

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEW BRUNSWICK AND RUTGERS HEALTH

258th Anniversary Commencement

SUNDAY, MAY 12





President's Message



Dear Members of the Class of 2024,

It's time to celebrate!

All your hard work, your curiosity and creativity, your willingness to venture outside your comfort zone, and your determination and diligence have led to this milestone: earning a degree from one of the finest public universities in the nation. On behalf of the Rutgers community, I am delighted to say: Congratulations!

For everyone turning a tassel today, this moment is the realization of overcoming obstacles large and small on your academic path. And I know that for many of you, your start at Rutgers—like mine—came amid a global pandemic that challenged you in ways unforeseen. Class of 2024, you deserve to take enormous pride in all you have accomplished. It is a pride rightfully shared by your families, your friends, your faculty, and all those who have supported you along the way.

Better yet, you can look to the future with confidence, knowing that your education at Rutgers has prepared you well. In completing your degree, you have acquired knowledge, honed your talent and intellect, and developed critical thinking skills that will help you master the personal and professional opportunities that await you. Just as important, I hope that your experience at Rutgers has inspired you to take an active role in civic life, advancing our mission of service to the common good in communities local and global.

As you go forth from Rutgers, taking your place among our distinguished alumni, know that your alma mater is proud of you. You are Scarlet Forever. We are excited to see the remarkable things the Class of 2024 will accomplish, armed with a Rutgers degree, adding prestige to the university with your achievements. And we hope you will always keep in touch throughout your life as we strive to make you ever prouder of this storied institution.

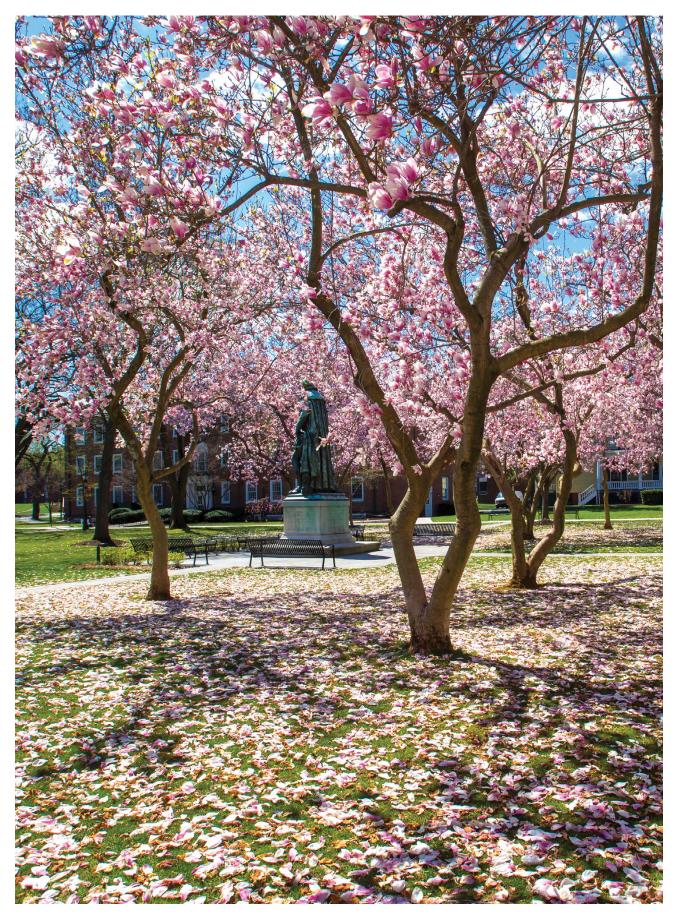
Congratulations again to the Rutgers University Class of 2024!

Sincerely,

Jonathan Holloway

President and University Professor

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey



Congratulations from Our Chancellors



Dear Graduates.

Congratulations on your remarkable achievement! Each of you has earned a degree from the nation's #15 top public university. This hard-earned and extraordinary accomplishment will change the course of your life, prepare you for success in your future pursuits, and foster the value of engaged citizenship.

Your long road to commencement has undoubtedly been eventful, marked by triumphs, joys, stresses, and anxieties. I encourage you to reflect on those memories and how even the difficult ones have taught you to overcome adversity. In contrast, the happy ones reinforced your commitment to becoming your best self and gave you hope that will serve you for years. Remember, you were not alone in this journey. A network of loved ones, family members, and friends helped you feel grounded and connected. Please make time to share the joy of this day with them.

