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STEVE ADUBATO, host:

The future of higher education, next on CAUCUS: NEW JERSEY.

Announcer: Funding for this edition of CAUCUS: NEW JERSEY has been provided by New Jersey Association of State Colleges and Universities; Johnson & Johnson, the worldwide health care products company; New Jersey Natural Gas, proud to support education in our communities; QualCare Inc., a local managed care company covering 600,000 New Jersey residents; and by Verizon Communications.

ADUBATO: Welcome to this very special program. I'm Steve Adubato. Joining us to discuss the changes that lie ahead for New Jersey state colleges and universities are the honorable Governor Thomas Kean, who served as New Jersey's 48th governor and for 15 years was president of Drew University; my good friend Dr. Susan Cole, president of my alma mater, Montclair State University; Dr. Bobbie Gitenstein is president of The College of New Jersey; and finally, Dr. Peter Mercer, president of Ramapo College of New Jersey.

I want to thank all of you for joining us. Listen, we're talking about the future of higher education, the challenges of higher education.

Governor, let me ask you--by the way, throughout this entire program, log on to the Web sites that you will see to get more information. New Jersey has the greatest colleges and universities. It's a--it's a--it's a secret for a lot of people. More importantly, you need to know what's going on.

(Graphic on screen)

[www.CaucusNJ.org](http://www.CaucusNJ.org)  
Higher Education Resource Center

ADUBATO: Governor, last 10 years the biggest change in higher ed has been?

Former Governor TOM KEAN (Former New Jersey Governor; Former President, Drew University): Well, the last 10 years? Frankly, unfortunately, the decline in funding. Last--particularly the last five years, we've been funding state colleges last in the country.

ADUBATO: Because?

Mr. KEAN: I think lack of priorities. Higher education has not been, as it was previously, a priority in the state budget. My feeling is higher education should be tied to growth in jobs, our ability to attract jobs in the future. And I think the lack of funding from the state over the last--particularly the last five years, but over the last 10 years also has been a real--the fact that these colleges have done so well out of the millions of such great colleges nationally in spite of the lack of state funding has been really tremendous.

ADUBATO: Mm. Well, Dr. Cole, let me ask you. I mean, I know Montclair State well. Full disclosure, I do teach a course there on journalism. Not an

easy A, I just want to clarify that. But, Susan, seriously, while we're talking about this and the governor's talking about the lack of funding, at Montclair State there seems to be so much going on: new construction, new programs, new activities, new initiatives. How the heck is that happening while there are drastic cuts in state government aid to higher ed?

Dr. SUSAN A. COLE (President, Montclair State University): There are two points here, Steve. First is the demand for higher education in this state is huge. It's never been bigger. So all of the colleges have had to respond by growing enrollments or growing programs, growing quality, growing facilities, building stronger faculties. We've had to do that to respond to the needs of the people in the state. But what has happened in terms of how we have done it is, frankly, the costs of higher education have been shifted from the state to the students and their families.

ADUBATO: Tuition going up.

Dr. COLE: Tuition has gone up. New Jersey has among the highest public tuitions in the country.

ADUBATO: Among the highest. But at the same time, at a college like yours, a place like yours the standards are extremely high.

Dr. R. BARBARA GITENSTEIN (President, The College of New Jersey): They are.

ADUBATO: Very tough to get into.

Dr. GITENSTEIN: Yes.

ADUBATO: We've talked about this before, Bobbie. Tuition going up. But there's demand. Because I know that there are more students applying than ever before, high school students, to Montclair State. Same thing at your place?

Dr. GITENSTEIN: There's a huge demand. There's a huge demand at all our colleges. But the question is, is it just a private good, higher education, or is it also a public good? And should a state see that it is to its own benefit as a society to invest in its own citizens?

ADUBATO: To invest vs. spend. Someone says wait a minute, you have the economy in trouble, you've got people not working. We can't spend in higher education, we have to spend to build roads and bridges. And the governor, you know, was the leader in 1984 when I happened to be in the legislature for a short time, the transportation trust fund. Why do I mention it? Because people say roads and bridges, that's where our money should be spent. You say wait a minute, we can't afford not to invest.

Dr. GITENSTEIN: And that's exactly the way to think about it. Because what it--what's the outcome of such investment? Not only do you get better educated citizens who make more money, who pay higher taxes, but they have better health, they are better citizens. Everything in the community is improved by higher education.

ADUBATO: The investment.

