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What They Are Saying...

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Achieving the Governor's Higher Education Task Force recommendations would "significantly enhance the quality and profile of New Jersey higher education"

Rutgers President Richard L. McCormick, recommendations in the report would "significantly enhance the quality and profile of New Jersey higher education and would benefit residents across the entire state":

"I want to acknowledge immediately the strong merits of one of the task force's most important recommendations, which is to reunite Rutgers University and the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. Virtually every prominent medical school in the nation is affiliated with a top research university. These institutions attract the finest faculty and students, develop cutting-edge multidisciplinary initiatives, and are effective catalysts for economic growth and new jobs. Universities that are affiliated with medical schools also attract the highest levels of research funding and channel significant dollars into their states." (Tom Hester Sr., "Christie task force recommends merger of Rutgers-UMDNJ," New Jersey Newsroom, 1/4/2011)

"...praised the idea of folding Robert Wood Johnson Medical School into the 56,000-student state university... "Such a union would create a national academic powerhouse that would significantly enhance the quality and profile of New Jersey higher education and would benefit residents across the entire state," McCormick said in a statement." (Kelly Heyboer and Ginger Gibson, "In task force report, UMDNJ faces third call to merge with Rutgers University in a decade," The Star-Ledger, 1/5/2011)

Richard Stockton College of New Jersey President Herman J. Saatkamp, "Gov. Christie, Gov. Kean and the committee of the Governor's Task Force on Higher Education are to be commended for a comprehensive and forward-thinking approach to the challenges facing higher education in New Jersey":

"The report reinforces the importance of individual autonomy of the colleges and universities, and recognizes each institution's distinctiveness in structure, geography and mission...Gov. Christie, Gov. Kean and the committee of the Governor's Task Force on Higher Education are to be commended for a comprehensive and forward-thinking approach to the challenges facing higher education in New Jersey. The Task Force report released today acknowledges and plans for much-needed changes following two decades of declines in state funding, increased demand for access, and serious capacity issues. In doing so, it realistically incorporates the financial constraints our state is facing in the years ahead." Saatkamp went on to praise the committee's recommendations to provide assistance to finance new and/or updated facilities; increase scholarship programs and promote access to all; eliminate tuition caps; continue autonomy of institutional governance and accountability through the Board of Trustees; and reduction in red tape and state mandates. "Many of the recommendations contained in the report are consistent with those made by the Presidents' Council of the state's colleges and universities, as well as those of the New Jersey Association of State Colleges and Universities," Saatkamp said. "The task force has mapped out a model approach for other states as our nation competes on a global basis in higher education." (Anthony Bellano, "Stockton President Praises Taskforce Findings," Galloway Patch, 1/4/2011)

Montclair State University President Susan Cole, "several recommendations in the report" echo reforms she has been pushing for:

"Cole has been pushing for several recommendations in the report, including a bond issue for higher education and reforms in how the state divides funding among the public colleges. 'I, for one, am very much looking forward to step two,' Cole said. 'I don't think Gov. Christie would have gone forward with this task force if he didn't intend to act.'" (Kelly Heyboer and Ginger Gibson, "In task force report, UMDNJ faces third call to merge with Rutgers University in a decade," The Star-Ledger, 1/5/2011)

New Jersey Council of County Colleges Chairman Ron Winthers and President Lawrence A. Nespoli, "[we] are encouraged that we once again have a governor who recognizes the importance of higher education":

"Like all New Jerseyans, we are grateful for the efforts of Governor Kean and his fellow task force members and are encouraged that we once again have a governor who recognizes the importance of higher education." (New Jersey's Council of County Colleges Press Release, 1/4/2011)

New Jersey Association of State Colleges and Universities Head Darryl Greer, "the recommendations squarely address many of the areas" that New Jersey need to act on:

"I am pleased that it outlines steps, policies, and investments needed to assure New Jersey's future prosperity through higher education, transforming the lives of our citizens, and ensuring that all can successfully live and work in the

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Garden State." (Kevin McArdle, "Task Force Releases Higher Ed Recommendations," NJ 101.5 FM, 1/5/2011)

"...the recommendations squarely address many of the areas where we, in New Jersey, have danced around issues or improvised for far too long — the need for state support for facilities, for example..." (Kelly Heyboer and Ginger Gibson, "In task force report, UMDNJ faces third call to merge with Rutgers University in a decade," The Star-Ledger, 1/5/2011)

"Speaking to the overall report, Darryl Greer, head of the New Jersey Association of State Colleges and Universities, said that achieving its recommendations would be "a huge step" toward preserving public colleges' affordability and access." (Rita Giordano and Adrienne Lu, "Panel calls on N.J. to help colleges," Inquirer, 1/5/2011)

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