity and determination. One faculty member captured a frequently expressed sentiment of her colleagues when she said at a listening tour session that unforeseen turns in classroom discussion arise regularly from the widely varied perspectives of her students, on many occasions serving as a source of new questions and insights to explore in her scholarship. Likewise, numerous students who spoke up at listening tour sessions and in strategic planning charrettes cited revelations they’ve had in understanding course material because of ideas shared by fellow students in and out of class coming from perspectives they hadn’t considered before. It is in commonly echoed remarks such as these that we begin to understand the degree to which RU-N’s remarkable diversity is much more than “a feel-good slogan,” as students, faculty, and staff members pointed out in town hall meetings this spring, it profoundly improves scholarship and learning.

Something about this exceptionally fertile intellectual environment also predisposes us to focus our gaze outward

beyond the boundaries of our university as we consider the questions and challenges to which we will turn our attention. This impulse surely is explained in part by the proclivities that we—faculty, students, and staff—bring with us that drive us to work hard to make a difference in the world. But it surely also has something to do with the connections we build to each other as we spend time together in this place—a sense of caring we develop as we come to empathize with and understand each other and the circumstances and places from which we come. It is striking that so often throughout the strategic planning process so many faculty and staff shared publicly (in listening tour sessions, charrettes, and town hall meetings, or in sidebar conversations) that they, just as many of our students, were first-generation college-going, from modest circumstances, not long removed from the generation of their family that immigrated to the United States, and worked very hard to get by while instilling in the next generation the paramount value of education. Perhaps this is what happens when so many people from different backgrounds—no group dominant in number—come together in what the philosopher of education John Dewey called “a mode of associated living; of conjoint communicated experience”—in a word: democracy.<sup>24</sup>

Perhaps it is also because when we look out at the city of Newark, each of us can see in it at least a little bit of ourselves and the places from which we come. In this sense, we testify to the words of Clement A. Price: “all roads lead to Newark.” Further, we all want Newark to excel as a city and region—and we believe it will and we want to be a part of bringing that to fruition. We know that as a university, we are not just in Newark, but *of* Newark. This is what compels so many of us to focus at least some part of our capacities on Newark, which we see happening in myriad ways across campus, including: the Cornwall Center facilitating the Newark City of Learning Collaborative, a cross-sector partnership to significantly raise postsecondary educational attainment in Greater Newark; the creation, under the leadership of Chancellor Diner, of the Office of University Community Partnerships, embodying RU-N’s first institutionalized efforts to broker connections between the university and Greater Newark communities, addressing critical needs across the age spectrum from early literacy to teen parenting to healthy aging, among others; faculty from supply chain management collaborating with local industries and agencies as well as the Brookings Institution to document the robustness and still untapped potential in Newark’s manufacturing sector; criminal justice and policing experts working with law enforcement at all levels to improve safety and security in Newark; law faculty and students advocating for local families struggling to assure that their children with

*The RU Ready program enabled me to think about college when I didn’t have anyone else encouraging me.*

*Coming to Rutgers was a first for me: first in my family to go to college, first job I ever had, first internship, first time I thought I could believe in me. That’s what college access is about.*

*I want to positively affect the lives of people who look like me and remind me of my family.*

[Comments from students in charrettes and town hall meetings.]

disabilities have access to the supports needed for them to succeed in school; faculty, staff, and students working on the Promise Neighborhood project with community-based organizations to build comprehensive support networks for families in Newark’s most challenged neighborhoods; public management experts developing a mobile app to help local government be more responsive and keep citizens informed about services available to them; scholars of urban entrepreneurship advising local startups to launch, revitalizing downtown; artists and humanists helping our students whose families are among the newest Americans in the area develop their voices as future artists, scholars, or professionals; and the Institute on Ethnicity, Culture, and the Modern Experience annually conducting Newark’s longest running civic ritual—the Marion Thompson Wright public lectures. And there are so many more ongoing examples of close, reciprocal partnerships and collaborations that create social impact, involve community-based learning experiences, and redound to the immense benefit of our research and the education of our students.

None of these would be possible without a deeply dedicated cadre of professional and support staff, who shares the faculty’s commitment to and affinity for our mission, who commonly come from or live in Greater Newark, who, in many cases, are or have been students here, themselves, and who bring their knowledge and experience to work every day. This is evident in myriad ways when our staff: work with community educators and nonprofits to inspire local

youth to excel and stay on track for college; build new supply chains of goods and services procured from local vendors; tend to universitywide efforts to embrace sustainable practices and beautify our campus; conduct a summit for hundreds of local LGBTQA-identified high school students to exchange stories and thus make visible their narratives; or lead winter break trips for students to work with local residents and NGOs in Central America on health care infrastructure projects. Whether near to home or far away, the resonance of these experiences with experiences in the global city that is Newark and the multi-cultural community that is Rutgers University–Newark strengthens their impact all the more.

All of these elements and influences define what “excellence” means for us at Rutgers University–Newark. We are scholars, teachers, staff, and administrators on a mission to serve the public good by playing our part in advancing knowledge and educating the magnificently diverse next generation of



The 2014 Marion Thompson Wright Lecture, themed “Tending the Light: Community Organizing and the Modern Civil Rights Movement,” commemorated the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mississippi Freedom Summer and the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

*Newark is the cultural capital of New Jersey.*

*The unique location of this institution allows us to be different, let's use this.*

*More opportunities here than anywhere else because location, location, location.*

*Rutgers University–Newark’s strongest resource IS Newark.*

*Newark has a vibrant arts and culture framework. The urban setting makes it easier to have partnerships and coalitions. We are an influencer in this community and we need to take on the responsibility.*

[Notes of student, faculty, and staff comments in charrettes.]



students who are absolutely brimming with talent, intellect, energy, and potential. We know that we do all of this more effectively when we do it together with partners from across the public, private, and nonprofit sectors—eschewing the traditional higher education “cult of the expert” for “communities of experts”—because that diversity of perspectives yields better results. We see our students as the future leaders in industry, academia, government, the sciences and culture—and, equally important, as informed and engaged citizens. For us, diversity is not just a happenstance of our situation; it is a defining element of our identity and a purposeful and central aim of our work. We see ourselves as both representing and embracing the richness and complexity of today’s world. For, on one hand, this is a world defined by increasingly “borderless” activities connected through technology, a global economy, and migration. On the other hand, we live in a world deeply divided and in some peril over inter-ethnic, national, religious, racial, and other cultural conflicts. Therefore, it is the task of a great urban research university not to shy away from but rather to be fully in and of that world—and this vision is intended to build upon the traditions and assets of Rutgers–Newark to do just that in our next steps forward.

### 3. If this is our moment, what shall we do?

The answers to the first two questions that helped guide our strategic planning process leave absolutely no doubt in our minds that this is our moment at Rutgers University–Newark. We not only have the right set of intellectual, social, and human capital assets and characteristics—including the right location—to be even more forcefully a leading exemplar anchor institution, but we are at precisely the right moment developmentally. The Rutgers system has reached a milestone in its evolution, intensively reinventing itself today for the times ahead, a fundamental aspect of which is facilitating the fulsome development of its three constituent universities and health sciences system.

This is a heady realization for us, and while we know that there is much work to be done and we must get down to it immediately, our strategic planning process was designed

to give us the time to gather input as democratically and thoroughly as possible. At the outset, Chancellor Nancy Cantor and Provost Todd Clear engaged the Newark Faculty Council (NFC), soliciting a representative of the group to co-chair the Strategic Planning Oversight Committee that would guide the process. Concurrently, the NFC’s own ad hoc committee formulated independent recommendations from the council’s perspective, which joined the streams of input from the other methods of stakeholder engagement. Ultimately, the process provided for voices of every constituency internal and external to the university to contribute.

It was a messy process at times, as democracy is, but across modes of engagement it yielded remarkable consonance of purpose. One theme that emerged very quickly was to resolve that our strategic plan should not be constructed in a way that will make it prone to mechanistic implementation—a characteristic that our campus community widely criticized as too often a result of traditional strategic plans. There was broad consensus that ours should be conceived as a living document, outlining shared principles and priorities for how to invest our intellectual, human, and social capital. As a first principle, then, **we resolve to establish mechanisms for robust ongoing engagement across all stakeholder groups to allow for adapting our activities as needed to accelerate us along our trajectory, while also assuring transparency and inclusiveness in this democratic practice.**

Another crucial theme that emerged was that where traditional silos, whether ensconced organizationally or codified culturally in the university, present impediments to realizing our potential, they must be broken down. In our charrettes, in particular, “silo-busting” was a prevalent response to the question, “If this is our moment, what shall we do?” Consequently, we are establishing an operational principle that **in all areas of our work moving forward, we will seek to build bridges and other connectors that bring the members of our multiple communities together and break silos and siloed behaviors that threaten our ability to realize our vision to be nimble and agile in responding to the evolving needs of our city, state, nation, and world.**

*Rutgers University–Newark “should serve the surrounding urban population – educating its students and benefiting its needs. It should be a force for upward mobility for students at all levels: undergraduate, graduate, and professional.”*

[Newark Faculty Council Ad Hoc Committee on Implementation, 2014]

The inadequacy of metrics for evaluating effectiveness of an institution like ours was another key theme, leading us to adopt the principle going forward that **we will develop and implement metrics calibrated to our values as a major, urban research university that embraces its public mission.** We know that creating new metrics will present significant challenges of its own because in some key areas, such as evaluating the potential of prospective students and the accomplishments of faculty members, traditional metrics too often are superficial proxies that have been adopted out of convenience rather than the methodological rigor required to align measures of excellence with fundamental educational and developmental values.

