How did Rutgers University in Newark become a long-distance learning lab for 31 representatives of the nation’s higher education institutions?

When the American Council on Education (ACE) went looking for a diverse environment that could serve as a case study for fellows in its midyear seminar, the organization tapped Rutgers in Newark. It was a match made in pedagogical heaven: the university received valuable input from academics nationwide, and ACE fellows had the advantage of studying an actual institution in real time. The idea was for the fellows to research the chosen facility and develop proposals based on the seminar’s themes of leadership, diversity and change in higher education as they apply to several nontraditional student populations.

Working with background information Rutgers supplied, the participants brainstormed with the participation of Newark Chancellor Steven J. Diner – himself an ACE fellow a quarter of a century ago – and Sherri-Ann Butterfield, associate professor of sociology and a faculty fellow this year in the chancellor’s office.

“The fellows offered us the perspectives of outsiders, seeing us with fresh eyes,” Diner said. The chancellor said he was impressed with the fellows’ grasp of the campus’s historical mission of serving lower-income and first-generation college students, and their ability to link those factors to today’s student populations.

The findings will allow ACE to fine-tune the case-study process for next year, when Rutgers again will be a featured participant. ACE represents presidents and chancellors of all types of U.S. degree-granting institutions, more than 1,600 in all.
The galleries, now celebrating their 30th anniversary year, offer a series of arts-based education programs “in the spirit of civic and cultural activism, reflecting Paul Robeson’s life work,” explains Anonda Bell, interim director and associate curator. “The emphasis is on finding ways to make art relevant, (both physically and intellectually) and thus enhance accessibility for a broad range of people of all ages.” Toward that end, the galleries not only present high-caliber exhibitions, publications and public educational programs, but also partner with individuals and community groups, explain Bell and Miesha Hayden, the galleries’ education coordinator/gallery manager.

Outreach includes programs in coordination with Newark area schools; Saturday workshops and tours geared for families; and ArtMoves, a program that brings arts, arts education and arts therapy to communities and audiences without ready access to the arts.

The ArtMoves program brings interactive talks on Paul Robeson Galleries’ exhibitions and art-making workshops into the Adult Day Health Care Center at Newark Beth Israel Medical Center and the Essex County Juvenile Detention Center. These also are offered at no cost, thanks to grants from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts and the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation.

For more information on the galleries and upcoming 30th anniversary events, visit http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/artgallery/.

Art that Teaches and Touches

The Paul Robeson Galleries are more than spaces where you can enjoy art; they are centers of education and interaction with the community not confined within the Paul Robeson Campus Center.

Diversity on Campus

Transforms Learning...and Society

Why does the nation’s most diverse national university need to teach faculty about diversity? In the words of Chancellor Steven J. Diner, “Our students and graduates tell us repeatedly how much they learn from all of the cultures represented on campus. So we need to learn how to use that diversity to make us better and stronger as a community.”

That’s where Diner’s bold new campus initiative comes into play. In March the first “Faculty Development Workshop on Diversity” was taught by Assistant Chancellor and Dana Library Director Mark Winston and Associate Professor Sherri-Ann Butterfield, faculty fellow in the Office of the Chancellor. Working with Diner, Winston and Butterfield are developing a series of seminars in which faculty members from every discipline will both learn and share ideas for maximizing the educational benefits presented by the diversity within their classrooms. The goal is to make diversity a crucial teaching tool that enhances the learning experience for Rutgers students and faculty alike. “It’s more than focusing on representational diversity – it’s transformational diversity, transforming the processes of teaching and of learning,” says Butterfield.

For instance, an education professor might ask students to design a curriculum for an institution where some students observe daily prayers and others do not, or a professor in the business school might have students research the relationship between diversity and organizational performance in corporations that serve both global and local markets.

The seminars will show faculty how to seize opportunities – such as a current event or a student’s question – and to manage the discussion around issues of diversity. Faculty also should come away prepared to respond to possibly sensitive issues in a way that enlightens the discussion, rather than disrupting it.

The workshops will include cultural, religious, racial, ethnic, gender and sexual diversity, according to Winston and Butterfield. “Faculty won’t need to change their curriculum,” notes Butterfield, “just their approach to teaching.” Moreover, the seminars should give faculty “a greater sense of comfort in their abilities to discuss diversity issues in the classroom,” Winston explains.

