Dear NJASCU Colleagues/Friends:

Welcome to this week’s edition of NJASCU’s "Noteworthy" compilation of a feature story, advocacy report, and news item(s), reflecting the interests and happenings among New Jersey’s senior public colleges and universities. Some of our news articles are reprinted in full; most are summaries with the full article accessible by clicking on the headline.

We would love your feedback and suggestions. Please keep sending press releases, many of which will be included in our "Noteworthy" compilation.

Thank you,

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NJASCU Features

Ramapo College is Grant Recipient of U.S. Department of State's Capacity Building Program for Study Abroad

NJASCU QuickTakes

Ramapo College of New Jersey has been selected to receive a grant as part of the U.S. Department of State’s 2019 Capacity Building Program for Study Abroad. Ramapo is one of 21 colleges and universities from across the United States selected from more than 120 applications to create, expand and/or diversify American student mobility overseas in support of foreign policy goals.

The Capacity Building Program for U.S. Study Abroad is a program of the U.S. Department of State with funding provided by the U.S. Government and supported in its implementation by World Learning.
Ramapo College, which has a vibrant international program, recently created a new model of study abroad experience called "Global Field Experiences." These are two-credit courses that involve 7-15 days of travel during winter or spring break in addition to structured activities before, during and after the international component to create meaningful learning experiences.

"The Global Field Experience initiative is an embodiment of the Ramapo College mission in action: the commitment to support international, experiential, interdisciplinary, and intercultural learning and awareness for our students," said Stefan Becker, provost and vice president of Academic Affairs at Ramapo College. "We are grateful and proud our efforts to provide students with meaningful and affordable international learning experiences have been recognized by the State Department's Capacity Building Program for Study Abroad. Through this initiative, students will have more opportunities for academically rigorous, experiential and project-based learning abroad that will enhance their curriculum and deepen their understanding of global intercultural competence," Dr. Becker said. Read more.

**NJCU Leadership Awards Celebrate Four Impact Makers for Exemplary Contributions to Jersey City**

**NJASCU Quicktakes**

Four acclaimed individuals whose contributions to Jersey City represent the pinnacle of excellence in areas of the arts, service, innovation, and community building as a lifelong legacy were honored with Jersey City Leadership Awards at a celebration presented by the New Jersey City University Foundation on Thursday, June 6, 2019 at the Liberty House.

Rooted in the fundamental premise that bettering the quality of life for those who live, work, play, and study in Jersey City is a noble pursuit, the Jersey City Leadership Awards were conceived to honor, promote, and encourage exemplary efforts by individuals and organizations who have made and continue to make exemplary contributions to Jersey City.

The honorees, who were recognized for the tremendous impact they have had on Jersey City and their efforts to positively transform our community, are:

**Arts Award**

Meredith Burns, Executive Director, Art House Productions

**Service Award**

Hon. Frank J. Guarini, Former Congressman and Philanthropist

**Innovation Award**

Joseph F. Scott, Executive Vice President, Health Care Transformation, RWJBarnabas Health

**Legacy Award**

Glenn D. Cunningham, Former Mayor (2001-2004), Jersey City (posthumously)
In announcing the Jersey City Leadership Awards, NJCU President Sue Henderson said, "We are thrilled to celebrate our outstanding honorees for their vision, achievements, and continuing commitment to advance their areas of expertise on behalf of Jersey City. The four recipients of the Jersey City Leadership Awards demonstrate the true spirit of professional and personal leadership to our community."

**Stockton Poll: One-Third Report Greater Political Engagement in Trump Era**

**NJASCU QuickTakes**

Nearly one-third of New Jersey adults report being more civically engaged today than they were before Donald Trump was elected president, according to a Stockton University poll released today.

However, when compared with results of a 2015 Stockton poll, the overall percentage of respondents participating in specific civic activities was statistically the same as four years ago.

Results of the 2019 poll by the Stockton Polling Institute show that more than half (57 percent) of the 852 poll respondents said there was no difference in their engagement level between 2015 and 2019. Ten percent reported being less civically active in 2019 than they were four years ago.

One in four (24 percent) respondents who are more active today cited opposition to Trump and the Republican Party as motivating factors, while 5 percent were motivated by support of Trump and the GOP. Another one in four (26 percent) cited unhappiness with the state of politics or a sense of civic duty in response to the open-ended question. Five percent of those more engaged today said they feel that democracy or the rule of law is being threatened.