With these principles in mind, we are able to articulate a set of priorities reflecting themes that emerged powerfully across constituencies and modes of engagement in our strategic planning process. Our priorities will serve as guideposts for Rutgers University–Newark in our daily work to realize our vision to be a model urban research university for the 21st century, serving the public good by generating first-rate scholarship that takes on the great questions and challenges

of the world and in the process educating students who embody the full participation of our diverse populace and who are prepared for engaged citizenship in an inexorably urbanizing world. Our priorities also will guide strategic plans for short- and long-term investments to be made across the university, which will be described in section 4, all of which will be oriented toward achievement of that vision.

Rutgers University–Newark  
at the center of New  
Jersey's largest city.



## Strategic Priorities

### 1. Invest in collaboration in academic and research programs

As an institution that always has been keenly attuned to the fact that the questions and problems of the world are not neatly defined and, therefore, demand approaches that integrate scholarship and teaching across disciplinary boundaries, Rutgers University–Newark places a high priority on increasing cross-unit collaboration in academic and research programs. We eagerly embrace the challenge to think and act in ways that cut across traditional boundaries, fully recognizing that high-impact scholarship often requires cross-disciplinary engagement, that the workforce needs people with both broad and deep skill sets, and that informed and engaged citizenship increasingly demands critical thinking across fields regardless of profession. We also know that we live in a world defined by geographic mobility and the technological ability to make distanced connections, and the facility to learn and work in such a distributed environment will therefore be critical to the re-invention of higher education moving forward. For example, the Rutgers Business School is a two-location program, housed in Newark but with a new building in Piscataway; many of its faculty members teach in both locations and it enrolls students in both. We are currently working to merge the law schools in Newark and Camden into a single Rutgers University School of Law, with students slated

to take classes in both locations. And there already are precedents for both joint academic programs and scholarly/ research collaborations that cross institutional boundaries of RU-N, Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences (RBHS), and New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) that can be enhanced—joint master’s degrees between School of Public Affairs and Administration (SPAA) and RBHS, federated departments such as history and biology, and programs such as theater with NJIT, as examples of the former, and research collaborations such as the Rutgers University Brain Imaging Center, as an example of the latter. Our faculty are eagerly participating in the proposals for interdisciplinary symposia and courses and cross-location core facilities initiated by the 100-Day Initiatives in Rutgers’ system-wide strategic plan. These can serve as models for future development, explored and selected through a request for proposal (RFP) process that would “encourage our faculty and campus constituents to propose specific, detailed innovative interdisciplinary plans,” as the Newark Faculty Council’s ad hoc committee has suggested. Such new investments might find precedents in the following.

- **Boundary-crossing scholarly initiatives** that transcend departments, disciplines, colleges, and external stakeholders long have been powerful catalysts for RU-N faculty and students to engage globally important ideas and problems. One need only look at



Rutgers Business School–Newark and New Brunswick’s home in Newark (at right) is in a prime location on the city’s main thoroughfare, Broad Street, adjacent to the historic Newark Public Library and two doors down from 15 Washington Street, soon to be renovated as an RU-N residence hall.

*The Newark Faculty Council suggests leveraging RU-N’s strengths as the nation’s most diverse research university, our broad and deep representation of nationalities, and our location embedded in the iconic American city of Newark. An interdisciplinary Urban Civic Initiative aimed at analyzing what Newark can learn from international cities, and vice versa, might be such a vehicle.*

[Based on an example from the Newark Faculty Council.]



our centers and institutes to see this, prompting a recent proposal, for example, to form a consortium of scholarly activity across the humanities and social sciences. Indeed, similar synergies will be achieved in the sciences when our new Life Sciences Center II literally connects, by a series of bridges, the other science buildings on campus, simultaneously symbolizing and facilitating the collaborations among scientists that push the boundaries of knowledge. The newly funded High-Performance Computing Cluster is poised to spawn new collaborations across theoretical chemistry, neuroscience, and potentially numerous other disciplines that require massively parallel computing capability to analyze large data sets. Another newer initiative that might also serve to ignite innovative collaboration is the Evidence-Based Institute (EBI), a cross-school initiative of the School of Criminal Justice (SCJ) and the Faculty of Arts and Sciences–Newark (FAS-N). Originally wholly located within SCJ, the EBI was founded with start-up funding from the Office of the Attorney General of New Jersey and now is jointly managed as a collaborative applied research operation employing doctoral students from both SCJ and FAS-N. These examples encourage us in the direction of envisioning other areas where investment could yield powerfully agile and flexible new arrangements that leverage seed investment with externally sponsored funding, including collaborations with industry, government, and nonprofit sector partners. Equally encouraging is that our long-standing strength in facilitating this kind of collaborative scholarship is precisely what the National Research Council calls upon all research universities to develop in a new report exhorting universities and funding agencies to break down barriers to such work—an indication that RU-N is ahead of the curve.<sup>25</sup>

- **Cross-disciplinary curricular innovations** take many forms, from integrating electives strategically within a major or minor to creating undergraduate minors or graduate certificate programs, to creating altogether new majors or graduate degree programs. One can readily imagine, then, leveraging RU-N's existing strengths that lend themselves to cross-school/college suites of courses and degree programs at the undergraduate or graduate levels—for example, entrepreneurship and economic development, sustainability studies, study of lives in translation, arts leadership and social change, bio-mathematics, and bioethics were all mentioned in the visioning process—with multiple schools and colleges jointly supporting

them and, perhaps, housing them as universitywide programs. At the same time, excellent examples of pedagogical innovation exist at RU-N that can inspire further creativity by faculty across the university. In Writers at Newark, a multi-faceted ongoing project of the RU-N master of fine arts in creative writing program, our graduate students teach local high school students the work of renowned contemporary writers who speak at RU-N, bringing back to their classrooms and to their own writing new understandings of how youth encounter this work; professors from sociology and English co-taught a course that examined storytelling devices and the representation of urban life in the television drama, *The Wire*, to instigate student reflection on their own stories and experiences; and a School of Criminal Justice professor co-taught a two-semester course with a theater professor titled, *Oral Histories: Narratives of Prison Reform*, in which students interviewed persons with incarceration histories and then created a theater piece and an ad campaign addressing commonly held misperceptions of individuals who have been incarcerated.

There are many other disciplinary intersections at RU-N that are ripe for exploring. For example, a new “Green Lit” course slated to be offered in fall 2014 will bridge the art and science of environmentalism, suggesting many other possibilities to galvanize existing broad interest in environmental issues and sustainability—from the life and physical sciences to the social sciences, humanities, arts, and business—that might be tapped to develop new courses and curricula connecting directly to global challenges manifest on our campus and in our community.

- Likewise, in an era in which we fully expect to see **increased cross-institution collaboration** within the Rutgers system, as well as across institutions co-located in Newark, or around the world, for that matter, it is an opportune time to think beyond our institutional boundaries, tapping research and curricular expertise where it already exists, building new bridges across institutions that will, in turn, build new opportunities for faculty, staff, and students by strengthening our connections to the world. For example, School of Public Affairs and Administration has built strong working, two-way relationships across the levels of city, county, state, federal, and international governments that yield expansive opportunities for study, research, and professional development for students and faculty. Prospectively, the Newark Faculty Council points out that neuroscience is an incontestable strength of



Rutgers University–Newark, a presence which is now complemented by the incorporation of the legacy New Jersey Medical School into Rutgers, with neurologists, psychiatrists and other medical doctors as members of the Rutgers faculty, along with existing Rutgers faculty in the College of Nursing. This provides an opportunity for RU-N to develop a unique, innovative interdisciplinary and collaborative specialty—Clinical Neuroscience (*i.e.*, applying our current basic neuroscience research toward addressing clinical issues). Furthermore, we have major expertise at RU-N for image analysis; the resources of CMBN, Rutgers University Brain Imaging Center (RUBIC), psychology, and biology could integrate with the Center for Information Management, which specializes in image analysis, and the RU-N’s John Cotton Dana Library (digital image storage technology) in collaboration with neurology clinicians, for a uniquely powerful interdisciplinary effort to apply brain image analysis to clinical neurological problems. Such comprehensive basic and applied research collaborations, as this proposed example in clinical neuroscience suggests, hold promise to advance the missions of each institution and unit in ways that none could do on its own.

## 2. Invest in our students

Optimizing the student experience and attuning it to today’s world was identified as a high priority across all constituencies in the strategic planning process. A host of issues connect to this idea: who our students are and what that means for the uniquely contemporary experience of education here; how we recruit students; how we support them institutionally and financially so that they succeed; what makes coming to RU-N a special experience; how to best recognize the career ambitions of our undergraduate, graduate, and professional students in today’s competitive landscape; and how we establish a sustained relationship with our alumni.

- A core strategy for addressing this priority is to show our students and students-to-be how strongly we embrace RU-N’s identity as a world-class urban research university whose remarkably diverse student body defines us as noteworthy. The strategic planning process yielded many suggestions for how we might do this, among them: commission a competition to design RU-N “swag”; produce videos of students, faculty, staff, and alumni telling the stories of how they got to RU-N and what this institution means to them; document the lives of our students who are among the “newest Americans” and whose road to pursuing the 21st century American dream leads through RU-N; and work collaboratively with partners across the city and region to promote a new—often unheard—narrative of Newark that reflects the diverse, hopeful, energetic, and inspiring voices of its people.
- Assuring access to and affordability of a college education is, and will remain, a critical challenge for the nation as a whole, but it is particularly important that we at RU-N succeed in taking this on. Our identity as a powerful engine of social mobility for generations positions us to be a bellwether institution for the country, a place to which higher education leaders and policymakers alike might look to see how successfully America is living up to its promise of genuine educational opportunity in a context of excellence. Among the initiatives already under way that we must consider strengthening are efforts to: get our RU-N story out through more extensive, on the ground, recruitment; expand enrollment of students from urban schools in the Greater Newark metropolitan area, as well as provide more support for residential opportunities; create new hybrid programs that map an explicit pathway from county colleges to RU-N and solidify other transfer opportunities, continuing the tradition extending from our Bridges to the Baccalaureate program of the 1990s through today’s ambitious articulation agreements; start bridge

*Some students may be unprepared before they get here, but when they get here, they are our responsibility.*

*We need to influence area students from cradle to college to career – to cultivate and nurture high school students until they go into their careers, so that they become loyal alumni and partners in the community.*

[Notes from faculty and staff comments in charrettes.]

programs for students re-entering the educational pipeline; increase access more generally for non-traditional students; and improve strategic financial aid packaging to minimize post-graduation student debt loads.

