

## Aimee Rousseau

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**From:** Office of the President <NJCUPresident@njcu.edu>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 30, 2022 5:14 PM  
**To:** Aimee Rousseau  
**Subject:** An Introductory Message from Acting President Jason Kroll



Dear Members of the NJCU Community,

Much of what I am about to share with you will likely not come as a surprise given the Board of Trustees' declaration that NJCU is about to weather a financial crisis. However, allow me to lead with this: I accepted the responsibility of serving as acting president with an understanding of the challenges and difficult decisions that lie ahead. The reason I did so was galvanized yesterday when I attended the new student orientation and lost myself in the nervous enthusiasm of soon-to-be first-year students and their parents and siblings.

Diversity, as you would want and expect, ruled the day – from Ewing, to Manalapan, to North Bergen, I spoke with aspiring biologists, psychologists, and visual artists; some will commute and others expressed excitement to live on campus, away from home for the very first time.

I would be remiss if I did not applaud the tremendous impact faculty and staff had on the atmosphere – clad in gold t-shirts, their ever-present smiles were welcoming and comforting to all. None of this surprised me. All of it reinforced my already strong feelings about NJCU, but it was not lost on me that this was all happening during some of the most excruciating days in the history of New Jersey City University.

As long as I am sitting in this seat as acting president of NJCU, I can promise there will be full transparency in all our communications with the campus community. That begins today with this message.

The financial crisis which has engulfed the university has already caused incredible hardship in the form of managerial layoffs. We have been forced to

lose many valued and dedicated servants to our mission.

I am deeply sorry that this is where we find ourselves.

As Board Chair Joe Scott [noted in his letter to the university community on June 27](#), there will continue to be serious hardships within the NJCU community, which will be particularly felt by personnel. All options must be on the table. There are no words that can soften this hard reality.

As a result, more struggle will be felt as we start the fiscal year with necessary managerial pay cuts and furloughs, in addition to the loss of jobs that has already occurred this week.

As this is just the start of the process, there will be continued shared sacrifices in the days and months ahead. These actions are necessary for the university to recalibrate and position itself for a better future.

It's not lost upon us the challenges that furloughs will have on staff and faculty and their families and that is why it's imperative that there be a true partnership between administration and faculty and staff as we move forward.

We are working around the clock with the Governor's office and our state representatives, in an attempt to navigate through the rocky waters of this crisis.

We are thankful to leaders on campus for their openness and willingness to be partners in helping us find a resolution as the university is facing this unprecedented challenge. The university will only thrive with the aid of a strong and united workforce. With your help, we will get through this difficult time in our history and we will emerge stronger than ever, together.

It is clear through my conversations with our staff and faculty just how much they care about the mission of this university and the students it serves. They live it every day.

I too am committed to fighting for our university and our core mission of serving a population that no other four-year public institution serves. We can all agree that our students deserve our greatest possible effort.

As our path forward continues, and we work to emerge from the greatest financial crisis of our time, the student experience and sustaining the mission of why NJCU exists must be at the core of everything we do. It is important to note that any proposed reductions, or cuts, will be done thoughtfully to preserve mission-critical functions, and always with an emphasis on equity and the student experience.

As part of my pledge of open and transparent communications, beginning next

week I will begin visiting all divisions, departments and cohorts across campus – including our student groups – and will make myself available on a regular basis for both formal and informal conversations. This practice will continue as long as I am in this chair. Ensuring our community is seen and heard is of utmost importance.

Additionally, in an effort to alleviate some of the pain we will all feel during this time, we are looking to implement some of the most progressive workplace practices, including flexible work policies. Ultimately, our goal is to position NJCU as the most progressive and compassionate workplace in higher education – not only in New Jersey, but nationally as well. We will be leaders in this area. All ideas will be on the table, and I would welcome input from you.

Thank you to the faculty, staff, and students who proactively offered me their support, confidence, gratitude, and prayers in my temporary role as acting president. I know each congratulatory remark is genuine and well-intended but, please, know I do not celebrate or relish taking this post for the reasons I was requested to do so. That said, declining the request was never an option – not when I considered the respect and admiration I have for our mission, the students and the community we serve, and our dedicated faculty and staff.

There are difficult days ahead. While the challenges we are facing are daunting, NJCU is resilient and I am confident that with us all working together we will see this emergency through, and write a strong next chapter in our history.

Sincerely,

**Jason Kroll**  
**Acting President**  
**New Jersey City University**



**New Jersey City University**  
**2039 John F. Kennedy Boulevard | Jersey City, N.J. 07305**

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