Rutgers—New Brunswick is honored to have been your home and partner throughout this transformative period of your life, and we want to maintain our relationship with you. You are part of the two-and-a-half centuries-old Rutgers story, and we hope you remain connected with your alma mater and fellow alumni as you go on to change the world for the better.

Warmly,

Francine Conway

Chancellor and Distinguished Professor, Rutgers University-New Brunswick



Dear Rutgers Health Graduates,

As you transition into the next phase of your journey, I want to extend my heartfelt congratulations to each of you. Your dedication, compassion, and commitment to serving others have been evident throughout your time here at Rutgers Health.

Whether you choose to focus on individual patient care, community health initiatives, education, or research, remember the importance of equitable access and outcomes for all. Your role in advancing the health and well-being of diverse populations is invaluable.

Today, surrounded by your mentors, peers, loved ones, and supporters, I commend you for your hard work and perseverance. Your achievements are a testament to your resilience and dedication.

As you embark on this new chapter, I encourage you to stay connected with Rutgers and continue to foster the relationships you have built here. May you find fulfillment in your professional pursuits and always cherish the joy of learning.

Congratulations once again, and best wishes for a successful and rewarding journey ahead.

Warm regards,

Brian L. Strom

Chancellor, Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences and Executive Vice President for Health Affairs

Order of Exercises

ACADEMIC PROCESSION

Rutgers Wind Ensemble from the Mason Gross School of the Arts Dr. Kraig A. Williams, Conductor

BOARD OF GOVERNORS' WELCOME

Mr. William E. Best Chair of the Board of Governors

NATIONAL ANTHEM

Members of the Rutgers University Choirs from the Mason Gross School of the Arts Dr. Brandon Williams, Conductor

PRESIDENT'S GREETING

Dr. Jonathan Holloway President, Rutgers University

CONFERRING OF HONORARY DEGREES

Dr. Jonathan Holloway President, Rutgers University

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

Dr. Freeman A. Hrabowski III Scientist, Educator, and President Emeritus, University of Maryland, Baltimore County

"THE BELLS MUST RING"

by Richard Hadden Rutgers University Glee Club Dr. Brandon Williams, Conductor

CLASS OF 2024 ADDRESS

Remarks

Mr. Jack Ramirez, Rutgers Class of 2025

President, Rutgers University Student Assembly (2023-2024)

Address

Ms. Aarushi Fernandez, Rutgers Class of 2024

Bachelor of Science

Biomedical Engineering, School of Engineering

Vice President, Rutgers University Student Assembly (2023–2024)

ALUMNI WELCOME

Ms. Gloria K. Vanderham

Chair, Rutgers University Alumni Association Board of Directors

Video Presentation: We Are You

ALMA MATER

Members of the Rutgers University Choirs from the Mason Gross School of the Arts Dr. Brandon Williams, Conductor

PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES AND CONFERRING OF DEGREES

Dr. Jonathan Holloway President, Rutgers University

Dr. Francine Conway Chancellor, Rutgers University-New Brunswick

Dr. Brian L. Strom

Chancellor, Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences and Executive Vice President for Health Affairs

RECESSIONAL

Rutgers Wind Ensemble from the Mason Gross School of the Arts *Dr. Kraig A. Williams, Conductor*

Commencement Music

Rutgers Wind Ensemble from the Mason Gross School of the Arts

Kraig A. Williams, Conductor Dana Mandell, Assistant Conductor

Pre-ceremony

The Fairest of the Fair John Philip Sousa
First Suite in E Flat Gustav Holst

I. Chaconne

II. Intermezzo

III. March

Salute to the Big 10 Thomas Bourgault
The Liberty Bell John Philip Sousa
Florentiner March Julius Fucik

Young Person's Guide to John Williams John Williams

Commencement Fanfare Joseph Marta, Bachelor of Music '24

Academic Procession

Midway March John Williams

Procession of the Nobles Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov

March ProcessionalClare GrundmanCrown ImperialWilliam WaltonPomp and Circumstance No. 1Edward Elgar

