

July 27, 2023

Colleagues:

As we approach the end of another month, I write with updates as to recent activities that you may find of interest.

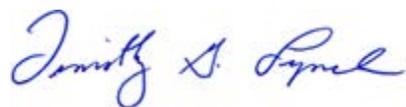
Over the past two weeks I and members of the administration have had the opportunity to engage with various community stakeholders. Last week we had a pair of visits to the Richmond Jewish Community Center, where we discussed opportunities for internships, programming, and ways in which we can best support the local community. We also spoke with our counterparts from Wagner College, to discuss how we can leverage our roles as higher education institutions to the betterment of our students and the entire Staten Island community. These are encouraging conversations that position the campus well to have a larger impact in the borough. This impact will be seen in an expanded marketing and outreach campaign, where we seek to “paint the town blue” with an advertising campaign that highlights our programs and emphasizes our value proposition.

On Monday of this week, the campus hosted a well-attended event in recognition of Disability Pride Month, featuring representatives from roughly two dozen agencies and organizations that support and work with this community. I was able to speak with Christina Curry, Commissioner of the Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities, a fierce advocate for the community and frequent visitor to our campus. Her inspiring words of support and encouragement were a great kickoff to the event, and as a multiple CUNY graduate, she recognizes the transformative role that our institution can play in the lives of so many. I also had the opportunity to network with several local service providers—many of which were staffed by and led by CSI graduates—which affirms the role that we can play in this space. I also had the opportunity to speak with Borough President Vito Fossella, whose office hosted a Disability Rights Roundtable the following day, and thanked him for his support of various campus improvement projects.

To that end, I am pleased to report that the City Council, Borough President, and other local electeds have awarded CSI over \$8.5 million dollars in funding for campus upgrades. These include much-needed investments in lights for our Center for the Arts theaters, which will allow us to once again host community programs and revenue-generating productions. Additionally, we secured funding to install lighting on our new athletic facilities, which will likewise allow us to monetize that asset as we can rent the fields for camps, clinics, and leagues. We similarly secured funding for our Tech Incubator, support for Dr. Donna Gerstle's Staten Island Breast Cancer Research Initiative, and for our Liberty Partnership programming. On this last point, I had the great pleasure of meeting and addressing this summer's cohort of high-schoolers, who are learning important academic and career skills from our dedicated staff (thank you Shawn Landry!) this summer, as they ponder their college and career options.

The summer is often seen as a time of decreased activity on a college campus, but that is not true at CSI. We are hosting soccer camps, academic classes, and expending tremendous time and energy on campus infrastructure improvements. The walkway project is continuing, as are efforts to refresh the entrances to all our academic buildings, including our Library. Upgrades to campus lighting and landscaping are ongoing, and we are pushing forth with a major sustainability initiative in the coming year. We hope that when the fall term begins that these improvements will add to a sense of pride and purpose, and serve as a reminder that CSI is a campus that cares about its stakeholders.

Until next time,



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