

[An Appreciation of Gardening and an Inspiration to Study Anatomy: Livingston College in the Early 1970s](#)

[Read more Livingston College Students' Memories.]

By Lisa Matusow-Futterman, LC'73

I graduated from Livingston College in 1973. As a biology major many of my most vivid memories were of my science classes. I began when Dr. Robert Jenkins was chairman of the bio department. I remember him bringing in fresh corn from his garden and offering it to us to eat raw. I had never eaten raw corn before, but he inspired me to learn about gardening and how wonderful fresh vegetables were.

I took human anatomy with Dr. Norman Walensky. It was the best class of my college years. He inspired to continue my graduate education in anatomy and I went on to teach human anatomy in several different medical and dental schools. Livingston was a wonderful experience, especially during the early 70s.

I met my husband in Dr. Leatham's endocrinology class; we were lab partners.

Lisa Matusow-Futterman is a 1973 graduate of Livingston College at Rutgers University.

(Contact Lisa via email.)

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[Towering Memories: Livingston College Students Move In to Dorms on North Side of Campus](#)

[Read Steven T. Walker's interview with the Rutgers Oral History Archives.]



It began with a single bead of sweat.

Ice-cold and intrusive, it worked its way from the warm parts of my body, down my rib cage and seemed to loudly splash somewhere along the right side of my only clean dress shirt.

I was terrified and worried that a huge wet streak had appeared on the side of my button-down during what, at the time, was the most important interview of my life.

I'd showered and prepared for this "preceptor" interview with zeal, only to walk from a steamy bathroom down a dank hallway and back into my stuffy dorm room before beginning the march northward from the Quads to the "forbidden" end of Livingston College Campus ... the end only inhabited by Rutgers College students.

In the early 1980s, "The Rock," as we lovingly called Livingston, was the home to the Quad dormitories for our students. "Unfortunate" Rutgers College students were banished from College Avenue to The Towers. No Livingston student had ever lived in the hulking twin towers or enjoyed the view from their majestic, twin, eight-floor vantage points.

That all was about to change on one hot, spring day in 1983.

Later, sitting in the air-conditioned apartment of the head of Residence Life in the upscale Towers residence complex, I felt I may have been out of my league and my sweat stain was growing cold by the time the actual interview was set to begin.

"So, why do you want to be a preceptor?" the interviewer queried.

My first thoughts were nothing more than incoherent fragments.

"Focus!" I told myself.

Moving through what felt like an infinite period of silence, I threw caution to the wind and blurted out the true goal of my mission, without guile or pretense.

"I want to help kids make the adjustment to living in the dorms and away from their families for the first time," I said, after sifting through the seemingly thousands of thoughts floating around in my head. "I also want to make sure that I help let Rutgers College students learn that Livingston College students are no different than they are."

The second part of the answer probably got me at least noticed. It had barely left my lips before I regretted bringing that point to fore.

The facts were: I was sitting in what had always been a residence hall off-limits to Livingston College students, despite its location on Livingston Campus. The issue of students from the university's newest campus actually being allowed to commingle with students from its oldest was new and at the heart of the entire concept.

It was the proverbial 800-pound gorilla in the room.

Either it was going to bring me onto their collective pages on this issue or it was going to knock me out of contention. I figured: "Play big or go home!"

Although I was treading in complete uncharted territory here, I felt comfortable and for one of the first times in my young life, true to myself for breaching a point that probably had been approached numerous times since "The Rock" rose from the high grounds near Camp Kilmer.

I was barely 18 years old myself and was expected to help undo something that had been firmly planted in the cultural terra firma of one of the nation's oldest universities – no pressure.

The interview proceeded flawlessly, in fact.

My interviewers did not seem alarmed by my statement, and that was cool with me.

I prepared for the inevitable and remembered how I really didn't mind living in the much maligned "Quads" and actually had grown accustomed to picking my way along its tunnels.