- Access and affordability are only truly meaningful if they are complemented by equivalent efforts to enhance student retention and success. Among the ways that we could expand such efforts at Rutgers University–Newark are: investing more in administrative offices across the university to enable the highest-quality service to students, including seamless integration of services across the functions of admissions, financial aid, transfer, disability services, international student services, student accounts, and registration; facilitating cross-unit advising and transfer of credits between units; improving campus programming and amenities to enhance student life for those who commute to RU-N; offering a universitywide course for entering first-year and transfer students entitled “cultural capital you need to succeed in college and career”; enhancing disability services.
- We can do much more to emphasize RU-N’s distinctive excellence as exemplified by its student body, by investing in signature programs that provide our students with more opportunities to identify and tap their full potential. Among our existing assets that should receive increased attention toward this end is the Honors College, which can be a centerpiece for the entire campus as a place that leverages diversity and intellectual and civic engagement. One way to move this agenda forward is already under discussion: exploring the possibility of building a new residential living-learning community designed specifically to facilitate the kinds of leadership development,

curricular intersections, cross-sector community engagement, and mentoring of future generations that foster excellence in deeply meaningful ways. Other avenues for exploration include: building on existing opportunities mounted by our faculty and professional staff for experiential learning and internships; expanding our infrastructure to support sustained study abroad by our students and study by students from around the world at RU-N; and on-line learning and hybrid programs that would help commuting students optimize their time on and off campus.

- RU-N has a wealth of assets that we need to leverage more systematically to transform career opportunities for our students in to realities. Our location in Newark and in the larger New York metropolitan area puts us in one of the largest job markets in the nation, with career paths of every type and in every sector. Our schools and colleges already ply their established networks—including eager alumni—to help undergraduate and graduate students gain insights and experience in their prospective career fields, for example, by bringing renowned professionals and scholars to campus or by facilitating student placement as interns in public agencies, private businesses, or nonprofit organizations. We need to systematize and expand these efforts, especially those that put our students *in situ* where they can test what they know. In addition to seeding best practices across RU-N that already exist here—for example, the array of real-world opportunities facilitated by Rutgers Business School–Newark and New Brunswick for students from internships to consulting teams working with regional businesses—we should aim to grow promising programs, such as the Graduate School–Newark fellowships in homeland security, community development, and international



Chancellor Nancy Cantor with RU-N’s 2014 Phi Beta Kappa initiates.

study in Poland, South Africa, or the Dominican Republic, or the law clinics that provide law students with on the ground experience and the newly formed Rutgers Law Associates Fellowship Program that models a “residency” program for new law graduates prior to entering full-fledged practice.

- Although they may have attended RU-N decades apart, there are inherently powerful bonds among current students and alumni, who so often share common life experiences such as: being first-generation college-going, first- or second-generation Americans, coming from families of modest means that emphasized making the most of educational opportunity, and possessing a resolve to use their education to make a real difference in the world. It behooves us to strengthen these connections for mutual benefit, which we can do through career and social networking through in-person events, web-based services, and social media.

### 3. Invest in our faculty and graduate and professional students

Recruiting and retaining strong faculty and growing the next generation of graduate and professional students are important priorities for RU-N. This agenda item includes a range of topics, including: supporting an environment of high-quality scholarship in both basic and applied research and disciplines; recruiting faculty who are engaged in the mission of RU-N; creating a multi-dimensionally diverse faculty;<sup>26</sup> supporting faculty professional development for tenure track and nontenure track faculty members, part-time lecturers, and professors of practice; and establishing a career path that enables a foundation for evaluating excellence in and rewarding “public scholarship.” A critical piece of this

investment must also be in the diverse next generation of future faculty and professionals, be they graduate students, postdoctoral scholars, or professional interns.

- **Recruiting faculty and graduate students in cutting-edge areas of scholarship.** Targeting some areas that have wide university appeal for expanded faculty hiring and the recruitment of graduate students with enhanced support will be an important component of our future. For example, a planning group already is studying how Rutgers University–Newark can build capacity in “Big Data,” the collection, management, and analysis of data sets too large to process using traditional hardware and software. The broad applicability of big data techniques is evident in the academic areas participating in this planning: Rutgers Business School, School of Public Affairs and Administration, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences–Newark departments of Chemistry, Center for Molecular and Behavioral Neuroscience, Earth and Environmental Sciences, Philosophy, and Psychology, as well as Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences, both Rutgers medical schools, and New Jersey Institute of Technology. Such an initiative would undoubtedly also reach across sectors to collaborations with industry partners.
- **Supporting professionals as faculty in mission-relevant areas.** There are many professionals in fields such as government, business, the creative arts, and the nonprofit worlds who can offer tremendous experience and knowledge to students in the classroom, and provide leadership on many of our anchor initiatives going forward. Establishing opportunities for flexible faculty roles in the university is now an accepted way to get world-class experts in conversation with faculty and students. RU-N has a long and distinguished record of recruiting such talent to our professional schools. Such faculty may stay with the institution for defined periods of time, perhaps even a career; there also should be allowance for short-term engagements such as for scholars and practitioners in residence who are attached to a center or professional school. The key to successfully harnessing professors of practice is placing an intrinsic value on their work and contribution. This means establishing clear career paths and expectations as they lend their contributions to the institution.
- **Building a diverse faculty.** One way to increase a diverse faculty is to support cohort hiring in particularly fertile substantive areas of expertise and engagement. As an example, we now have a group of very active scholars and practitioners working on



Professor Mark Gluck of the Center for Molecular and Behavioral Neuroscience with members of a community based team studying Alzheimer’s disease among African Americans.



entrepreneurship. These scholars have a place to call home within the Center for Urban Entrepreneurship and Economic Development (CUEED). This example should embolden us to identify thematic areas central to our strategic plan and hire groups of faculty across disciplines that can complement and support each other as they progress in their careers. Faculty in the School of Criminal Justice, for example, have been very active in a national project focused on the study of racial democracy, crime, and justice, and a significant part of this project is to support a network of young scholars of color in an annual Summer Research Institute. Pre-doctoral fellowships are another way to increase diversity in a discipline. While a significant investment, this framework can be strategically used to attract promising young scholars, as they are about to write their dissertations. As a tool, it should be reserved for disciplines that experience an especially challenging time attracting a diverse faculty. Post-doctoral fellowships are another more traditional way to build a diverse faculty. In both of these examples, someone must be dedicated to building a connection with colleagues around the country—in various disciplines—who then send promising pre- and post-doctoral students to RU-N.

- ***Embracing publicly engaged scholarship and scholars.*** Publicly engaged scholars are a vital part of RU-N's scholarly landscape. They often conduct research and creative scholarship in collaborative, cross-sector, non-university settings; frequently address their work to pressing issues that eschew easy or fast solutions; and sometimes place their scholarship in non-traditional outlets. Publicly-engaged scholars feel a duty to thoughtfully present their work to the world of both ideas and practice, not just one. This is what the faculty in the American Studies program do, not only when they bring their scholarship to bear on contemporary issues ranging from the origins of discriminatory lending practices in the housing market to black-white alliances in the LGBTQ political movement, but also when they work in partnership with Newark's communities to document their histories and, working with our librarians, preserve and digitize those records to share with the public. This is also what our environmental scientists do when they join with the city of Newark's Office of Sustainability to work together on issues of air quality and green streets/green infrastructure. While universities are used to evaluating excellence in many creative and cultural disciplines that produce a variety of scholarly artifacts, we will also be increasingly called upon to do so in other disciplines as

well. RU-N has a tradition already of supporting such work—for example, publicly engaged scholars in the Institute on Education Law and Policy and the Abbott Leadership Institute are actively shaping education policy in the State of New Jersey through rigorous analysis coupled with engagement in the public square trying to establish educational opportunity for all New Jersey's children; in the business school, publicly engaged scholars are working to change tax policies at the state and national level, reform practices in governmental accounting across the country, develop new business models that balance the pursuit of profits with community and environmental goals, and strengthen ethical practices in the private and nonprofit sectors through the Institute for Ethical Leadership. Our strategic vision calls upon us to embrace a wider range of excellence in faculty scholarship, recognizing the multi-faceted value gained from the diversity of research that emerges from breaking silos and engaging with other constituencies outside the academic sphere. For example, we might consider, as suggested in one charrette discussion, supporting young scholars by starting a tenure clock later if they can find external support to work in a public agency or setting that directly contributes to their field of scholarship.

- ***Supporting the career trajectories of young scholars.*** Many of the areas ripe for scholarly investment and faculty and graduate and pre-professional support at RU-N not only require a fuller, more interdisciplinary, less "siloed" approach, but also suggest the need for complementary innovations in how we support, evaluate and reward excellence all along the career trajectory. This is certainly true as noted above in some of the cutting edge publicly-engaged areas, but it is equally true in what might be considered more traditional areas of STEM, for example. Leading universities across the country are considering or have already adopted extended tenure clocks to recognize the fiercely competitive sponsored research landscape,<sup>27</sup> as well as various measures to support career-life balance all along the career trajectory, recognizing that the labor involved in dependent and family care are not solely restricted to early moments in a career. Additionally, RU-N should increase access to career advice as well as internships and training for graduate and professional students, many of whom aim to pursue careers outside of academia. As we do this, we should look for ways to magnify our masters' programs, which attract large volumes of professional talent and serve both as a gateway to a doctoral degree and a valuable form of professional development.



