

## Governor Christie Highlights Progress on Innovative Learning Facility at New Jersey Institute of Technology

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*State Invests \$30.7M in Building Our Future GO Funds in State-of-the-Art Center in Newark*

**Trenton, NJ** – Highlighting his commitment to provide New Jersey’s institutions of higher learning with the resources they need to prepare students to enter the workforce with the skills they need to succeed in the 21st century, Governor Chris Christie today toured the Central King Building, an ongoing improvement project on the NJIT campus in Newark. The project is funded through the Building Our Future General Obligation Bond Act (the GO Bond Act), which was signed into law by Governor Christie in 2012 and approved by voters.

“The Go Bond Act is making it possible for New Jersey’s colleges and universities to provide modern, world-class facilities to retain our best students and attract research partners who are looking to bring good-paying jobs and businesses here,” said Governor Christie. “This investment in our institutions of higher education will pay dividends in generations to come.”

The Central King Building -- formerly Newark’s Central High School -- is a state-of-the-art STEM teaching and learning hub, funded with \$30.7 million in GO Bond Act funds with a total state investment of \$86.3 million. It includes a Center for Innovation and Discovery to support innovative learning programs and the application of emerging knowledge through hands-on laboratories. The building now has three floors of instructional, academic and research space for the Biological Sciences Education and Research Complex, which brings together researchers and students from biology, neuroscience, ecology, biophysics, and mathematical biology, as well as a new Math Engagement Center, a new Composition Engagement Center, a Teaching Effectiveness Institute, and centers for tutoring and pre-professional mentoring.

The project is expected to be completed in January 2017. About 1,000 construction jobs were created as a result of the project. NJIT anticipates the King Building project will increase enrollment to more than 14,200 students by 2020, a 50 percent enrollment increase from 2011 and a 75 percent increase over 2005.

“I congratulate President Dr. Joel Bloom for his leadership in making NJIT a stellar example of research, innovation and diversity, for building a state-of-the-art facility that will prepare students from all backgrounds who enter the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM), which are the jobs of the future,” said Secretary of Higher Education Rochelle Hendricks. “Through its Innovation Institute, its corporate partnerships, and its service to the surrounding neighborhood, NJIT is a model citizen in the higher education community. The building we are celebrating today is the result of the Christie Administration’s strong commitment to providing higher education institutions with the world-class facilities they need to compete.”

A second NJIT project underway, the Life Sciences and Engineering Building, is funded through \$13.5 million in state funds, including \$9 million from the GO Bond Act. The state-of-the-art research facility was designed to promote collaboration among faculty, students, staff and external partners in fields ranging from biomedical engineering and the biological sciences to electrical engineering and health care technologies.

Currently, NJIT’s student undergraduate population is more than 50 percent minority and non-white. More than 30 percent of all NJIT undergraduate students are first generation with about 10 percent of entering undergraduates qualifying for the State’s Educational Opportunity Fund program.

The GO Bond Act was the first state-backed funding for higher education construction in 25 years and authorized up to \$750 million in state grants for new academic facilities. Combined with grant funding made available from other state-

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supported grant programs for higher education facilities, the Christie Administration authorized nearly \$1.3 billion in grants in 2013 for 176 projects at 46 institutions for cutting-edge research laboratories, computerized classrooms and cyber networks that allow students and faculty to interact with colleagues around the world.

In November 2015, Governor Christie announced a second round of funding for higher education construction projects. Those projects will be announced later this year.

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