Dr. GITENSTEIN: Correct.

ADUBATO: But, Dr. Mercer, do people see it? Do the average--look, you build a road, you build a bridge, there it is. There are politicians there, elected officials, you cut the ribbon, great. Do you see it clearly? Do most voters see the investment paying off in higher ed? Or because it's invisible, not a problem?

Dr. PETER PHILIP MERCER (President, Ramapo College of New Jersey): Well, I don't think it's invisible, because you can use any number of data to verify the value of public higher education. In particular, the unemployment rate among those who have college degrees is much lower than for those who do not. But I think you're onto something, and that is people are very worried now in the short term, and there has to be a longer-term investment in higher education. The rest of the world is doing it, and the United States is losing its place relative to the rest of the world. But you can even look internally. For example, the number of people with college degrees proportionately who are in their 60s is higher than that for those who are 25 to 29 years old, and that's scary.

ADUBATO: So across the board, the numbers that you're providing, the statistics, scream out and say wait a minute, quality higher education makes all the difference in terms of the quality of your life, your ability to earn money over time, your ability to be a contributing citizen, to earn a home, to pay taxes, correct, Governor?

Mr. KEAN: Yep.

ADUBATO: And in that spirit, explain to us what Nine Strong is, because it's not just a slogan, it's not just a name. It means a lot.

Mr. KEAN: No. This is a group of college presidents who've gotten together to really tell people about the state colleges, to plan for the future.

ADUBATO: Together?

Mr. KEAN: Together. This is--this is colleges working together. Now, I know. We had a program...

ADUBATO: This is New Jersey, Governor.

Mr. KEAN: It is New Jersey.

Dr. COLE: It's miraculous, isn't it?

Mr. KEAN: I know, but...

ADUBATO: Nine Strong is the name of it.

Mr. KEAN: Yeah, that's right.

ADUBATO: And so it's nine college presidents, right, nine institutions...

Dr. COLE: That's correct. Yeah.

ADUBATO: And universities, right, and colleges coming together to do what? Because aren't you competing for the limited dollars that you just talked about? Aren't you competing for all that?

Dr. GITENSTEIN: It could be seen that way. But I think what we have recognized and what we've acknowledged is one of the great attractions of the system to people outside of the state--and I think...

ADUBATO: By the way--excuse me--is there a system, Bobbie?

Dr. GITENSTEIN: Well, to the group of...

ADUBATO: Is there really a system of higher ed?

Dr. GITENSTEIN: The group of--the group of nine institutions, the state colleges and universities, is that we really do represent the wide range of higher education, and we don't try to do exactly the same thing one to the other. And as a consequence, I think what we have come to see and what we're trying to articulate in this Nine Strong is that The College of New Jersey is not serving the state by itself. The College of New Jersey is able to serve the state and its citizens better because there is a Montclair.

ADUBATO: Because there's a Montclair?

Dr. GITENSTEIN: Because there is a Ramapo. Yes, absolutely.

ADUBATO: But aren't you competing--respectfully, are you not competing--along with Drew. Drew is where you were president for 15 years, Governor. One--it's the only private institution we're talking about here. Three public, one private.

But aren't you competing for--I mean, I have a 16-year-old son, ready to make the decision. He's smart kid--everyone believes that about their own kid, but I'm talking about a kid who works hard. Cream of the crop. Aren't you all competing for the cream of the crop? So how could you say that what Susan's doing at Montclair State is better for your institution?

Mr. KEAN: But they're not. You see, back in the '80s we had a system where we asked every state college to come up with their own plan of their own individual dreams for how they wanted to progress.

ADUBATO: Otherwise known as autonomy?

Mr. KEAN: Yeah, autonomy. But we said when you do it, we'll fund it. And the state funded it so that each college had their own dreams and pursued that dream. So as your son's looking at colleges, Montclair isn't the same as Ramapo, and Ramapo isn't the same as College of New Jersey. And the other colleges are also different in certain ways. He'll find out and he'll make a decision as to what he wants--which one he wants to go to.

ADUBATO: And the market supports it, Dr. Cole?

