

A CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION

In November, on the milestone 20th anniversary of Celebration, three distinguished individuals were recognized for achievements that benefit New Jersey and the nation, along with an organization notable for its contributions to NJIT's mission. The university's annual black-tie fundraiser, Celebration was once again held at the Pleasantdale Chateau in West Orange, N.J.

Proceeds from Celebration support endowed scholarships for students at NJIT. Over the past two decades, many of NJIT's most generous supporters have gathered annually for the event, which has raised more than \$4.3 million in scholarship endowment funds. Celebration 2014 featured a "Roaring Twenties" theme and a special performance by Bernadette Peters, with Marvin Laird, music director.

Robert Medina, senior vice president and East District director of T.Y. Lin International, chaired the Executive Dinner Committee for 2014 and was the evening's master of ceremonies. Medina is a 1975 graduate of NJIT, and serves on the university's Board of Overseers.

"This degree of concern for the current generation of NJIT students and those who will follow is very meaningful for me," said Medina. "As someone whose own college education was made possible by a scholarship, I have always been mindful of how important such support is for outstanding young men and women who would otherwise encounter a daunting financial barrier on the path toward their educational goals."

The Honorable Thomas H. Kean received the University Medal for Lifetime Achievement. Kean served as governor of New Jersey from 1982 to 1990, and was the president of Drew University from 1990 to 2005. He also served for 10 years in the New Jersey Assembly, holding the positions of majority leader, minority leader, and speaker. As governor, Kean served on the President's Education Policy Advisory Committee and as chair of the Education Commission of the States and the National Governors Association Task Force on Teaching. He received an honorary doctor of humane letters degree from NJIT in 1983.

Following the tragic events of September 11, 2001, President George W. Bush called upon Kean to head the commission convened to recommend reforms in intelligence and other areas that could prevent such terrorist attacks in the future. In introducing one of New Jersey's most dedicated public servants, NJIT President Joel S. Bloom said, "This call to national service at a very difficult time in our country's history clearly attests



Bringing together a group of NJIT's most generous supporters in November, Celebration was sold out for the second year in a row.

to the character and reputation of the individual we honor with the University Medal for Lifetime Achievement."

The President's Medal for Lifetime Achievement was awarded to Congressman Rodney Frelinghuysen, who recently embarked on his 11th term as the representative for the state's 11th Congressional District. A member of the Frelinghuysen family represented the people of New Jersey at the Continental Congress in 1779. Members of later generations have served in the New Jersey state legislature, and as the state's attorney general. The Frelinghuysen family has also served the country at the national level in the State Department and in the Senate and House of Representatives.

Today, Rodney Frelinghuysen is chairman of the House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee. Through his work on the committee, he has become a highly respected voice on foreign, military and intelligence affairs and has made numerous trips to

Afghanistan and the Middle East to assess the situation from the personal perspective of New Jerseyans who are serving the nation in those troubled parts of the world.

Paul Eng-Wong '75, '80 received the Edward F. Weston Medal for Professional Achievement, which is presented to alumni in recognition of outstanding personal, professional and civic accomplishments, and commitment to the development of the university. Eng-Wong, who earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Newark College of Engineering, is a principal in the Newark office of Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, a firm providing multidisciplinary planning, design, engineering and consulting services for some of the nation's most complex infrastructure and development initiatives.

In 2009, Eng-Wong was presented with the NJIT Alumni Achievement Award for his acknowledged entrepreneurial leadership in the field of

“As someone whose own college education was made possible by a scholarship, I have always been mindful of how important such support is for outstanding young men and women.”

— Robert Medina, senior vice president and East District director of T.Y. Lin International

transportation engineering, and his continuing service to both the engineering profession and to the greater Newark community. He has also generously given back to his alma mater. In a tribute to his mother, he has endowed the Norma Eng-Wong Memorial Scholarship to provide financial assistance for civil engineering majors aspiring to join him as professional colleagues.

Torcon, Inc., recognized with the Outstanding Corporate Partner Award, is one of the nation’s leading construction-management and general-contracting firms. Headquartered in Red Bank, Torcon has had a special relationship with NJIT for nearly five decades. The construction of a major addition to the Chemistry and Chemical Engineering Building in 1969 was a Torcon project, and the firm is present on campus in 2015 as construction manager for the ongoing renovation of the Central King Building.

Presently, some two dozen NJIT alumni are employed at Torcon, working on projects that span facilities for education, energy, healthcare, scientific research and transportation, as well as residential and commercial developments. Torcon is also partnering with NJIT in the recently established New Jersey Innovation Institute, to support the institute’s work of spurring economic growth in New Jersey by leveraging the resources of industry, government and higher education. ■



FAR LEFT: Robert Medina '75, master of ceremonies for Celebration 2014.

LEFT: NJIT President Joel S. Bloom with Paul Eng-Wong, who was awarded the Edward F. Weston Medal for Professional Achievement.



Former New Jersey Governor Thomas H. Kean (left) and Congressman Rodney Frelinghuysen were honored for their long and distinguished service to New Jersey and the nation. Frelinghuysen received the President's Medal for Lifetime Achievement and Kean the University Medal for Lifetime Achievement.



LEFT: Student speaker Anthony San Filippo '15 represented the many talented young men and women who benefit from the scholarship assistance made possible by supporters such as those who have gathered for the past 20 years at Celebration. An Albert Dorman honors scholar, San Filippo is a biomedical engineering major with a minor in applied mathematics.

ABOVE: The University Medal for Lifetime Achievement has been presented only twice since it was inaugurated in 1998 to honor NJIT President Saul K. Fenster. Today president emeritus, Fenster congratulated Former New Jersey Governor Thomas H. Kean on his receiving the University Medal at Celebration 2014.

PHOTOS: GRADIMAGES™