

BUILDING THE BRAND IN ATHLETICS

From the time NJIT first welcomed students in 1881, recognition of the university's commitment to educational opportunity and leading-edge research has continued to grow. Now, in the 21st century, NJIT's debut in the Division I athletics arena is energizing even greater awareness of the university as an institution that strives for nothing short of maximum achievement in every field. And with \$4.2 million already pledged, the \$5 million Highlanders Athletics Campaign will do much to advance NJIT in athletic competition nationwide, as well as to promote recreational sports and personal fitness for all members of the university community.

There are many who share this view of athletics at NJIT and the significance of the Highlanders Campaign. One supporter is John Olson '61, MS '66, a member of the university's Board of Overseers who retired after a long career with Morgan Stanley. Olson, whose family generously supports NJIT academic scholarships, says that fostering a school's prominence in athletics is part of the "big picture" today when it comes to building the national reputation that attracts top students. "It's a matter of promoting brand-name recognition as a university that strives to be the best in every way."

Other supporters of the Highlanders Athletics Campaign cite important benefits for all



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students, faculty and staff. In addition to intercollegiate competition, NJIT has long encouraged recreational sports and personal physical fitness. The Highlanders Campaign is helping to improve athletic and fitness facilities available to all on campus — such as the immensely popular running track that is part of the renovations at Lubetkin Field.

James Boyle '58, a former NJIT soccer player now retired from Public Service Electric and Gas, remembers how important physical activity was as a student majoring in electrical engineering. "It really helped to ease the stress

of very demanding classes and actually helped me to be a better student. I think this aspect is even more important today given all our stresses and our tendency to be less physically active."

Then there are the important life skills that athletics can build. John Seazholtz '59, NCE soccer player and current chairman of the board at Westell Technologies, says that teamwork, consideration of others, dealing with disappointment and defeat are not innate personal qualities. "We have to learn these skills, and my experience has been that athletic competition at its best really encourages that learning," Seazholtz says.

Seazholtz also feels that attracting academically talented top athletes to NJIT through Division I play brings young men and women to campus who are role models on and off the field or court. "They encourage better athletic performance at all levels, and academic effort as well," he says.

National Division I success, building the NJIT brand for excellence in all areas, personal fitness for life, enrolling the best student-athletes — all are moving forward with the help of the Highlanders Athletics Campaign. If you haven't yet contributed, join the numerous supporters of a great university who have brought the campaign close to a \$5 million win. There's still time to get in the game and make a gift for general program support, scholarships, and improvement of facilities, including naming opportunities. ■

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