Recessional

Theme from Superman John Williams
Americans We Henry Fillmore



Commencement Speaker and Honorary Degree Recipient



Photo by Jay Baker

FREEMAN A. HRABOWSKI III

Doctor of Letters

Rutgers is proud to bestow upon Freeman A. Hrabowski III an honorary doctor of letters degree. Hrabowski, president emeritus of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, served as president from 1992 to 2022. His research and publications focus on science and math education, with special emphasis on minority participation and performance. He chaired the National Academies' committee that produced the 2011 report Expanding Underrepresented Minority Participation: America's Science and Technology Talent at the Crossroads. In 2012, he was named by President Obama to chair the President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for African Americans, His TED talk highlights the "Four Pillars of College Success in Science." In 2022, he was elected to the National Academy of Engineering and was named the inaugural American Council on Education Centennial Fellow. In addition, the Howard Hughes Medical Institute launched the \$1.5 billion Freeman Hrabowski Scholars Program to help build a scientific workforce that more fully reflects our increasingly diverse country, and he was named the inaugural Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Lecture Speaker by Harvard University. In 2023, the National Academy of Sciences awarded him the Public Welfare Medal, the academy's most prestigious award, and inducted him as a member of the academy for his extraordinary use of science for the public good.

In 2008, he was named one of America's Best Leaders by *U.S. News & World Report. TIME* magazine named him one of America's 10 Best College Presidents in 2009 and one of the 100 Most Influential People in the World in 2012. In 2011, he received both the TIAA-CREF Theodore M. Hesburgh Award for Leadership Excellence and the Carnegie Corporation of New York's Academic Leadership Award. Also in 2011, he was named one of seven Top American Leaders by the *Washington Post* and the Harvard Kennedy School's Center for Public Leadership. In 2012, he received the Heinz Award for his contributions to improving the "human condition" and was among the inaugural inductees into the *U.S. News & World Report* STEM Solutions Leadership Hall of Fame. He received the American Council on Education's Lifetime Achievement Award (2018), was named a recipient of the University of California, Berkeley's Clark Kerr Award (2019), and was awarded the University of California, San Francisco's UCSF Medal (2020).

With philanthropist Robert Meyerhoff, he cofounded the Meyerhoff Scholars Program in 1988. The program, recognized as a national model, is open to all high-achieving students committed to pursuing advanced degrees and research careers in science and engineering and advancing underrepresented minorities in STEM. He has authored numerous articles and coauthored five books. His latest book, *The Resilient University: How Purpose and Inclusion Drive Success* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2024), written with three colleagues, focuses on how leaders can use the qualities of openness, resilience, courage, passion, and hope in challenging times to drive student success.

Born in 1950 in Birmingham, Alabama, he was a child-leader in the Civil Rights Movement and was featured in Spike Lee's 1997 documentary *Four Little Girls*. He graduated from Hampton Institute with highest honors in mathematics. He received his M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Honorary Degree Recipient



Photo courtesy of William E. Best

WILLIAM E. BEST

Doctor of Laws

Rutgers is proud to bestow upon William E. Best an honorary doctor of laws degree. Best is senior vice president, northeast market manager at PNC, championing the bank's commitment to accelerating growth and prosperity for low to moderate income segments, including community and economic development corporations, small businesses, and women- and minority-owned enterprises in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York, and Boston.

Best returned to PNC after his governor-appointed role as the first executive director of the New Jersey Redevelopment Authority, a state-financing agency where he served six years under three administrations. During his tenure, Best established the brain trust, public-private partnerships, infrastructure capitalization, and organizational talent to transform the Redevelopment Authority from a one-year appropriation to a sustainable agency investing \$1.3 billion of financial and technical resources into urban neighborhood redevelopment projects.

Prior to leading the Redevelopment Authority, Best pioneered commercial banking initiatives in accordance with the Community Reinvestment Act as vice president of community development for PNC and community reinvestment officer at BNY Mellon.

Best's strategic vision, broad business acumen, and consensus-building have enabled him to provide actionable insight and financial stewardship to institutional boards. Reelected chair of Rutgers University's Board of Governors and co-vice chair of the search committee selecting the university's 21st president, he is currently affiliated with boards for New Jersey Future, New Jersey Regional Plan Association, Newark Alliance, and Newark Regional Business Partnership.

He is a former chair and an honorary lifetime member of the International Economic Development Council, the world's largest professional association for economic developers, with over 5,000 members worldwide. As chair, he instituted a comprehensive Ethics Education and Enforcement Policy; strategies for recession recovery; and educational, federal, and organizational partnerships.