The Stockton Poll asked all respondents whether they had participated in specific civic activities other than voting in the past 12 months. Those results were compared to results for identical questions asked in 2015. Even though one-third had reported being more civically engaged today, the overall percentages participating in specific civic activities was statistically the same as four years ago.

Similar percentages of people in both years volunteered in a campaign, made a campaign contribution, attended a protest, wrote to a newspaper or elected official, served on a local government board, worked on a community problem or signed a petition.

"Many people may feel more engaged in these volatile times even if they are not participating in certain civic practices. Some may relate engagement specifically to voting," said John Froonjian, Ed.D., interim executive director of the Hughes Center. He noted that voter turnout of more than 55 percent in 2018 was the highest for a midterm election in New Jersey in years. [Read full article.](#) For full poll results, go to [Poll Results](#).

**Kean University Industrial Design Grad Wins Top National Award**

**NJASCU QuickTakes**

Recent Kean industrial design graduate
Recent Kean University graduate Emma Mantell of Vernon is the winner of the prestigious Industrial Design Society of America (IDSA) Student Merit Award, one of five regional winners throughout the country.

"This is the most prestigious award in the U.S. for a student, the institution, and the faculty in the industrial design field. Almost all of the previous winners' careers skyrocketed after this event," said Efecem Kutuk, assistant professor and program coordinator of industrial design at Robert Busch School of Design in Michael Graves College. "We are very proud of Emma and hope her success will serve as a model for other students in the college."

Ms. Mantell was inspired to create the two-part winning design, in part, by her grandmother's accessibility challenges as she aged. One project, called ESA, uses technology to design a door lock, door handle and key chain to assist the elderly and users with motor skills limitations. The other, called Prana, is a breast shield device and app that measures milk flow from nursing mothers to their babies.

"This is an incredibly prestigious award, and I’m incredibly honored," Ms. Mantell said. She said both projects were conceptualized in class, designed to meet users' needs and guided by professors.

The name of the first project, ESA, stands for "ease, style and accessibility." The other, Prana, is named for a Buddhist hand gesture that represents life-giving energy. "It’s something I thought relates perfectly to nursing," Ms. Mantell said.

Ms. Mantell, who is from Vernon, will present at the International Design Conference in Chicago in August, where she will have the chance to network with more than 400 professionals. Her name will also be featured on the IDSA's website for years to come.

Professor Kutuk, who taught Mantell almost every semester while at Kean, said she worked hard, took feedback and exceeded standards throughout her education.

"Both projects can be considered technological designs for the social good, not just another beautiful, meaningless object, but problem-solving ones," he said.

Ms. Mantell said she looks forward to presenting at the conference and pursuing her career goals. She said she chose to attend Kean because she wanted smaller classes and opportunities to be involved with other design students, as well as taking advantage of the campus' access to New York City.

Ms. Mantell chose industrial design because she felt it integrated aspects of both art and science that she enjoyed. Ms. Mantell said she ultimately hopes to work in an environment with "plenty of variety and collaboration."

"A job that would allow me to meet and work alongside lots of new people would be ideal for helping me to build a greater perspective that will aid me in growing as a designer," she said. "Honestly, my career goals are constantly evolving."
Two Alums Score a Fat Investment on "Shark Tank"
www.TCNJ.edu

Students at TCNJ bought into the Fat Shack concept long before billionaire investor Mark Cuban, making a local success of an alumnus-run business selling sandwiches that are a mashup of everybody’s favorite hangover foods.

But now, with a $250,000 investment from Cuban, Tom Armenti and Kevin Gabauer (both ’09), are poised to watch their business grow far beyond the 13 franchises now operating in Colorado, Texas and Washington State.

Armenti and Gabauer make their pitch on an episode of Shark Tank that aired on May 12, 2019. Cuban bought a 15 percent stake in Fat Shack after the pair made a successful pitch in an episode of ABC’s popular "Shark Tank" that aired May 12. By the next day, it was clear things had changed.

"Already in the last 12 hours we’ve had hundreds of email requests," said Mr. Armenti from Colorado. "The exposure has really opened us up to growth."

