

R. Barbara Gitenstein
Paul Loser Hall Recommendation
May 15, 2017

To the Campus Community:

This afternoon I received a recommendation from the Advisory Commission on Social Justice: Race and Educational Attainment co-chairs John Donohue and Christopher Fisher. After carefully considering the comments made at last week's forum, testimony given at previous open fora, and the archival research findings of Professor Robert McGreevey's students, the Commission is recommending that the college remove Dr. Paul Loser's name from the building that houses the Office of Admissions and the School of Nursing, Health, and Exercise Science (SONHES).

Its rationale is thoughtful and compelling. It notes that TCNJ strives to be a diverse and inclusive community and that maintaining a name on a building of someone we now know was openly and actively promoting segregation is inconsistent with our mission and values. Further, keeping the name on the building will be an impediment to building community among our many constituents.

I concur that while a decision to rename a building should never be taken lightly, there are times when such actions should be taken. I believe that this is one of those times. Since I have such personal admiration for members of the Loser family, I come to this conclusion with sadness but without regret.

I will formally take the recommendation for renaming Paul Loser Hall to the Board of Trustees for its consideration. In that recommendation, I will include the Commission's list of possible names, as suggested through the public fora and by Commission members. I believe that the most powerful ones are those that reaffirm our history as a Trenton-born institution. Recognizing that it is the Board's prerogative to name institutional assets, I will also suggest that the Board refine procedures for the naming of buildings and spaces in the future.

I look forward to receiving the Commission's final report next month, which I hope will reinforce the institutional responsibilities to both Trenton and Ewing. In my charge to the commission, I requested that it propose sustainable projects and initiatives which seek to remediate instances of inequality and prejudice, including ways in which the institution can have a positive impact on race relations and social justice with particular attention to the enhancement of educational attainment.

Thank you to the members of the Commission and the campus and local communities who provided input to this process.