#### 4. Value our professional and support staff as key to our success

Staff at RU-N, across a wide range of support and professional roles, care deeply about the University and its mission. They contribute significantly to the quality of campus life and the excellence of RU-N through both operational activities and partnerships to support students, faculty, and community. Over the history of our institution, they have left an extraordinary record of accomplishments. From upgrading buildings and grounds to enhancing technology and offering effective and efficient campus services, our staff defines the campus experience.

Together, professional, administrative, and campus support staff have embodied greatly the spirit of collaboration manifest in creative and distinctive programs: from the internship programs developed at RBS and SPAA to the student development study abroad programs; from the array of wellness programs and team sports offered in athletics to the annual student health fairs addressing wellness issues to the DeStress Fest initiative that garnered national attention as a model of student support designed to relieve final-exam anxiety. RU-N staff members are also very engaged in initiatives that spread educational opportunity, access, and inclusion through university-school-community partnerships such as RU Ready for Work, Rutgers Future Scholars, and

the Step Scholars.<sup>28</sup> Others, such as those from the Paul Robeson Galleries, have created signature arts programs with cross-disciplinary collaborations on campus as well as educational programs for local and regional communities that embody the spirit of the university’s commitment to creative expression in a diverse world.

The importance of the collaborations with faculty also must not be underestimated, as professional staff support the conferences, research activities, and cross sector collaborations both inside and outside of the community that produce excellence and address societal needs. In many instances professional staff and faculty work quite closely as teams, to great effect; such is the case in the public humanities digitization project that has produced local history archives like the Krueger-Scott Collection; or in the action research collaborative between School of Criminal Justice faculty, the Rutgers University–Newark LGBTQ and Diversity Resource Center and youth advocates from Newark’s Hetrick-Martin Institute.

As we imagine our future through this strategic plan, we acknowledge the voices of staff heard through the listening tours, town halls, and charrettes, which revealed a desire for recognition of their contributions, for an increased role in RU-N affairs, especially to help streamline or change rules that hamper institutional effectiveness, and for stronger faculty-staff-student-administrator collaborations that

*RU-N can develop a centralized wellness center to support students across the continuum. The wellness center could provide wellness education, access to community farming on campus and places for commuters to rest between classes.*

*We need better marking of our buildings; mark buildings as Rutgers buildings; create awareness.*

*The campus has been much improved in the past several years – from concrete to green space. Our parking lots can be improved and made more attractive – ex: Bradley Hall lot and the lot next to the Center for Law and Justice. Our gateways also need greening in order to be more welcoming.*

*All roads, highways, leading to campus should publicize RU-N – that we are here – in Newark – and to promote all of our programs.*

*Make Wi-Fi available campuswide.*

*We need to develop environments for faculty as well as student interaction.*

*Keep faculty club open all day, at least until 5 or 6 pm. Hold conversations there to encourage the cross-disciplinary activity.*

[Notes of student, faculty, and staff comments in charrettes.]

support our strategic priorities. We need to make sure that we are engaging in the best practices that foster positive communication and cooperation with staff and the highest utilization of their experience with and understanding of both challenges and opportunities. Some examples for achieving these goals might include the following:

- Institutionalize periodic town hall meetings with senior RU-N leadership to elicit suggestions for improving the institution.
- Explore best practices for faculty-staff-student collaborations including opportunities for ongoing discussions.
- Examine opportunities available for expanding knowledge through training and development.
- Offer career counseling services so that staff can fully explore opportunities to contribute more broadly to the university and advance professionally.
- Articulate the roles of staff members in supporting the anchor institution goals of RU-N, especially by addressing ways to systematize structured volunteer opportunities (a “good neighbor committee”) that reflect best practices among the many efforts of individuals and departments now occurring.
- Convene a study group composed of staff and faculty from the schools and colleges to identify rules, regulations, and practices that limit institutional effectiveness.
- Create a platform, such as a managers’ forum, to improve communication between operational managers, fostering improved planning, operational coordination, and elimination of silos.
- Continue staff appreciation events that value the work and contributions of staff.

## 5. Invest in the spaces and places where we live, learn, create, and engage the world

Participant input from many of those involved in our strategic planning yielded an overarching priority regarding Rutgers University–Newark’s physical presence that reflects two broad aspects of work to be done: we can and need to elevate the quality of our campus—from tending to sidewalks and building interiors to improving safety to assuring access to information technology that supports 21st century pedagogy—and we should create new spaces and places in which to engage collaboratively with community partners as a way of fulfilling our anchor institution role. The rationale for improving our physical space in both of these ways ultimately is to continue to drive the quality and impact of our research, pedagogy, and social impact forward.

Pursuit of this priority will take many forms, some of which already are under discussion or under way, including the following examples.



Newly renovated Military Park in downtown Newark.

*“It is without dispute that America’s older legacy cities and their revitalization are critical to the country’s economy and its international economic competitiveness.”*

[Managing Change: Preservation and Rightsizing in America, a report of the President’s Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, 2014]

- Conversation has begun to establish priorities for the repair and maintenance of public space, so as to improve the attractiveness and usefulness of our spaces for students, faculty, and staff, to improve the appearance of our gateways for visitors, and to better mark our campus and buildings as “Rutgers University–Newark.” Much has been done in these areas in recent years, but more remains to be done.
- There is a broad consensus that RU-N’s information technology infrastructure is underdeveloped for a university of its stature in terms of its capacities to support both research and teaching across the disciplines. The Rutgers system-wide strategic plan expresses a strong commitment to building an up-to-date and effective technological foundation, and RU-N will participate vigorously in planning and implementation so that the benefits of improvements are evident in Newark.
- Maintaining safety is, in many ways, foundational for our quality of life at RU-N, which was echoed consistently by our campus community members. An essential element of this is directing sufficient resources, of course, but we also must create an environment of transparency and proactive engagement between public safety professionals and the university community. Significant steps already have been taken in this area, including realignment and enhancement of the Rutgers University–Newark Police Department, scientific study of safety by the Center on Public Security, advancement of evidence-based policing practices in the “University Heights” area of Newark, and coordination of strategies across the public and private sectors in Newark.
- The libraries are an essential public space where the academy meets the community. Open to the public, the libraries offer residents of Newark and northern New Jersey access to research and information, in addition to their prime mission of supporting scholarship within the university community. The libraries curate digital collections of great value to all New Jerseyans and make them freely accessible on the internet. For example, the law library offers free digital access to New Jersey case law, statutes, and administrative decisions. As the largest law library in New Jersey, it is well used by members of the bench and bar and provides unrepresented litigants with crucial resources necessary for access to justice. The John Cotton Dana Library offers a rich array of cultural programming through symposia and exhibitions, often in collaboration with other Newark cultural organizations. For example, the Institute of Jazz Studies collaborates with WBGO Radio to produce programming utilizing its extensive jazz archives. As we work toward even greater engagement with the Newark community, our libraries will play a central role in that effort.
- RU-N has a proud tradition of anchor institution engagement in Newark and ongoing discussions are taking place to build on this legacy, particularly with an eye toward creating and/or activating spaces where we can engage with community partners more readily



*Interdisciplinary efforts provide lessons beyond addressing the academic question being focused on. There is the real world skill of working with people who view the world differently to accomplish something positive.*

*There is a huge opportunity here to improve teacher education in urban areas. We must focus on improving teachers to better overcome the difficulties unique to urban locations.*

[Notes of student, faculty, and staff comments in charrettes.]

*RU-N undergraduate biology students and recent graduates are creating “Sci-Facts,” a video series to build on a fast-paced, engaging public service announcement they made explaining how the cerebellum matters in everyday life. See it at [bit.ly/1oKibWp](http://bit.ly/1oKibWp).*



on equal footing—in what are sometimes called “third spaces.”<sup>29</sup> There are several very promising prospects developing that will contribute to grow the arts and cultural district on the eastern border of campus. For example, RU-N leaders, faculty, and professional staff are in conversation with the team redeveloping the iconic, former Hahne’s department store bordering Broad, New, and Halsey Streets to explore creating innovative spaces to facilitate publicly engaged scholarship in the arts, culture, and media. Among the possibilities are an arts incubator where faculty work with community artists and local schools to cultivate new talent; a community media center that leverages expertise on and off campus to help Newarkers of all generations develop tools to tell stories in multimedia that will weave the counter-narrative of this diverse community, told by, rather than merely about, its members; a design consortium partnering the university and community arts and cultural organizations to immerse students in a real-world consulting company that takes on the challenge of communicating about urgent issues facing metropolitan America; and a community portrait studio where people who live in, work in, or pass through Newark—including student and youth groups—can have complimentary portraits made and practice photography while learning about Newark’s historic role in American portraiture; a space for exhibitions and performances associated with Newark’s grand legacy in jazz. Other possibilities surely would arise over time to leverage having publicly accessible space on the newly renovated Military Park and Newark’s signature boulevard.

## 6. Invest in anchor institution collaboration

Being *of* Newark, not just *in* Newark emerged as a key element of Rutgers University–Newark’s identity, and enhancing even more our anchor institution agenda is one of the highest priorities emerging from our strategic visioning process. There are five major broad areas that capture much of the scholarly expertise and civic-oriented interests in anchor institution work: K-20 educational pipeline and pathways; strong, healthy, safe neighborhoods; arts and cultural districts and initiatives; economic development; and science and public problem-solving. Activity in these areas already ranges from cross-disciplinary initiatives rooted in community, to partnerships with diverse “communities of experts,” to co-created spaces in the city and region. Future investments should build on the strong foundation of work in our city and region already underway.

