INTRODUCTION
Welcome everybody, faculty, staff, students and anybody who just discovered they are in the wrong place but is now too embarrassed to leave. Also, I extend a special welcome to Trustee Bill Dator, sitting in the front row. It is my privilege to address you once again on the state of the College. This is my fifteenth such address and, as in the past, these continue to be tumultuous times requiring sustained vigilance on all our parts, but we are responding well and the state of the College is sound.

Our freshman class, which, by the way, is the most diverse in the College’s history, seems particularly full of positive energy.

I am going to begin by relating some news items both external and internal and then go to some more general themes. There will, as always, be time for questions at the conclusion of my formal address.

CAPITAL BOND REFERENDUM
The first news item has to do with the capital bond referendum. The governor signed the bill giving rise to the referendum last month and it authorizes the issuance of $750 million in state general obligation bonds to provide grants to New Jersey’s public and private institutes of higher education to construct and equip higher education facilities. That referendum will be on the November 6th ballot. No matter how jaundiced you may feel about the election, no matter how turned off you may be by the implications of the candidates, vote on that day for the bond referendum if for nothing else and encourage your friends and relations to do the same. The bond proceeds will be allocated among the sectors of higher education as follows:

- Public Research Universities: $300 million
- State Colleges and Universities (that’s us): $247.5 million
  Note: That’s us minus one because Rowan has now become a research university and is in the $300 million group.
- The County Colleges: $150 million
- The Private Institutions: $52.5 million

There is a kicker...institutions that receive capital project grants must provide institutional funds to support 25% of the cost of the project. So, let’s suppose Ramapo College receives $20 million, we would have to come up with $5 million of our own as the 25% match—we would have to do that from Capital Reserves and we would have to find the money because we are sure not going to give it up.

Now, the allocation process—which is, typically, somewhat byzantine. The bill, A3139, available in its entirety at www.njleg.state.nj.us/2012/Bills/A3500/3139_I1.HTM, states:
Procedures for the review and approval of, and eligibility criteria for, grants shall be established by the secretary. An institution of higher education shall submit a long-range facilities plan that details the facilities needs of the institution and the institution’s plans to address those needs. The institution shall demonstrate how the project to be financed through bond funds advances the goals of the long-range facilities plan, increases the academic capacity of the institution, and provides a direct benefit to students.

This is not particularly challenging given that we have not received any capital funding since 1988. What would count as deferred maintenance alone could meet these criteria. The secretary shall then prepare a list of eligible projects. Projects that are deemed “construction-ready” shall receive priority. The bill does not define the phrase “construction-ready.” To facilitate the appropriation of funds not later than June 30, 2013, the secretary is required to submit to the presiding officers of each House, on or before March 1, a list of eligible projects along with the amount of the grant for each project. The bill states:

The list shall be deemed to be approved in its entirety unless the Legislature adopts a concurrent resolution stating that the Legislature is not in agreement with the list within 60 days following the date of transmittal of the list to the Legislature.

Which is to say that if the legislature doesn’t take any action, the recommendation sticks. If the legislature does decide to take action, it doesn’t stick. We have no idea how all of this will shake out. Together, with all of the other colleges, we have submitted a substantial list of projects and I can assure you that they are all projects we would be willing to see funded. However, it remains to be seen what our proportionate share will be. We don’t know if there will be a formula devised. One formula that you might choose could be based on your state appropriation. That is not a formula that Ramapo College would want and I have argued forcefully against it because, as you know, we do not get our fair share of state appropriations.

Remember, November 6, get out there and vote for the capital bond referendum.

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENTS
I would like to describe some themes which have given rise to infrastructure developments at the College that have taken place on the personnel side since I arrived. In 2005, when I became your president, I felt strongly that academic priorities needed to be reinforced at the College. More of the budget was in fact shifted to Academic Affairs. For example, we:

• Oversaw the integration of planning and budgeting
• Instituted the Strategic Priorities Incentive Fund (which has been allocated mostly to academic projects)
• Hired five net new faculty members per year for several years
We are not yet where we want to be when it comes to academic programs and personnel but those needs, for the moment, have been eclipsed by other infrastructure support needs. As the state demands more and more of us and as our prospective students, their parents, and our graduates demand more and more of us, particularly by way of data, we have had to focus our attention on data collection. As a result, we have instituted the new Office of Institutional Research. Gurvider Khanijeh, our new director of institutional research, please stand to be recognized.