We shook hands wrapped up the interview and I lumbered back to my dorm room to compare notes with my roommate, who ironically had interviewed for the same preceptor position earlier that day.

How was I to know days later I would become the first Livingston preceptor and lead the first group of Livingston students into what had always been uncharted territory?

After all, Livingston College itself was one Rutgers' boldest experiments.

Established as the cutting edge of higher education, Livingston opened its doors to students in 1969 and featured a diverse, multicultural student body, pass/fail grading system and a reputation as a haven for radical students and radical thought.

Such things were big for a university like Rutgers, which was founded 10 years before America and which had an academic hall on its Newark campus seized in 1969 to force a commitment to increase minority enrollment and faculty hires. The revolutionary action at Rutgers-Newark led to the creation of the Educational Opportunity Fund, which increased minority enrollment at all

university campuses in the 1970s, 80s and beyond.

But what do I know?

Today my hire may be seen as something “historic,” but 30 years ago, this former 18-year-old, first-generation university attendee just marked it as the day I officially became a supposed former Quad dweller.

Photo: Walker from the 1986 yearbook, The Experience.

Steven T. Walker is a 1986 graduate of Livingston College at Rutgers University.

[Livingston College in the Early 1970s: A Great Social Experiment](#)

By Richard D. Apgar, LC'75

[Read more Livingston College Students' Memories.]

I attended Livingston College while the Vietnam War was still raging although we were told it was winding down. I survived three selective service draft lotteries and considered myself lucky enough to continue my degree despite the fact that my classmates were still dying in a useless war. There were still plenty of things to protest, and Livingston College saw its share. In those days (1973 -1975), Livingston College became a great social experiment. Rutgers University opened its doors to every citizen of New Jersey and at Livingston we all gathered for what I consider the best education in the world. I was raised in a farming community in western Morris County and earned an AA degree from Morris County Community College in the summer of 1973. I was excited about being accepted at Rutgers and looked forward to real college dorm life. After seeing years of war and protest and finally seeing real social change I knew my time at Rutgers would be special.

The day I checked into my dorm room I was paired with a black student. I was willing to share my dorm room and hoped that we could prove that blacks and whites could be friends after all. We were all ready to stop the rioting and it seemed the war would end and real change could take place. That night I couldn't get to sleep. My new roommate insisted on playing music all night even after he fell asleep. When he did, I reached over and turned the radio off and fell asleep myself. The next morning my roommate moved out after a brief discussion about keeping my hands off his stuff. I guess the great social experiment wasn't going to work right away. There were still plenty of protests

going on. I would wake up some nights to hear close order military drill going on in the courtyard at 2 a.m. by uniformed young Black Panthers. I would talk about what I saw to others students in the dorm later on. They were part of the great social experiment as well. They were from inner cities and rural towns from across the tri-state area. They were Catholics, Orthodox Jews, Muslims and Protestants. They were black, white and Spanish, and foreign students from all five continents. Eventually we all got to know each other, and learn from each other, and finally love each other.

One dorm mate was a tunnel rat recently back from Vietnam. He was a brilliant chess player and it took me six months to finally win a game from him. He called me the Professor because I would help him in his English composition class. One day I knocked on his door to have another chess game and when he answered he wouldn't let me in. He told me to go away because he joined the Black Panthers and had taken an oath to kill a white man a year. It was for my own good, he told me. I was a bit surprised but after witnessing years of riots and shootings it was understandable. I never saw him again after he left the dorm.

There were also other examples of racial tension around campus. Sometimes angry black students would knock down food trays from nerdy white students in the cafeteria. There were a few fistfights but mostly everyone learned to get along, especially after the college approved an on-campus tavern. It was in the Livingston College beer hall that the great social experiment finally succeeded.

