

PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE COLLEGE COUNCIL
May 16, 2013

Artist, poet, and writer Khalil Gibran once said that “When you are sorrowful look again in your heart, and you shall see that in truth you are weeping for that which has been your delight.” This aptly describes the sorrow we are feeling over the recent loss of two members of the CSI family - Rose Volpe, founder of the Friends of CSI and wife of Dr. Edmond L. Volpe, the first President of the College of Staten Island, and Jason Turetsky, Assistant Director of Support Initiatives in the Office of Academic Support.

I would ask everyone to join me in a moment of silence on their behalf.

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In my first report to the College Council as Interim President back in September, I spoke about the challenges associated with the College’s transition in leadership. Now, in my final report to the College Council this academic year, we are again faced with another significant transition of leadership. As I am sure you are aware, on April 12, Chancellor Dr. Matthew Goldstein announced his plans to step down from his position this summer.

The Board of Trustees has announced that William P. Kelly, President of The Graduate Center of The City University of New York, will serve as Interim Chancellor of the University starting July 1. I know Dr. Kelly very well, and I am confident that with his support we will continue the incredible momentum we have experienced on numerous fronts this semester.

As of this morning, we have received residential housing applications and deposits from approximately 465 students. We are drawing students from all of the boroughs including 147 from Brooklyn, 88 from the Bronx, 53 from Manhattan, 51 from Staten Island, and 27 from Queens. We have also attracted a number of students from areas of New York State that we have not traditionally seen, including students from Buffalo, Albany, New Paltz, several Westchester and Rockland County towns, and communities on Long Island. Other students are coming from California, Texas, Montana, Missouri, Florida, Virginia, Maryland, Massachusetts, Maine, Connecticut, and New Jersey. Internationally, we have applications for housing from Greece, France, Japan, Australia, and the Netherlands. I have previously commented that the new residence halls will change the very fabric of this institution. Based upon the remarkable geographic diversity represented by these students, we can see this change already starting to take place.

CUNY has identified the construction of the Interdisciplinary High-Performance Computing Center as one of its capital project priorities and included the project on its “gold sheet” of funding requests presented to our legislative representatives in Albany. This space will give us 100,000 usable square feet.

We are also scheduled to start construction late this summer on the initial renovations of the 2M building, a project that will provide us with ten additional classrooms and two

office suites. This is just the initial phase of a complete renovation of approximately 80,000 square feet of usable space in 2M as set forth in our Facilities Master Plan.

The entire campus has been suffering from a lack of space, and I am confident that some of the most critical issues will be addressed with these two projects. In addition, as a campus, we will soon be determining the priority order of several projects identified in the Facilities Master Plan such as expansion of the Library and Campus Center. My vision is to have a seamless and continuous progression of construction projects over the next ten years. In the meantime, we are looking at every possible creative solution to make the most efficient use of our existing facilities.

While our “Serious Conversation” symposium about Superstorm Sandy was certainly a highlight of this semester, we have also had formal visits from Governor Andrew Cuomo (who memorably called us the crown jewel of CUNY), Senator Charles Schumer, Dr. Jerod Loeb (Executive Vice President of The Joint Commission, the organization that accredits and certifies more than 20,000 healthcare organizations and programs in the United States, and who became our first-ever College of Staten Island Alumni Fellow), and William Dudley (President of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York).

These visits involved personal and meaningful interactions with students and faculty. William Dudley told me how impressed he was with our students and the learned, thoughtful nature of their questions, which is a testament to the critical thinking skills advanced and nurtured by our faculty.

Last, but certainly not least, the College of Staten Island was officially registered as a Doctoral-degree-granting institution in New York State when Governor Cuomo approved the amendment to the long-range Master Plan of The City University of New York. As of September 2014, when the first Clinical Doctorate in Physical Therapy cohort enrolls at the College, students will study and receive their degrees solely from CSI. The College will be able to grant doctoral degrees not only in Physical Therapy, but in other fields as well, allowing CSI to join the ranks of Hunter and City College as the only CUNY campuses other than The Graduate Center to confer doctoral degrees on its students.

All of these achievements are consistent with my goals in bringing more resources to our budget, constructing more facilities to solve our space issues, and attaining greater recognition for our outstanding faculty, students, and programs. I will be providing an update on our new schools and departments in my Institutional Planning Committee report.

In closing, let me wish everyone a successful conclusion to this academic year, and I look forward to seeing everyone at CSI’s 37th Commencement on May 30.

Thank you.

William J. Fritz, PhD
Interim President