We also know, and you are probably as tired of hearing this as I am, that Ramapo is still referred to as “a hidden gem.” It is a loathsome phrase but I still hear it all the time. Well, we are trying not to be as hidden, which is why we have broken out Public Affairs and Marketing into two positions because, frankly, they demand it. Anna Lieggi Nadler, our new assistant vice president of marketing, please stand to be recognized.

Further we have had a strong demand from our staff in particular, but from faculty as well, for training and development. So I am pleased to announce that Lorraine Edwards will be moving to the new position of director of training and development within the Department of Human Resources; and the position being vacated by Lorraine, Director of Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action, will be assumed by Melissa Van Der Wall, who will report directly to me. I want to express my gratitude to both Lorraine and Melissa for their willingness to take on these tasks. It shows a heightened awareness of our need to focus on those two areas and they will certainly have my full support and that of the administration. These changes will be effective November 1 and so we will begin immediately to search for a new director of campus judicial affairs.

Now, I know what some of you will be thinking…that this migration from hiring new and more faculty to hiring administrators is a worrisome one. Well, everybody knows the dangers of “administrative creep” (which is a process and not a person) but we are not going to let that happen. We are still very lean administratively. Babs Varano has done the research for me on a couple of occasions in the last year or so and we are relatively thin on the ground administratively despite what some of you may think. There are of course certain realities that we must face as a small institution. For example, we cannot do without a registrar just because we don’t enroll as many students as Montclair State.

STRATEGIC PLAN
The Strategic Planning Task Force is moving along very well, a little slower than I had hoped, but it has been very rich in its deliberations, which more than compensates for us. The Task Force, which includes 25 people (faculty, staff, students, members of the Board of Governors and the Board of Trustees, and other community members), began meeting in January. We updated the Board of Trustees in June on progress and I want now to update you. There have been significant achievements, including the endorsement of a revised mission statement, all of which will be coming to the College very shortly for discussion. This simply means that our deliberations have yielded these drafts.
I want to read to you just the revised mission statement and you will get a sense of just how much more concise and focused it is.

Ramapo College is New Jersey's Public Liberal Arts College, dedicated to providing students a strong foundation for a lifetime of achievement. The College is committed to academic excellence through interdisciplinary and experiential learning, and international and intercultural understanding. Ramapo College emphasizes teaching and individual attention to all students. We promote diversity, inclusiveness, sustainability, student engagement, and community involvement.

The Strategic Planning Task Force has also endorsed three guiding principles:
• Principle 1 is to ensure mission and vision consistency.
• Principle 2 notes that there will be due attention to assessment, accountability, and analysis.
• Principle 3 emphasizes collaboration and transparency.

These principles, in turn, inform the four goals that have been identified, they are:
• Goal 1: Advance Academic Excellence and Engagement
• Goal 2: Cultivate and Support Diversity and Inclusiveness
• Goal 3: Enhance Institutional Viability and Foster Operational Sustainability
• Goal 4: Improve Internal and External Relations and Operations

The objectives for each of these goals are currently being refined. In the next week or two we will engage a third party consultant to help us bring the document home, if you will, and do the final editing. We are also continuing to work with the Master Planners to make sure that we don’t wind up with a Master Plan and a Strategic Plan that don’t dovetail. The next steps of the Strategic Planning process will involve:
• Consultation with the third party consultant
• Fora with the College-at-large so that we can get direct feedback
• Kick off the Outreach and Establishment of Achievement Targets Process through “on the road” work groups who will go out to individual units and discuss with them how they, in turn, respond to the Strategic Plan
• Compilation and vetting of the achievement targets
• College-wide presentation of the plan
• Development of an internal resource group to help others implement the plan
• Board of Trustees review and endorsement
• Implementation, annual assessment, and iterative development on defining and using data to make decisions

Updates on the Strategic Plan are available at www.ramapo.edu/president/stratplan.html.

