

## Editorial

A new building is going up on the Rutgers Busch Campus in Piscataway. It will be academic home for Professors Jay Tischfield (Department of Genetics and mentor of Rutgers Undergraduate Research Fellow M Heimmel (2001)) and Joachim Kohn (Department of Chemistry and Chemical Biology). Their planned cohabitation symbolizes nicely the blurring of traditional disciplinary lines within the university. The construction site lies between Wright-Rieman Laboratories (the old "chemistry") and Nelson Biological Laboratories (the old "biology"). Eminently practical, the choice of location is another apt metaphor for the shrinking gap between the disciplines. The convergence of the disciplines is also clear in the table of contents of the Rutgers Scholar, where a quick look at this year's titles and authors' departments shows how DNA unites us and drives so much research.

A few steps down the road from the construction site, from the roof of the Library of Science and Medicine, we can turn and look back on Wright-Rieman and Nelson. With a turn to the north, we can see the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ). A recent New Jersey State Commission Report calls for merging (restructuring) Rutgers with UMDNJ. The report stresses the common interests of Rutgers and UMDNJ faculty and the importance of making it easy for everyone to work together. Once unified, the two institutions will have a deeper roster of talented faculty members in the life sciences. We anticipate that they will continue to cross our fuzzy interdisciplinary boundaries as they take part in collaborative projects not only with each other, but also with colleagues in the social sciences and the humanities.

The Commission's report points out that the new structure will involve all university undergraduate programs. Thus, among other outcomes, the restructuring should ultimately make it easier for undergraduates to do research with faculty members in the medical school. Many pre-meds will no doubt be interested, as will, we hope future Rutgers Undergraduate Research Fellows from many different disciplines. Medical school faculty members, for their part, may welcome the chance to work with undergraduates. With appropriate planning now the new university can quickly realize the many potential advantages of the merger - more opportunities, better training, and greater student satisfaction, and a stronger national profile for the university.

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