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#### MISSION STATEMENT

The *Adirondack Journal of Environmental Studies* (AJES) exists to foster a dialogue about the broad range of issues that concern the Adirondacks and Northern Forest.

AJES serves to bridge the gaps among academic disciplines and among researchers and practitioners devoted to understanding and promoting the development of sustainable communities, both human and wild.

The journal purposefully avoids serving as a vehicle for any single or special point of view. To the contrary, in searching for common ground AJES welcomes variety and a broad spectrum of perspectives from its contributors.

#### CONTRIBUTING TO AJES

We encourage the submission of manuscripts, reviews, photographs, artwork and letters to the editor. For additional information please visit the AJES website at [www.ajes.org/](http://www.ajes.org/) or contact Jon Erickson at [jon.erickson@uvm.edu](mailto:jon.erickson@uvm.edu) or 802-656-3328.

#### SUBSCRIPTIONS

AJES is now published on-line at [www.ajes.org](http://www.ajes.org) and printed annually.

The subscription rate is \$45 per year, which includes membership in the Adirondack Research Consortium.

Back issues, if available, are \$10 plus postage.

Visit AJES online at [www.ajes.org](http://www.ajes.org).

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ISSN: 1075-0436

## PREROGATIVE

# College of the Adirondacks— Community of the Adirondacks

By Dr. JOHN MILLS

Since I arrived at Paul Smith's College more than a decade ago, we have made an all-encompassing commitment to live up to our slogan: Every day, we strive to be the College of the Adirondacks.

Of course, the Adirondacks are a big place, and our college is small. So we fulfill that pledge by taking our mission well past our campus borders: Our Adirondack Watershed Institute, for instance, helps communities throughout the park address water quality issues. Our students frequently tackle matters that affect business and local government, such as doing market research for the new Community Store in Saranac Lake, or evaluating tourism opportunities in the North Country. And earlier this year, we assumed control of the VIC after New York State shut its doors, in order to preserve that invaluable community resource.

I am proud of what we do to make the Adirondacks a better place. Yet we need to do more. If our remote corner of the Empire State will ever become as good a place to live and work as it is to visit, economic development needs to be much higher on our to-do list.

We cannot do that alone, however. Building that kind of success is a goal the community needs to embrace in unison—and up to now, we have all fallen short in articulating a common goal for what we want our future to look like.

To a certain extent, that is hardly a surprise. The Adirondacks are diverse in many ways, and iconoclasm here

runs deep. It is part of our charm. We need to begin working together on these things, though, as nobody will work on them for us. The dangers of inaction are evident: The state's financial problems will continue to exact a toll on our local communities. Population inside the park's borders continues to decline. If we want our grandchildren to settle here, we need to build the kind of sustainable communities that will make that possible.

I have always been inspired by the deep willingness of so many of our community members to jump into civic ventures. So many of our most beloved institutions exist because of these types of commitments. But mere participation is not enough to ensure our future vitality. We need a plan. We need a voice. And we need to commit our resources to that end.

Among our richest resources, fortunately, are our institutions of higher education. Our region is home to not only Paul Smith's but North Country and Adirondack community colleges, SUNY-ESF, and more. I know that we are all willing to be part of our economic, social and cultural growth—to ensure that as our own fortunes rise, so do those of our entire community.

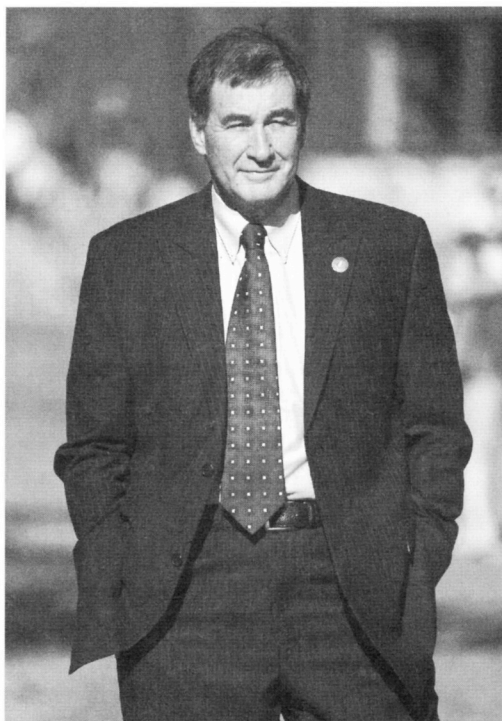
This type of town-gown relationship is not a novel concept. People such as Richard Florida have been pushing it for years. His oft-cited 2002 book, *The Rise of the Creative Class*,<sup>1</sup> makes a convincing case that

<sup>1</sup>Florida, R., 2002. *The Rise of the Creative Class*. Cambridge, MA: Basic Books.

in areas where economic growth was outstripping the regional or national norms you could find that colleges and universities were playing a central role by bringing the 3T's inherent in a college environment—*Technology, Talent and Tolerance*—to the region.

And, to be sure, this type of work is already being done in the region. There is significant traction already with the success of the Common Ground Alliance and the work of the Adirondack Park Planning Initiative Steering Committee commissioned by former New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Alexander “Pete” Grannis. Both of these groups want to see the Adirondack community prosper.

But we can all do more. I'd challenge our regional partners to challenge *us*—Paul Smith's Col-



*John Mills is the ninth president of Paul Smith's College. Dr. Mills, formerly the College's Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, holds an undergraduate degree in Zoology from the University of Rhode Island and a Ph.D. in Biology from Brown University.*

lege and the other higher education institutions in the Adirondacks—to help work toward this success. We are ready to come together, organize and strategize as we look for the mechanism through which our collective resources can be focused on enhancing community development. But the community needs to want that to happen. It is clear across the nation that higher education is, more and more, playing a central role in the economic success of the communities in which its institutions are located. It is critical that the Adirondack communities embrace this model and ask us to be their partners in solving the region's needs.

It is one thing to be the College of the Adirondacks. Becoming the Community of the Adirondacks is a much harder thing—but it will be essential to all of our success.



*17th Annual Conference on the Adirondacks, Lake Placid, NY, 2010*

## AJES On-Line at [www.AJES.org](http://www.AJES.org)

At long last, we have launched the online version of the Adirondack Journal of Environmental Studies. Take a look, tell us what you think. Executive Editor Jon Erickson deserves a lot of credit for driving this endeavor through completion. Jon outlined the philosophy and

approach for the project in his Prerogative in Volume 15.2. The Consortium Board of Directors believes that the online version is going to significantly expand our publishing opportunities and our audience. By utilizing an ongoing publishing cycle, readers and authors

will have greater opportunity for interaction. But don't be alarmed if you like the look and feel of the Journal in your hands, our intent is to publish an annual paper version of the Journal and make it available to our members and libraries.