Rutgers University, Newark

2009 Commencement

At-A-Glance

College of Nursing
Tuesday, May 19, 10 a.m.
Golden Dome Athletic Center
Speaker: P.K. Scheerle, RN, former president and CEO of American Nursing Services, Inc.

Graduate School-Newark and School of Public Affairs & Administration
Tuesday, May 19, 2 p.m.
Golden Dome Athletic Center
Speaker: Jayne Anne Phillips, professor of English and director of the Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing Program

School of Criminal Justice
Wednesday, May 20, 10 a.m.
Golden Dome Athletic Center
Speaker: Garry McCarthy, director of the Newark Police Department

Rutgers Business School
Thursday, May 21, 10 a.m.
New Jersey Performing Arts Center
Speaker: The Honorable Cory A. Booker, Mayor of Newark, NJ

Newark College of Arts and Sciences and University College
Thursday, May 21, 2 p.m.
New Jersey Performing Arts Center
Speaker: Alfred C. Koeppe, NCAS ’69, president and CEO of the Newark Alliance and member of the Rutgers Hall of Distinguished Alumni

School of Law
Friday, May 22, 10 a.m.
New Jersey Performing Arts Center
Speaker: The Honorable Freda L. Wolfson, Rutgers Law ‘79, U.S. District Judge, NJ
At Rutgers he volunteered with NJPIRG’s WaterWatch group, educating public school children about pollution, and also worked with the Hunger/Homelessness Campaign. But the Roselle, NJ resident made the most impact by founding The Guardian Fellowship in 2007, a non-profit organization dedicated to “people helping people.” Jason and 16 Rutgers students made it to the Top Four in the annual RBS Investment Research Challenge, placing with other top business schools Columbia, Fordham and Yale. Last year, Rutgers Business School students concluded on Feb. 19. Team members were Nathan Greenblatt, Elise Polezel, Sonah Chandra, Steve Catara and Tony Zhang. Their research project focused on Phillips-Van Heusen Corp., whose brands include Calvin Klein, DKNY, Kenneth Cole, Geoffrey Beene and Timberland. The Investment Research Challenge is a six-month educational initiative in which leading industry professionals teach business and finance students how to research and report on a publicly traded company. Students then present their research to a high-profile panel of Wall Street experts. Last year, Rutgers Business School students captured first place and were awarded $5,000 in scholarship funds for RBS and provided with the opportunity to ring the NASDAQ Stock Market’s closing bell at the NASDAQ MarketSite at Times Square.

Chancellor Steven J. Diner Named President of Urban College Coalition

It’s a perfect match: Steven J. Diner, chancellor of Rutgers University in Newark, whose career has been committed to urban engagement, is the new president of the Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities (CUMU). CUMU is an international organization of more than 85 institutions sharing the mission of “striving for national excellence while contributing to the economic development, social health and cultural vitality of the urban or metropolitan centers served.” Diner, who previously served as vice president of CUMU, is a nationally known urban historian. “Throughout my career, I have been deeply committed to the idea that cities and metropolitan areas provide extraordinarily rich resources to advance universities’ core missions of teaching and research,” noted Diner.

Diner also has been asked to serve a three-year appointment on the American Council on Education’s Commission on Racial and Ethnic Equity. The commission is charged with providing guidance in a variety of areas of institutional effectiveness, including access, success, equity and diversity, lifelong learning and internationalization.

A Graduate With a Mission... from page 1

At Rutgers he volunteered with NJPIRG’s WaterWatch group, educating public school children about pollution, and also worked with the Hunger/Homelessness Campaign. But the Roselle, NJ resident made the most impact by founding The Guardian Fellowship in 2007, a non-profit organization dedicated to “people helping people.” Jason and 16 Rutgers students work with K-8 pupils at St. Philip’s Academy in Newark. Jason’s almu mater “twice a week, the Rutgers volunteers tutor and mentor the younger pupils. Last fall Jason’s dedication and hard work were recognized by Rutgers when he received the Student Community Service Award as part of the Chancellor’s Community Engagement Awards. Graduation and graduate school will not end Jason’s work with The Guardian Fellowship. “When you help children and change their lives, you change the world,” he observes, and that is one of his life’s goals.
The greening of the campus, notes Claus Holzapfel, assistant professor, biological sciences, “gives people a chance to look at nature in places where they wouldn’t usually expect it.”

