



NJ PATHWAYS  
TO CAREER OPPORTUNITIES  
**SUMMIT**  
**2026**

Pathways That Work:  
Skills. Credentials. Mobility.

**June 9, 2026**



2026  
NJ COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
OPPORTUNITY SUMMIT

**Opportunity**   
 **In Action**

**June 9-11, 2026**

Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Atlantic City

[NJCommunityColleges.org](https://NJCommunityColleges.org)

# Welcome

These times of great uncertainty and change call for us to be bold, innovative, and collaborative, to recommit to working together to expand opportunity for everyone in our state, and to set a goal that will inspire and inform our work together. In the years ahead, this ambitious goal will be to increase the number of New Jersey adults in the labor market who have earned a postsecondary degree or credential of value to **75% by 2040**. We are proud to stand with 34 statewide organizations in the **Future Ready New Jersey Coalition** in support of this goal.

For the next three days, we will hear from national and state leaders, coalition partners, and community college leaders. We will learn from each other. We will make new connections.

During the **NJ Pathways to Career Opportunities Summit**, we will celebrate and advance our statewide **New Jersey Pathways Initiative** that is building a more agile and aligned education and workforce system that meets the needs of students, workers, and employers across our state. With the support of the Governor and Legislature and in partnership with the **New Jersey Business and Industry Association**, the **NJ Pathways Initiative** has engaged more than 1,800 partners, launched 100 pathways, and developed and enhanced more than 300 curriculum models focused on skills, credentials, and mobility.

The **New Jersey Community College Opportunity Summit**, with its theme of Opportunity in Action, will focus on the ideas, practices, strategies, partnerships, and data that are transforming postsecondary education to better serve students and strengthen our state's economy. We'll explore the challenges that we face and find solutions. We'll learn about the efforts of the **New Jersey's 18 Community Colleges** to turn innovation and collaboration into meaningful outcomes for students and communities.

And together, we will take a moment to recognize outstanding individuals and partners during our annual **New Jersey Community College Awards Dinner** where we will honor the legacy of **President Steven M. Rose**.

In his 30 years as President of Passaic County Community College, **President Rose** helped tens of thousands of people to realize their dreams, built a welcoming inclusive community, left an indelible mark on higher education in our state, and mentored a generation of community college leaders. We commit here at these Summits, and in the years ahead, to honor his legacy by continuing his life's work with integrity, humility, and humanity.

We hope you leave Atlantic City energized by new ideas, strengthened partnerships, and a renewed commitment to expanding opportunity for all New Jerseyans.

### **Jessica Purnell**

Chair, New Jersey Council of County Colleges  
Trustee, Camden County College

### **Aaron Fichtner**

President, New Jersey Council of County Colleges



The New Jersey of Council of County Colleges Hosted Its Second New Jersey Community College Student Leadership Summit at Brookdale Community College [April, 2026]

# Thank You to Our Visionary Partner Sponsors

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AI that  
**serves** the  
mission.

Scale student support, not  
staff burnout



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We gratefully acknowledge the generous support of our sponsors whose partnership makes this Summit possible

## Lanyard

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### Exhibit

- ACUE
- Courshedog
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- Edge
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- Symbiosis



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Illuminate Truth  
Eliminate Fraud



# June 9

## New Jersey Pathways to Career Opportunities Summit Pathways That Work: Skills. Credentials. Mobility

**7:30 AM**     **Registration**  
*Seminole Ballroom Pre-Function Area*

**7:30 AM**     **Breakfast**  
*Seminole Ballroom II, III*

**9:00 AM**     **Welcoming Remarks**  
*Seminole Ballroom I*

**Catherine Frugé Starghill**, Vice President & Chief Workforce Innovation Officer, New Jersey Council of County Colleges & Executive Director, New Jersey Community College Consortium for Workforce and Economic Development

**Chris Emigholz**, Chief Government Affairs Officer, New Jersey Business & Industry Association

**President David Stout**, Brookdale Community College

**Secretary Margo Chaly**, New Jersey Office of the Secretary of Higher Education

**Yolanda Allen**, Assistant Commissioner of Workforce Development, New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development

