

Livingston College Time Capsule

Livingston College created a time capsule on the occasion of its 30th anniversary in 1999-2000, and closed the capsule on April 18, 2000. The capsule is on a shelf in the double-height Great Hall of Tillett Hall on Livingston Campus.



The Livingston College time capsule, as seen in 2019.



Livingston College's Liberated Gospel Choir performs to celebrate the time capsule closing on April 18, 2000.



Students Michelle Massie, Melissa Carpini, and Marcella DiBenedetto, seen here, headed the Time Capsule Committee in 1999-2000.

The time capsule project and its contents were described in an article in the Livingston Alumni Association's newsletter of summer 2000 by Ruby Keise of the Rutgers News Service, as reprinted below. The time capsule is to be opened in 2029, the 60th anniversary of the opening of Livingston College.

Celebrating 30 Years

By Ruby Keise, Rutgers News Service

Faculty, staff and students at Livingston College wrapped up the celebration of the college's 30th anniversary on April 18, by filling and closing a time capsule during a ceremony in The Great Hall in Tillett.

Among the items in the capsule are photographs of students dating back to the 1970s; an old term bill from 1969 indicating a tuition of \$280 for the semester (Spring '00 tuition was \$2,381); old student ID cards; and a 1973 recording by the Liberated Gospel Choir, a Livingston student group. The choir, which has continued to grow throughout the years, sang two selections for the capsule-closing ceremony.

Several personal items left by students were added to the capsule during the ceremony. Students also left messages written on archival-quality, acid-free postcards that were made available by the Time Capsule Committee, headed by students Michelle Massie, Melissa Carpini and Marcella DiBenedetto [Editor's Note: pictured above].

"When Livingston opened its doors in 1969 with some 800 students, the university very much needed the social and intellectual jolt that Livingston

was to supply,” stated Martin Gliserman, an associate professor of English and an early faculty member at Livingston, who was among the speakers at the ceremony. There have been great changes at Livingston over the years, he reflected, both in the physical plant – in the beginning there was “one elevator on campus that my 90-year-old father could beat any day” – and in academics.

Programs such as urban studies, Africana studies, anthropology, Puerto Rican studies, computer science, marketing, and women’s studies originated at Livingston and have all now been integrated into the general university curriculum.

The closed capsule will be housed on a specially built shelf on the wall of The Great Hall. It will be opened in 30 years when the college celebrates its 60th anniversary.

[Scarlet and Black Marker Confronts Legacy of William Livingston and His Family](#)

A plaque installed in 2021 on the Livingston campus confronts the legacy of William Livingston, namesake of the campus and the former Livingston College, and his family, as people who enslaved other human beings.



Photos courtesy of Stephen Yanick


The two-sided marker has been placed on a prominent walkway on campus, between the Lynton North and South Towers residence halls and the Livingston Student Center.

The plaque reads:

“Livingston Campus (site of former Livingston College) was named after William Livingston, the first governor of the state of New Jersey, whose family made a fortune trafficking human beings in the transatlantic slave trade. The campus opened in 1969 as an experimental, social-justice oriented campus at the site of Camp Kilmer, a World War II-era military camp. The Livingston family

collectively enslaved hundreds of people and Williams' brothers, Philip and Robert, two of Rutgers' founding trustees, bought and sold hundreds more. When William Livingston moved to New Jersey, he enslaved at least two people, a woman named Bell and her son Lambert. Though he later advocated for gradual abolition, he continued to represent the legal interests of his slave-trading family's wealth throughout his career. This marker honors Bell, Lambert, and the other women, men, and children enslaved and sold by the Livingston family."

[Dean Paula Van Riper Remembered; Honored with Memorial Bench on Livingston Campus](#)

Rutgers University has honored **Paula K. Van Riper**, a former assistant dean and director of advising for Rutgers' School of Arts and Sciences (SAS) and previously for Livingston College, with a tribute plaque erected on a bench outside the James Dickson Carr Library (formerly the Kilmer Library) on Livingston campus. 

Rutgers dedicated the plaque to Van Riper's memory at a ceremony on Saturday, September 24, 2016.

Van Riper, 67, of Branchburg, New Jersey, passed away on August 20, 2015, after a long struggle with multiple myeloma.

Van Riper had served as a dean at Rutgers in various roles since 1992. Prior to joining the university, Van Riper served on the Piscataway, New Jersey, Board of Education as a member, Vice President and President, and as President of the PTA Presidents Council.

Diagnosed with myeloma in 1999, Van Riper founded the Central Jersey Multiple Myeloma Support Group, providing information, guidance, and support to many fellow patients and their families. She had spoken and written extensively in support of the myeloma community, and had appeared as its advocate before legislative bodies. She also started a yearly 5K race to support multiple myeloma research. In fall 2015, shortly after Van Riper's death, the proceeds from the race funded a research grant in her name.

A fund-raiser for Van Riper's memorial plaque, which ran from August 10-September 12, 2016, raised \$8,840, with \$7,000 earmarked for Rutgers and \$1,840 for scholarships for Piscataway High School students.

"Thousands of students remember her fondly as the advisor ready with a word of good advice, a smile and a gentle push forward," her colleague, SAS Assistant Dean Robin Diamond, said in a video explaining the fund-raising campaign (also embedded on this page). "Need someone to talk to who would give it to you straight while still caring about your experience? Paula was your person."

Among other accomplishments, Van Riper established a connection between the radio stations at Rutgers and Piscataway High School, allowing them to merge and serve both the university and the high school since 2000.

Garth Patterson, an academic advisor in SAS since its founding in 2007, remembers Van Riper as a professional mentor "and in uncountable ways, influenced my growth as a person."

Jason Goldstein, a 2002 alumnus of Livingston College, remembers Van Riper from an open house event he attended before entering college.

"As a dean, Paula Van Riper provided remarks, led a panel discussion, and provided insight when answering questions from the audience. She showcased her warmth, energy, and love for students, a disposition that represented Livingston College very well," said Goldstein, who is also a former President of the Livingston Alumni Association. "As an inquisitive high school student, I had a million questions. After the event ended, I approached Paula in the hallway to introduce myself and learn a little more. Paula spent what must have been a half hour with me and my parents sharing her passion for Livingston College and tips to be successful at Rutgers and in life. I felt there was now a face, with a beautiful smile, on this intimidating university."

Sabrina Laudent, an alumna from the SAS Class of 2015, remembers Van Riper as "thoughtful, kind, witty and very honest to me about everything.

"Dean Van Riper was thoughtful, kind, witty and very honest to me about everything. Dean Van Riper guided me through a lot of my academic and personal struggles, and was always willing to meet with me in between work and classes," said Laudent, a secretarial assistant at the Livingston Advising Center. "During each advising session she encouraged me to try harder and simply do better, and I always left feeling a little more confident in my abilities and myself.

"There were plenty of fun conversations too, about puppies, the weather and our hair. I loved everything about Dean Van Riper from the way she appreciated everyone around her, the way she spoke, the pretty scarves she wore, her cute green Prius, and the hugs she gave me before and after every long break."

Van Riper was born in 1947 in New Brunswick, New Jersey, and graduated from Franklin High School in 1965. Van Riper earned a B.S. in Business Administration from Rider University in 1969, and a Master's in Social Work from Rutgers in 1997.

She is survived by her son Ryan Van Riper, daughter Renee (Whitman) and her husband Eric Whitman, brother Richard Bonopane, sister Bonnie (Fochi), brother Alan Bonopane, and grandson Alexander Whitman. She is predeceased by her parents, Vincent and Frances Bonopane.