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New Jersey Commission on Higher Education

# ◆ Highlights ◆

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## ***In This Issue:***

### **[Agreement Near on Performance Funding Measures](#)**

*With the implementation of Governor Whitman's performance funding initiative, New Jersey joins a growing number of states that tie a portion of spending for public colleges and universities to institutional performance...*

### **[Commission Executive Director Announces Plans to Step Down](#)**

*After four years as executive director, Martine Hammond-Paludan plans to leave the Commission on Higher Education in December...*

### **[INNOVATIONS - Atlantic and Cape May Officials Agree on Joint College](#)**

*Many years of discussion and study came to fruition in late August when Atlantic and Cape May counties and Atlantic Community College entered into an agreement to establish a joint college...*

### **[INNOVATIONS - Commission Approves Funds to Establish VALE](#)**

*Connectivity among New Jersey's colleges and universities took a major step forward in June when the Commission on Higher Education earmarked \$500,000 for the Virtual Academic Library Environment, known as VALE...*

### **[Virtual University Will Soon be Reality in New Jersey](#)**

*In an effort to make New Jersey a leader in high quality distance education, the Governor's office is spearheading the creation of a New Jersey Virtual University...*

### **[Commission Membership Shrinks as Trustees Depart; Two New Student Members Named for 1998-99](#)**

*A "downsized" Commission on Higher Education convened its September meeting with nine voting members instead of 15. The change in composition was prescribed by the [Higher Education Restructuring Act](#), which stipulates that the four-year terms of the Commission's trustee members expired at the end of June 1998...*

### **[Commission Awards Urban Revitalization Planning Grants](#)**

*In September, the Commission on Higher Education awarded 13 planning grants to 12 urban colleges and universities that will join with community groups and the private sector to develop proposals to address pressing local problems and needs.*

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## **Agreement Near on Performance Funding Measures**

With the implementation of Governor Whitman's performance funding initiative, New Jersey joins a growing number of states that tie a portion of spending for public colleges and universities to institutional performance.

In the current fiscal year, all New Jersey public institutions receive a performance-based increase equal to one percent of operating aid. Beginning in FY 2000, each institution's aid amount will be calculated based on the achievement of performance standards.

Governor Whitman specified four key areas of institutional performance that reflect state priorities identified in the long-range plan for higher education: graduation, transfer/articulation, institutional efficiency, and diversification of institutional revenues.

Over the past several months, the Commission staff has worked with New Jersey's 31 public colleges and

universities to develop clear standards and agree on performance benchmarks in each of the four areas the Governor specified. Representatives from the Governor's office, Treasury, and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) also participated in those discussions.

The standards measure performance both in absolute terms and from year to year. Institutions will be judged against agreed-upon benchmarks that are suitable to institutional missions. They will not be compared with each other.

The performance funding indicators address issues of concern to the general public, said Martine Hammond-Paludan, executive director of the Commission. "New Jersey taxpayers want students at New Jersey's public colleges and universities to complete their studies in a timely fashion. They want institutions to enhance effectiveness by using their revenues efficiently, they want employers to value New Jersey college graduates, and they want tuition costs contained," she told Commission members at their September meeting.

Noting that the Commission first proposed performance funding in fall 1997, Dr. Paludan said she is pleased by the Governor's proactive stance in the FY 1999 budget. She said the Commission, working with the institutions, developed a plan that will both strengthen accountability and enhance the quality of New Jersey's public colleges and universities into the next century.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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### **Commission Executive Director Announces Plans to Step Down**

After four years as executive director, Martine Hammond-Paludan plans to leave the Commission on Higher Education in December.

Citing the difficulty of being geographically separated from her husband Phillip, a professor at the University of Kansas, Dr. Paludan said the decision was purely personal.

"The past four years have been an incredible experience," she told the Commission. "I love the intensity and challenges that New Jersey presents and I believe restructuring has achieved much in four years."

"Dr. Paludan has been instrumental in bringing the Commission's planning efforts to fruition through the enactment of various funding and policy recommendations," Commission Chairman Alfred Cade said in announcing her resignation at the Commission's September meeting.

"She has done this through a broad knowledge of higher education issues nationally, her remarkable ability to focus on those items important to the Commission, and through her consultative style of listening and learning from campus leaders, legislators, and the Governor. Dr. Paludan deserves a large share of the credit for the Commission's successes over the past four years," he said.