Dr. COLE: And not only does it support it, Steve, but we are looking at a circumstance in this state now where we are short literally tens of thousands of seats in public higher education. If you look at states that are competitor states to New Jersey with comparable populations--Georgia, Virginia, Indiana, Michigan, North Carolina--tens of thousands more seats in those states in public higher education than in New Jersey. In Michigan, 240,000 more seats than we have. We have an enormous shortage of seats in this state. They need The College of New Jersey, they need Montclair State, they need Ramapo, they need all of the nine state colleges and universities,

and they need us even more than we can provide. Public higher education is the only insurance--the only insurance we have in this country that every citizen, based on their abilities and ambition, will be able to participate productively in this economy. It is the only insurance.

ADUBATO: So what's miss--OK. But, Susan, respectfully, what are we missing?

By the way, log on to the Web site to get more information. We can only do so much in a half hour, which is really a 24-minute program with the heads and tails of the show. Log on to get more information.

But I've got to ask--you're making compelling arguments--what's the disconnect? How could it be that funding continues to go down on the state level? I'm not--I'm not going to put it on Governor Corzine, but I'll ask this question of Governor Corzine: Doesn't he get it?

Mr. KEAN: Let me answer that. He doesn't. And I'll tell you why. Because New Jersey's unique in this area. Take Connecticut, that's the other richest state in the country. Connecticut, since about 2000, has had an 18 percent increase in their funding for higher education.

ADUBATO: Eighteen percent.

Mr. KEAN: Up.

ADUBATO: Connecticut.

Mr. KEAN: Connecticut. We've had a decrease. You know where we rank in education spending for these colleges since 2000? Dead last. Behind Louisiana, behind Mississippi, behind Arkansas.

ADUBATO: Excuse me, no disrespect. We're behind Mississippi?

Mr. KEAN: Yes. And in terms of any increases, we've actually decreased spending. And that's New Jersey, it's not the rest of the country. So we haven't given the priority in this state--not just Corzine, it's the legislature, maybe his predecessor as governor. It's been going on for a while.

ADUBATO: What do--what do they--what do governor--listen, you're not just a former college president, you're the former governor and you were very popular governor. What happens when you talk to your former friends down there in Trenton, you say, 'Listen, here's what you don't understand'? What happens?

Mr. KEAN: Well, some of them I think get it, but they haven't been able to--haven't been able to have much of a say. It's a--I don't understand really, because...

ADUBATO: You don't understand why they don't understand?

Mr. KEAN: I don't understand, because every single statistic there is says that a--that a state that doesn't have a good system of higher education is a state in decline.

ADUBATO: In decline?

Mr. KEAN: In decline, because you cannot create jobs--you can--when we

lowered all those jobs in the '80s, you remember.

ADUBATO: Sure.

Mr. KEAN: We sold our work force. We said we've got the best educated work force in the country. You come here, great employees, great situation, great lifestyle.

ADUBATO: Can we still say it?

Mr. KEAN: Well, we're still saying it because of the work some of these people are doing, but it's a declining--as long as we don't fund it...

ADUBATO: OK.

Mr. KEAN: ...it's not going to continue.

Dr. MERCER: The only reason it's harder to say it...

Dr. GITENSTEIN: I...

ADUBATO: Peter, jump back in.

I'll come back to you. Bobbie.

Dr. MERCER: We're sending thousands of students out of state...

ADUBATO: Is that otherwise known as the brain drain?

Dr. MERCER: Well, it's a brain drain in this sense, and it's really quite ironic, because once you get to the ninth grade in New Jersey you're the best prepared for college of any ninth grader in the state--in the country. And yet we send 29,000 a year out of state because we don't have places for them. And that's a--that's a significant problem, and it's a very hard problem to address when so much state revenue goes out immediately to municipalities and to other sources rather than to public higher education.

ADUBATO: OK, wait a minute. So we're losing--OK, you were talking about very high standards. The standards are definitely higher than when I went to school. And I know the SAT is a different test. I'm learning a lot about that now. And there's something called an ACT as well.

Dr. GITENSTEIN: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Dr. MERCER: Mm-hmm.

ADUBATO: That's a different show. That being said, while the standards are higher at Montclair State and at Rutgers and at every one of your institutions--SAT scores, class rank, the whole bit--we're still losing some really smart kids and talented kids...

Dr. GITENSTEIN: Yes.

ADUBATO: ...to other institutions in other parts of the country. What happens when that happens? Do those kid--do those kids come back and say...

Dr. GITENSTEIN: No.

ADUBATO: ...`I want to be part of New Jersey!' Or are they all of a sudden they go to some other place and then they're spending that money some other place? Bobbie?

