



Dear Colleagues,

On November 24th, 2015, I announced RU-1st, as a set of initiatives targeted at nearly 8,000 students in New Brunswick who are first in their family to attend college, from a low-income background, or from a historically underrepresented group, but do not receive enhanced academic support provided by existing federal and state government programs at Rutgers University- New Brunswick.

RU-1st is comprised of a three-prong approach for providing support:

- **Coordination:** Organized shared information and the sharing of best practices between schools, units, departments and community affiliates. This is necessary due to the size of Rutgers-New Brunswick.
- **Advising:** Improved access to advisors across New Brunswick who will provide information and resources to students. Advising is key, as studies have shown that it positively affects outcomes of student success and is critical in institutional efforts to retain and graduate first-generation students.
- **High Impact Programs & Courses:** Programming includes co-curricular and extra-curricular experiences that engage students in efforts to increase retention. These Programs create an inclusive environment for the student population, focusing on retention programming, events and mentoring opportunities.

I have also created the RU-1st coordinating committee to strengthen the support and access to information for students. The committee serves as the coordinating body under the direction of the Vice Chancellor for Undergraduate Academic Affairs. The primary objectives of this committee charge will be to:

- Collaborate with schools and/or unit administrators to ensure there are programs, courses, and a robust infrastructure is developed within the school/unit level for this population.
- Collaborate with School Deans and CFO's to ensure the future success and funding of RU-1st within Rutgers- New Brunswick.
- Identify full-time professional staff at each school/unit to serve as a liaisons to work with central RU-1st office and students.
- Develop tools and benchmarks for measuring success for underrepresented students.
- Develop a report on the status, achievements and success of first-generation, low-income, and underrepresented students for Rutgers-New Brunswick.
- Attend RU-1st committee meetings and develop best practices that encourages and supports first-generation student success in the Rutgers-New Brunswick community.
- Sponsor and participate in high-impact programs facilitated by the RU-1st.
- Develop creative innovative measures to increase degree completion within four years.
- Make recommendations to the Chancellor to improve the RU-1st population experience

Sincerely,

Richard L. Edwards- Chancellor New Brunswick