Some sample engagements in this area include the following:

- The Newark “City of Learning” Collaborative seeks to increase the percentage of Newark residents who hold postsecondary credentials. Specifically, the collaborative supports the City of Newark 2012 Master Plan goal: increasing the number of Newark adults with high-quality postsecondary degrees and credentials from 13% to 25% by 2025. The collaborative, hosted and managed by the Cornwall Center, brings together numerous partners across the governmental, philanthropic, business, and educational sectors with community-based intervention programs, organizing this effort under one umbrella.
- The School of Public Affairs and Administration is now developing a center for nonprofit capacity building in which the law school clinics and the Cornwall Center all can find a role; RBS-Newark has created an umbrella Institute for the Study of Entrepreneurial Ecosystems and is planning an incubator site in conjunction jointly with Audible.com.
- The School of Criminal Justice and the Department of Psychology are pivotal partners in The Greater Newark Youth Violence Consortium, drawing upon the prodigious pool of expertise among the faculty at RU-N and Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences, together with approximately 40 community service organizations and law enforcement and community corrections agencies to develop an agenda for reducing violence and increasing support and opportunities for youth across the neighborhoods of Newark that is based on the latest and best scholarship in criminology, sociology, psychology, economic development, and related areas.

*“Newark needs a more systematic alignment of anchors’ efforts with local initiatives (e.g., with respect to local procurement, transportation investments, workforce and small business development, etc.) and stakeholders to not only enhance and expand access to regional economic opportunities but also promote neighborhood revitalization.”*

[City of Newark Master Plan]



- The Newark Fairmount Promise Neighborhood Partnership seeks to improve educational outcomes for children and families in the Fairmount neighborhood in Newark’s West Ward by improving neighborhood schools, and increasing the coordination of family and community support services that directly impact school achievement and career readiness. Three managing partners facilitate the implementation of this initiative: Rutgers University–Newark, the Urban League of Essex County, and the United Way of Essex and West Hudson. The partnership received initial support from the U.S. Department of Education’s Promise Neighborhood Planning grant.
  - With the renovation of one of Newark’s iconic buildings now under way at 15 Washington Street, at which upwards of 370 students soon will live, we are developing an agenda for programming that will engage faculty, students, and community in innovative approaches to living-learning, with particular attention to bringing the inspirational potential of the building’s grand hall—one of the grandest spaces in Newark—to bear on academic programming around the arts that engages local artists and their future successors.
  - Faculty, staff, and students have joined with members of the community to create The Queer Newark Oral History Project, a community-based and community-directed initiative dedicated to preserving the history of Queer Newark. Its goal is to document the history of Newark’s LBGTQA community in its full diversity and make that history available through John Cotton Dana Library as a digitized online archive. It aims to interview members of Newark’s LBGTQA community; engage LBGTQA Newark youth in interviewing each other as well as LBGTQA adult Newark community; engage college and university students and faculty in interviewing, cataloging, transcribing, publicizing, and organizing the oral histories.
  - As we consider the ways to meet the pervasive need for increased scientific literacy in our populace, we must look not only at ourselves and our curricula—closely re-examining the role that science must play in the education of our students of today and tomorrow and retooling to assure we are educating them to be the kind of informed and engaged 21st century citizens that are in all too short supply today—but we must also look at what we can do to bring science into public problem-solving directly.<sup>30</sup> Some of our scientists, for example, are working with community members and students to study the impact of diminishing urban forest habitats on bird populations; faculty members in Earth and Environmental Sciences are working with local schools to demonstrate the applicability of geophysics techniques to the anthropology of a cemetery of former slaves; and faculty members from our Center for Technology Leadership and Center for Information Management, Integration and Connectivity are working with public, private, and nonprofit sector partners to increase understanding of technology—in applications from information systems to energy and sustainability—to improve leadership decision making.
- Our goal is to continue to build the capacities of our world class research university as an anchor institution that is a key force in working on challenges that are manifest locally, but are representative of those faced globally, including improving the economic base of Newark and northern New Jersey, helping to improve economic and governance networks that create opportunity for the students and residents that we serve, and in the process, building models of innovative collaborative, cross-sector problem solving and intellectual innovation that advance scholarship in our disciplines, strengthen the education of our students, and increase the broader impacts of our work that ripple out across our local and global communities. As the anchor

*We need a deeper, richer, broader discussion about the meaning of the diversity of our student body in relation to the university’s mission. How does it affect our classrooms, our research, campus life, our relationships to our communities?*

*Let’s celebrate the many kinds of diversity here in a curriculum that will uniquely prepare them for careers and personal lives.*

*Capitalizing on diversity should include celebrating the religions of our students, faculty, and staff.*

[Comments from the town hall meetings]

institution ethos continues to grow at RU-N, reflecting the momentum it is gaining nationally, we also want to be a part of national task forces and assessment projects that connect us to other institutions doing this kind of work, such as the Anchor Institution Task Force spearheaded by Ira Harkavy at the University of Pennsylvania and David Maurrasse at Magna, Inc., and the Democracy Collaborative, led by Ted Howard at the University of Maryland. This will involve exploring assessment rubrics such as the Anchor Dashboard National Pilot Project,<sup>31</sup> which shows promise for successfully drawing upon the full power of quantitative and qualitative methods for measuring the impact of universities committed to this kind of work.

## 7. Leverage our diversity and build civic dialogue

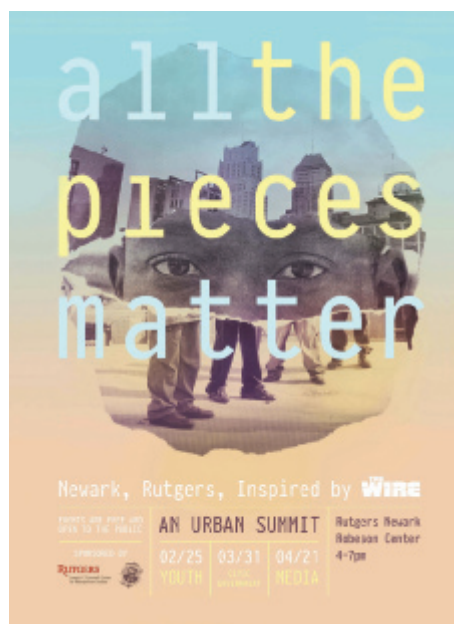
A recurrent theme in the listening tours and charrette dialogues was making the most of our diversity and the diversity around us in Newark and the region, as well as its connections nationally and globally. To fully leverage who we are and who we can be as a university community, we need to be cognizant of both the many dimensions of diversity richly represented here – including, for example, the extraordinary range of heritage languages of our students, faculty, and staff – and the complex way in which those different dimensions intersect within an individual, and across the tapestry of our community. Diversity must be “unpacked” as a nuanced construct of modern life and social experience, and then its multi-faceted impact recognized as an enormous asset to scholarship, pedagogy, civic life, and community well-being.

We need to deliberately foster “dialogues across difference” and build on the full range of experiences, opinions, values, cultural traditions encompassed here, both in the curriculum, and in public events and convenings. This means bringing many peoples together, from within and outside our university, often in new combinations and settings—such as the Brick City Conversations with leaders of community-based organizations and civic leaders already being facilitated by the Cornwall Center. It also means continuing the kinds of democratic participatory dialogues and problem solving and story-telling that this strategic planning process itself has involved. In so doing not only will we leverage our remarkable diversity but we will strengthen our shared governance and co-ownership across university-community, public-private, academic-non-academic, citizen-scholars, generations, groups, and geographies of our joined futures.

Leveraging diversity is a broad exercise in continuous institutional reflection—not an easy task accomplished by one-shot investment—and so we will establish a study group to consider the many avenues for building on this signature strength of Rutgers University–Newark in all of its richness.

## 8. Tell the Rutgers University–Newark story more effectively

While communicating effectively emerged as a priority for students, faculty, staff, and stakeholders through all modes of engagement in the strategic planning process and in discussion of all of the areas in which we need to invest, building our capacity to tell our story warrants calling it out as a priority because it demands coordination. We must assure that across the university the distinctive excellence of Rutgers University–Newark as an institution—our “brand”—is communicated to all audiences, emphasizing all aspects of our strengths (faculty, students, staff, anchor institution role, and national leadership roles). Consequently, we will constitute a working group focused on ways to strengthen communications across institutional functions including enrollment management, development, marketing, government and business relations, and media relations, as well as communications internal to RU-N. Sponsoring colloquia, conferences, and institutes to bring more attention to the range, variety, and excellence of activity here and to its applicability to the pressing issues of our day, will also be an effective element in telling our story.



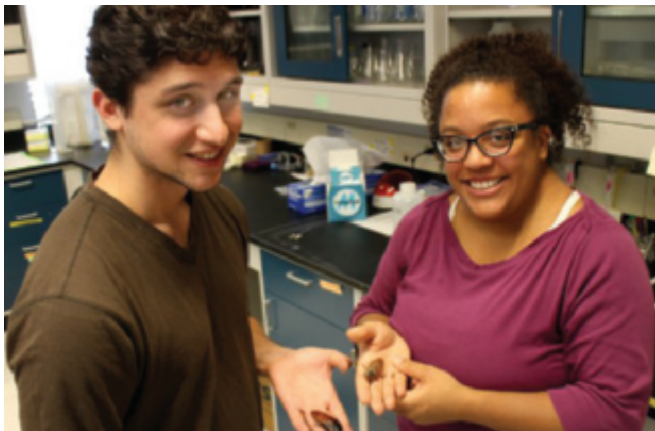
## Getting Started: Stepping into our Future

As noted at the start, Rutgers University–Newark undertakes this work at a time of major changes throughout Rutgers. The university system has doubled in size, with the creation of Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences integrating parts of the former University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. The broad-based strategic planning led by President Barchi encourages both more autonomy and clarification of vision for Camden, New Brunswick, and Newark, and enhanced possibilities for academic collaboration across these universities and with Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences, and for reflection on the best mix of distributed and centralized services. Moving to a system of Responsibility Center Management for budgeting will bring a new transparency to our fiscal affairs and unleash creative potential for growth within academic units. Additionally, centralization of some support functions will promote administrative efficiency and enable system-wide improvements in service.