Dr. GITENSTEIN: Well, while we don't have statistics about New Jersey, per se, we do have national statistics that indicate that for the most part students, when they graduate, get their first jobs in the state where they graduate. And that's even more so in these days when we--when all of us have internships...

ADUBATO: Right.

Dr. GITENSTEIN: ...at our--we push them very hard.

I'd like to come back to a comment we were making before, if you don't mind.

ADUBATO: Sure.

Dr. GITENSTEIN: While I appreciate the political responsibility in this failure to accept the message, I also think that we as presidents have to accept part of the responsibility for not making it clear. And it seems to me what is so promising about this Nine Strong is that we are speaking in a different kind of way. First of all, we are speaking as a group of autonomous institutions, but as a group that have one responsibility, and that is to the state of New Jersey and its citizens.

ADUBATO: And what's the compelling message?

Dr. GITENSTEIN: And trying to communicate to people what we are doing for the whole state in our different programs. I think in the past when there was advocacy for individual institutions, it was seen very much self-serving and it was seen as very narrow. Even though I think we did not want it to sound that way, that is the way it sounded. So I do think we're trying to change the conversation as well and accept some of the responsibility for trying to change the foundation.

ADUBATO: OK, but wait a minute. First of all, autonomy created a lot of good things, but didn't it also create a degree of competition where you were in there fighting for whatever dollars were there, and therefore you were seen as, your term, Dr. Gitenstein, self-serving. And now with this Nine Strong initiative, you're saying, `No, we're together. We're different. Yeah, we're competing on some level, but we are together.'

Can that be sold, Peter? Can you really sell this as a--as an industry--I hate to call it industry...

Dr. GITENSTEIN: It is an industry.

ADUBATO: As an industry that says, `We're together, and if we fail the state fails.' Can that be sold?

Dr. MERCER: Well, I think when you look at the parameters of the issue, Steve, it not only can be sold, it is being sold. Let me give you one example. A couple of years ago, all the state colleges, together with the privates and the two-year institutions, got together to discuss the possibility of a bond issue proposal for capital facilities for the state.

ADUBATO: Explain that to the folks, so the voters would have a chance to vote, right?

Dr. MERCER: Right.

ADUBATO: And that a pot of money, if approved, would go to what?

Dr. MERCER: It would go to construction of facilities for identified projects that were in the proposal itself. The extraordinary thing is that every single post-secondary institution signed off on the plan, which included not only the broad outline of the bond issue proposal, but the specific delineation of the monies. So I would have known, as the president of Ramapo College, precisely what my share of that pot would have been. I think that's probably unprecedented in the history of higher education. And it shows the degree of public participation and cooperation among the institutions. I think we have that, because our message is clear. If we're going to succeed as a state, we really need to invest in higher education. It's really that simple.

ADUBATO: If you want to find out more about Nine Strong, log on to the Web site you see on the screen. We'll drive you--it's a not-for-profit initiative and the learning--we're trying--listen, we're all trying to learn as much as we can. I was educated in public institutions at Montclair State and later at Rutgers, and I'm a big advocate. It's still the best deal around, and I don't just mean from a financial point of view. It's a tremendous education.

But I will say this. As a marketing issue, Dr. Cole, there's a branding and marketing issue. And let's put it on the table. There are a lot of folks, a lot of young people and their parents who historically--maybe the economy has changed things--who were convinced that if they didn't go to some small private liberal arts college somewhere, wherever, and pay God knows what, 50 grand and up, somehow the education in New Jersey, come on, let's be serious. If you had a really smart kid, you wouldn't send them to so-and-so. Has that changed dramatically?

Dr. COLE: It has changed very significantly. It really has changed. If you look at the situation right now, Montclair State, applications for next fall are up 20 percent. You're going to see people competing to get into The College of New Jersey, competing to get into Montclair State, competing to get into--it's tougher and tougher to actually get admission to these institutions. New Jersey students want to go to their New Jersey institutions.

ADUBATO: They do?

Dr. COLE: They do. They do. The data shows it, the applications show it. But when push comes to shove, we can only take so many because we don't have the facilities and the capacity. I've got students who want to come from south Jersey, I can't give them beds. I don't have enough residence halls.

ADUBATO: Because you don't have the dorms.

Dr. COLE: Right. We don't have enough residence halls. We have students in hotels. We have got to get it together in New Jersey collectively to make sure that we are not sitting 20 years from today asking, Why is tuition so

high? Why can't we serve New Jersey students who need a place? We didn't do what we needed to do in the last 20 years, we now have to start facing the fact that if we're going to have a vibrant society in New Jersey, we're going to have to enable people to be able to get an education. We need a homegrown, creative, well trained, well educated work force. We don't have oil in New Jersey, we have brains.