GOOD NEWS
TAS’ Upward Bound Achievements
The Ramapo College Upward Bound Math Science Program has just been awarded its 5th grant for $263,414 for each of 5 years, and it will service at least 59 students per year
through 2017. The granting agency, NSF, issued RCNJ a perfect score of 100. In addition to the overall success of the program, recent successes of UBMS Ramapo attendees include:

- 13 attended Ramapo on merit scholarships and were not in the EOF program, even though they would have been financially eligible.
- Two of our students, Rizwana Yasmin and Jonathan Gonzalez, were given the freshman chemistry award for being the highest achieving students in Fundamentals of Chemistry I and II for their year.
- One merit scholarship student, Beyhan Bulur, earned her Bachelor’s degree in three years and one current Presidential scholar, Akhlema Haidar, is on track to graduate in three years with a Biochemistry major.

These are truly impressive accomplishments and we should not take for granted the Upward Bound program merely because it has been a part of Ramapo for so long. I think it has really been rejuvenated and I extend my congratulations.

ASB’s Impressive MBA Cohort
The MBA program in the Anisfield School of Business kicked off this summer and exceeded its enrollment goals. We have an impressive cohort and it includes professionals from Stryker, TD Bank, JP Morgan Chase, Konica Minolta, UPS, Pearson Education, and the ARC of Essex County. These students have undergraduate majors in Chemistry, Journalism, Marketing, Material Engineering, Finance, Management, and Applied Psychology. Their average work experience is 5.6 years and their average GPA is a 3.33. 50% of them are Ramapo Alumni and 55% of the cohort is female.

SSHS College Dean Edits
In the School of Social Science and Human Services, we are going to focus on the Dean. They are so often forgotten, it just isn’t fair. Our Dean of SSHS and Professor of Social Work, Sam Rosenberg, edited the second edition of Community Mental Health, subtitled Challenges for the 21st Century, along with Associate Professor of Social Work at Long Island University Jessica Rosenberg (who suspiciously shares his last name). According to Routledge Taylor Mental Health, the first edition of the textbook “quickly established itself as one of the most comprehensive and timely books about mental health practice in community settings.” Congratulations, Sam. I say nothing about the appropriateness of a Dean being a specialist in mental health.

CA Design Students/Alumni to Exhibit at Manhattan Gallery
In our School of Contemporary Arts, Visual Communication Design students Kenny Tietz, Lauren Pinto, and Maripet Mangosing entered “Students Vs. Trash,” a visual design competition sponsored by the Environmental Finance Center and the Environmental Protection Agency. The competition was open to college students in New York, New Jersey and Puerto Rico, and it promotes recycling and reusing and strives to put an end to littering. Tietz was named a finalist in the competition, and Pinto and Mangosing earned Honorable Mentions for their work. The winning works will be exhibited in the Manhattan Gallery in November 2012. I get regular news from Dean
Perry about what our CA grads are doing, it is really extraordinary stuff and we have so much to be proud of.

**SSAIS Students Present Papers at National Convention**
Six students in the Salameno School of American and International Studies were selected to present their papers at the Sigma Tau Delta convention. The papers were on creative and critical literary resources. I am going to read you the titles of the papers, without comment, as they are sometimes challenging:

- Brendan Flanagan: "Decapitation in Medieval Literature"
- Kimberly Eskin: "The Senselessness of Life in Gernet's The Balcony,”
- Francesca Baratta: "Female Sexuality and Insanity in Atwood's Alias Grace"
- Lauren Santaniello: "The Final Account of Anna Benson"
- Sarah Galo: "I Married my Rapist, a Selection of Poetry"
- Stephanie Mauro: "Displaced"

**The Ramapo App**
Ramapo ITS unveiled the new Ramapo Mobile Application. The app was designed by a Ramapo student and I have heard people raving about it. The app allows for faster access through “one click” navigation to a number of the College’s resources including: Faculty/Staff/Department Directory, Academic Information, Academic Calendar, Athletics, Shuttle Service, Banner Self-Service, Web for Students, Class Schedule, Course Catalog, Map of Ramapo and surrounding areas, Events, News, and Twitter.