"Dr. Paludan played a critical role in the evolution of the state's Commission on Higher Education—creating an efficient and modern organization that best suits the needs of New Jersey's higher education community," said Governor Christine Todd Whitman.

Mr. Cade appointed a committee to conduct a national search with the goal of appointing a new executive director early in 1999.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## I - N - N - O - V - A - T - I - O - N - S

### **Atlantic and Cape May Officials Agree on Joint College**

Many years of discussion and study came to fruition in late August when Atlantic and Cape May counties and Atlantic Community College entered into an agreement to establish a joint college.

Cape May is the only one of New Jersey's 21 counties that does not have its own or a joint community college. Creation of the new regional college will dramatically enhance higher education opportunities in New Jersey's southernmost county and will give Cape May residents a voice on the college's governing board.

In 1995, the Commission on Higher Education determined that a joint college would serve New Jersey's southeastern region more efficiently and more effectively than a stand-alone community college in Cape May County. The Commission pledged to actively support initiatives for a bi-county or regional college, and later recommended that the Legislature redirect \$645,000 in unexpended funds from the Jobs, Education, and Competitiveness Bond Act to support higher education services in Cape May County.

Under the agreement, the joint college will get a new name and a new 60,000-square-foot full-service campus in Cape May Court House. However, course offerings in Cape May County will be expanded well before construction is completed in 2001, with additional classes available at the current extension center in Rio Grande and other satellite locations beginning in January 1999.

The three-party agreement stipulates that Atlantic and Cape May counties will provide funding for the new joint college based on the proportion of credits taken by the residents of each county. Currently, about 1,200 Cape May residents attend Atlantic Community College under a chargeback system that enables them to pay the same tuition rate paid by Atlantic County residents, with their home county paying an additional subsidy.

Because the new funding agreement is a departure from the current joint community college funding formula, legislative approval of the agreement is needed. Legislation (S-1380/A-2410) was introduced in the Senate and Assembly in September, and the counties are hoping for swift action to approve the joint college agreement.

When the joint college agreement takes effect on December 1, Cape May County will gain representation on both the joint college board of trustees and the board of school estimate, the body that sets college appropriations.

Commission Chairman Alfred Cade joined county and college officials in touting the historic agreement to create a joint college serving the residents of Atlantic and Cape May counties. Mr. Cade said the agreement is a creative approach to meeting the educational needs of southeastern New Jersey that is consistent with New Jersey's long-range plan for higher education.

"This win-win arrangement is a wonderful example of how higher education partnerships can improve services in a cost-effective manner," Mr. Cade said.

While the Commission is not required to act on the jointure agreement, eventually it will have to approve the creation of a full-service branch campus in Cape May County. The Commission is also required by statute to apportion the membership of the joint college's board of trustees, which it did in

September.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## I - N - N - O - V - A - T - I - O - N - S

### **Commission Approves Funds to Establish VALE**

Connectivity among New Jersey's colleges and universities took a major step forward in June when the Commission on Higher Education earmarked \$500,000 for the Virtual Academic Library Environment, known as VALE.

The Higher Education Technology Infrastructure Fund includes \$5 million for institutional interconnectivity. While most of that money will be used to create a systemwide higher education network, the Higher Education Technology Advisory Committee recommended using \$500,000 to establish VALE.

With institutional matching funds of \$500,000 and an additional \$100,000 provided by the State Library, a total of \$1.1 million is available for the project.

VALE will enable academic libraries at the 45 public and independent institutions with a public mission to collaborate on database acquisitions, leveraging their collective buying power and providing access to information resources beyond those of any single institution. All institutions are currently receiving access to the four databases contained in VALE through the Internet. Phase in of direct access to databases will begin in November.

A steering committee will provide assessment and planning for VALE annually to ensure that it is meeting members' current and future information needs.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

### **Virtual University Will Soon be Reality in New Jersey**

In an effort to make New Jersey a leader in high quality distance education, the Governor's office is spearheading the creation of a New Jersey Virtual University.

A 13-member design team chaired by Wendy Rayner, the state's chief information officer, is developing a blueprint for a virtual university and implementing the first phase of the initiative — an interactive, on-line catalogue of distance learning opportunities offered by New Jersey colleges and universities. The design team includes representatives from the higher education community, the telecommunications industry, and state government. (*see box below*)

Creating a New Jersey Virtual University will make students and employers more aware of the abundant opportunities for "any time, any place" learning. A coordinated effort to address the increasing demand for distance education will enhance access to higher education programs and encourage lifelong learning.

