

# Deans' Letters to Graduates

Many of the Livingston College yearbooks include letters to the graduating class from the college's dean. The pages linked below include the text of each letter, as well as a link to the page(s) where they were printed in each yearbook.

From Ernest A. Lynton:

Classes of 1970, 1971 and 1972: No yearbooks were published; no graduation letters have been located.

Letter to the Class of 1973.

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From George W. Carey:

Letter to the Class of 1974.

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From Emmanuel George Mesthene:

Class of 1975: No yearbook has been located; most likely it was not published. No graduation letter has been located.

Class of 1976: No separate yearbook was produced (graduates' photos were included in the 1977 yearbook); no graduation letter has been located.

Letter to the Class of 1977.

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From W. Robert Jenkins:

Letter to the Class of 1978.

Class of 1979: No separate yearbook was produced (graduates' photos were included in the 1980 yearbook); no graduation letter has been located.

Letters to the Classes of:

- 1980
- 1981
- 1982
- 1983

- 1984
- 1985
- 1986

Class of 1987: The yearbook does not include a letter from the dean; no separate letter has been located.

Letter to the Class of 1988.

Classes of 1989 and 1990: No yearbooks have been located; most likely they were not published. No separate letters have been located.

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From Walton R. Johnson:

Letters to the Classes of:

- 1991
  - 1992
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From Arnold G. Hyndman:

Classes of 1993 through 2001: The yearbooks do not include a letter from the dean; no separate letters have been located.

Letter to the Class of 2002.

Classes of 2003 through 2007: The yearbooks do not include a letter from the dean; no separate letters have been located.

Classes of 2008 through 2010: No yearbooks were published; no graduation letters have been located.

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

*W.*

*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

## [Livingston Women's Art Show in 1972 Was 'Strictly Unpolitical'](#)

Deborah Stokes, a 1974 graduate of Rutgers University's Livingston College and a 2015 Livingston College Distinguished Alumna, was one of eight artists exhibiting their works at the "First Livingston Women's Show" in 1972. She shared the following article documenting the experience (also attached as a PDF file):

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*Livingston's first show by women strictly unpolitical*



PISCATAWAY – Women artists needn't be women's libbers.

That's proved by the "First Livingston Women's Show" in the Livingston College Art Gallery, which features the work of eight female art students there.

"There is no overt 'political' art in the show, and those expecting to see a few fists and 2-D women breaking their chains will be disappointed," said Elizabeth Frenchman, a senior majoring in lithography, who is showing two amusing color prints and a yellow vinyl "2-D or 3-D stitched sculpture" (with grommets), which at quick glance might be mistaken for an oversize apron.

"The art is women's art, painted, woven, glazed by women serious about the creative life," she declared.

This first show by women art students, which closes Thursday, is small, because the gallery in the new academic building complex is small. Competition was ruled out because of the gallery size. The exhibition consists of the work of eight students chosen by instructors in various art disciplines.

Deborah Stokes, senior exhibiting paintings and a silk screen print, prepared the statement denying feminist intention for the show.

Cognizant of today's transitory American art scene, she pays lip service to feminism in art but makes no commitment.

She explained: "The politics of the Women's Movement have brought about a new

tolerance of diverse life styles, while the American social structure is experiencing a change in identity as women move out of their traditional roles. Increasingly, women are creating the energy for new discoveries in artistic expression.


“For many years women’s artistic outlets have been controlled by the dominant forces in the art world. The Livingston Women’s Show follows the current trend away from the museum aesthetic and moves towards diversity in artistic acceptance. Although a women’s show helps to strengthen an artistic group seeking recognition, women’s art may suffer as much from new categorical definitions as from the old male dominance.”

The Livingston senior feels, “While some women’s art reveals an inherently feminine consciousness through socially influenced subject matter, stylistic elements are universal and cannot be designated exclusively feminine or masculine.”

“Specific media, however, have been traditionally sex-defined,” she said. “The functional art forms, including weaving and ceramics, are only now gradually acquiring the status of other fine arts.”

She pointed out, “Kim Blackburn (sophomore exhibiting weaving and macrame) and Eleanor Fetteroff (junior showing ceramics) consider their pieces to be more than craft.”

The show’s spokesman said Miss Blackburn believes her weaving is “as much an expression of (her) self” and Miss Fetteroff views her raku ceramics as the means to an aesthetic “sensory stimulation.”

 The grotesqueries by Inez Andrucyk, another junior studying ceramics, “are derived from human forms.” These whimsical, non-functional pieces beg to be handled.

Bonnie Carlson, a senior showing a big painting with surrealist overtones, so graphic that the stove door handle seems to project from the canvas, makes her eloquent statement as an artist, rather than as a woman.

