

Dean's Letter to Class of 1982: Livingston Grads 'Beginning to Be a Factor in Society'

W. Robert Jenkins, dean of Livingston College, wrote the following letter to the Class of 1982, included in the college yearbook, [The Rock: A Plateau for a New Beginning](#).

Dear Members of the Class of 1982:

Much has happened while you have been at Livingston College. As a result of organizational changes in the University, your college has gone from a point of relatively great autonomy to one which is highly limited in its freedom. These limits have been imposed by faculty who were not previously associated with the College but were primarily from Rutgers and Douglass Colleges, and by the Rutgers University Administration. If we are not careful, these decisions might do away with the differences which have made us special and will render us indistinguishable from the other New Brunswick units. As alumni of Rutgers University/Livingston College, you do have a hand in the decisions of tomorrow.

Other changes have also taken place which are not so ominous in portent. We now have so many applications for admission that we can pick and choose those students who best further the mission of the College. That is truly a desirable and happy situation for us. Another change which is highly likely is that we will at long last have a Student Center of our own and correct a serious error made by our early planners.

Yet another major difference is now discernible, a difference to which you will contribute. Our graduates, more than 6000 of them in the past decade, are now beginning to be a factor in society. Almost everywhere I go, I run into a successful Livingston College alumnus who proudly speaks of her or his College and fondly reminisces about the good old days – even those that were not so good. I look forward to these chance meetings and to seeing all of you again.

Make no mistakes and no apologies, Livingston College has been a success. We are not as successful as many of us had dreamed, but I suppose that would be a truly rare occurrence. On the other hand, we are far more successful than many of our detractors thought we could ever be and more successful than many of them would ever admit. So little they know.

Now another class graduates and departs. It goes without saying that I wish you well; you are part of my dream. It is similarly unnecessary to caution you to remember your College; how could you possibly forget it? With your graduation,

an era ends and another begins. With our spirit, determination and joint effort, our "reorganized" era can be as successful as the one just past.

So for now, farewell and Godspeed. Remember us well and return home when you can.

Affectionately yours,
W. Robert Jenkins
Dean