

Sweeney & Smith Tour Of New Rutgers Facilities Shows Investment In Higher Education Gets Results

New Honors College attracts state's best and brightest students

TRENTON – Senate President Steve Sweeney (D-Gloucester) and Senator Bob Smith (D-Middlesex) joined Rutgers University President Robert Barchi on an exclusive tour today of some of the new, state-of-the-art facilities at Rutgers University, including the school's new Honors College.

"These new laboratories, lecture halls and residence dorms let students both in the state and around the world know that New Jersey is committed to providing the greatest educational experience possible," said Senator Sweeney. "The money we invest in higher education facilities helps keep costs under control while providing modern amenities for our students and faculty.

"I congratulate Rutgers University and The New Brunswick Development Corporation on these important projects that will serve students and our state for generations."

He was joined on the tour by Senator Bob Smith (D-Middlesex). "I'm proud to represent New Brunswick and Piscataway, home to several of these cutting edge projects. The message is clear, New Jersey's higher education facilities will take a back seat to no one," said Senator Smith.

Joining Senators Sweeney and Smith was Christopher Paladino, President of The New Brunswick Development Corporation (DEVCO). "I want to thank Senator Sweeney and Senator Smith for taking the time to tour these exciting new campus landmarks. These types of state investments are critical to improving New Jersey's universities and cities," said Paladino.

Among the stops along the tour Thursday was Rutgers University's brand new Honors College. The 170,000 square foot building is home to 550 beds for University honors students, and includes recreational space, study rooms and four faculty apartments designed to encourage interaction between students and instructors. Building the College created more than 800 construction related jobs at a total project value of more than \$84 million.

The Senators also visited Rutgers' new Institute for Food Nutrition and Health. This \$55 million dollar project was financed by a \$35 million dollar grant from the Building Our Future Bond Act, and will be open for the Fall 2015 semester. Housed on the Cook Campus, students in the 51 thousand square foot building will study the country's major nutrition-related health issues including obesity, diabetes and heart disease.

Finally, the tour included a stop at the future College Avenue campus Academic Building. Still under construction, the building will house 2,500 seats in a variety of classroom and laboratory settings. Three floors of departmental space will accommodate several divisions of the University's School of Arts and Sciences. Due for completion in the summer of 2016, the project relies on \$43 million in state financing and created more than 1,200 construction related jobs.

"Investing in higher education is one of the smartest investments that can be made. It pays dividends for generations to come. An educated and skilled workforce is what fuels the economy and sustains progress and innovation," said Senator Sweeney.