

Dean's Letter to Class of 1974: Be Proud of Acting in Unity Amid Shaken Society

George W. Carey, acting dean of Livingston College, wrote the following letter to the Class of 1974, included in the college yearbook, [We the People](#). Note that the yearbook misspells his last name as "Cary."

To the Graduating Class of 1974, Livingston College

This has been a year in which we have seen the legitimacy and credibility of some of the most central institutions of our society shaken. At all scales of concern – national, regional, state and local – there has been a breakdown of public faith and confidence attended by the explosive growth of disillusionment and cynicism.

What has occurred in society as a whole, has always manifested itself in Livingston College as well. We have gone through our own crisis of confidence. The reason for this is surely related to the fact that our college, more than most, represents a cross-section of society in its students and faculty: affluent, middle class, and poor; white, black and Puerto Rican, we represent a heterogeneous mix of all of the elements of our social order. Since we have chosen not to be homogenized into only one class or ethnic group, we have brought with us into our collegiate halls many of the issues which are left at the threshold of more homogenous colleges. We are a part of society, not apart from society.

In Livingston during this year, pressures arising from the inadequate support of certain vital areas threatened to divide us into competing interest groups. Despite the relentless pressures of resource scarcity which we feel so acutely, we were able to respond by drawing together to fight for common goals, rather than split apart to compete with each other. Our success in this regard has been greater than society's. We may be proud of it.

As the Spring semester progresses, there seems to be growing a renewed interest in the organization of student participation in community governance. I hope and trust that students and faculty alike will continue to work out the means to enable Livingston College to respond in unity to the challenges which await us in the future.

If it is true that our college is of society rather than a thing apart, then we hope that you, the graduating class, will remain committed to our efforts to

grow as a multi-racial, multi-ethnic institution dedicated to providing a quality education to the members of all of the communities to which you now return. We hope that as you work towards the betterment of those communities, that – by word and deed – you will be advocates of the College. And we hope that you will return active and interested participants in our efforts as alumni. Goodbye and good luck.

Sincerely,
George W. [Carey]
Acting Dean