ADUBATO: That being said, the Obama stimulus package--we're doing this program--we never try to--we're always up front. We're doing it in the middle of February, this program will air after that. Here's the deal. You see the date right on the screen, it's February 11th that we're doing it.

Governor, without getting to the minutiae of the federal Obama stimulus package, what does it mean to higher ed and what does it mean in particular to higher ed in New Jersey? What do you think it means?

Mr. KEAN: Well, it depends very much, frankly, how this ends up. Because there's a lot of money for higher ed in the House version, not so much in the Senate version. And...

ADUBATO: What would be good for New Jersey higher ed?

Mr. KEAN: Much more of the House version in that area, because there's a lot of money in the House bill for infrastructure--in other words, rebuilding some of these campuses that drastically need it, because New Jersey hasn't done its own bond issue.

ADUBATO: How is that stimulus? How would someone say--because I hear a lot of talk show hosts that say that's not stimulus. The federal government gives money to a state of New Jersey, where they allow the public higher education institutions, the colleges and universities to build something. How is that stimulus? How is that stimulus?

Dr. GITENSTEIN: My...

ADUBATO: Governor, go ahead.

Mr. KEAN: I just--listen, that's real stimulus as opposed to about 40 percent of the rest of the bill. Because these colleges, these institutions have projects ready to go, shovel in the ground stuff. I mean, you can put laborers, good union people, people to work right away on these projects. That's some of the best stimulus in the entire bill.

Dr. GITENSTEIN: We were asked to list--all of us were--what shovel-ready projects we had.

ADUBATO: What does that mean, by the way? Really ready to go?

Dr. GITENSTEIN: That you could--really ready to go, plans ready.

ADUBATO: No government bureaucracy involved, slowing it down?

Dr. GITENSTEIN: Well, there may be government bureaucracy, but not as far as our plans are concerned.

ADUBATO: Oh, yeah, got it.

Dr. GITENSTEIN: You know, we're ready to go. We had \$60 million worth of projects. My vice president for construction shared with me the other day that for every \$57,000 worth of money you spend in construction, you create a construction job. That's clearly stimulus.

ADUBATO: Jobs, growth, opportunity to build the dormitories for people that come--for kids to come in.

Dr. COLE: Right. You're--training of the work force. Putting people to work takes the burden off society of all of the ill effects of people who haven't been able to participate in the economy.

ADUBATO: Does this economic downturn--Dr. Mercer, does this serious economic downturn, does it--is it--I hate to put it this way. Is it better for New Jersey colleges and universities, for this Nine Strong group, because things--money's so tight and it's a better deal in New Jersey? Is it--I hate to say it that way, but is it a better situation for you guys?

Dr. MERCER: I don't think it's a better situation, because of course there's a lot of human carnage at stake when we talk about such an economic downturn. And many of our students and their families are finding it very, very difficult to find the funds to be able to continue. I suppose if you had to look for a silver lining in that cloud, you would say there's a refocused sense now that higher education has to be viewed as a priority by more and more people, and that includes New Jersey residents and their families, not just legislators. And we certainly feel that we have a message to convey to that extent. If we're going to pull ourselves out of this malaise, education's got to play a very large part in that.

ADUBATO: Who's the biggest advocate? Used to be--Governor, when you were the chief executive of the state, there was an infrastructure. I know we're using that word a lot. There was a state what, board of higher education.

Mr. KEAN: Yeah, and there was a chancellor.

ADUBATO: There was a chancellor of higher education.

Mr. KEAN: And he sat in my Cabinet. And if ever higher education wasn't getting paid attention to, he spoke up and said, 'No, you've got to put more money in for higher education.'

ADUBATO: What exists now?

Mr. KEAN: Now there isn't any such advocate, such a formal advocate around the governor and the Cabinet, so.

ADUBATO: How could that be?

Mr. KEAN: Well, it was abolished back in the...

ADUBATO: Christie Whitman administration?

Mr. KEAN: Yeah, abolished back then.

ADUBATO: It was the Whitman administration who said we don't need this extra layer of bureaucracy, we don't need a chancellor of higher ed, we don't need a board of higher ed. Am I correct so far?

Dr. COLE: That's right.