Mr. Armenti started Fat Shack in 2010 from a bagel shop in Ewing, delivering 2000-calorie sandwiches to the dorms at TCNJ and Rider in the late night and early morning hours. Later, he moved to Colorado, exporting the Jersey-born cuisine to Fort Collins.

Mr. Gabauer joined him a few years later, leaving behind a corporate insurance job. He said the company - with a tagline of "late night done right" - did $5.7 million in sales last year with menu items like the trademarked "Fat Jersey." The sub features cheesesteak, chicken fingers, mozzarella sticks, French fries and honey mustard. Desserts like funnel cake, Oreos, and Twinkies are all deep fried and covered in powdered sugar.

The pair, both business majors, opened their pitch on Shark Tank by throwing a plate of kale in the garbage and instead offering the sharks - the business panel that weighs in on proposals - calorie-laden fat sandwiches.

After a few bites most were sold. Cuban was hesitant at first: "What I can’t get past is the whole health thing. Every other food product I have is geared towards healthy living," he said.

But he didn’t resist long. After a nosh and a short negotiation Cuban declared: "Done. Let’s
Mr. Armenti and Mr. Gabauer said working together on group projects in TCNJ’s School of Business and at their fraternity Phi Kappa Psi laid the groundwork for success in business.

The Jersey Fat Shack closed, but the pair envisions a return. "Obviously Fat Shack is Jersey and TCNJ is where it all started," said Mr. Armenti, "We've got Jersey in our veins."

"We'll definitely be back," said Mr. Gabauer.

### Noteworthy: New Jersey Issues

**Senator Sandra Cunningham Spearheading Effort to Help New Jersey College Students Graduate**

[www.TapInto.net](http://www.TapInto.net)

Senate Higher Education Chair Sandra B. Cunningham (D-Hudson) is spearheading legislation to help college students reduce their overall education costs by graduating on time.

The bill, S-760, which requires undergraduate students at all colleges and universities that receive state Tuition Aid Grants to meet with an appropriate academic official and outline the requirements of their degree program along with a plan to meet those requirements, was passed by the Senate 36-0 Thursday.

"We are working aggressively to do all we can for our college students," Cunningham said adding that the low four-year graduation rates at New Jersey colleges, in some instances just 42 percent, "is an issue."

At four-year schools, students would be required to meet with their advisor sometime between when they start school and when they complete 45 credit hours. At county colleges, students would be required to set their degree plan before the completion of 30 credits.

"If we want our college students to graduate on time, there must be a safeguard in place to keep them on track."

**Pew Report: Just 3 States Lack Rainy Day Fund, and NJ is One**

[www.NJBiz.com](http://www.NJBiz.com)

New Jersey is one of the few states that failed to rebuild its rainy-day fund following the Great Recession a decade ago, according to the second report in recent weeks criticizing what it called the overall poor quality of the reserve.

This comes as lawmakers and the Murphy administration butt heads over a budget proposal to put roughly $317 million into New Jersey's rainy-day fund for the coming fiscal year, starting in July - a move considered inappropriate by legislative leaders who argue the state still has too many bills to pay.

Only two other states, Kansas and Montana, did not grow their rainy-day fund at all since the economic downturn, according to Tuesday's report from The Pew Charitable Trusts.
Meanwhile, a mid-May report from Wall Street rating agency Moody’s Investors Services found New Jersey and Illinois were the two least-prepared states for an economic downturn, given the condition of their rainy-day funds.

State Treasurer Elizabeth Maher Muoio said the Moody's report bolsters the state's need to boost the fund.

"While our projected surplus is certainly better than the far too risky position New Jersey had become accustomed to in recent years, we are still far behind most states when it comes to being adequately positioned to weather a future economic downturn," she said in a May statement.

The injection into the rainy-day fund comes thanks to the $1.1 billion surplus that the state will have following the end of the 2019 budget, which closes on June 30, Muhoio said.

