



DR. RICHARD D. WELLBROCK – Chairman
DR. LAWRENCE A. NESPOLI – President

News Release

Contact: Jacob C. Farbman, APR, (609) 392-3434, ext. 105 or (856) 802-0129 (evenings)

Date: February 21, 2008

For Release February 22, 2008

Editor Please Note: Attached is a chart containing NJ STARS enrollment growth at New Jersey's community colleges as of Jan. 25, 2008, the most recent data available.

NJ STARS Enrollment Jumps 32 Percent Statewide

TRENTON, N.J.—Statewide enrollment of New Jersey Student Tuition Assistance Rewards Scholarship (NJ STARS) students at New Jersey's 19 community colleges increased by 32 percent compared to last year, according to a recent New Jersey Higher Education Student Assistance Authority (HESAA) survey released today by the New Jersey Council of County Colleges.

According to HESAA, the state authority that coordinates all state-sponsored merit- and need-based financial aid programs, 4,126 NJ STARS students enrolled in community colleges during the fall 2007 semester. In fall 2006, 3,121 NJ STARS students attended.

The number of students taking advantage of the NJ STARS scholarship has more than quadrupled since the program began in fall 2004, when 933 students enrolled in community colleges throughout the state.

-more-

NJ STARS Enrollment Jumps 32 Percent / page two

“We’re very proud of the tremendous growth of the NJ STARS program,” said Council President Dr. Lawrence A. Nespoli. “More and more of New Jersey’s best and brightest students are taking advantage of this merit-based scholarship, which the state legislature created to help keep the best talent in New Jersey to pursue their higher education.”

NJ STARS is the first state-sponsored, merit-based scholarship program in the country that covers the cost of tuition and approved fees at community colleges. Students who graduate in the top 20 percent of their high school class are eligible. The scholarship covers up to five semesters of tuition and approved fees for full-time students. To receive the scholarship in their sophomore year at a community college, students must finish their freshman year with a 3.0 grade point average.

In January 2006, the State of New Jersey enacted NJ STARS II, which allows community college NJ STARS students who earn their associate's degrees with a 3.0 grade point average or better to receive a full tuition and fees scholarship at any New Jersey public four-year college or university. In addition, many of the state’s private four-year colleges and universities offer transfer scholarships to community college graduates who would otherwise qualify for NJ STARS II by attending a state college or university.

The New Jersey Council of County Colleges is the state association representing New Jersey’s 19 community colleges. As an independent, trustee-headed organization that joins the leadership of trustees and presidents, the Council is the voice of the community college sector before the state legislature and other branches of government.

**NJ STARS Enrollments
at New Jersey's Community Colleges**

| College | Fall 2004 | Fall 2005 | Fall 2006 | Fall 2007* |
|----------------|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Atlantic Cape | 39 | 124 | 194 | 262 |
| Bergen | 37 | 65 | 122 | 166 |
| Brookdale | 72 | 191 | 293 | 365 |
| Burlington | 111 | 205 | 253 | 315 |
| Camden | 111 | 216 | 349 | 460 |
| Cumberland | 67 | 146 | 200 | 253 |
| Essex | 56 | 94 | 117 | 159 |
| Gloucester | 82 | 164 | 269 | 354 |
| Hudson | 24 | 44 | 64 | 77 |
| Mercer | 39 | 92 | 153 | 188 |
| Middlesex | 36 | 106 | 193 | 262 |
| Morris | 34 | 67 | 101 | 133 |
| Ocean | 109 | 246 | 396 | 544 |
| Passaic | 19 | 31 | 43 | 79 |
| Raritan Valley | 7 | 37 | 44 | 76 |
| Salem | 11 | 33 | 61 | 92 |
| Sussex | 18 | 64 | 107 | 156 |
| Union | 44 | 71 | 83 | 105 |
| Warren | 17 | 44 | 79 | 80 |
| Total | 933 | 2,040 | 3,121 | 4,126 |

*The Fall 2007 NJ STARS numbers are as of 1/25/08.

Source: New Jersey Higher Education Student Assistance Authority