

2023-2024

Annual Report



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OUR MISSION

To represent member institutions, advocate for higher education as a public good, and communicate the collective value of the state colleges and universities in serving the public interest and the State of New Jersey.



A Letter from Our Chairman

Dear Members and Friends of the New Jersey Association of State Colleges and Universities,

As we reflect on the past year and look forward to the opportunities and challenges ahead, I am thrilled to welcome new leadership to our Board and celebrate significant milestones within our community.

First and foremost, it is my great pleasure to welcome Kevin Drennan, Trustee of The College of New Jersey, to the Board. Kevin's extensive experience and commitment to public service will be invaluable as we continue to advocate for the needs of New Jersey's state colleges and universities.

I would also like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to Dr. Michael Bernstein on his permanent appointment as President of The College of New Jersey. Dr. Bernstein has already shown exceptional leadership during his interim tenure, and we are confident that under his guidance, The College of New Jersey will continue to thrive and set new standards of excellence.

In addition to these exciting developments, I am particularly delighted to welcome Jennifer Keyes-Maloney as the new Executive Director of the New Jersey Association of State Colleges and Universities. Jennifer joined us this past April, bringing with her over 25 years of experience across the public, private, and non-profit sectors. She is a seasoned advocate, a skilled administrator, and a dynamic leader who has already begun to make a substantial impact on our organization.

I would also like to acknowledge the critical stewardship that Associate Director Morganne Dudzinski provided over the last year to NJASCU. Her management and commitment to the organization has been instrumental to our success and deserves special recognition.

Under Jennifer and Morganne's leadership, our association has already seen successful outcomes, including the recent budget advocacy in the FY25 budget process, where we secured an increase in operating aid for senior public institutions. This critical investment will help our colleges and universities meet increasing costs and continue to provide high-quality education to New Jersey's students.

As we move forward, I am confident that the association is well-positioned to navigate the evolving landscape of higher education. Our continued success is made possible by the unwavering support of our members, partners, and stakeholders. Thank you for your commitment to our mission and for the trust you place in us.

Together, we will continue to champion the interests of New Jersey's state colleges and universities and ensure that they remain at the forefront of educational excellence.

A.J. Sabath
Chairman, NJASCU Board of Trustees

A Letter from Our Executive Director

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I am pleased to present the 2023-2024 Annual Report of the New Jersey Association of State Colleges and Universities (NJASCU).

First, I extend my gratitude to our board members and institutions' presidents for their steadfast support. Our collective efforts and shared vision have made NJASCU a prominent voice in New Jersey higher education policy, benefiting the students we serve. I also sincerely thank you for your support as I transition into the role of Executive Director. My predecessor, Gene Lepore, set an important trajectory for NJASCU, which I aim to build upon. Special thanks go to Associate Director Morganne Dudzinski for her dedication in guiding our organization through this period of change. Both Gene and Morganne have helped make NJASCU the leading advocate it is today.

I want to acknowledge outgoing Presidents' Chair, Rich Helldobler of William Paterson University, for his leadership over the last three years, and extend my heartfelt thanks to incoming Chair, Ramapo College President Cindy Jebb, for her commitment to fostering collaboration and strategy development among our members.

One of our key achievements this year has been maintaining and increasing public higher education funding. Over the past two years, we successfully advocated for over \$140 million in funding to address major cost increases and secured vital stabilization funds for institutions facing financial challenges.

NJASCU continues to be a vital partner and resource for state policymakers. From collaborating on student mental health and wellness with independent colleges to advocating alongside county colleges, and maintaining regular dialogue with the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education and the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority, we are both a valued partner and a convenor. NJASCU brings together leaders and staff to address critical issues affecting students, institutions, and higher education as a whole. Our institutions not only have a voice in key policy decisions but are also recognized as leaders in fostering consensus, developing best practices, and identifying areas for effective collaboration.

As the higher education landscape evolves, NJASCU remains committed to fostering dialogue, collaboration, and resource sharing among members. We will continue to lead on key issues like research commercialization and shared services with partners like Rutgers University and NJEDGE.

NJASCU remains dedicated to promoting higher education as a public good that drives socioeconomic mobility, stimulates communities, and fosters innovation. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to our mission and, most importantly, to our students.

Jennifer Keyes-Maloney
Executive Director, NJASCU

Leadership



A.J. Sabath, Trustee
Ramapo College of New Jersey
Chair, NJASCU



Madeleine Deininger, Trustee
Stockton University
Co-Vice Chair, NJASCU



Kevin Drennan, Trustee
The College of New Jersey
Co-Vice Chair, NJASCU



Dr. Kemi Alli, MD, Trustee
Thomas Edison State University



Frederick L. Gruel, Trustee
William Paterson University



Carlos Lejniaks, Trustee
New Jersey City University



Linda Lewis, Trustee
Kean University



Andrés Acebo, Interim President
New Jersey City University



Dr. Michael Bernstein, President
The College of New Jersey



Dr. Joe Bertolino, President
Stockton University



Dr. Merodie A. Hancock, President
Thomas Edison State University



Dr. Richard J. Helldobler, President
William Paterson University



Dr. Cindy R. Jebb, President
Ramapo College of New Jersey



Dr. Lamont Repollet, President
Kean University

Staff

Jennifer Keyes-Maloney

Executive Director

Jenn works with member institutions' presidents and senior leadership to develop the organization's policy agenda and objectives. She is responsible for publicly articulating the organization's positions to the State's key policy makers and stakeholders.