Best was unanimously elected to serve two terms as chair of Rutgers University's Board of Trustees, commissioning a Student Aid Task Force resulting in a sustainable fund supporting low-income student educational opportunities. Following his second term, he was elected trustee emeritus.

He earned a bachelor of science degree in business administration from North Carolina Central University and completed the Harvard Kennedy School of Government's Senior Executive Leadership Program.

Honorary Degree Recipient



Photo by Eileen Barroso

JELANI COBB

Doctor of Letters

Rutgers is proud to bestow upon Jelani Cobb an honorary doctor of letters degree. Cobb leads Columbia Journalism School as the dean and is the Henry R. Luce Professor of Journalism. Cobb joined the faculty in 2016 as the founding director of the Lipman Center for Journalism and Civil and Human Rights before becoming the 14th dean of the school.

Cobb has been a staff writer at *The New Yorker* since 2015. His journalism there has explored the intersection of race and policing, covered the aftermath of mass shootings, examined crucial social and cultural concerns, and chronicled national politics. He is the editor or coeditor of several volumes including *The Matter of Black Lives: Writing from The New Yorker* and *The Essential Kerner Commission Report*. He has also coproduced and written a number of documentaries including *Lincoln's Dilemma, The Riot Report*, and *Policing the Police*.

He received a Peabody Award for his 2020 PBS Frontline film *Whose Vote Counts*, which examined crucial issues of voter access ahead of the presidential election, and he was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in Commentary in 2018. He has also been a political analyst for MSNBC since 2019. Cobb is a recipient of fellowships from the Ford Foundation, the Fulbright Foundation, and the Shorenstein Center at Harvard Kennedy School of Government.

Cobb was educated at Jamaica High School in Queens, N.Y.; Howard University, where he earned a B.A. in English; and Rutgers University, where he completed his M.A. and doctorate in American history in 2003. His research concentrates on the linkages and relationship between the Cold War and the Civil Rights Movement. He currently serves on the Board of Directors of the American Journalism Project, New York Public Library, and Gordon Parks Foundation. He was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2023. Cobb has dedicated his deanship to paving pathways to greater access to a journalism education, including Columbia Journalism School's Loan Repayment Assistance Program—the first of its kind for the journalism industry—as well as landmark events.

He is the author of *The Substance of Hope: Barack Obama and the Paradox of Progress* and *To the Break of Dawn: A Freestyle on the Hip Hop Aesthetic.*

Cobb has been a featured commentator on National Public Radio, CNN, Al-Jazeera, CBS News, and other national broadcast outlets.

Literacy and education were valued highly in Cobb's childhood household. Both of his parents had migrated from the South, where they did not have access to high-quality schools. He recounted being taught to write at an early age by his father, Willie Lee Cobb, and has been writing ever since.

Honorary Degree Recipient



Photo courtesy of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

RACHEL L. LEVINE

Doctor of Science

Rutgers is proud to bestow upon Rachel L. Levine an honorary doctor of science degree. Admiral Levine serves as the 17th assistant secretary for health for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, after being nominated by President Joe Biden and confirmed by the U.S. Senate in 2021. As assistant secretary for health, Levine fights every day to improve the health and well-being of all Americans. She's working to help our nation overcome the COVID-19 pandemic and build a stronger foundation for a healthier future—one in which every American can attain their full health potential. Levine also is the head of the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps, one of the eight uniformed services.

After graduating from Harvard College and Tulane University School of Medicine, Levine completed her training in pediatrics and adolescent medicine at the Mt. Sinai Medical Center in New York City. As a physician, she focused on the intersection between mental and physical health, treating children, adolescents, and young adults. Levine was a professor of pediatrics and psychiatry at the Penn State College of Medicine. Her previous posts included vice chair for clinical affairs for the Department of Pediatrics and chief of the Division of Adolescent Medicine and Eating Disorders at the Penn State Hershey Medical Center.

In 2015, Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf nominated Levine to be Pennsylvania's physician general and she was subsequently unanimously confirmed by Pennsylvania's State Senate. In March 2018, Levine was named Pennsylvania's secretary of health. During her time in state government, Levine worked to address Pennsylvania's opioid crisis, focus attention on maternal health, and improve immunization rates among children. Her decision to issue a standing order for the anti-overdose drug Naloxone saved thousands of lives by allowing law enforcement to carry the drug and Pennsylvanians to purchase it without a prescription from their doctor.