“I like the paradoxes painting provides, the personal experience turned public. I live working with the two dimensional plane, aiming for the third (perhaps fourth) dimension ... my concern is with reality, that level of mystery visible but yet invisible,” she declared.

Puerto Rican-born Pedro Juan, sophomore political science major visiting the gallery, voices a quick, crystal clear interpretation of his own on viewing the kitchen scene that shows a headless man with police cap and full-bodied shadow.

“I like that a lot,” he said of the surrealist painting.

Juan explained, “It symbolized the realities of life. It’s how people see

people – the phony person, unreal person. It's how people really are. They're phonies."

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## Dean's Letter to Class of 1981: Rutgers Reorganization Needn't Destroy Livingston

W.

*W. Robert Jenkins, dean of Livingston College, wrote the following letter to the Class of 1981, included in the college yearbook, [The Last](#).*

Dear Graduate:

There are always mixed emotions when one is graduated, emotions which range from the joys of success to the sadness of leaving friends and associates. I am sure that each of you fully understands this point and that you will understand when I say that I am happy to see you succeed but regret sincerely your leaving.

Livingston College is special to each of us. It is here that you have grown and learned to live with and tolerate others, regardless of their backgrounds and beliefs. In achieving this understanding, you have helped fulfill one of the early goals of the College. You have learned in the classrooms and laboratories as well, and with this knowledge you leave us now to employment, further study, travel, and the challenges of the future. This process surely meets another goal, not only of Livingston College but of any college, of preparing people for the rest of their lives.

At the same time, you have helped the College achieve other goals. Our impact upon Rutgers University is virtually immeasurable, an impact so great that we cannot fully define the changes we have caused. New programs of study, new approaches to learning, a diverse and outstanding faculty, the most representative student body possible; all have helped mold a unique institution of which we are justly proud.

This pride in ourselves and the certainty of our destiny caused us last year to oppose vigorously the reorganization which is now well under way for the New Brunswick campus. Our fear that this reorganization will sufficiently alter Livingston College so as to destroy it need not be realized; we must avoid the

risk of making that fear a self-fulfilling prophecy. Livingston College will remain if we wish it and are willing to put forth the efforts necessary to sustain our will. I wish to ask you, as alumni, to assist me and our loyal faculty in maintaining this College. The goals we set for ourselves in 1969 are still worthwhile and still attainable.

As you leave, I hope that the spirit of Livingston College stays with you and that you will keep in touch. We'll always be a part of each other.

With affection,  
W. Robert Jenkins  
Dean

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*Revised November 29, 2015*

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## [Dean's Letter to Class of 1980: A Decade Later, Livingston's Excitement Is Now Focused on Academics](#)

*W.*

*W. Robert Jenkins, dean of Livingston College, wrote the following letter to the Class of 1980, included in the college yearbook, [The Rock, Volume IV](#).*

Dear Graduate:

Your class is the tenth to graduate from this College and with your graduation you now become one of the more than 4,000 alumni who hold degrees from Livingston College. Those of us who were here in the fall of 1969 and saw the college in its infancy, have seen the initial enrollment of 750 surge to over 3,800 last fall. For me, this has been an especially gratifying experience. When I joined the Livingston Adventure as a faculty member I hardly anticipated that I would ever be writing this letter as your dean, but I can assure you that I am pleased and proud to do so.

I would like to reflect a bit on our past and, in doing so, note some of the

changes which have occurred besides the increase in numbers of graduates. Our first year saw faculty offices in quad rooms and classes held in lounges, living rooms, the old officer's club, and any other place where we could get together. Since then Tillett, Lucy Stone Hall, Beck, and the warehouse renovations for biology and psychology have all been completed. Although we do not have that much-desired separate student center building, we do now have a gym and additional recreational space in Tillett.

In the early days Livingston was known as a place where students were socially and politically active. This activity has been replaced with a concentration on career goals and concern about our futures as individuals. This some of the excitement is gone but to many that excitement has been replaced by a different kind. The stimulation of working together in pursuit of a strong academic experience is equally exciting. As we mature, we are reminded that we are a part of the rest of society to the extent that our worries and concerns differ little from those of others.

The faculty too has changed. We still have a generally dedicated and youthful faculty which give more of their time in informal ways to students than other college faculties. It is a group second to none so the value of their instruction and direction of you is unsurpassed in other colleges.

At the same time we have succeeded in many ways. The University is now open to large numbers of students who, in pre-Livingston years, did not enter the "hallowed halls" of the State University. We still have a campus as diverse in its people as is the population of the State. Education at Livingston College far exceeds the boundaries of the classroom, laboratory, and studio. This accomplishment is our greatest one and I am certain that you will see changes in society which are led by our graduates. Hopefully, each of you will be a part of these changes and hopefully, they will be for the better.

