

Office of the Governor

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NEWS RELEASE

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Governor Whitman Launches New Jersey Virtual University Website

Governor Christie Whitman today announced the establishment of the New Jersey Virtual University website, an on-line index that will expand access to distance learning courses offered by participating New Jersey colleges and universities.

"This initiative will provide unprecedented opportunities for students of all ages to access higher education in our state by eliminating the most common constraints - time and location," Governor Whitman noted. "The NJVU website continues my commitment to providing the highest quality of education to all of our state's citizens whether it be for job training, career development or personal growth."

The New Jersey Virtual University can be accessed online at www.njvu.org. The website provides a user-friendly online index of more than 800 distance learning courses and programs from 42 participating public and independent colleges and universities throughout New Jersey.

The NJVU website provides a central source of information on courses and programs offered over the Internet or through other technologies. It is not a degree granting institution, but rather a mechanism for students to access distance learning opportunities at existing New Jersey institutions. These schools retain jurisdiction over the granting of credits, certificates or degrees.

"The principle objective of the NJVU is to encourage lifelong learning through our existing higher education structure," Gov. Whitman said. "We are particularly fortunate to have a wide range of distance learning opportunities which the NJVU can help promote and cultivate both within the state and well beyond its borders."

In 1997, Governor Whitman proposed and signed into law the Higher Education Technology Infrastructure Fund Act to help New Jersey's public and independent colleges and universities accelerate their long-range technology plans and enhance their capacity to make higher education more accessible through distance learning. Last summer, she called for the creation of a virtual university to build upon that increased capacity.

A Virtual University Design Team, led by Wendy Rayner, the State's Chief Information Officer, and including college and university representatives, private sector technology experts, and staff from the Commission on Higher Education, developed the online index of offerings. In the coming months, the design team will further enhance the virtual university website and initiate faculty development and course conversion plans.

The Governor has proposed \$500,000 to support faculty training programs.

"The Virtual University is a wonderful example of how New Jersey can use technology to transform the way citizens and businesses access education and training to deliver services, eliminate waste and improve communication," Rayner said. "Learning is increasingly important in today's information-driven, global economy both to our students and to our State."

"The New Jersey Virtual University builds upon the State's wealth of high-tech corporate and academic resources, providing flexibility and increased opportunity to meet diverse workforce training and education needs, as well as the needs of recent high school graduates and adults seeking lifelong learning opportunities," said Alfred J. Cade, chair of the New Jersey Commission of Higher Education.

For more information on the New Jersey Virtual University and to access the online index of offerings, direct your web browser to <http://www.njvu.org>. The website can also be reached through a link from the State of New Jersey home page at <http://www.state.nj.us>

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PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS

Atlantic Community College	Monmouth University
Bergen Community College	New Jersey City University
Berkeley College	New Jersey Institute of Technology
Brookdale Community College	Ocean County College
Burlington County College	Passaic County Community College
Caldwell College	Ramapo College of NJ
Camden County College	Raritan Valley Community College
Centenary College	Richard Stockton College of New Jersey
College of Saint Elizabeth	Rider University
County College of Morris	Rowan University
Cumberland County College	Rutgers, the State University of NJ
DeVry Institute	Saint Peter's College
Drew University	Salem Community College
Fairleigh Dickinson University	Seton Hall University
Felician College	Stevens Institute of Technology
Georgian Court College	Sussex County Community College
Gloucester County College	Thomas Edison State College
Hudson County Community College	Union County College
Kean University	University of Medicine and Dentistry of NJ
Mercer County Community College	Warren County Community College
Middlesex County College	William Paterson University of NJ

WATCH FOR THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTIONS WHO INTEND TO JOIN US SOON:

Bloomfield College	Montclair State University
Essex County College	Princeton University