**9:45 AM**     **Building Careers Through Credentials**  
*Seminole Ballroom I*

**Rachel Khan**, Senior Director, Community College Growth Engine, Education Design Lab

**10:45 AM**     **Pathways Projects Networking**  
*Seminole Ballroom Pre-Function Area*

**10:45 AM**     **New Jersey Presidents' Council Meeting**  
*Fort Pierce D*

**11:15 AM**     **The Data You Need to Drive Workforce Strategy**  
*Seminole Ballroom I*

**Nicol Nicola**, Director, Div. of Economic & Demographic Research, Office of Research & Information, New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development

# June 9 (Cont.)

## New Jersey Pathways to Career Opportunities Summit Pathways That Work: Skills. Credentials. Mobility

- 12:15 PM**    **Lunch**  
*Seminole Ballroom II, III*
- 12:45 PM**    **A Conversation of Presidents: What More Can We Do to Collaborate, Align, and Stack for Student Pathways**  
*Seminole Ballroom II, III*
- President Michael Avaltroni**, Fairleigh Dickinson University & Chair, New Jersey Presidents' Council
- President Anthony Iacono**, County College of Morris
- President Jonathan Koppell**, Montclair State University
- President Margaret M. McMenamin**, UCNJ Union College of Union County, NJ
- President Lovell Pugh-Bassett**, Camden County College
- 2:00 PM**    **AI in Action: Building New Jersey's Innovation Economy**  
*Seminole Ballroom I*
- David Cole**, Chief Innovation Officer, New Jersey Innovation Authority
- Matthew LaBrake**, Associate Vice President Digital Learning, AI, and Emerging Technologies, Hudson County Community College
- Liat Krawczyk**, Executive Director, New Jersey AI Hub
- 3:00 PM**    **Pathways in Action: Projects Driving Impact**  
*Seminole Ballroom I*
- 1. New Jersey Micro Business Hydroponics Network**  
        **Edward Sanchez**, Project Director, Bergen Community College
- 2. Pathways to Careers in Teaching**  
        **Cinzia D'Iorio**, Vice President of Continuing Education & Workforce Development, Bergen Community College
- Susan Pagano**, Executive Director Continuing & Professional Studies, Brookdale Community College

# June 9 (Cont.)

## New Jersey Pathways to Career Opportunities Summit Pathways That Work: Skills. Credentials. Mobility

3:45 PM **Pathways Projects Networking**  
*Seminole Ballroom Pre-Function Area*

4:15 PM **Partnerships Powering Pathways**  
*Seminole Ballroom I*

**James Horne**, President, Junior Achievement of New Jersey

**Fran Kuhn**, Executive Director, Atlantic County Workforce Development Board, & President, Garden State Employment & Training Association

**Retired Judge Sandson**, Superior Court of New Jersey

4:45 PM **Next Steps & Closing Remarks**  
*Seminole Ballroom I*

**Catherine Frugé Starghill**, Vice President & Chief Workforce Innovation Officer, New Jersey Council of County Colleges & Executive Director, New Jersey Community College Consortium for Workforce and Economic Development