Our strategic vision has been expressly developed to fit within this broader plan for growth and distinction at Rutgers. Within this context, we are particularly optimistic about this as a moment to explore RU-N’s identity and excellence, and to engage in conversations with colleagues throughout Rutgers as to how to best structure our programs and our operations to deliver on our vision, individually and collectively.

This strategic vision for Rutgers University–Newark is not just a statement of our values. It is a plan that will proceed in various modes of action:

- The leadership across Rutgers University–Newark will engage their units and each other in conversations about the implications of our strategic vision for their work, to identify specific ways their unit can bring this plan to life.



Graduate student Dominic Evangelista and Dr. Jessica Ware have conducted path-breaking research on a winter-resistant species of cockroaches.

- The chancellor’s office will create an ongoing seed-grant competition focused on addressing specific priorities identified in this strategic plan, along lines suggested by the Newark Faculty Council, with an RU-N-wide committee formed to issue RFPs, evaluate proposals, and recommend the most promising to the chancellor and provost for seed funding that has been reserved for this purpose.
- In areas where a deeper kind of reflection on our practices and opportunities is called for, the chancellor’s office will form study groups charged with leading a community-wide conversation about and formulating recommendations for what is needed to capitalize on our history and assets as we embrace this vision.
- To recognize the ambitions of this strategic vision, the chancellor’s office will initiate extensive and intensive conversations across many units and stakeholders as we contemplate a cross-cutting initiative to plan for an honors living-learning community dedicated to the theme of “Local Citizenship in a Global World.”

These four major implementation approaches will ensure sustained engagement of students, faculty, staff, and stakeholders that *wraps itself* around fulfilling this agenda through a series of action steps that serve as points both of reflection and stimulation for short- and long-term areas of targeted investments and assessment of progress.

### **Action Mode 1: The responsibility of Rutgers University–Newark’s leadership**

In the coming months, RU-N leadership will convene their units and engage a conversation about the implications of this vision for their work. By thinking through the connection between their unit’s work and this strategic vision, these units will identify specific strategies that will enable them to take this work forward creatively and rapidly. In keeping with the cross-cutting theme of “building bridges and breaking down silos,” the leadership will be encouraged to look both *within* their units for effective ways to implement the vision and *across* RU-N (and beyond it) to find the appropriate collaborators and to create a community of experts and stakeholders working together on shared initiatives.

*Academic units.* Deans will call upon their faculty, staff, and students to discuss how their school’s academic strengths can be leveraged to create curricular innovations that reflect this vision and give life to our commitment for cutting-edge



research and action initiatives. While there may be several types of results of this academic-unit conversation, one expectation is the proposal of a series of multi-disciplinary minors and certificate, graduate, and professional programs that will create scholarly synergies across academic units and enhance students' development as future professionals and citizens.

An enhanced commitment to academic minors that span the colleges and schools is a way to strengthen the undergraduate academic experience to enable students to integrate skills, offer them opportunities to study in areas they would love to simply explore, and break out of the pre-professional silos that too often constrain them in realizing their potential. Undergraduates are already required to take a second concentration, and the process of expanding the number of available minors has begun, but the pace of change can be accelerated, as can the flexibility to pursue minors across professional schools as well as between Faculty of Arts and Sciences–Newark and a professional program. For example, a student may major in business, but minor in women's studies and take courses that cross FAS-N, School of Public Affairs and Administration and Rutgers Business School because he or she has an interest in working in a nonprofit that focuses on women's issues. At the same time, a major in one of the arts might minor in entrepreneurship in RBS, as might a SPAA student studying nonprofit management. A well-chosen minor cannot only help students increase their employability and pursue their passions, but also demonstrate they have additional skills and interests that distinguish them as candidates in applying for graduate or professional school or entry level positions. While the undergraduate colleges each have minors available to students in the other colleges, the next step is to create innovative minors that bridge the schools on campus and in Newark. RBS and FAS-N are creating a program in the Business of Fashion, while the law school is planning a legal studies concentration for undergraduates interested in careers in business, criminal justice, public policy, and other disciplines with which the law interacts. In a similar vein, FAS-N is in early discussions with the School of Health Related Professions about possible collaborations.

A similarly expansive analysis, perhaps spearheaded by the Dean of the Graduate School–Newark along with the other deans, should take place with respect to graduate programs and integrative graduate training opportunities. Many individual departments and centers, for example, engage graduate and professional students in global study, and not only would it be worthy of discussion as to how best to create synergies across these efforts, but also with the Division of Global Affairs as it re-examines its structure and programs in

the context of this strategic plan. RU-N's students, staff, and faculty speak a remarkably wide range of heritage languages and represent a rich tapestry of cultures and nationalities, often not only from the invaluable contributions of international citizens studying or working here, but also from those who have grown up or migrated here, contributing to the global landscape of New Jersey. We have a rich asset to leverage in this globally-diverse university and community, and one way to start building on this unique strength is in a RU-N-wide discussion of language training and cultural diversity.

Many academic units sponsor research centers and institutes that carry out research agendas, involve multiple disciplines in cross-cutting scholarship, engage external collaborators in community-based and/or global work, and attract extramural support. These units will also use the strategic vision as a springboard to explore new possibilities for research that opens new doors of knowledge. Centers and institutes can envision new relationships that expand the scope of their curricular, research, and engagement activities and allow for synergies between units and the sharing of support infrastructure. The same kinds of scholarly synergies and shared support services may well be achievable across academic departments as well.

*Administrative units.* Leadership in the university's administrative units will also take responsibility for bringing this vision into action. Their challenge will not only be to embrace our thematic vision and priorities, but also to do so within the context of system-wide organizational, budgeting, and service delivery changes at Rutgers. RU-N must chart a new relationship with other Rutgers institutions. Our need to build effective academic and research partnerships that span





the Rutgers system is one example. But working out the right combination of centralized support services and local service delivery capacity is another. In particular, working out new balances of central and local enrollment management services, human resource support, and technology support already are under consideration.

In the Office of the Provost, for example, administrators responsible for the recruitment and retention of students will meet with their staff to identify relevant priority initiatives impacting the student experience. Likewise, conversations will take place in Student Affairs, with the aim of enhancing the student experience in ways that capitalize on our urban, anchor institution mission, fit our student body of residential and commuting students, and take account of the many pressures that our students are often juggling between academic study, work, and home life.

Our strategic visioning sets high priorities for the student experience. We learned that there is widespread agreement that the quality of student life needs to receive new attention. Creation of a one-stop shop for linked student services such as admissions, financial aid, transfer, international student services, student accounts, and registration is a theme that arose repeatedly, and investing in more residential options was also frequently mentioned. Administrative units will consider the full range of ways that the college experience can be strengthened.

We will also use this as an opportunity to build awareness of RU-N’s distinctive excellence and character, creating a marketing strategy that speaks directly to our strengths. A great student experience begins with a powerful story that attracts and sustains interest, and is evident across our university community.

*Physical plant.* Rutgers University–Newark support services offices will carry out these conversations, as well, in this case to establish priorities for improvements in infrastructure and technical capacity. Because infrastructure capacity is funded, for the most part, through central sources, identifying infrastructure maintenance priorities occurs within the larger planning effort of the Rutgers system. The function of administrative leadership in this area is to develop plans for infrastructure in ways that exemplify our vision and priorities.

Some of the new strategies coming from RU-N’s units will require no new resources; others will. Those new strategies that can be put into place without new funding can receive immediate attention. Those that require funding will need a plan coming from Rutgers Newark and its Responsibility Center Management system for long-term sustainability.

## **Action Mode 2: Strategic seed-grants**

It is anticipated that there will be an abundance of creative, promising ideas for addressing the priorities articulated in the strategic plan, many of which will require seed funding. To provide a fair mechanism for evaluating these opportunities, the chancellor’s office and the Newark Faculty Council will work together to appoint a standing Strategic Seed-Grant Committee comprising faculty, staff, and students. The committee will compose a request for proposal including the following criteria for funding: cross-cutting—proposals must address one or more of the priorities articulated in this strategic plan; sustainability—provide a plan for a long-term funding; “bridge building”—involve multiple units; and innovation—create something new and different. A competitive advantage will be given to proposals that integrate one or more of our existing centers or institutes or programs, and/or provide support for graduate and professional fellows.

Among the kinds of proposals one might anticipate are the following.

- New degree and certificate programs might be envisioned that span academic programs within RU-N, programs that connect RU-N to Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences and New Jersey Institute of Technology, and cross-Rutgers programs that connect to New Brunswick and Camden. Creative thinking should characterize these proposals, offering students the opportunity to explore substantive academic integrations that they could not easily obtain within one program or institution.
- Research partnerships might be proposed that offer opportunities for multi-disciplinary, problem-focused strategies that connect researchers who would otherwise work independently of one another. This is an opportunity for departments, centers, and institutes to create new lines of inquiry and explore research connections that promise innovative and creative scholarship. In particular, we think two kinds of new research trajectories are promising: those that build new connections among and across RU-N, RBHS and NJIT, especially as they expand capacity for faculty and students at RU-N; and those that reflect the urban, anchor institution, public scholarship agenda so closely connected to our mission. Of course, many cutting-edge proposals may well achieve both of these objectives at once.

- Anchor institution initiatives are partnerships that bridge the university to the communities within which we live and whose residents we serve. There is extraordinary creativity in this category of funding possibilities, including partnerships that galvanize new K-12 programs, new businesses and nonprofit ventures, cultural engagement with the community in the arts, and joint programs in shared physical space.