ADUBATO: OK, so what happens? The argument's made, less government. And by the way, when we talk about the public, you say to the public we're going to have, quote, "less government," they'll say, 'We sign up, where?' They have no idea very often what it means. But there's less government there.

Dr. Cole, what has it meant not to have a chancellor of higher education, a board of higher education and no one within--there is someone, by the way, in the State Department--excuse me, in state government that does have some responsibility for higher ed, am I correct?

Dr. GITENSTEIN: That's correct.

ADUBATO: OK. Because we actually...

Dr. GITENSTEIN: State director of Commission on Higher Education.

ADUBATO: And her name is?

Dr. GITENSTEIN: Jane Oates.

ADUBATO: Jane Oates was actually here on the program.

Dr. GITENSTEIN: Mm-hmm.

ADUBATO: How is that different from what existed before, as it--and is it, loaded question, better or worse?

Dr. COLE: It's definitely better. I--there's no question, I am a fan of the elimination of the department of higher education. It set the institutions free to be able to develop into the kinds of strong institutions and differentiated institutions that you see today. Had we gone through the same kind of economic times and the same kind of policies with a department of higher education, we would have remained extraordinarily underdeveloped institutions.

But the issue, Steve, is never about structure. Never about structure. You can have a great infrastructure of higher education without a strong central structure as you have in Michigan, or you can have a strong central structure and have great infrastructure, as you do in California. The question is not structure, it's the word Bobbie used earlier, it's investment. It's investment.

ADUBATO: But who's your champion?

Dr. COLE: Well...

ADUBATO: Who's--who is the champion in state government, who's the advocate in state government?

Dr. GITENSTEIN: Well, I was...

ADUBATO: The governor said if for whatever reason he or, you know, a governor before him missed it, the chancellor would say time out, let's get our priorities straight.

Dr. GITENSTEIN: Well, I'm...

ADUBATO: Who's your champion?

Dr. COLE: When the governor was governor, the governor was the champion.

Dr. GITENSTEIN: The governor was. The governor was the champion.

Dr. COLE: And...

ADUBATO: OK, but do you need--wait a minute. Are we talking about a situation in higher education in New Jersey where you have to have the chief executive of the state being the champion of higher education in the state?

Dr. GITENSTEIN: Well, I'm not--I haven't been here for more than 10 years, but I know that Susan has a--has a long history with regard to New Jersey higher education. And if I'm not mistaken, I've heard you say before that the investment in higher education was not better under the chancellor. I mean, maybe you could share that rather than me repeating what you say.

ADUBATO: A couple minutes left here. It was not, though?

Dr. COLE: No, it was not. It definitely was not. These institutions were delivered to autonomy, some of the least well supported, least developed in the country. So clearly the structure hadn't worked for them. Senator Lesniak has a bill...

ADUBATO: Senator Ray Lesniak. Go ahead. One minute left. Go ahead.

Dr. COLE: ...that provides for a secretary of higher education without all of the bureaucracy.

ADUBATO: Good idea?

Dr. COLE: Yes.

ADUBATO: All right, let's do this. Minute left. Real quick, going around. Agenda. I know the agenda of Nine Strong is complex, but real quick, Governor, one item on the agenda.

Mr. KEAN: Should be an advocate for higher education with the ear of the governor.

ADUBATO: One key to that plan, advocating.

Dr. MERCER: A sustained long-term investment plan for public higher education.

ADUBATO: A sustained--very similar to the transportation trust fund. I know I'm mixing apples and oranges.

Mr. KEAN: Yeah, yeah.

ADUBATO: Go ahead, Doctor.

Dr. GITENSTEIN: That it's investment, it's not expense.

ADUBATO: Say that again.

Dr. GITENSTEIN: Higher education is an investment, it is not an expense.

ADUBATO: That has to be sold and seen in that way.

Dr. GITENSTEIN: Correct.

ADUBATO: Dr. Cole, finally, 20 seconds, the last piece of this pledge.

Dr. COLE: The absolute critical connection between American democracy and higher education.

ADUBATO: Good stuff. Listen, go to the Web site, it is [www.njascu.org](http://www.njascu.org). I want to thank all of you. The Nine Strong organization, you taught us a lot. Thank you.

Announcer: If you would like more information on this program, or if you'd like to express an opinion, e-mail us at [info@caucusnj.org](mailto:info@caucusnj.org). And visit us online at [caucusnj.org](http://caucusnj.org).

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