**Aaron Fichtner**, President, New Jersey Council of County Colleges

## Discover the Momentum Behind NJ Pathways

Explore 100+ Pathway Initiatives  
Shaping New Jersey's Workforce



Scan to  
View Full  
Catalog



# Measuring the Momentum

## Partnership Infrastructure

**1.8K** Partners

**52** Convenings

**3** Summits

## Centers of Workforce Innovation Outcomes

**11K+**

Student and Professional Participants

**100**

Pathway Initiatives

**17**

Community Colleges

**25**

4-Year Colleges and Universities

**650+**

Industry Valued Credentials Earned

**65**

Middle/ High Schools

**9**

Labor Unions

**20**

CBOs/ Industry Associations

**2** Public-Private Work-Force Partnerships

 NJ BioFutures

 New Jersey Film Academy  
Where the best in the biz begin

## Curriculum Developed or Enhanced

**15** Career Awareness Programs

**61** Workforce Training Programs

**43** Dual Enrollment Programs

**11** Adult Literacy Programs

**75** Academic Courses and Certificates

**65** Industry Valued Credential Exam Prep Courses

**50** Industry Valued Credentials Embedded

# June 10

## New Jersey Community College Opportunity Summit: Opportunity in Action

- 7:30 AM**    **Registration**  
*Seminole Ballroom Pre-Function Area*
- 7:30 AM**    **Breakfast**  
*Seminole Ballroom II, III*
- 9:00 AM**    **Welcoming Remarks**  
*Seminole Ballroom I*
- Aaron Fichtner**, President, New Jersey Council of  
                 County Colleges
- Jessica Purnell**, Chair, New Jersey Council of County  
                 Colleges, and Trustee, Camden County College
- 9:15 AM**    **Future Ready New Jersey Coalition: Why "75x2040"  
Matters to Equity and Broad-based Economic Prosperity**  
*Seminole Ballroom I*
- Maria Heidkamp**, Chief Innovation & Policy Officer,  
                 New Jersey Council of County Colleges
- 9:45 AM**    **What Does "Of Value" Mean, and How Do Students and  
Adult Learners Pay for Short-term Nondegree and Other  
Industry Credentials Currently?**  
*Seminole Ballroom I*
- Ilan Levine**, Principal Associate, Quality Skills &  
                 Education Pathways, The Pew Charitable Trusts
- Hydie Kim Hudson**, Vice President, Impact Investments,  
                 Social Finance
- 10:15 AM**    **Exhibitor Break**  
*Seminole Ballroom Pre-Function Area*
- 10:30 AM**    **What Supports Do Students Need to Succeed?**  
*Seminole Ballroom I*
- Iris Palmer**, Director, Community Colleges Initiative,  
                 Center on Education & Labor at New America
- 11:00 AM**    **Crafting a Future Ready New Jersey Coalition Action  
Blueprint: Steps to 75x2040**  
*Seminole Ballroom I*

# June 10 (Cont.)

## New Jersey Community College Opportunity Summit: Opportunity in Action

**Assemblywoman Carmen Morales**, Chair, Assembly  
Higher Education Committee, New Jersey State  
Legislature

**Harbani Ahuja**, Senior Counsel, New Jersey Institute for  
Social Justice

**Chrissy Buteas**, President & Chief Executive Officer,  
HealthCare Institute of New Jersey and Trustee,  
Middlesex College

**11:45 AM** **Exhibitor Break**  
*Seminole Ballroom Pre-Function Area*

**12:00 PM** **Lunch**  
*Seminole Ballroom II, III*

**12:30 PM** **More Essential Than Ever: Community College  
Pathways to Post-Completion Success**  
*Seminole Ballroom I*

**Davis Jenkins**, Senior Research Scholar, Community  
College Research Center

**Hana Lahr**, Assistant Director of Research & Director of  
Applied Learning, Community College Research Center

**1:30 PM** **Exhibitor Break**  
*Seminole Ballroom Pre-Function Area*

### 1:45 PM Breakout Sessions

**Belonging, Barriers and Breakthroughs: The Impact of the  
Community to Opportunity Initiative**  
*Seminole Ballroom I*

**Leanne Davis**, Managing Researcher, Education Northwest

**President Cory Homer**, Sussex County Community College

**Keith Kirkland**, Dean, Student Affairs, Essex County College

**Richard F. Kopp**, Executive Dean of Student Success &  
Retention, Camden County College

# June 10 (Cont.)

## New Jersey Community College Opportunity Summit: Opportunity in Action

### 1:45 PM Breakout Sessions (Cont.)

The Evolution of General Education & the Development of the Essential Learning Framework  
*Big Cypress B*

**Panel of Provosts and Vice Presidents:** Karen Bearce (Raritan), Sarah Iepson (Camden), Josette Katz (Atlantic Cape), Katie Lynch (Brookdale), Dionne Miller (Middlesex), Robert Schreyer (Mercer), & Andrew Tomko (Bergen)

Setting the Stage: The Current & Future Data Landscape  
*Immokalee A*

**Aaron Fichtner**, President, New Jersey Council of County Colleges

**Alexandra Gusciora**, Research Analyst, New Jersey Council of County Colleges

**Stephanie Walsh**, Assistant Director & Director of the New Jersey Statewide Data System, Heldrich Center for Workforce Development

