

## **Ocean County College Board of Trustees Meeting – March 26, 2007**

Hello my name is Richard Gamba. I wish to thank the members of the board for allowing me this opportunity to speak here today. I am here before you as a very relieved resident of Ocean County and as the President of Save the Planetarium Fund, Inc.

Save the Planetarium Fund, Inc. is a non-profit corporation formed by myself and other Ocean County residents. Its purpose is to work towards reopening the doors of the Robert J. Novins Planetarium through community support and awareness, and a variety of fundraising efforts, so the residents of Ocean County and its neighboring communities can once again enjoy the immersive experience and magic that can only occur in a planetarium theater.

With the commitment, publicly offered last Wednesday by the Ocean County Board of Chosen Freeholders, and the commitment you are offering here today, the residents of Ocean County may all be able to take a collective sigh-of-relief, that we may once again see the doors to the Robert J. Novins Planetarium open for good.

I would personally like to thank the members of the board for responding to the desires of the community in such a timely fashion. By your willingness to have the college begin fund raising efforts and allowing Dr. Larson to focus on how best to utilize the planetarium facility to accommodate both the college's needs and the public's, you are putting forth the correct message of leadership and vision.

I am very pleased with your decision. I would like to inform you of my commitment, and that of the Save the Planetarium Fund, to continue a campaign of community awareness and fundraising.

We are committed to helping you achieve the goal of making the Novins Planetarium a world class facility and a sought after destination, not only for the children and residents of Ocean County, but for all the resident of New Jersey and beyond.

The Novins Planetarium already has a reputation for providing high-quality programming for education and entertainment. Save the Planetarium Fund wants to work with you and Dr. Larson to ensure that the Planetarium continues to provide the high-quality programming for which it has become known, and has the tools needed to carry it into the future.

We feel certain that a continued strong public involvement and commitment will only serve to ensure the ongoing operations and long-term future success of the Planetarium.

To that end, tomorrow evening, March 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm in the Toms River Knights of Columbus Council Hall, we will be conducting our first Volunteer Recruitment Meeting, inviting all interested persons to join our organization. Also, our website [SavethePlanetarium.org](http://SavethePlanetarium.org) will continue to provide all the current information on our fundraising efforts and the status of the rebuilding of the Novins Planetarium.

I wish to thank the members of the board for your time and wish you the best of success in this wonderful and meaningful endeavor. And please remember that the “I’m Helping to Save the Planetarium” t-shirts are available on our website.