

Kean University

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Urban Research University

Abstract

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Keywords

Urban Research University

Health & Safety

Kean University is dedicated to protecting the health and well-being of our campus community. Learn more about the University's [health and safety protocols](#) designed to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Kean Named New Jersey's First Urban Research University

Nov 12, 2021



Kean joins the state's list of elite public research universities

New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy this week signed into law a bill designating Kean University as the state's first urban research university, recognizing Kean's growing role in conducting research and generating solutions to issues in urban communities statewide.

"This designation is a transformative development for Kean and positions the University as a statewide leader in research and policy for our underserved cities and urban communities. It will change the course of this institution and provide new opportunities for the students we serve," said Kean President Lamont O. Repollet, Ed.D. "As the state's only urban research university, we can also make a real difference in the lives of New Jerseyans living in urban communities as we help urban centers build stronger futures."

The bill received unanimous support in both the New Jersey Senate and Assembly. As New Jersey's first urban research university, Kean joins Rutgers University, New Jersey Institute of Technology, Rowan University and Montclair State University as a state-designated public research university.

"With this designation, Kean's world-class programs and research can stretch even farther beyond the borders of our campus, into cities and urban communities in need of the insight and targeted attention that we can provide," said Kellie LeDet, chief government affairs officer at Kean. "We are grateful for the support of the governor and other lawmakers who recognize the growing role Kean plays across New Jersey, particularly in urban communities."

This designation will elevate Kean's profile across the nation, enhance faculty and student recruitment, increase student Tuition Aid Grant (TAG) awards and boost competitiveness for research grants.

Kean is also actively pursuing a R2 designation by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education.

Senior Vice President for Research Jeffrey H. Toney, Ph.D., noted there are more than 30 research centers and institutes at Kean USA and Wenzhou-Kean University in China. He said highly competitive federal research grants have more than tripled at Kean since 2017, and the University will now be eligible for even more research funding.

“Kean shines among the constellation of public state universities because our true north is equity, access and opportunity,” Toney said. “Our diverse students engage in research and creative projects in the sciences, arts and humanities, learning outside of the classroom along with their peers at the very best universities. Many live in urban communities themselves and will now have an opportunity to support their own cities and towns.”

The John S. Watson Institute for Urban Policy and Research, which was established at Kean in the spring, plays a critical role in researching issues affecting the state’s urban centers and developing solutions to address them. The Institute works with 32 mayors from the New Jersey Urban Mayors Association and is a vital resource in informing urban decision-making and public policy on critical issues such as sustainable growth, economic development, water quality and infrastructure, education, environmental justice, health and public safety.

“The leaders of this state have long linked New Jersey’s future and prosperity to the renaissance and continued revitalization of our state’s urban centers,” Kean Senior Vice President for External Affairs Joseph Youngblood, Ph.D., said. “There are no cookie-cutter policy approaches to the issues impacting our diverse urban contexts. Through strong partnerships with lawmakers, industry leaders and community organizations, the Institute will provide evidence, analysis and recommendations that help move all of our urban communities forward.”

Kean was also recently named one of 25 colleges and universities nationwide selected for a U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) University Center grant to promote innovation and strengthen regional economies. Through the more than \$1 million, five-year grant, Kean will create the Center for Business/Workforce Development, Innovation & Social Entrepreneurship, the first of its kind in the state. The Center will work to strengthen regional economies statewide by providing support, expertise, applied research and technical assistance to identify and address the specific regional needs of urban centers.

Repollet said the urban research designation and the EDA grant will both help Kean continue the important work of conducting research on issues that impact the state’s urban centers.

“We take responsibility for not just identifying the challenges in our cities but finding the solutions that are replicable, scalable and sustainable to move us forward,” Repollet said. “We look forward to bringing our faculty and students into this research so they can contribute directly to learning projects that will impact their own communities.

Tagged

Campus and Community, Campus Outreach, Research

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