Reimagining the Community College: How Agentic AI Empowers Lean Teams to Scale  
*Immokalee B*

**Jacob Thomas**, Drivestream

2:30 PM **Community College Business Officers' Meeting: Health Insurance Discussion (Members Only)**  
*Big Cypress A*

### 2:30 PM Breakout Sessions

Early Intervention: "We'll See" Isn't a Strategy  
*Seminole Ballroom I*

**Sheenah Hartigan**, Associate Vice President, Enrollment Services, Ocean County College

# June 10 (Cont.)

## New Jersey Community College Opportunity Summit: Opportunity in Action

### 2:30 PM Breakout Sessions (Cont.)

**Jim Campbell**, Director of Student Success and Retention,  
Ocean County College

#### **Student Engagement in STEM Research** *Big Cypress B*

*Samsung Innovation Campus at Bergen Community College:  
Collaboration at Work*

**Emily Vandalovsky**, Dean of Mathematics, Science &  
Technology Division, Bergen Community College

*Bridging the Gap: The Power of Undergraduate Research in STEM  
Success*

**Edem Tetteh**, Dean of STEM, Rowan College at Burlington  
County

#### **Unlocking Longitudinal Data: Tools and Insights** *Immokalee A*

**Victoria Coty**, Research Project Assistant, Heldrich Center for  
Workforce Development

**Kirsten Meidlinger**, Research Project Assistant, Heldrich Center  
for Workforce Development

**3:15 PM**     **Exhibitor Break**  
*Seminole Ballroom Pre-Function Area*

### 3:45 PM Breakout Sessions

#### **Community College Pathways to Post-Completion Success** *Seminole Ballroom I*

*Expanding Opportunities Through Dual Enrollment: A Panel  
Discussion*

**Christopher Conzen**, Executive Director, Secaucus  
Center & Early College Programs, Hudson County  
Community College

# June 10 (Cont.)

## New Jersey Community College Opportunity Summit: Opportunity in Action

### 3:45 PM Breakout Sessions (Cont.)

**Cara Novak**, Director of Educational Partnerships,  
Brookdale Community College

**Tanya Da Silva**, Director of Early College & Dual  
Enrollment, Passaic County Community College

**Shay Wadher**, Director of K-12 Partnerships, Raritan  
Valley Community College

#### *Pathways at Ocean*

**Alexa Beshara Blauth**, Executive Director, Institutional  
Planning, Ocean County College

**Catherine Mancuso**, Dean, Academic Affairs &  
Faculty Development, Ocean County College

**James Marshall**, Executive Director,  
Curriculum/Academic Affairs, Ocean County College

#### **Data Informed Community Colleges: Innovation in Practice** *Immokalee A*

**Michelle Van Noy**, Director & Associate Research Professor,  
Education and Employment Research Center, Rutgers University

#### **AI That Transforms Community Colleges: Fraud, Student Services, & Automation** *Immokalee B*

**Katan Cheti and Tom Gavin**, N2N Services Inc.

5:00 PM **Networking Reception**  
*Pre-function III*

6:00 PM **New Jersey Community College Awards Dinner in Honor  
of President Steven Rose**  
*Seminole Ballroom II, III*



IN HONOR OF PRESIDENT STEVEN M. ROSE  
PASSAIC COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE



# June 11

## New Jersey Community College Opportunity Summit: Opportunity in Action

- 7:30 AM**    **Registration**  
*Seminole Ballroom Pre-Function Area*
- 7:30 AM**    **Breakfast**  
*Fresh Harvest Buffet*
- 9:00 AM**    **Community Colleges in a Changing World Discussion**  
*Seminole Ballroom II, III*  
**Jee Hang Lee**, President & CEO, Association of  
Community College Trustees
- 9:45 AM**    **Exhibitor Break**  
*Seminole Ballroom Pre-Function Area*

### 10:10 AM Breakout Sessions

**Bridging the Gap: Uniting Admissions and Advising to Foster First-Year Student Belonging**  
*Seminole Ballroom I*

**Pamela Marcenaro**, Associate Vice President, Enrollment Management, County College of Morris

**Aligning College and Career**  
*Big Cypress B*

*Equity in Action: Aligning Schools, Community College, & Workforce for Student Success*