The education I received was spectacular. Some professors taught from a somewhat socialistic approach, others from a strong capitalistic approach and yet others from a wonderfully creative approach. The best teacher of Shakespeare I ever encountered was Miguel Algarin. He truly brought the works of Shakespeare to a modern political light. Perhaps when the Livingston College tavern came to be, Professor Algarin conceived his idea of the Nuyorican Poet Society. It was sheer pleasure to read poetry in New York City with Miguel and be a part of his dream in the early days. Sometimes other English literature classes were held in the tavern or at times in the home of a professor in a more relaxed, less formal way where true creativity and expression was unencumbered.

Livingston College was indeed a trip. The class of 1975 graduation ceremony was like a carnival. Some wore the traditional cap and gown while others dressed in African ceremonial tribal dress. Still others wore tattered blue jeans and some decided not to attend at all. I remember my father saying it was the strangest graduation ceremony he ever saw. Thinking back, I would have to agree. And as I think back, I remember trying to date girls from Douglass College and trying to make out with them at the Passion Puddle. Sometime I would take my dates into the woods at Livingston where there was a large tree with a rope tied to its branch where you could swing over a muddy ravine and pretend to be Tarzan. Finally, there were plenty of fun frat parties to attend on Union Avenue in New

Brunswick or simply have fun dining out at Tumulty's Pub or a wonderful pizzeria whose name I can't remember.

Looking back, all I can say is that the education and life's lesson learned at Livingston served me well. I was able to have a wonderful career in the fire service industry. I became a fire chief and a business owner. And now that I am retired my only regret is that during my time at Livingston I never attended enough football games. Go Scarlet Knights!

Richard D. (Rick) Apgar is a 1975 graduate of Livingston College at Rutgers University.

(Contact Rick via email.)



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[Livingston College of the 1980s: Social Awareness in a 'Small School' Setting](#)



By Robert Breckinridge, LC'88



I went to Livingston College (LC) between 1984 and 1988. I came from Illinois and my first day on campus was freshman orientation. When I applied to Rutgers University, I chose LC primarily because LC did not require a foreign language class to attend. I had no real idea of what LC was all about or its history but after I arrived, I figured it out quickly and was even happier I chose LC to attend.

College to me was more than "book learning," it was the social aspect. Where I

grew up, I had little contact with other cultures and other sexual preferences. At LC, I learned tolerance and I learned to respect other races, cultures, and sexual orientations that I would not have otherwise learned about until much later. While at LC, I was a sports editor for a year or so for the Medium. I was on the LCGA as a junior and then the University Senate as a senior and was able to interact on a positive level with Dean W. Robert Jenkins, Dean of Students George Jones, and others in the LC administration.

I worked as a referee at the Livingston Gym, reporting most of the time to Sue Beaudrow though I did briefly report to two other women who proceeded her in that position. I met some amazing people and living in the basement floor of House 17 for all but a brief time. I got to meet several of the basketball team including Mark Peterson, who always had a smile and always was very friendly and gracious.

My years at LC were some of the happiest of my life and I look back on those years with precious memories and cherished the mission of LC to find and educate "diamonds in the rough," as it were. As I was wrapping up my time there with the School of Business starting to take off, I was concerned that LC would eventually lose its identity and with the combining of all of the schools, it probably has. That's a shame. LC allowed me to enjoy all of the advantages of going to a large university (most of my classes were on College Avenue) while being able to take advantage of what being a part of a "small school" had to offer.

Robert Breckinridge is a 1988 graduate of Livingston College at Rutgers University.
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Alumni Memories

Do you have a memory of your time at Livingston: a favorite professor, dorm, event, club/organization? Email us at [info AT](mailto:info@livingstoncollege.edu) to share your memories!

[Also see Deans' Reflections.]

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- **Towering Memories: Livingston College Students Move In to Dorms on North Side of Campus**, by Steven T. Walker, LC'86
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Top photo: The New Academic Building (later named Lucy Stone Hall) on Rutgers' Kilmer campus (later named Livingston campus), circa 1973.