Levine is a member of the National Academy of Medicine and a fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine, and the Academy for Eating Disorders. She was also president of the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials. In addition to her recent posts in medicine and government, Levine is an accomplished speaker and author of numerous publications on the opioid crisis, adolescent medicine, eating disorders, and LGBT medicine.

Student Speaker



AARUSHI FERNANDEZ

Bachelor of Science
Biomedical Engineering
School of Engineering
Vice President, Rutgers University Student Assembly (2023–2024)

Rutgers is delighted to have Aarushi Fernandez represent the Class of 2024.

Aarushi Fernandez was born in India and emigrated to the United States with her family as a child. She is an out-of-state student, currently residing in Denver, Colorado. Fernandez is graduating with a bachelor of science degree in biomedical engineering. As a self-described "third culture kid," she has lived in multiple states across the United States, as well as in Europe. Her extracurricular involvement includes the multicultural service organization Delta Kappa Delta Sorority Inc., working as a dental assistant, and volunteer work as a phone bank leader for a nonprofit organization. Fernandez sought to contribute to and enhance the diverse community at Rutgers, making her mark through serving the student body.

During her first year at Rutgers, Fernandez served in the Rutgers University Student Assembly (RUSA) as a Livingston Campus representative and as a member of the Legislative Affairs Committee. From October 2021 to April 2023, she served as the student body secretary of RUSA's 15th and 16th assemblies. During this time, she also served as the Multicultural Greek Council's representative to RUSA, sitting as a voting member in the assembly and on the Sexual Violence Education Committee.

Fernandez helped to establish the Public Safety Student Advisory Board, partnering with the Rutgers University Police Department to strengthen community relationships.

Through her tenure as vice president of the 17th assembly, Fernandez served on President Holloway's Student Advisory Committee, the Public Safety Student Advisory Board, the New Brunswick Diversity Strategic Plan Working Group, and as a delegate to the Association of Big Ten Students conferences. Continuing her work in public safety, Fernandez coauthored the Rutgers Public Safety Package, creating a safety device distribution program for off-campus housing. She created the RUSA Public Health Package to expand student knowledge of the resources currently provided. Her public health efforts included supporting the Rutgers Food Pantry, furthering Naloxone administration training and harm reduction services, and partnering with mental health organizations. Focusing on improving the Rutgers community was a priority of the 17th assembly. Celebrating the diverse community at Rutgers was essential, and an initiative to partner with the Rutgers Center for Social Justice Education and LGBT Communities to raise a Pride banner was spearheaded by Fernandez and RUSA president Jack Ramirez. RUSA also continued advocacy efforts with the New Jersey Public Interest Research Group (NJPIRG) to advance the use of open-source and affordable textbooks. As a long-standing member, Fernandez continued to pursue the initiatives of past administrations, persisting in efforts to increase the availability of free menstrual hygiene products across campus.

Beyond Rutgers, the Ramirez-Fernandez administration advocated at a federal level through the Association of Big Ten Students Conference in Washington, D.C., to improve campus safety, increase Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits through the Farm Bill, and accommodate all students through the RISE Act.

Following graduation, Fernandez is preparing to pursue her ambition to become an orthodontist and intends to combine her knowledge of biomedical engineering with the field of dentistry.

Presentation of Candidates and Conferring of Degrees

President Jonathan Holloway

RUTGERS HEALTH

Chancellor, Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences and Executive Vice President for Health Affairs Brian L. Strom

Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy

Dean Joseph A. Barone Doctor of Pharmacy

New Jersey Medical School

Dean Robert L. Johnson

Doctor of Medicine

Rutgers School of Dental Medicine

Dean Cecile A. Feldman
Master of Dental Science
Master of Science
Master of Science in Dentistry
Doctor of Dental Medicine

School of Nursing

Dean Linda Flynn
Bachelor of Science
Master of Science in Nursing
Post-Master's Certificate
Doctor of Nursing Practice
Doctor of Philosophy