**José Laureano**, Vice President, Student & Enrollment Services, Middlesex College

**Lisa Rodriguez-Gregory**, Dean of Enrollment Management, Middlesex College

**Ria Gaviria**, Director, Advising, Career & Transfer Services, Middlesex College

*Beyond Completion: Community College 3.0, Systems Redesign, and Post-Completion Success*

**Nicole Cippoletti**, Dean, Scotch Plains and Virtual Campus, UCNJ Union College of Union County, NJ

# June 11 (Cont.)

## New Jersey Community College Opportunity Summit: Opportunity in Action

### 10:10 AM Breakout Sessions (Cont.)

#### Bridging High School & College Through Scalable Financial Literacy Partnerships

*Immokalee A*

**Anthony J. Trump**, Vice President of Student Affairs, Bergen Community College

**Andrew Tomko**, Vice President of Academic Affairs & Provost, Bergen Community College

#### Empowering STEM Students Through the Integration of AI in the Learning Environment and Responsible Use

*Fort Pierce D*

**Sherry Heidary**, Associate Professor of Chemistry, UCNJ Union College of Union County, NJ

10:55 PM Break

### 11:00 AM Breakout Sessions

#### Breaking Barriers: Advancing First-Generation Success at Middlesex

*Seminole Ballroom I*

**José Laureano**, Vice President, Student and Enrollment Services, Middlesex College

**Odé Hoppie**, Dean of Students, Middlesex College

#### Transforming Student Success Through Math Redesign: Closing Equity Gaps Through Guided Math Pathways

*Immokalee A*

**Taziah Kenney**, Associate Dean of STEM, Rowan College at Burlington County

**Cathy Briggs**, Dean of Student Success, Rowan College at Burlington County

# June 11 (Cont.)

## New Jersey Community College Opportunity Summit: Opportunity in Action

### 11:00 AM Breakout Sessions (Cont.)

#### Clear Paths, Open Doors: How Full-Year Registration Drives Equity & Opportunity

*Big Cypress B*

**Karen Archambault**, Senior Vice President, Enrollment Management and Student Success, Rowan College at Burlington County

**Alexandra O'Neil**, Associate Dean, Advising & Rowan Relations, Rowan College at Burlington County

**LacyJane Ryman**, Registrar, Rowan College at Burlington County

**Gabrielle Marcucci**, Student Services Generalist, Rowan College at Burlington County

#### AI Showcase: AI in Teaching, Learning, & Student Success

*Fort Pierce D*

##### *Survey of Student Use of AI at CCM*

**Kelly Fitzpatrick**, Associate Vice President, Institutional Effectiveness, County College of Morris

##### *Beyond Detection: AI-Forward and AI-Resistant Assignment Design for Authentic Student Learning*

**Lauren Schwartz**, Academic Technology Coordinator, Salem Community College

##### *From Reactive to Predictive: Building an AI-Powered Student Success Ecosystem*

**Agnieszka Drupka**, Dean of AI Innovation, UCNJ Union College of Union County, NJ

#### Establishing Pathway Partnerships for Student Transfer Success

*Immokalee B*

**Joanne Coté-Bonanno and Kyle Dobbeck**, Montclair State University

# June 11 (Cont.)

New Jersey Community College Opportunity Summit:  
Opportunity in Action

11:45 AM Break

12:00 PM Presidents' Panel, Closing Reflections: Building a Collaborative, Agile, Innovative Future  
*Seminole Ballroom II, III*

## Meet Our Summit Speakers

**National and state thought leaders** are sharing their insights on strategies that will help more New Jerseyans to earn postsecondary degrees or credentials of value and thrive in a changing world and economy. **New Jersey's Community Colleges** are highlighting the innovative practices that are unlocking opportunity by transforming postsecondary education to better serve students and strengthen our state's economy.