We expect this to be an annual RFP process through which funding requests would be entertained for multiple-year projects that create new infrastructure to support scholarship, education, and engagement.

### **Action Mode 3: Creating a sustained understanding of the challenge we face**

The strategic visioning process has already given us a fertile base of ideas from which to build on the strengths of RU-N with new academic, research, and anchor initiatives. We also face the need to build a knowledge base for the emerging story of Rutgers University–Newark. Our aim here is to strengthen an already existing culture at Rutgers University–Newark, so that over time the mission and vision we have outlined here is evermore deeply integrated into the norms and practices of our community.

To do this, we propose to initiate a series of study groups to continue the participatory dialogues afforded by our visioning process. The idea is to convene study groups in succession over several years to take on some of the more ambitious (even culture-changing) priorities of this strategic vision. Stemming from the many comments we heard during the strategic visioning process, we suggest four study groups to start this tradition of inquiry and reflection.

*A study group on the new professoriate* will help us think about what is needed to create the right foundation for scholarship of the future. This study group will address questions regarding the tenure clock, public scholarship, nontenured faculty, and graduate and professional training.

*A study group on staffing for the new mission* will help us think about optimal strategies for building an excellent staff. Topics will include staff training and development, recognition of staff in the anchor institution framework, and new ways of leveraging the talents of our staff for our institutional mission.

*A study group on the anchor institution* will help us identify ways that we can more fully and broadly

develop our anchor institution ideal. Topics will include strategies for deepening the connection to community, mechanisms for mutual investment and civic dialogue, partnership strategies, and ways to cement a two-way flow of engagement from campus-community and community-campus.

*A study group on leveraging diversity* will identify a range of ways that our signal distinguishing character—a diverse faculty, staff, and student body—can be leveraged so that the connection between our excellence and our diversity is apparent throughout the curriculum, university experience, and community civic life.

Each study group will be comprised of faculty, staff, students, and relevant partners and stakeholders. They will begin their work in fall, 2014, and will report on progress by mid-spring 2015, and share “final reports” by fall 2015.

### **Action Mode 4: Cross-Cutting initiatives – taking a big step forward**

Even as we move forward with unit plans, seed grant competitions, and study groups, we also want to put a stake in the ground for initiatives that are especially ambitious as they address a cross-cutting set of this vision’s priorities at once and involve multiple interventions, leaders, and units at Rutgers University–Newark. We anticipate that there may well be several such cross-cutting initiatives that emerge in the coming three-five years, but to conclude our outline of a set of steps moving forward, we articulate here preliminary thoughts on one such signature initiative that addresses many themes at once of this RU-N vision – the development of a new honors living-learning community that anchors RU-N “in and of” Greater Newark and its global connections.

We propose to begin intensive and extensive conversations about the feasibility of designing and supporting a residential honors college living-learning community, including a state-of-the-art facility (which might house upwards of 500 first and second year students, dining, recreational, and academic space); curricular offerings that center around themes of “Local Citizenship in a Global World”; and increased enrollment of the talented students from Greater Newark, as they live and learn at RU-N with students from all over the world – an education emblematic of our metaphor: “*all roads lead to Newark.*” This would be an honors community in the deepest meaning of the term – one in which we honor the potential (evident in a wide array of talents and skills for leadership, innovation, citizenship, resilience) of the next

generation to anchor the future of the “American dream” (one shared across the world), and to continue the legacy of RU-N as a seeder of opportunity and excellence (“inclusive admissions, elite graduates”).

Planning for this cross-cutting initiative not only would weave in many of our strategic priorities – from improved infrastructure to enhancing student life to leveraging diversity and anchor institution engagement – but it would engage a broad base of faculty, staff, students, and external stakeholders with wide-ranging technical and disciplinary and professional expertise and yet deeply shared values that define the best of RU-N as we embrace the world, near and far, now and into the future.

### Assessing Our Excellence and Sharing Our Successes

In the spirit of keeping this as a living document, we will assess our progress using metrics of fiscal health, operational health, research productivity, educational outcomes, and student satisfaction, as outlined in the Rutgers system strategic plan, recognizing that some of the same metrics proposed in that plan will apply to us. We accept as guiding ideas that measures of fiscal health (financial reserves, new revenues), operational health (fiscal efficiency, faculty / staff / student diversity), scholarly productivity (quality of scholarly products, grants, awards, program rankings), student satisfaction (Student Experience in the Research University survey, student awards, graduation rates, career

opportunities) and faculty, staff, and student diversity can be used to assess our movement along this path. We will provide those kinds of data to our Rutgers University–Newark Advisory Board and to the Newark Faculty Council, and then our leadership will engage with them in a conversation about our progress on this plan.

While we also wish to be held accountable for the national prominence of our programs, we want to go beyond the usual rankings systems that so many campuses now rely upon to demonstrate their excellence. To be sure, we have numerous “nationally ranked” programs throughout RU-N, and are deeply proud of the prominence of each of these programs. But in the end it is not just “the rankings” that will tell the story of growing excellence at Rutgers University–Newark. Numbers like these are indicators, but they can be a fickle friend, changing with miniscule shifts in minor indicators.

We look for metrics that give measure to the way we have helped to change the destinies of so many people who are directly and indirectly touched by our work. We want to see support for research increase and the faculty expand in ways that build on our strengths and forge new connections across disciplines. We want to see corporate and foundation support increase by forging reciprocal partnerships that spur innovation in academic programs and research. We want to broaden and extend our pipeline of students in ways that increase inclusiveness, opportunity, and excellence, for example, by increasing connections to county colleges, as well as increasing philanthropic support. We want to be known as an institution that thinks seriously about and

Conceived and founded by former RU-N faculty member Patricia Kettenring, GlassRoots is a community based nonprofit organization in Newark that employs the curriculum-based disciplines of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math), enhanced by STEAM (adding arts in the mix), through hands-on learning in glass-making.





attempts to redefine “merit” in its assessment of student qualifications, scholarly productivity, and social impact. We want to be at the vanguard of building a vibrant, inclusive community in which the contributions of staff at all levels are recognized. We want quite specifically to be seen as a socially responsible institution and so we will continuously monitor a series of anchor institution measures that focus directly on our impact locally – among them:

- Increases in the number of people who choose to live in the vibrant new areas of downtown Newark and in the neighborhoods proximate to our campus;
- Growth in the formation of public private/partnerships that we directly initiate and whose benefits complement the economic and social development of Greater Newark;
- Significant increase in the availability and integration of public art in the life of the communities and neighborhoods in which we are embedded;
- Local school partnerships that create healthy communities;
- Increasingly successful public safety interventions;
- Creating community wealth by creating and developing businesses;
- Building local leadership capacity;
- Sustainable practices that promote community and economic development;
- Stimulating economic growth through local purchasing and real estate development;

- Improvements in the quality of life for children and families living near us;
- Increases in the number of local students who are successful in postsecondary education; and
- Satisfaction of community partners in their engagement with us.

These kinds of measures are, we admit, a little more difficult to obtain than rankings, and also quite a bit more difficult to affect. But they matter in the lives of our community, and the scholarly, pedagogical, and engagement work behind them matter as well in advancing our disciplines, the citizens and professionals we educate, and the public’s commitment to higher education. Thus we will try to hold ourselves accountable for being a direct part of the improvement in the quality of life experienced by all of whom we are a part, for, as one of Newark’s cherished heroes, Rabbi Joachim Prinz poignantly noted, “Neighbor is not a geographic term. It is a moral concept.”



Left: The RU Ready for Work Program partners with the Essex County Division of Senior Services to provide community service and to assist with the coordination of their Annual Farmer’s Market Kick-Off Event. The event took place at the Stephen N. Aduato, Sr. Sports Complex located in Branch Brook Park in Newark, New Jersey.

## Rutgers University–Newark: Excellence at the Intersection

In this strategic visioning process, we took seriously the admonition of the Kellogg Commission for higher education to refresh itself, repeatedly, for the times that are emerging instead of the times that have passed. While a good part of our visioning involved re-connecting with and re-telling our story – we have been an all too well kept secret of a leading edge institution for much of our history – it also resulted in serious commitment to pushing forward ambitiously and assertively to be that diverse urban research institution that leaves no stone unturned in its impact – on scholarship, social mobility, urban civic life. To fulfill this commitment we must redouble our efforts to ensure that we are an engaged institution (not an ivory tower); that we act as cultivators of talent (not just judges of merit); that we stretch the borders of our disciplines and the definitions of scholarship (not protect our silos and traditions); that we recognize the innovation that comes from collaborating in “communities of experts, with and without standard pedigree” (not reifying the “cult of the expert”); that we reinforce our sense of community built on the contributions of all who work at and dedicate time to Rutgers University–Newark (not allowing any part of us to remain invisible in our success). Our excellence lies at the intersection of these commitments to engagement, cultivation, boundary-crossing, collaboration, and community.

