



October 6, 2023

Colleagues

I hope the warm start to autumn finds you well as I write with updates concerning recent campus activities.

This week was spent engaging with students in various capacities. On Monday morning, I had the opportunity to tour the WSIA radio station, a fixture of the campus for more than 40 years. With an impressive record (see what I did there?) of serving our community, WSIA is a paragon of student engagement, and serves as the only student-run FM (88.9 “on your dial”) station in the city. The entire operation is managed by students (under the guidance of a station engineer, and CSI alum Laura Maraio, and the Office of Student Life) so the experience is truly one of workplace-based learning. In addition to a look “behind the scenes” I had the pleasure of being interviewed on-air by the morning staff, by Janyah Mercedes, WSIA Programming Director: it was a great opportunity to share my personal experience as a CUNY alum and to articulate our vision for CSI in the coming years.

On Tuesday I was honored to represent the campus at Chancellor Matos-Rodríguez’s inaugural [State of the University address](#), where we officially launched the CUNY Strategic Roadmap. The Chancellor spoke about how we will continue to provide access to transformational educational opportunities, and how we will link students (and graduates) to rewarding careers that will positively impact the local economy. By offering a “degree for every dream” CUNY will serve as an engine of economic and social mobility that will lift New York in the post-pandemic world. I am proud to support this mission, and look forward to the hard, important work ahead. Although it was great to interact with my peers and several members of the Board of Trustees at that event, the highlight for me was interacting with CSI student-athlete Elizabeth Nicotra, a first-year cross-country athlete who was named the East

Coast Conference's Rookie of the Week. Like so many of our students, she is our best ambassador!

On Thursday I was able to greet and speak to several dozen high school counselors as part of an ongoing initiative to promote our campus as the college of choice. Provost Steiper and I highlighted the many reasons that students should choose CSI: from opportunities for undergraduate research, to the opportunities to study with and learn from fantastic faculty, and from D2 athletics and our relationship with the local community, CSI is the place to be. While the Chancellor may have proclaimed October as "CUNY Month" in his address (where NYC high school students can apply to our system at no cost), I believe that "every day is CSI day" and we should take every opportunity to share the wonderful things that are happening on our campus. This was a message that VP Hodge and I shared with the Student Government Association executive board at yesterday afternoon's "Pizza with the President" luncheon, where we discussed what we are doing well, and where we can do better. It was clear from our conversation that these students could have gone anywhere they wanted (and some did, only to subsequently transfer here) but they chose CSI because of our world class faculty (like Director of CSI's Legal Studies Institute & Pre-Law Advisor Michael Paris whose dedication to his students prepares them for legal apprenticeships and graduate education) and our caring staff (who were singled out for their empathy and compassion). It was also clear to me that these students want---I would even say demand---more opportunities for engagement: student activities and clubs are booming (the newly formed African Club has 90 members in its first weeks of existence!) --and there is a real appetite for internships, community service projects, and other experiential learning opportunities. I look forward to working with our student leaders to implement the many good ideas they brought to me.

This week also saw the arrival of October and with it the start of Italian American Heritage month. As a protected class within CUNY, and as a sizable proportion of our local community, the contributions of Italians and Italian Americans deserve to be recognized. As such, I thank Professor Paola Ureni and Enza Vario for their service as campus representatives on the Italian American Faculty and Staff Advisory Council to the John D. Calandra Italian American Institute...and I wish you all a restful Columbus Day -- (Indigenous Peoples' Day) Holiday weekend.

Until next time,

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