## FULL SPEAKER LINE-UP



# Schedule at a Glance

## NJ Pathways to Career Opportunities Summit

### June 9

9:00 AM	Seminole Ballroom I	Welcoming Remarks
9:45 AM	Seminole Ballroom I	Building Careers Through Credentials
10:45 AM	Prefunction Area	Pathways Projects Networking
10:45 AM	Fort Pierce D	New Jersey Presidents' Council Meeting
11:15 AM	Seminole Ballroom I	The Data You Need to Drive Workforce Strategy
12:15 PM	Seminole Ballroom II, II	Lunch/A Conversation of Presidents
2:00 PM	Seminole Ballroom I	AI in Action: Building New Jersey's Innovation Economy
3:00 PM	Seminole Ballroom I	Pathways in Action: Projects Driving Impact
3:45 PM	Prefunction Area	Pathways Projects Networking
4:15 PM	Seminole Ballroom I	Partnerships Powering Pathways
4:45 PM	Seminole Ballroom I	Next Steps & Closing Remarks

## New Jersey Community College Opportunity Summit

### June 10

9:00 AM	Seminole Ballroom I	Welcoming Remarks
9:15 AM	Seminole Ballroom I	Future Ready New Jersey Coalition: Why "75x2040" Matters
9:45 AM	Seminole Ballroom I	What Does "Of Value" Mean?
10:15 AM	Prefunction Area	Exhibitor Break
10:30 AM	Seminole Ballroom I	What Supports Do Students Need to Succeed?
11:00 AM	Seminole Ballroom I	Crafting a Future Ready New Jersey Coalition Action Blueprint
12:00 PM	Seminole Ballroom II, III	Lunch/More Essential Than Ever
1:30 PM	Prefunction Area	Exhibitor Break
1:45 PM	Seminole Ballroom I	Belonging, Barriers, and Breakthroughs
1:45 PM	Big Cypress B	The Evolution of General Education
1:45 PM	Immokalee A	Setting the Stage: The Current and Future Data Landscape
1:45 PM	Immokalee B	Reimagining the Community College
2:30 PM	Big Cypress A	Community College Business Officers' Meeting
2:30 PM	Seminole Ballroom I	Early Intervention: "We'll See" Isn't a Strategy
2:30 PM	Big Cypress B	Student Engagement in Research
2:30 PM	Immokalee A	Unlocking Longitudinal Data: Tools and Insights
3:15 PM	Prefunction Area	Exhibitor Break
3:45 PM	Seminole Ballroom I	Community College Pathways to Post-Completion Success
3:45 PM	Immokalee A	Data Informed Community Colleges: Innovation in Practice
3:45 PM	Immokalee B	AI That Transforms Community College
5:00 PM	Pre-function III	Networking Reception
6:00 PM	Seminole Ballroom II, III	New Jersey Community College Awards Dinner

### June 11

9:00 AM	Seminole Ballroom II, III	Community Colleges in a Changing World Discussion
9:45 AM	Prefunction Area	Exhibitor Break
10:10 AM	Seminole Ballroom	Bridging the Gap
10:10 AM	Big Cypress B	Aligning College and Career
10:10 AM	Immokalee A	Bridging High School and College
10:10 AM	Fort Pierce D	Empowering STEM Students through the Integration of AI
11:00 AM	Seminole Ballroom I	Breaking Barriers: Advancing First-Generation Success
11:00 AM	Immokalee A	Transforming Student Success Through Math Redesign
11:00 AM	Big Cypress B	Clear Paths, Open Doors
11:00 AM	Fort Pierce D	AI Showcase: AI in Teaching, Learning, & Student Success
11:00 AM	Immokalee Studio B	Establishing Pathway Partnerships for Student Transfer Success
12:00 PM	Seminole Ballroom II, III	Presidents' Panel, Closing Reflections

# MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY



Montclair State University is proud to sponsor the Summit in honor of Steve M. Rose, who served Passaic County Community College for 37 years, including three decades as President. An exemplar of commitment to access and achievement, Steve will be deeply missed by friends, colleagues, and students.

## Not a pipeline. A Partnership.

At Montclair State University, we believe the most powerful educational pathways are designed together—not stitched together after the fact. We look forward to bringing leadership and faculty from community colleges and Montclair to align curriculum, advising, and support to build a seamless ecosystem designed for student success.

*“When we align our strengths as genuine peers, we can go way beyond articulation agreements. Together let’s provide all New Jersey students the opportunity to develop their full potential.”*

Jonathan Koppell  
President, Montclair State University