The measure of success for this vision going forward will lie most pointedly in our ability to keep this as a dynamic, living document going forward—a framework that focuses us on our values and commitments and calls forth continued cross-constituent dialogue and participation (faculty, students, staff, deans, directors, alumni, advisory board and faculty council members, regional stakeholders, and partners), as we make investments in our future. Each of the strategic priority areas (outlined in section 3) can be evaluated in concrete ways as we make new investments – for example, in new cross-disciplinary minors or increased global experiences for students or the design of a residential honors community embracing the diverse talent in our city, our region, our world. We can judge the success of our anchor institution strategy by the sustainability of the partnerships we form, by the vibrancy of the places we create where artists, scientists, and entrepreneurs meet, publicly-engaged scholarship is produced, stories are shared, problems are diagnosed, and civic dialogue flourishes; by the excitement produced with investments in areas of scholarly excellence; by our success in recruiting and supporting a diverse cadre of faculty and the fresh look we take at rewarding the full range of their scholarly and pedagogical efforts; and by how we provide recognition and professional development opportunities for the staff who so critically enact our vision every day. All of these signs of progress, and many more, should be evident

to all as we make strategic investments going forward. As a whole, though, they should indeed amount to more than the proverbial sum of the parts, generating a forceful enthusiasm for the kind of research university we are and want to be even more—a signature 21st century public institution that takes its responsibilities seriously. We want everyone to know and talk about Rutgers University–Newark as *the* place where excellence embraces diversity, where cutting edge scholarship and social impact positively collide, where opportunity is not bestowed on a select few, but deliberately cultivated for many, where those many graduate as the elite, as the leaders, professionals and citizens so needed for tomorrow.

*We are the premiere urban institution for opportunity.*

*We have the unique opportunity of combining real people with real scholarship.*

*Rutgers University–Newark is unique because it takes local students and turns them into elite graduates.*

*In many ways, diversity has been normalized at RU-N. It is part of the environment, the landscape the institution is built on. This “normal” has to be promoted as an advantage to gaining future success in the post-college world to our target recruiting population. It has to mean something to our students.*

*There is a definite desire to give back to the community in terms of research, outreach, and programs to encourage everything from literacy to critical thought.*

*RU-N must be willing to tell its students “We will ask more of you here than other places, and in turn you will leave with more than you otherwise would have received elsewhere.” This experience must incorporate the richness of our surroundings. We must embrace our surrounding neighborhoods and make it all part of our identity.*

[Notes of student, faculty, and staff comments in charrettes.]

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> The Spring 2014 Strategic Planning Dialogues included almost 20 days of listening tours with all current students (undergraduate and graduate), faculty and staff; input gathered through electronic communications with all current students, faculty, staff, and alumni; four town hall meetings; engagement with leadership bodies such as the RU-N Advisory Board and Newark Faculty Council; Essex County Legislators, Newark Municipal Council, community education advocates and nonprofit leaders, and feedback from strategic visioning charrettes that brought together 172 faculty, staff, and students in 11 representative groups. These engagements will continue in the fall with listening tours with alumni and conversations with public and private sector leaders and advocates.

<sup>2</sup> Rutgers University, *In a 250-Year History, a Singular Moment in Time... a Strategic Plan for the New Rutgers*. New Brunswick, NJ (February 2014).

<sup>3</sup> Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities, *Renewing the Covenant: Learning, Discovery, and Engagement in a New Age and Different World* (Washington, DC: National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, 2000), 9.

<sup>4</sup> National Science Foundation, *Empowering the Nation Through Discovery and Innovation: NSF Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years (FY) 2011-2016* (Washington, DC: National Science Foundation, 2011), 2.

<sup>5</sup> American Academy of Arts and Sciences, *The Heart of the Matter: The Humanities and Social Sciences for a Vibrant, Competitive, and Secure Nation* (Cambridge, MA: American Academy of Arts and Sciences), 34.

<sup>6</sup> Julie Ellison and Timothy K. Eatman, *Scholarship in Public: Knowledge Creation and Tenure Policy in the Engaged University* (Syracuse, NY: Imagining America, 2008), 1.

<sup>7</sup> Scott E. Page, *The Difference: How the Power of Diversity Creates Better Groups, Firms, Schools, and Societies* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007).

<sup>8</sup> Association of American Colleges and Universities, *It Takes More than a Major: Employer Priorities for College Learning and Student Success* (Washington, DC: Hart Research Associates, 2013).

<sup>9</sup> See Charles E. Lindblom and David K. Cohen, *Usable Knowledge: Social Science and Social Problem Solving* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1979).

<sup>10</sup> See <http://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/education/higher-education>, accessed April 6, 2014.

<sup>11</sup> See <http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/just-facts/new-americans-new-jersey>, accessed April 6, 2014.

<sup>12</sup> See, for example, The Century Foundation, *Bridging the Higher Education Divide: Strengthening Community Colleges and Restoring the American Dream* (New York: Century Foundation Press, 2013) and The Lumina Foundation and Gallup, *America's Call for Higher Education Redesign: The 2012 Lumina Foundation Study of the American Public's Opinion on Higher Education* (Washington DC: Gallup, 2013).

<sup>13</sup> A complete description of the College Board's project to increase educational opportunity may be found at <https://www.collegeboard.org/delivering-opportunity/sat> (accessed April 22, 2014).

<sup>14</sup> For a description of the Posse Foundation's methodologies, see <http://www.possefoundation.org/about-posse>.

<sup>15</sup> Tina Rosenberg, "Beyond SATs, Finding Success in Numbers," *The New York Times*, February 15, 2012, Opinionator Blog, and excerpt of which, including the quote cited, was printed as an op-ed February 19, 2012 as "Fixes; More Than SAT Scores."

<sup>16</sup> Among the earliest published uses, if not the earliest use, of the term "anchor institution" is in Carol O'Cleireacain and Alice Rivlin, "Families vs. Singles, Costs vs. Benefits," *The Washington Post*, July 1, 2001, B3.

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, the account of effective anchor institution work by universities in Rita Axelroth and Steven Dubb, *The Road Half-Traveled: University Engagement at a Crossroads* (College Park, MD: The Democracy Collaborative, 2010).

<sup>18</sup> Among many other examples of universities engaging in genuine collaboration with partners in their communities, see the work of members of the Anchor Institutions Task Force at <http://www.margainc.com/initiatives/aitf/> and the approach advocated by the national nonprofit CEOs for Cities in its report *Leveraging Anchor Institutions for Urban Success*, [http://www.ceosforcities.org/pagefiles/CEOs\\_LeveragingAnchorInstitutionsforUrbanSuccess\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.ceosforcities.org/pagefiles/CEOs_LeveragingAnchorInstitutionsforUrbanSuccess_FINAL.pdf), accessed April 22, 2014.

<sup>19</sup> The concept of building an "architecture of inclusion" with full participation was pioneered by the social and legal theorist Susan Sturm in "The Architecture of Inclusion: Advancing Workplace Equity in Higher Education," *Harvard Journal of Law & Gender* 29, no. 2 (2006): 248–334.

<sup>20</sup> For an engaging account of the university's history, see *Rutgers University in Newark: A Century of Reaching Higher*, a celebratory publication issued on the occasion of the institution's 100th anniversary, including examples of alumni exemplifying the university's ethos, available at <http://www.newark.rutgers.edu/files/centuryofreachinghigher.pdf>.

<sup>21</sup> Franklin Conklin, Jr. was the first president of the board of Rutgers University–Newark's predecessor, the University of Newark. Conklin was also a well-known civic leader in Newark. He attended Princeton from 1903-04 and later headed the Flood and Conklin Manufacturing Co. He was also a member and past president of the Essex County Park Commission, past president of The Newark Museum (1943-64). He was founder and first president of the board of the University of Newark.

<sup>22</sup> The story behind the Conklin Hall takeover is available in the John Cotton Dana Library archives. Over the years, the university, along with the surviving members of the two dozen Conklin Hall participants, has celebrated this event as the powerful moment it was in changing and deepening the mission of the university toward democratic ideals. Also, see *The Black Student Protest Movement at Rutgers*, by Richard P. McCormick, (1990, Rutgers University Press.)

<sup>23</sup> A similarly pivotal moment of transformation at that time occurred when the law school started the Minority Student Program (MSP- <http://law.newark.rutgers.edu/admissions-financial-aid/minority-student-program>) as the student body and the faculty called for increased diversity. They established an aggressive policy of equal opportunity for historically underrepresented students which significantly diversified the legal profession in New Jersey.

<sup>24</sup> John Dewey, *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education* (New York, NY: Macmillan Company, 1916).

<sup>25</sup> National Research Council, *Convergence: Facilitating Transdisciplinary Integration of Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, Engineering, and Beyond* (Washington, D.C.: National Academies Press, 2014).

<sup>26</sup> There are many facets, of course, to ensuring the success of a diverse faculty cohort. For example, the NFC's ad-hoc committee report urged efforts to make sure that underrepresented groups were not overly concentrated in non-tenure track faculty positions (as compared with tenure track lines) and/or in lower ranks of the faculty alone.

<sup>27</sup> The leaders of Rutgers University's NSF ADVANCE grant for institutional transformation report that this intervention has been very successful at several leading universities, including, for example, the University of Michigan.

<sup>28</sup> These include college readiness and school-to-career programs that run year round. During summer alone, RU-N staff from the Office of University-Community Partnerships, Academic Foundation Center and programs run out of the deans' offices, work with more than 400 students from the greater Newark metropolitan area. They are part of pre-college faculty-staff collaborations and outreach initiatives that promote academic skills, career exposure and pathways for admissions. Many of these programs are funded by grants developed by staff over many years.

<sup>29</sup> For a discussion and examples of third spaces, see Nancy Cantor, Peter Englot and Marilyn Higgins, "Making the Work of Anchor Institutions Stick: Building Coalitions and Collective Expertise," *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, Volume 17, Number 3, p. 17 (2013).

<sup>30</sup> For a discussion of science and public problem-solving, see Karen Bäckstrand, "Civic Science for Sustainability: Reframing the Role of Experts, Policy-Makers and Citizens in Environmental Governance," *Global Environmental Politics*, November 2003, Vol. 3, No. 4, pp. 24-41.

<sup>31</sup> For a description of the research behind the national pilot study and a description of the Anchor Dashboard designed to measure the impact of anchor institutions in their communities, see Steve Dubb, Sarah McKinley, and Ted Howard, *The Anchor Dashboard: Aligning Institutional Practice to Meet Low-Income Community Needs* (Tacoma Park, MD: The Democracy Collaborative, 2013).







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