The on-line index of credit and noncredit offerings should be available by the end of December. The design team is studying similar efforts in other states to develop recommendations regarding the virtual university structure and full range of services that will best meet New Jersey's current and future needs.

<b>Virtual University Design Team</b>
Wendy Rayner, chair, Governor's office
Robert Bocchino, DeVry Institute
Leonard Bogdon, William Paterson University
Ray Caprio, Rutgers University
Edward Chapel, Fairleigh Dickinson University
Lanse Davis, SETC
William Freeman, Bell Atlantic-NJ
Cary Israel, Raritan Valley Community College
Wendy Lang, Governor's office
John McMaster, AT&T
Julie O'Sullivan Maillet, UMDNJ
Jeanne Oswald, Commission on Higher Education
Gale Spak, NJIT

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

### **Commission Membership Shrinks as Trustees Depart; Two New Student Members Named for 1998-99**

A “downsized” Commission on Higher Education convened its September meeting with nine voting members instead of 15.

The change in composition was prescribed by the Higher Education Restructuring Act, which stipulates that the four-year terms of the Commission’s trustee members expired at the end of June 1998.

Governor Whitman attended the Commission’s June meeting and personally thanked the departing members for their hard work throughout the Commission’s first four years. She presented proclamations of appreciation to Oswald Cano, Edward FitzPatrick, Donald Loff, Thomas Sayles, Jr., and Anne Thomas. The sixth trustee position was vacant.

The Governor also presented proclamations to departing student members Robert Benacchio and Nicole Parisi, and to Arnold Speert as he concluded his term on the Commission as chair of the Presidents’ Council. Dr. Speert was replaced by the new chair of the Presidents’ Council, Peter Burnham, who is the president of Brookdale Community College.

William Freeman, the president of Bell Atlantic-New Jersey, was recently confirmed by the Senate as a new member of the Commission, replacing Dr. Robert Albright. Mr. Freeman will be sworn in in November. Two other nominations to fill vacancies are pending.

The Commission’s new student members are Anne Loyle, a liberal arts student majoring in math and science at Cumberland County College, and Maura Reilly, a psychology major at the College of New Jersey.

Ms. Loyle returned to college after working for 12 years in restaurant management. She plans to complete her associate degree program and then transfer to a four-year institution to prepare for a teaching career at the college level. The mother of a four-year-old, she currently tutors students in math and is also a member of the Cumberland County College Student Senate.

Ms. Reilly expects to earn her bachelor's degree from the College of New Jersey in May 1999. She is president of the Leadership Development Program, through which she developed and presented educational workshops on the college campus and at community high schools. Ms. Reilly also serves as a residence hall advisor and as an assistant in the Office of Campus Life. She is an associate member of the Student Government Association and the Society for Human Resource Management.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Commission Awards Urban Revitalization Planning Grants

In September, the Commission on Higher Education awarded 13 planning grants to 12 urban colleges and universities that will join with community groups and the private sector to develop proposals to address pressing local problems and needs.

The Urban Incentive Grant Program grew out of the long-range plan for New Jersey higher education, which recommended that the Commission and the Presidents' Council jointly develop a proposal for incentive funding to promote higher education's involvement in urban revitalization. The grants of up to \$25,000 each are the first phase of the program. Collaboratives with successful planning grants will compete for eight implementation grants of up to \$1 million each, pending appropriation of the funds in the next fiscal year.

Planning grants were awarded to institutions located in all eight eligible locales – Camden, Elizabeth, Jersey City, Millville/Vineland, Newark, Pemberton, Paterson, and Trenton.

Each successful collaborative consists of multiple constituencies that include community organizations, business and industry, local government, and residents. Several of the collaboratives include more than one higher education partner. The participants were required to demonstrate previous involvement in community outreach and readiness to participate effectively in the project.

The planning grants may be used for technical assistance, travel, and clerical assistance.

Urban Planning Grant Recipients
Burlington County College (two grants)
Cumberland County College
Mercer County Community College
New Jersey City University
New Jersey Institute of Technology
Passaic County Community College
Rowan University
Rutgers University - Newark
Saint Peter's College
Thomas Edison State College
Union County College
University of Medicine and Dentistry of NJ

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

[The Commission](#) | [Reports & Documents](#) | [News Releases / Newsletters](#) | [EOF & Grant Programs](#)  
[More Information about NJ Higher Ed](#)