

New Jersey Independent Colleges Respond to the George Floyd Murder

In light of the recent murder of George Floyd, an African-American man killed at the hands of law enforcement, our member institutions - along with many all over the world - have taken a vocal stand against racism. Students and staff, together have participated in peaceful protests on some of our campuses and in their respective communities.

Lou Manzione made an opening statement at the ICFNJ Board Meeting asking that we reflect on what we can do individually and collectively to end systemic racism in our country. While many of our presidents have issued public statements on behalf of their universities, Princeton University President Eisgruber has also called on his University leadership to confront the realities and legacy of racism at every level of our institution in his most recent [statement](#) on the matter. Other universities are taking other stances. Both Monmouth University and Princeton University have decided to remove Woodrow Wilson's name from one of their buildings. The Monmouth decision was covered in a New York Times [article](#) and the Princeton University [story](#) was widely covered as well.

Additionally, several of our member institution presidents were involved in crafting a statement on behalf of the New Jersey Presidents' Council. [The NJPC statement](#) - which was a joint effort of all NJ private, public, and community colleges and universities, as well as the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education - discussed combating systemic racism and fostering inclusive communities.

Ernst and Young Virtual Roundtable Discussion

The [Ernst and Young Virtual Roundtable](#) discussion originally scheduled for June 17th, has been rescheduled for August 4th, 2020. A seat at the virtual table will be open to 25 full-time students enrolled at one of New Jersey's independent colleges or universities seeking both traditional and innovative career options across 14 majors. Ernst and Young will coordinate professionals to match the majors of students selected to participate.

State Guidance for Reopening Higher Education

On June 17th, 2020, Governor Murphy issued the long-awaited state [guidance](#) for reopening Higher Education Institutions in New Jersey. Our universities have had several contingency plans in the works while awaiting the official guidance, and are now busy finalizing implementation, which is due to the state 14 days prior to bringing staff and/or students back to campus.

ICFNJ Trustees have been invited to share expertise, resources, and/or innovative solutions from their respective businesses that could be offered to assist our colleges and universities in addressing one or more of the key on-campus functional areas identified by the state. Timing is critical for sharing the response opportunities. Through a series of informational sessions and resource launches, we plan to offer our members access to important information and thought provoking tools available for their use. The resources will be offered for continued reference through a resource portal linked on our website.

PPP Funding/2019 Audit

AICUNJ/ICFNJ applied for and was awarded a Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) Loan from the Small Business Administration to help defer the costs of salaries, rent, and utilities. We expect the majority of the loan will be forgiven when the employment window ends and we can apply for forgiveness.

The 2019 audit is complete and was approved by the finance committee on June 4, 2020. The annual audit is performed by SobelCo at the end of our fiscal year.

Affinity Group Meetings

In June, AICUNJ relaunched three affinity groups: the Financial Affairs affinity group, the Enrollment Management affinity group, and the Academic Affairs affinity group. These meetings have been great vehicles for staff in similar institutional roles from the different member universities to get together (virtually, at the moment) and share relevant information, ideas, and best practices. The original plan was to gather the groups quarterly, but a few groups, such as the Academic Affairs group, have found the meetings to be so valuable that they've requested more frequent gatherings. The meetings have been especially helpful as universities plan to reopen in the Fall.

ICFNJ Board Meeting

The ICFNJ held a board meeting on June 8th via Zoom. The date was originally reserved for the Annual Spring Dinner, but the pandemic did not allow us to gather in person as we would have liked. The upside of having a virtual meeting, however, is that we boasted the highest attendance for a Board Meeting yet - 61%!

Changing of the Guard

We bid farewell and best wishes to Dr. Nancy Blattner, President of Caldwell University, to Dr. MaryAnn Baenninger, President of Drew University, and to Dr. Anne Prisco, President of Felician University, as they end their terms as president of their respective universities. Their service to both their university communities as well as the AICUNJ and ICFNJ boards has been greatly appreciated. They have each served on both the AICUNJ and ICFNJ boards with distinction and dedication.

[Dr. Matthew Whelan](#) has been named the next president of Caldwell University, effective July 1st. The Board of Trustees at Felician University appointed [Dr. Sylvia McCreary](#) as the new acting President of the University. We look forward to working with Drs. Whelan and McCreary and welcome them into the fold.

Dr. Baenninger's interim successor will be named when she departs in July.

ICFNJ Annual Report

The 2019 Independent College Fund of New Jersey's Annual Report, entitled, ["Imagine the Possibilities"](#) was issued in June 2020. The theme of this year's annual report is more meaningful than ever given the COVID-19 pandemic and re-orchestration of the college experience to remote in the Spring semester. Through the tireless efforts of our college faculty and administration, students can still imagine the possibilities of a life built on the sound foundation of a college degree.

As always, we thank you for your commitment to student success and for your dedicated support of the Independent College Fund of New Jersey.

Student Voices

As you know, our scholars have completed an all but ordinary Spring semester. Listen to Stephanie Daniels, a nursing major at Fairleigh Dickinson University, reflect on her Spring 2020 semester and discuss her summer plans in this short [video](#).