

May 26, 2023

Colleagues:

What a wonderful week! Yesterday, the College celebrated its 74th Commencement, with over 2100 students receiving their degrees. The graduating class, resilient through a global pandemic, persevered and received their Advanced Certificates (26), Associates (387), Bachelors (1460), Masters (281), and Doctoral (27) degrees. They could not have done so without the dedication of our faculty and staff: THANK YOU for your assistance in getting them all to this point. The class of 2023 was among the most diverse in our institution's history, with more than one in four identifying as Latinx, and more than 10% as Black or African American. Five percent were international students, and nearly one-third were “nontraditional” in that they were older than 26.

Of this last cohort, I would like to celebrate one graduate in particular. Carmen Guirguis is an immigrant—actually a refugee from Cuba—who began studying part-time at CSI more than a decade ago. During her matriculation, Carmen studied abroad in Italy (twice), finished her degree a BA in Italian, her 3rd language), and then continued on to earn a Master's Degree in English. She is exceptional for many reasons, but perhaps mostly for the fact that the above happened ...following her retirement! Most of her classes were completed while she was in her 70s, and her degree was earned shortly after her 80th birthday: she is not only a testament to the power of lifelong learning, but a true inspiration to all of us that it is NEVER too late.

Yesterday also brought the welcome news that two of our faculty members—John Arena (Sociology and Anthropology) and Natalie Kimball (History) have been selected as Fulbright recipients, with funded research trips to Colombia and Bolivia, respectively. Selection to this highly competitive program is another testament to our incredible faculty and the work that they do, and reflects the world-class reputation that CSI has in the scholarly community. Congratulations!

With the Memorial Day holiday and the unofficial start of summer upon us, I want to again thank you all for your contributions to making CSI a destination campus, where both aspects of our mission---access and excellence—are alive and well, and where “if you stay here, you can go anywhere.” I wish you all the best, today and always.

Appreciatively, TGL

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Timothy G. Lynch". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Timothy G. Lynch, Ph.D. (he/him/his)

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