Part of that transformation began four years ago as an Earth Day celebration. On that day, volunteers from Rutgers-Newark took part in a day of service performing gardening tasks at the Greater Newark Conservatory. The next year, Assistant Professor Gabriela Küting, who teaches global environmental politics, initiated development of a sustainable garden on campus consisting of native New Jersey plants.

Providing a backdrop for the transformation, the Department of Physical Plant several years ago ripped out tons of concrete on the Norman Samuels Plaza and planted large swaths of grass. Now it is focusing on filling in the campus’s tree canopy. Last year, Sal Palatucci, grounds supervisor, applied for a grant through the New Jersey Tree Foundation and the Beautiful Newark initiative to plant trees along the campus corridors. Lining the streets are more than 100 new trees, including Japanese lilac, plum, cherry and dogwood. This year, he hopes to receive up to 70 additional trees.

As the campus has transformed, both people and birds have found Rutgers in Newark a more welcoming place. More than 100 species of birds now rest here during their spring and fall migrations. With them, too, has come a responsibility.

“By attracting birds we now have a duty to provide them with food sources and places to hide,” notes Holzapfel, who leads bird walks on campus in the spring and fall. To meet that need, campus volunteers and professionals from the Greater Newark Conservancy planted another sustainable garden with blueberry, elderberry and other bushes.

The development of the campus as an urban green-space provides a model for how cities can provide settings where nature can be observed. An ecologist who studies the formation of novel communities by species that previously did not exist together, Holzapfel has been watching how the white-throated sparrows that winter on campus have been forming a community with the house sparrows that make their home in Newark. “They are forming a new community you can see here,” he says. To take part in one of Holzapfel’s bird walks this May, go to http://newarkbioweb.rutgers.edu/Holzapfel Lab/.

## Protecting the Planet Through Research and Service

By Kathleen Brunet Eagan

Faculty members at Rutgers University in Newark cover a wide terrain when it comes to environmental stewardship.

### Research

Peta Christmann, associate professor, management and global business, Rutgers Business School, specializes in environmental strategies and competitive advantage, global firm self-regulation, voluntary initiatives and standards to govern firms’ environmental conduct.

Frank Fischer, professor, political science and global affairs, specializes in environmental politics and policy, science and technology policy, and the politics of sustainability.

H. Bruce Franklin, professor, English and American studies, has researched and written an acclaimed book about the ecological and historical significance of menhaden, a fish crucial to the health of the Atlantic and Gulf coasts’ marine environments.

Yuan Gao, associate professor, Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, researches the impact of atmospheric iron and dust on oceanic biogeochemistry and carbon cycles, and urban pollution and atmospheric nitrogen deposition in New Jersey coastal waters.

Claus Holzapfel, assistant professor, biological sciences, specializes in the development and effect of novel biological communities and urban “wild lands” resulting from human impact and climate change.

Karina Schäfer, assistant professor, biological sciences, researches global change and its effects on forest ecosystems, and carbon dioxide and water fluxes in the Meadowlands and in urban areas.

Lee Slater, professor, Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, specializes in water resources, methane cycling in peatlands, and geophysical imaging of near surface processes.

Genese Sokoloff, assistant professor, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, researches rain forest conservation and the politics of biodiversity loss.

Judith Weis, professor, biological sciences, researches the effect of environmental stresses, including contaminants, invasive species and parasites on the behavior and ecology of estuarine organisms.

## A Rooftop Meadow Grows at Rutgers Business School

By Kathleen Brunet Eagan

When Rutgers Business School moves into its new facility at 1 Washington Park, faculty, students and staff will be able to enjoy a 12,000 square-foot rooftop meadow. The meadow, a sustainable garden consisting of ornamental grasses and sedums, will be located on the roof of the two-story entry pavilion constructed for the school at the high-rise office tower. Rutgers Business School will be occupying 11 floors of the building.

Not only a place to enjoy, the urban rooftop meadow will help keep the building cooler in summer, reduce rainwater runoff and prolong the life of the roof itself, according to Daniel J. Topping, AIA, of Nadaskay Kopelson Architects of Morristown. The architect for Rutgers Business School’s new Newark facilities, Nadaskay Kopelson worked with Roofscapes Inc. of Philadelphia on construction of the rooftop meadow.

A sustainable garden similar to one pictured here will be planted on the rooftop of Rutgers Business School’s new home in Newark at 1 Washington Park.

## Keep Connected

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