

Mayor Reed reveals Penn State Harrisburg's new competitor: Harrisburg University

By JOHN FOX
Staff reporter

As of October 8, 2003, The Harrisburg Polytechnic Institute officially changed its name to Harrisburg University of Science and Technology (HUST). The University is projected to open in September 2005 and will be located in or near downtown Harrisburg.

Many people have been anticipating the fruition of this concept for several years, but no one more than Harrisburg Mayor, Stephen Reed.

"Harrisburg Area Community College's (HACC) President, Edna V. Baehre, is on the board and we will have HACC directly involved on the University campus in helping to offer some of our courses," said Reed.

"That's good for HACC in two ways. One, it ensures that the University is non-competitive with HACC. Two, HACC students can segue directly into the University having already been there. A student will be able to receive dual certificates and degrees between HACC and the University."

"Despite what they will tell you, Penn State views HACC in a competitive way. In fact, they view all the community colleges in a competitive way."

This sounds like the beginning of a wonderful relationship. Could it be as good as the relationship HACC currently has with Penn State?

"Far better than that," Reed ensured. "Despite what they will tell you, Penn State views HACC in a competitive way. In fact they view all the community colleges in a competitive way. Penn State's master plan in the last ten years has been to go into every community where there is a community college and set up a duplicative campus. They have picked out the community colleges of Pennsylvania as a target of opportunity. They will publicly deny that, but their whole modus operandi of the last ten years completely supports what I have just said."

Despite Reed's claim that HUST will have a non-competitive relationship with HACC, is it still possible that a significant amount of prospective HACC students will choose HUST, thus crippling HACC's current record high enrollment?

"No. I don't see that happening because the curriculum offered at the University will be different than that which is offered at HACC, for the most part. HACC has nothing to lose. What will happen is that in the same town where HACC's main Wildwood campus is located there will be a university to which students can then matriculate and already have some degree of familiarity with it."

Such a cooperative relationship was not expressed with respect to Penn State Harrisburg.

An official press release said that HUST will offer "education for students seeking careers in information technology-including computer sciences and applied mathematics, advanced manufacturing, biotechnology and biosciences, and distribution sciences/logistics."

"We will have undergraduate as well as graduate degrees. We will focus especially on high-tech types of positions, not just the usual like computer programming," Reed said.

"This is a university dedicated to inspiring innovation. We will be able to, in both the classroom setting and the workforce development center component of the University, apply these innovations in commercial ways.

"For example, transportation logistics is a huge employer in Central PA and the higher paying positions, which are more technically oriented, are going unfilled because the American system of higher education isn't likely connected to what the workforce development needs are. There is a disconnect between what higher education is or is not doing versus what our current and projected economic and workforce needs are," Reed said.

"This University is very flexible and non-traditional in that it can, similar to what a community college does, flexibly create and devise curricula based on those workforce development needs. We will be involved in any area of high tech including biomedical research and the application of advanced technology to just about every field of endeavor in the world's economy. That will be our focus. Flexibility here is the key to innovation."

There are actually three entities to HUST. The first is the university itself. Second is the HUST High School, which is a regional math and science school that opened in September 2003 to 166 area students. Its temporary location is at the Rowland School on Derry Street and is going to be permanently housed at 215 Market Street, across from the Whitaker Center, in Summer 2004.

Mayor Reed said with pride, "This is quite unique. There is no four year university in the nation that includes a prep school, which is high school level students, as part of the universities overall program."

Finally there is The Harrisburg University Applied Technology Center, which is to address the area's economic-development needs by providing services for startup high tech companies and is opening in Spring 2004.

Mayor Reed can be contacted at:

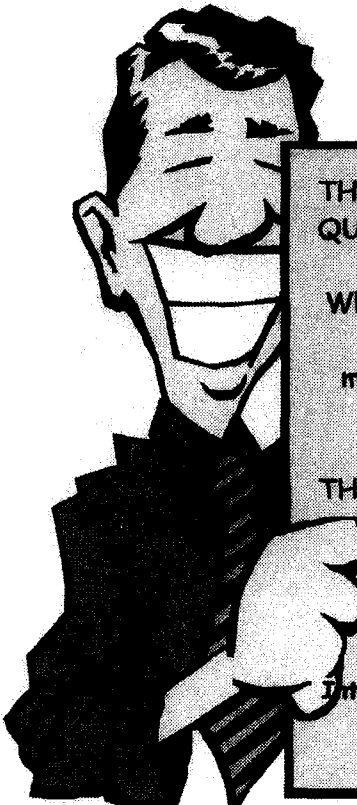
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**For further information
on HUST go to
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Harrisburg Mayor, Stephen R. Reed said the new Harrisburg University will not harm HACC's enrollment.



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