

Remarks by the Honorable Ray Mabus  
Secretary of the Navy  
Rutgers NROTC Proclamation  
Rutgers – The State University of New Jersey  
21 March 2012

I'm very happy to be here with you at Rutgers. Captain Roos and Dr. Stein, thank you for being here. Thank you all for your help in making this day possible. You all have worked very creatively and diligently to make sure this day happened.

I think diligence is probably the right word because when we were looking into Rutgers, we found the first application for Rutgers came in 1945 and the Pentagon moves slowly, but I think that is a record even for us. But as we talked about before, now Vice Chief of Naval Operations and then the Chief of Naval Personnel, Admiral Mark Ferguson, came here some three years ago, you reapplied almost two years ago and soon you will be welcoming at least the first nine members, hopefully many more, to Rutgers NROTC.

In order to be the best military in order to best serve this nation, it does not serve our country well if any part of society does not share in the honor of its defense.

The 161 universities and colleges where we have NROTC units today produce an extremely talented group of officers from different regions, different backgrounds, different experiences, different perspectives and different outlooks.

But the lack of a formal naval presence on a great campus like this resulted in too many undergraduates leaving college with little or no contact with our Navy or our Marine Corps. These relationships matter a lot. Our nation's universities like Rutgers produce the country's future political, economic, scientific, and business leaders.

The education of leaders is about exposure to new ideas...different ideas, to varied viewpoints, and to the full range of possibilities that are open to someone who graduates from an

incredible institution like Rutgers. Today only one percent of America wears the uniform of America and it is important that that one percent represent the best America has to offer and we are happy to be joining our Air Force and Army colleagues here at Rutgers.

We get to see what we have been missing over the years. The Navy has been missing something because Rutgers represents excellence in an incredibly wide range of fields, particularly things like science, technology. The Navy has a particular interest in renewable energy and Rutgers is a leader in that. And you have as the president pointed out a diverse student body and that is important to the Navy and the Marine Corps to make sure that the force that protects this country, represents this country. And Rutgers has been missing something in the Navy because of who we are as a service and what our men and women in the Navy and Marine Corps do every day.

The Navy and New Jersey have a long and storied history. Our country's most decorated battleship is named for this state. John Philip Holland invented the Navy's first submarine up the river in Elizabeth. This state has given might to our fleet, now Rutgers will provide minds needed to make decisions for our Sailors and Marines and for the country.

Once they graduate they are going to face a very uncertain world one that may require them to do a variety of tasks at any moment. Just look at last year. Everything from Libya to humanitarian assistance in Japan, Haiti, fighting pirates off the coast of Africa, to providing assistance and partnership building in Africa and South America. NROTC graduates here will answer our nation's call and Rutgers will prepare them to do whatever is necessary.

CAPT Roos and the rest of the NROTC unit staff, welcome to Rutgers. Fair winds and following seas.

It's a happy day. It's a happy day at Rutgers. It's a happy day for the Navy and Marine Corps. It's a happy day for the United States of America.

For 236 years, from sail to steam to nuclear; from USS Constitution to USS Carl Vinson; from Tripoli to Tripoli; our maritime warriors have upheld a very proud heritage, protected our nation, projected our power, and provided freedom of the seas. From today forward, our combined efforts will keep us as the Rutgers yell says, "up stream red team, red team up stream" and will assure that our Navy and Marine Corps not only survives, but continues to prevail.

Thank you.