Robert Wood Johnson Medical School

Dean Amy P. Murtha
Doctor of Medicine

School of Health Professions

Dean Jeffrey DiGiovanni
Associate of Science
Bachelor of Science
Master of Science
Doctor of Clinical Laboratory Science
Doctor of Clinical Nutrition
Doctor of Health Informatics
Doctor of Occupational Therapy
Doctor of Physical Therapy
Doctor of Philosophy

School of Public Health

Dean Perry N. Halkitis
Post-Baccalaureate Certificate
Master of Public Health
Master of Science
Doctor of Philosophy
Doctor of Public Health

School of Graduate Studies*

Dean Mark Gregory Robson Master of Arts

Master of Arts for Teachers

Master of Bioenvironmental Engineering

Master of Biomedical Sciences

Master of Business and Science

Master of Engineering

Master of Landscape Architecture

Master of Philosophy

Master of Science

Master of Science in Biomedical Sciences

Master of Science for Teachers

Doctor of Philosophy

^{*}The School of Graduate Studies—formed in July 2017 from the merger of the Graduate School–New Brunswick and the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences—is a unit of both Rutgers University–New Brunswick and Rutgers Health.

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEW BRUNSWICK

Chancellor Francine Conway

School of Engineering

Dean Alberto Cuitiño Bachelor of Science

School of Environmental and Biological Sciences

Executive Dean Laura J. Lawson

Bachelor of Arts Bachelor of Science

Graduate School of Education

Dean Wanda J. Blanchett Master of Education Specialist in Education Doctor of Education

Rutgers Business School–Newark and New Brunswick

Dean Lei Lei

Bachelor of Science

Master of Accountancy

Master of Business Administration

Master of Financial Analysis

Master of Information Technology and Analytics

Master of Quantitative Finance

Master of Science

Doctor of Business Administration

School of Social Work

Interim Dean Richard L. Edwards

Master of Social Work

Doctor of Social Work

Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology

Dean Arpana G. Inman

Master of Applied Behavior Analysis

Master of Applied Psychology

Master of Psychology

Doctor of Psychology

Mason Gross School of the Arts

Dean Jason Geary

Bachelor of Fine Arts

Bachelor of Music

Master of Fine Arts

Master of Music

Artist Diploma

Doctor of Musical Arts

School of Communication and Information

Interim Dean Dafna Lemish

Bachelor of Arts

Master of Communication and Media

Master of Health Communication and Information

Master of Information

Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy

Dean Stuart Shapiro

Bachelor of Arts

Bachelor of Science

Master of City and Regional Planning

Master of City and Regional Studies

Master of Health Administration

Master of Public Affairs and Politics

Master of Public Policy

Master of Public Informatics

School of Management and Labor Relations

Dean Adrienne E. Eaton

Bachelor of Arts

Bachelor of Science

Master of Human Resource Management

Master of Labor and Employment Relations

School of Arts and Sciences

Executive Dean Iuli Wade

Bachelor of Arts

Bachelor of Science

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Dr. Adrienne Simonds

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Dr. Mimi Phan

Alma Mater

ON THE BANKS OF THE OLD RARITAN

From far and near we came to Rutgers, And resolved to learn all that we can; And so we settled down, in that noisy college town, On the banks of the old Raritan.

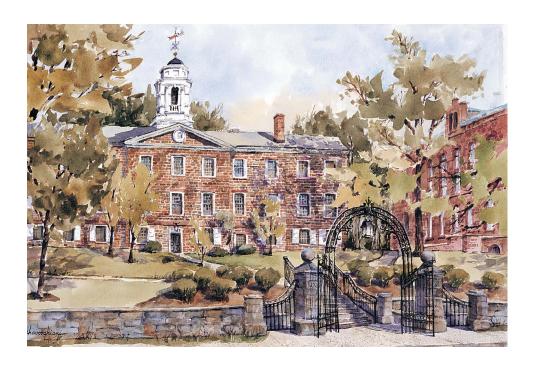
Chorus:

On the banks of the old Raritan, my friends, Where old Rutgers evermore shall stand; For has she not stood since the time of the flood, On the banks of the old Raritan.

Then sing aloud to *alma mater*,
And keep the Scarlet in the van;
For with her motto high, Rutgers' name shall never die
On the banks of the old Raritan.

Chorus:

On the banks of the old Raritan, my friends, Where old Rutgers evermore shall stand; For has she not stood since the time of the flood, On the banks of the old Raritan.





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