

ARCHITECT'S rendering depicts how new construction will blend new classroom facilities with existing structures at new campus for the College of Staten Island.

# College moves up grade at age 10

By MARY ENGELS

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**T**HE COLLEGE of Staten Island is celebrating its 10th anniversary as the only public college in New York City's fastest growing borough.

As it embarks on its second decade, the college is looking forward to unifying its operations and programs at a new campus site on the grounds of the old Willowbrook State School, now known as the Staten Island Developmental Center.

Dr. Edward Volpe, president of the College of Staten Island, said, "We are proud of our achievements, but we have no intention of luxuriating in our accomplishments."

"We must build upon the past, continue to evolve as we look forward to the day, and it is finally coming, when our operations shall be united at a single location on the Willowbrook campus."

## Mission to serve

Volpe stated, "It is our intention to explore all possible cooperative relationships with other Island institutions so that our own development evolves naturally from our identity

as a Staten Island institution and from our mission to serve the Island as an educational and research resource."

Volpe added, "One development of major consequence to our future was initiated last year with the exploration of possible areas of cooperation with the Institute for Basic Research, which will adjoin our campus at Willowbrook."

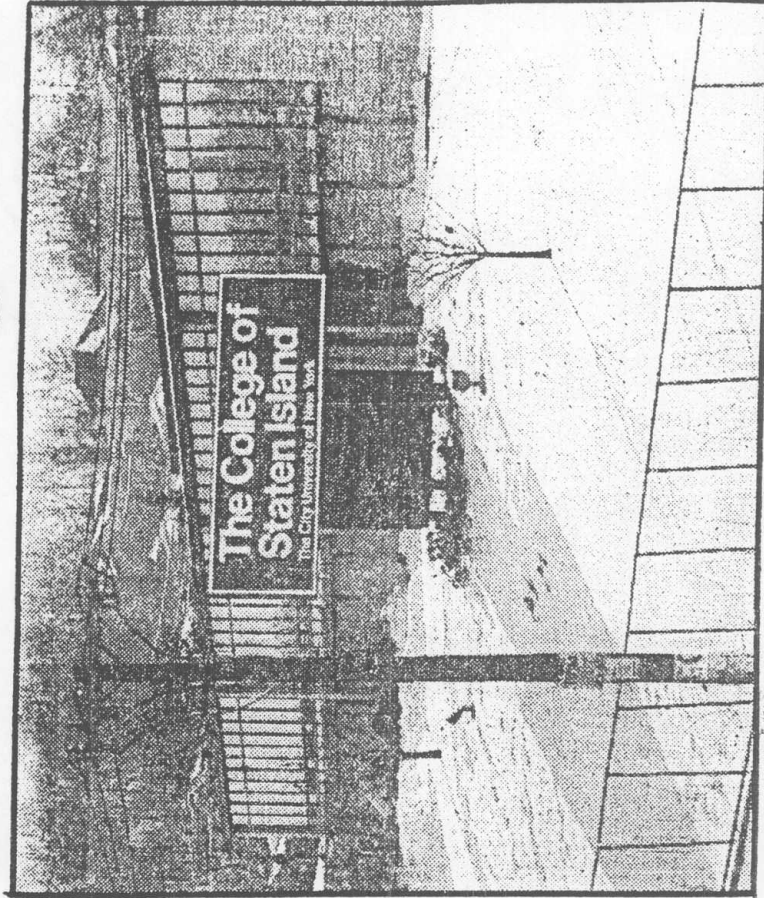
The educator also stated, "The institute is dedicated to research on the disabilities and diseases affecting the human brain."

Calling it "a remarkable institution doing basic and clinical research," Volpe said that joint committees, set up last spring, have developed proposals for doctoral-level programs, one in the field of psychology and the other in neuro science within the discipline of biology.

## Resources utilized

"Such programs will utilize the resources of our university, and the proposals have been submitted to the graduate school," he said.

Volpe also stated that the college has initiated another program at the graduate level involving another



SIGN identifies the College of Staten Island's present campus.

JAMES HUGHES DAILY NEWS

Staten Island research institution, the Center for Migration Studies.

"We have been exploring a relationship that would involve the college and the center with the important work being done there in the area of migration. It is all part of the commitment to serve the Island as an educational and research resource," he said.

Volpe, who is the college's first president, appeared on the Island scene in 1974 when he became president of Richmond College.

Richmond College, which was founded in 1966 by the Board of Trustees of the City University of New York as the first two-year upper division college of City University, began operations at the St. George campus in the fall of 1967.

### Two firsts

At the time, the school was the first on Staten Island to provide residents with free public higher education.

In that same year, Staten Island Community College became the first two-year community college organized by the City University board and was operating out of the Sunnyside campus.

During the city's budget crunch in the 1970s, the City University board moved to unite the two colleges through a process of federation and merger.

This process was designed and directed by Volpe, who provided the leadership in this unprecedented situation.

The process required the merging of the faculty, curricula, students, staff, libraries and administrative services.

### Careful planning

Most important, according to college officials, it required the systematic and careful planning of a new and different type of comprehensive college.

In determining the college's academic direction, Volpe's intention was to have the curriculum serve a diverse student body. To meet those needs, Volpe designed the curriculum to offer programs both in the liberal arts and sciences and in technologies and health sciences that meet clearly defined career qualifications.

Since merging the college, it has continued to cover and expand into a

wide variety of programs and, officials say, it is now at a point where present space has become inadequate.

Volpe said, "One of the most important developments since the college's establishment was the decision to consolidate its St. George and Sunnyside campuses."

### A campus is critical

"Because of the college's growth and development, a single unified and expanded campus now is considered the most critical and essential factor affecting the college's future," Volpe said.

After looking at several possibilities in recent years, college officials have set their sights on the former Willowbrook property after being approached by the state to look at this particular area.

Volpe said, "An additional \$13 million for design and construction of the new campus has been included in the executive budget, which, if approved by the legislature, will allow a total of \$20 million toward the architectural design.

"The college has completed its process of unifying its operations and programs. All that is needed is a new campus suited to the dynamic, pro-

gressive character that the College of Staten Island has developed in the past 10 years."

### 11,000 students

The current enrollment at the college is about 11,000 students, of whom 52% are enrolled part-time, while 48% are enrolled full-time.

Approximately, 42% of the student population is 25 years or older, with the average student age being 26 years and 11 months.

Enrollment in graduate programs has increased steadily from 532 graduate students in 1980 to 772 students currently enrolled.

About 500 foreign students attend the college, and the number is increasing.

To celebrate its 10th anniversary the college is proposing a festival of plays by the alumni; art exhibits and performances through the Department of Performing and Creative Arts; library exhibits, and an anniversary athletics tournament involving present students and alumni.

The Friends of the the College are also dedicating their annual Starlight Ball, scheduled for April 26, to the college's celebration schedule.