**Noteworthy: National Issues**

*As Congress Debates ‘Dreamers’ Bill, Colleges Focus on Aid and Services*  
[www.EducationDive.com](http://www.EducationDive.com)

House Democrats approved a narrow immigration bill on Tuesday that would grant legal status to more than 2 million immigrants, including those in the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. The American Dream and Promise Act of 2019 passed in the House in a 237-187 vote. Among its provisions are 10 years of permanent status for DACA recipients if certain conditions are met, including some related to education, though it doesn’t include language found in the original version making them eligible for federal aid. The bill is not expected to pass in the Republican-controlled Senate, reflecting partisan debate over immigration that has left states and colleges working out their own approaches to financial aid for these students.

DACA, which was established in 2012 under the Obama administration, grants temporary legal status to immigrants brought illegally to the U.S. as children. The Trump administration has since proposed to end the program, making nearly 1 million young adults eligible for deportation. Amid this uncertainty, college students living in the U.S. without legal permission are encountering restrictions on receiving and affording education. Three states ban offering the in-state tuition rates, and two states prohibit them from enrolling in public colleges. However, 18 states offer some form of in-state tuition. Several public and private colleges also offer institutional aid to DACA recipients, as do advocacy groups such as TheDream.US, which has provided $60 million in scholarships as of last fall.

But some college officials say current aid options aren’t enough.

*Increase in State Aid Allows Virginia Public Colleges to Freeze Tuition for the First Time in Two Decades*  
[www.EducationDive.com](http://www.EducationDive.com)

A $53 million increase in state funding will allow Virginia's public colleges to freeze tuition for the first time in two decades.
tuition for in-state students in the coming year, marking the first such move in two decades. Governing boards of the state’s 15 public institutions voted this spring to keep tuition flat for in-state undergraduates, and in some cases for out-of-state enrollees. At the University of Virginia, the decision reversed a planned 2.9% tuition increase. James Toscano, president of Partners for College Affordability and Public Trust, a group that advocates for lower college costs, told the Post it was a "significant victory for students and families in Virginia," and marks a trend of state legislatures increasing funding for public institutions.

State funding cuts have been one of the biggest challenges for public colleges at a time when they face a number of other headwinds, such as declining enrollment and more competition online.

Last fall, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities reported that state support for higher education decreased by $7 billion since the Great Recession, and as a result colleges are spending about 16% less per student than they were in 2008.

However, data shows funding is coming back to the states. State support for higher education rose 3.8% from the 2017-18 to the 2018-19 fiscal years, according to the latest annual data from Illinois State University’s Grapevine report. Read more.

Walmart Expands $1 a day Degree Program
www.EducationDive.com

Walmart announced recently that it is adding more degrees, college partners and a path for high school students to its one-year-old program offering full- and part-time U.S. employees access to a college degree for $1 a day. Southern New Hampshire University, Purdue University Global and Wilmington University will join the program, which adds 14 associate degrees, bachelor’s and certificate options in technical fields such as cybersecurity and computer science. Courses are offered through online degree marketplace Guild Education. The company hopes to continue to scale the program and is ahead of projections for participation in the first year, with 7,500 employees accepted and 5,500 of that group taking classes.

Arizona State University, Building on its Partnership with Starbucks, Seeks to Continue to Tap Into the 20 Billion Dollar Workplace Tuition Benefits Market
www.InsideHigherEd.com

Arizona State University's InStride program is latest entrant to the $20 billion tuition benefits market, a potential growth area as employers mull alternatives to the traditional college degree and whether to pay for customized online credentials for their workers. Building off the high-profile partnership between Arizona State and Starbucks, InStride will help large companies manage tuition benefit programs while offering their employees online credentials and courses from ASU Online and a developing group of other universities; the first announced partner is the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia.

With global ambitions, InStride's primary focus is the 37 million Americans who have earned some college credits but no degree.
"This market is bigger than the traditional 18- to 22-year-old market," said Daniel Pianko, co-founder and managing director of University Ventures (which is not an investor in InStride), who called the company a "logical extension" for ASU Online and its more than 175 bachelor's degrees, master's degrees and certificate programs.

A Degree May be Necessary in America But Maybe Not Sufficient
www.Bloomberg.com
May 28, 2019

Exploding student debt and increased competition have made earning a bachelor's degree a less likely path to financial security, Bloomberg reports. While more Americans than ever have the four-year degree - about one-third - they made less last year in real terms than in 1990, according to a New York Federal Reserve survey. While eight in 10 baby boomers say the value of their degrees outweighed its cost, only half of those under the age of 30 felt the same.