Jenn previously worked as the Associate Vice President for Government and Community Relations at The College of New Jersey, where she served as a liaison between the College and government officials, legislative bodies, and administrative agencies to advocate for the college's interests and secure vital funding. Prior to her role at the College, she served in key positions within the New Jersey Department of Treasury and before that as Assistant Director of Governmental Relations at the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association.

Jenn also currently serves as a councilwoman in Ewing Township.

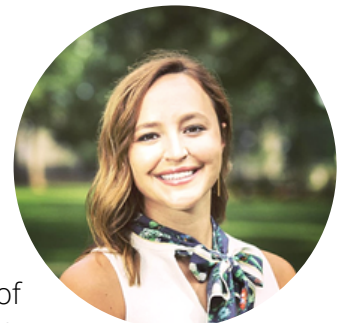


Morganne Dudzinski

Associate Director

Morganne assists the Executive Director in developing, proposing, and advocating for state higher education policy recommendations on behalf of NJASCU's seven member institutions. She also coordinates the association's communications and media relations. In 2023, Morganne was named to InsiderNJ's Insider 100: Millennials List.

Morganne has a decade of experience working in public policy, advocacy, and media relations in New Jersey. She previously served as the Director of News and Public Affairs and spokesperson at Monmouth University. Before that, Morganne worked as the Director of Advocacy and Public Affairs for JerseyCAN, a statewide education advocacy nonprofit. She also held the positions of Director of Constituent Affairs and later Legislative Director for former state Sen. Jennifer Beck, where she worked on the senator's policy agenda and also supported Sen. Declan O'Scanlon, who was a member of the General Assembly at the time.



Member Institutions



By the Numbers

NJASCU's seven member institutions collectively serve close to 59,000 students.

49,811

UNDERGRADUATES*

*IPEDS data from fall 2022.
Includes full and part time.

9,117

GRADUATE STUDENTS*

*IPEDS data from fall 2022.
Includes full and part time.

18,804

**PELL GRANT*
RECIPIENTS**

*Federal, need-based financial aid
for undergraduates. Data from 2021-
22 academic year.

13,703

TAG GRANT* RECIPIENTS

*NJ's need-based financial aid program.
Data from 2021-2022 academic year.

11,000+

**BACHELOR'S DEGREES
AWARDED IN 2022-2023**

2023-2024 Accomplishments

FY2025

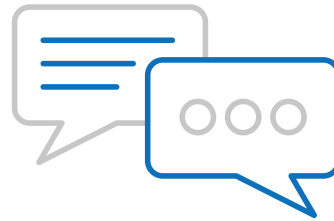
Successfully advocated for an additional **\$70.5 million** in operating aid via the Outcomes-Based Allocation (OBA) formula in the state budget.



Hosted inaugural legislative day at the State House; met with 30 members of the NJ Legislature.



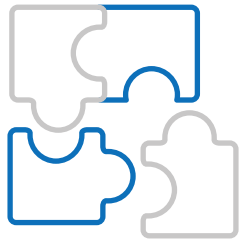
Welcomed our new Executive Director, Jennifer Keyes-Maloney.



Provided policy expertise and feedback on legislation, including:

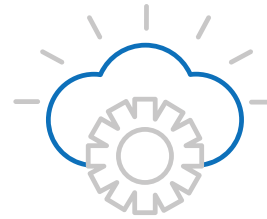
- supporting FAFSA completion for high school students, summer tuition aid grants, and increasing bidding threshold for public research universities, which are now law;
- securing amendments to a trustee training bill;
- offering testimony on meal plan donation legislation and transfer policy legislation;
- successfully advocating for amendments to transcript withholding legislation; and
- submitting comments on fiscal monitoring and career-oriented program regulatory proposals.

2023-2024 Accomplishments



Regularly convened NJASCU professional groups, including:

- Presidents
- Government affairs staff
- Provosts



Served on the steering committee for the inaugural NJ Higher Education Mental Health Summit.



Hosted inaugural Presidents' retreat and welcomed policy leaders, including:

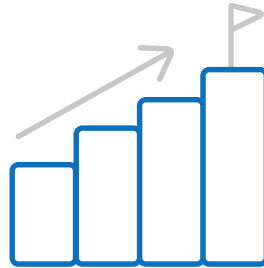
- Assembly Higher Education Chairwoman Linda Carter
- Congressman Andy Kim
- Senate Higher Education Vice Chairman Andrew Zwicker
- Assembly Higher Education Committee Member Cody Miller



Represented member institutions in policy discussions and in the media, such as:

- The Office of the Secretary of Higher Education's Outcomes-Based Allocation Working Group and Communities of Practice meetings;
- [NJ.com](#) and [NJ 101.5's](#) meal plan donation bill stories and [The Record's](#) FAFSA delay story.

Looking Ahead



In the year ahead, NJASCU looks forward to working with member institutions on initiatives that will strengthen the public higher education landscape in New Jersey, including:

- Collaborating with the Administration and Legislature on the fiscal year 2026 budget proposal to ensure adequate support for NJASCU institutions.
- Engaging legislators and the Governor's office on funding for capital and deferred maintenance at public colleges.
- Working to advance policy changes that would make higher education public-private partnership projects more feasible.
- Contributing to ongoing dialogue with state policymakers on the future of higher education in the State.
- Identifying opportunities for institutions to share resources, staff, and/or contractors to reduce overhead costs.
- Continuing to build the association's visibility through media, advocacy days, etc.