

PRESIDENT'S REPORT MEETING OF THE COLLEGE COUNCIL

SEPTEMBER 20, 2012

Good afternoon. I want to welcome everyone back for the start of the Fall Semester, and I hope that all of you had a great, relaxing, and productive summer break.

As you are aware, on August 15, I was appointed Interim President of the College. I feel very honored to be in a position to lead this institution during a period of exciting growth and opportunity, and let me again thank the many faculty and staff who expressed to me their well wishes and support.

This is a time of transition, and I recognize that there will be some initial challenges for all of us. As science fiction author and chemist Isaac Asimov observed, *"Life is pleasant. Death is peaceful. It's the transition that's troublesome."* However, with the following executive appointments made over the summer, I believe that we are well-positioned to move the College into the future:

- Fred Naider, Interim Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs;
- Mary Beth Reilly, Vice President for Enrollment Management;
- Kenneth Boyden, Interim Vice President for Institutional Advancement and External Affairs;
- Nan Sussman, Interim Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences; and
- Stephen Brennan, Assistant Vice President for Campus Planning and Facilities Management.

We also welcome 20 new accomplished faculty and several new support staff who, along with our current faculty and staff, continue to be the driving force behind CSI's realization of its full potential.

Over the summer, I received a letter from the Chancellor in which he lauded our many achievements, and I would like to take a moment to share some of his comments with you.

"I commend your faculty on their admirable work, as evidenced by several important indicators of student and faculty success. I am pleased with program development at the college and the anticipated completion of program review activities. . . The stellar increase in faculty scholarship – with more books and fine peer-reviewed articles published – and the successful completion of an impressive number of full-time faculty searches exemplify the good work at the college.

"I am also delighted with the increase in the percentage of students fully proficient by 30 credits, which is well above the University average. The increase in the associate retention rates of under-represented minorities has substantially narrowed the gap. And the uptick in four-year baccalaureate graduation rates and six-year associate graduation rates is very gratifying. The college's pass rates on teacher certification exams are among the highest in the University. CSI's efforts to build a student survey culture are most laudable; I hope it will be emulated by other CUNY campuses. In addition, enrollment management is strong, and fundraising continues to make progress."

The Chancellor's commendations are significant in that they represent a broadening recognition of the excellence found at the College of Staten Island. The most recent example comes from *Washington Monthly*, which named CSI as one of America's "Best-Bang-for-the-Buck Colleges." The aim of the magazine's rankings is to highlight those schools that utilize their resources to educate students effectively and get them "over the finish line" at a relatively low cost. CSI was one of only two "Master's Colleges" in the country to make the list.

Our reputation continues to propel and strengthen our enrollment as, once again, we have met our targets. Headcount enrollment increased by 1% with an FTE enrollment increase of 2.5%, and we have enrolled the largest number of incoming baccalaureate students in the College's history. Entering students have increased their credit load, thus contributing to a higher FTE-to-headcount ratio. This is due, in part, to the opportunities provided by the implementation of the new bell schedule. Five valedictorian/salutatorian scholarships were also awarded to entering students this fall. This year's awardees display the highest profile ever with a mean 96.7 high school average and a mean 1185 combined verbal and math SAT score. I am further pleased to report that the mean high school averages for both the Macaulay Honors College and The Verrazano School have increased this year with both selective programs also yielding very strong enrollments.

Our immediate future is certainly auspicious but also deeply challenging. The New York City and State budgets appear to be relatively stable, which should translate into stability for CUNY and additional funding opportunities for the College to advance its academic priorities. We are proceeding with 25 new faculty searches and hoping to add ten more. The construction of our High-Performance Computational Center will be a longer-term solution to remedy some of our space needs. In the short-term, we are planning two initiatives, including the relocation of Continuing Education to a suitable location off-campus and the acquisition of temporary modular units to address some of the more immediate space concerns of our academic departments. There will be meetings of the College Council Budget Committee and College-wide Budget Committee in November where we will have the opportunity to discuss many of these issues in detail.

It will also be my priority this year to work with the Office of Institutional Advancement and External Affairs and the CSI Foundation to reexamine our fundraising performance results to increase our internal and external philanthropic support. I will be reporting on our progress throughout the academic year.

Our student residential housing project is on schedule to be completed for occupancy in Fall 2013, and the progress has been remarkable. The four-story north building is up, and the foundation has been laid for commencing construction on the five-story south building. If you have not done so already, I strongly recommend that you view the construction site Webcam that can be accessed on our Website.

Also, while we celebrate the announcement this summer by the MTA that the S93 bus route from Brooklyn would finally be extended onto the CSI campus, I am all too aware of the difficult traffic conditions that we are currently experiencing on campus. Again, we are in the process of developing long- and short-term solutions to address this problem as well, and we will notify the campus community as new developments occur.

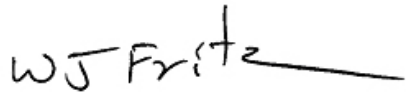
Recently, I had the opportunity to meet with some of our very distinguished alumni including Dr. Jerod Loeb, Executive Vice President with the Joint Commission, the accrediting and certifying body of more than 19,000 health care organizations in the United States, and Thomas Terracino, Global Safety, Environmental Affairs, and Security Director for M&M Mars, Inc. I share this with you because the many alumni whom I have met describe their experiences at the College in glowing terms, specifically mentioning their wonderful experiences with our faculty and staff, but also attributing much of their success to the education and opportunities they received here. These personal testimonials speak most eloquently to the impact that we have on the lives of our students.

As Interim President, I am wholly dedicated to advancing the Mission, Vision, and Values of this great institution. I will work diligently to achieve the ambitious goals of our Strategic Plan, *Many Voices, One Vision*, and I will be very deliberate in working with faculty, staff, and students to prioritize our initiatives in alignment with our available resources.

I look forward to this new academic year, and I wish everyone the greatest success this semester.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "WJ Fritz" followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

William J. Fritz, PhD
Interim President