

To: Members of the Rutgers Community

From: Bruce C. Fehn
Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration

I am writing to update you on the status of the current phase of the Rutgers Integrated Administrative Systems (RIAS) project, and to announce the leadership for the next phase of this project which is so central to the smooth administrative functioning of the Rutgers of the future.

As many of you already know, "Phase II", the General Ledger and Financial Data Warehouse component of the RIAS initiative, is nearing completion, and we expect to go live with the applications on or around July 1 of this year. We will then be moving forward with "RIAS Phase III", the most complex portion of the entire initiative, which will include the development and implementation of the critical Human Resources, Payroll, and Budgeting modules. These are the components of our administrative systems that most directly affect all of us as University employees, and that also will have a direct impact on managers' ability to undertake informed long-range and strategic planning in both the administrative and academic areas of the University. The need to have this phase of the RIAS initiative led by an individual who is both operationally and technologically sophisticated and who also knows the various components and cultures of Rutgers inside and out is critical. I am delighted, therefore, to announce that Sandra Russell, who for many years has served the University so ably as Associate Vice President for Human Resources, has agreed to take on this important new assignment. As Associate Vice President for Administration--RIAS, Sandy will lead the RIAS Phase III Project Management Team, and guide the project, in all its component parts, to a target implementation date of January 1, 2011.

Sandy is ideally suited to assume this new challenge. For all of her professional career, spanning the past 30 years, she has worked in either human resources or in a human resources-related systems area, and has headed University Human Resources since 1999. Under her expert tutelage, Human Resources has emphasized a service-oriented approach for both Rutgers employees and the general public in ways that have benefited the entire University. HR was among the first large university departments to develop a comprehensive website of information useful both to those already working at Rutgers and to those considering employment here. Under Sandy's leadership, a merit compensation program for nonaligned staff was redesigned and refined, and is now in its tenth successful year. Sandy's commitment to technological solutions led to the automation of many functions that had previously been paper driven, including the merit compensation programs for both faculty and staff and the on-line Applicant Tracking System for the posting and recruitment of all staff vacancies. Online, self-service applications were developed to enable employees to enroll in various professional development programs and workshops, to manage tax shelter reductions, to request compassionate leave, and to receive online annualized benefits statements. Under Sandy's able leadership faculty and staff Welcome and Recognition Programs were enhanced and expanded, and relations with our faculty and staff unions were improved. Most recently, the initial contract for our newest and largest staff union, the URA-AFT, was successfully and amicably concluded in just three months.

In all of these areas, Sandy has demonstrated her capacity for leadership, her skill in management, and her understanding both of our many local cultures and our complex operations. The variety and wealth of her experience at Rutgers makes her the ideal person to lead the RIAS team in this next phase of implementation. We will be conducting a national search in the coming weeks to identify Sandy's replacement. When that person is in place, Sandy will move to her new position as head of RIAS—Phase III. Please join me in congratulating her, and in thanking her for taking on this new challenge in the service of the University.