**Commencement**
The Class of 2013 will graduate on Friday, May 17 at the IZOD Center. Now, why are we moving to the IZOD center? There are three major reasons. First, we could get the date and time that we needed and that was, in and of itself, virtually conclusive. Second, we will obviously get additional seating. Third, we also get on-site free parking, a welcome change from last year. More information on Commencement is available at [www.ramapo.edu/commencement](http://www.ramapo.edu/commencement).

**CHALLENGES**
Now I want to turn to our challenges.

**Supply and Demand**
I know we are fed up with talking about the economy, so I am not going to talk about it in particular. I am simply going to say that the currents of activity that are generated are unlike anything we have ever seen. A few days before classes were due to begin we had 930 full-time/first-time freshmen deposits. That number fell by about 50 in only a few days pointing to just how undecided people are coming right down to the wire. We are not alone in that. If you talk to administrators at other colleges, they will tell you the same thing…these are tremendously tumultuous times. So we have gone from a situation in which we were lodging students in hotel rooms because we didn’t have enough beds to now having extra capacity in our residences.

**Public Support**
We also recognize that government is elaborate, persistent and slow. We are subject, of course, to the determinations of government. I mention this because we have only six weeks really before the capital bond referendum—that is 6 weeks with which to campaign and convince people to vote in favor of the resolution supporting the capital bond. For two reasons I think this will be a more difficult sell now than perhaps it has been in the past. First, I think some people will look at the resolution and see a thinly veiled attempt to corral some funds to support for the ill thought-out merger in South Jersey which has not found much favor with the public. Second, there is another question on the ballot that has to do with judicial pensions which I think will cause a certain amount of salivation that will be negative and that may spread to our resolution.

Competition
We also know that we have begun the era of heightened competition in a shrinking market with shrinking state appropriations. By “shrinking market” I mean fewer students are leaving high school and going to college. As a result, we are walking a fine line. We, ourselves, need to introduce financially successful new programs without sacrificing our essential character as a public liberal arts college. We have to respond to student demand without kowtowing to it.

CONCLUSION
The Knowledge Economy
I want to conclude on a more general level by reflecting on the words of Andrew Delbanco, Professor of American Studies at Columbia University, and author of a book published this year by Princeton University Press titled *College, What it Was, Is and Should Be.*

Delbanco was asked the question, “Has American higher education lost focus on the importance of a liberal education in its pursuit of the knowledge economy?” I like his answer:

The word “liberal” derived from the latin *liber or free* implies education for freedom. Responsible freedom requires perspective on one’s own time and place as well as an awareness of rival ideas about how society might be organized, of the power of art to liberate the imagination, and of the power of science to reveal the workings of the physical world. Democracy is built on the premise that these capabilities must be as widely distributed as possible in the enfranchised population. American higher education is not meeting these responsibilities. We are increasingly focused on such measures as standardized tests, graduation rates, and job attainment—which tell us little about what kinds of citizens are being graduated from our colleges. Proficiency in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) fields is important in the global knowledge economy but so are creativity, sensitivity to other cultures, and most of all the ability to mediate among conflicting values. If we are to be not only a competitive society but also a good society we need liberally educated citizens.
The Dictionary of Newfoundland English
I would like to close my address with another word from The Dictionary of Newfoundland English. The word I shared at my last address was “dunch” meaning dull, heavy, stiff with long waiting. Well, I have a companion word today. I like to apply this word to the processes of government. The word is “logy.” In Newfoundland, logy means of persons or institutions heavy, sluggish, in poor condition, or dull. Now I am not saying that word necessarily applies but should you choose to use it, you do so with my blessing.

Thank you.

QUESTION AND ANSWER