



NEW JERSEY

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QuickTakes!

Dr. Kathryn A. Foster Named TCNJ's 16th President

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Dr. Kathryn A. Foster to become 16th president of The College of New Jersey.

Dr. Kathryn A. Foster, a New Jersey native, is returning home from Maine where she served as president of University of Maine at Farmington (UMF), to become the 16th president of The College of New Jersey (TCNJ). She will officially begin in the position on July 1.

"In Dr. Foster, we have found the ideal person to lead our college," said TCNJ Board Chairman Jorge Caballero. "She is an accomplished academic leader with a passion for public education. She embodies our values and brings visionary leadership,

a strong academic perspective, and long-range strategic planning skills that will continue to position TCNJ for the future as a national exemplar."

"I am honored and humbled by the trust the board has placed in me," said Dr. Foster. "TCNJ is an exceptional place with the highest standards and deeply rooted values that mirror my own. I look forward to working with its talented, wise, and dedicated community, from whom I will learn and with whom I will enjoy serving to advance this exceptional college."

Dr. Foster, serving as president of UMF since 2012, has had as served as president since 2012, has had the opportunity to work with University of Maine Chancellor John H. Page on the highest levels of system strategy.

"President Foster is a dynamic and extraordinarily talented higher education leader and advocate," said James H. Page, chancellor of the University of Maine System. "The University of Maine at Farmington is a stronger institution, better positioned for success and service to Maine and its students because of Kate's inspired guidance. We thank Dr. Foster for her service and wish her and The College of New Jersey every success."

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Dr. Foster will replace Dr. R. Barbara Gitenstein, who has served in that role since January 1999 and will retire on June 30.

“I am thrilled by Kathryn Foster’s selection as TCNJ’s 16th president,” said President Gitenstein. “She has the right experience to prepare her for this role, having served as a chief executive officer in a state environment in which she has dealt with a range of higher education challenges at a senior level. She is an active listener and has a keen sense of our culture. She has the capacity to attend to that culture and learn from it. I am confident she will be very successful at TCNJ.”

Prior to UMF, Foster spent 18 years at the University at Buffalo, the largest campus in the State University of New York system. There she served as director of the school’s Regional Institute, chair of the Department of Urban and Regional Planning, and associate chair for undergraduate education and director of undergraduate studies.

“My experience as a planner has been a natural fit for presidential leadership,” said Dr. Foster. “I will bring to TCNJ an approach that involves taking a data-driven and clear-eyed assessment of current circumstances, making credible assumptions about the future, and imaginative envisioning to ensure our reach is at once bold, compelling, and ambitious, yet achievable.”

Dr. Foster plans to engage the TCNJ community before setting specific priorities, but does acknowledge being energized by the challenges that the college identified for its next president and articulated through the search. These include preserving and enhancing the traditions and culture of TCNJ, advancing the college’s reputation beyond the state’s borders, generating new resources through fundraising and program development, and building and celebrating diversity and inclusion on campus.

“My belief in the value of diversity and inclusion has deep roots,” said Dr. Foster. “It was matured by my Peace Corps experience of being young, female, and white in apartheid-era Swaziland, a black-African nation which revered elders and men.”

Dr. Foster holds a BA in geography and environmental engineering from The Johns Hopkins University and a master’s in city and regional planning from University of California, Berkeley. She earned a PhD in public and international affairs at Princeton University.

A native of Verona, Foster’s move to Ewing will be a homecoming. “I look forward to returning to a state that has meant so much to me over the years and where I still have family,” she said. “New Jersey is in my DNA. It is a place where I feel comfortable and at home.”

Dr. Foster’s appointment is the culmination of a national search that began in July 2017 when Gitenstein announced her intention to retire. The Presidential Search Committee was

chaired by Trustee Susanne Svizeny '79, who served alongside a diverse group of community members representing the talent and passion of TCNJ.

“The committee solicited input from all TCNJ constituents to develop a leadership agenda and define the qualities sought in an ideal candidate,” said Board President Caballero. “It then worked meticulously and tirelessly, always relying on this leadership agenda, to find Dr. Foster, the perfect match. I thank the members of the search committee for their outstanding work.”

Founded in 1855 as the New Jersey State Normal School, TCNJ delivers an exceptionally high-quality education in a collaborative and supportive environment. The college has the sixth highest four-year graduation rate among all public colleges and universities. It is ranked by *Money* as one of the top 15 public colleges “most likely to pay off financially,” and *U.S. News & World Report* rates it the No. 1 public institution among regional universities in the northeast. The college is situated on 289 tree-lined acres in suburban Ewing Township, New Jersey, in close proximity to both New York City and Philadelphia. A strong liberal arts core forms the foundation for a wealth of degree programs offered through the college’s seven schools: Arts and Communication; Business; Education; Engineering; Humanities and Social Sciences; Nursing, Health, and Exercise Science; and Science.