Finally, don't forget your College. Join our new alumni organization and help us work for our future. Keep in touch and come back to see us.

Fondly and sincerely yours,  
W. Robert Jenkins  
Dean

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*Revised November 27, 2015*

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# Dean's Letter to Class of 1978: Your Education Has Been Guided by Outstanding Faculty and Diverse Peers

W.

*W. Robert Jenkins, dean of Livingston College, wrote the following letter to the Class of 1978, included in the college yearbook, [The Rock, Volume III](#). (Jenkins was named permanent dean on March 6, 1978. Most likely, the letter below listing Jenkins as acting dean was written before that date.)*

Dear Graduate:

I am addressing this letter to you since it is upon you that the reputation and future of Livingston College will lie. In your stay at Livingston you have had the opportunity to study under a truly outstanding faculty, one second to none in Rutgers University and one which includes many persons of international reputation. I hope that you have availed yourself fully of this opportunity and will always reflect upon and profit from the ideas passed on to you by these people. After all, ideas and the ability to deal with them will be the greatest single return on your four-year investment in higher education.

Another and very significant part of anyone's education involves his or her peer relationships which have been developed. At Livingston College you have been a part of an unusually diverse student body, one which represents all facets of our general population. All racial and ethnic groups are present in significant numbers, older students returning to or just entering college after a number of years outside of the educational stream constitute a visible segment of our student body, and varied political and religious beliefs are well represented. To this group you owe acknowledgement of the broadening of your horizons, and they owe to you acknowledgement of your own specific contribution to the College.

Now that you are leaving us to take your place in the job market, to assume positions in all aspects of the employment scheme, and to go on to graduate and professional schools, you can best evaluate how good an education you received. Did your studies and your associations at Livingston College prepare you adequately? Do you have the knowledge and skills of your peers? Let us know. Your responses will help us to evaluate and improve our curriculum.

Finally, it has been a pleasure having you at Livingston College. I have enjoyed our personal contacts and wish that it had been possible to know each of you. Don't forget your College; keep in touch. You are the reward for our efforts and our investment in the future.

Sincerely yours,  
W. Robert Jenkins  
Acting Dean

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*Revised December 1, 2015*

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## Dean's Letter to Class of 1977: Livingston Has Provided a 'Better Than Average' Preparation for Life and Career

*Emmanuel G.*

*Emmanuel G. Mesthene, dean of Livingston College, wrote the following letter to the Class of 1977, included in the yearbook, The Rock, Volume II.*

FROM THE DESK OF THE DEAN

Dear Livingston College Students and Friends:

One's college years can be, in some respects, the best of one's life. Going to college means having challenged, sometimes for the first time, attitudes and assumptions formulated throughout a prior twelve years of schooling and half that many more of living.

Livingston College, as you know, is both very much like, and also different from, the "average," traditional college. As students here, you have had exposure to academic programs that are designed to provide preparation for further study and for a working life, for graduate and professional programs, for government service, and for the world of business.

At the same time, you have partaken and contributed to, the Livingston community. This yearbook, planned and put together by your fellow students, will help you to recall that community. I hope that your memories will be happy ones, that you will leave us and be able to judge that Livingston College has prepared you in better than the average way for what you will encounter in the future. To those of you who are graduating, I wish you well, and ask you to keep in touch, and to support your alma mater. The very best of luck to you!

Sincerely yours,  
Emmanuel G. Mesthene

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*Revised November 27, 2015*

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## **Dean's Letter to Class of 1973: You're Pioneers Who Have Shaped Livingston**

*Ernest A. Lynton, dean of Livingston College, wrote the following letter to the Class of 1973, included in the publication, [Livingston in the Retrospect: 1969-1973](#).*

To the Livingston Class of 1973:

You are the first full graduating class of Livingston College, and it is for all of us a proud and happy occasion. Many of you have been here with the College from its very beginning, back in September 1969 – which seems a very long time ago.

You and the College have come a long way since those early days, with mud everywhere and makeshift facilities, but also with a special kind of pioneering excitement which no one else at Livingston will ever know.

You have contributed a great deal to the shaping of Livingston, and we all owe you a debt of gratitude. I hope that in turn Livingston has given much to you, and that it has enhanced your ability to cope with your future and with the problems of our society in an effective and constructive fashion.

Our hopes and our good wishes accompany you in this task.

Cordially yours,  
Ernest A. Lynton  
Dean

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# [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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(Spam-resistant email link provided by WillMaster; email address image provided by Nexodyne.)

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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.*