

College Council President's Report

Good afternoon. Although I have probably spoken to almost everyone in this room since the start of the fall semester, allow me to welcome all of you back to the new academic year at CSI.

Let me start with two great song quotes, one which accurately describes our summer, and the other which does not. The first is a verse written by Robert Hunter and sung by the Grateful Dead in "U.S. Blues," "Summertime done, come and gone, my, oh, my," which certainly seems to fit our collective experience at CSI. A second verse, one sung by Nat King Cole about the "lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer," clearly does not, at least as far as the "lazy" part goes.

On the first day of class, I sent an email to the campus community detailing the abundance of activity taking place at the College over the summer. For those who may not have had an opportunity to read the email, allow me to very briefly summarize the events.

At the end of June, it was announced that the State allocated an additional \$67 million to CUNY, from which the University allocated \$22.5 million in additional funding to CSI for our Interdisciplinary High-Performance Computing Center. This funding supplements the \$10 million that had already been appropriated to the College for the 2014-2015 fiscal year by the State.

To date, the State has invested approximately \$40 million in the construction of the IHPCC. So what does a \$40 million investment really mean to us? It means that the construction of the first new academic space since moving to our Willowbrook campus in 1993 will be a reality.

July was a particularly busy month. Governor Cuomo announced the first round of NY CUNY 2020 awards, providing \$55 million to fund eight innovative projects designed to connect academic excellence with entrepreneurship and local economic development. One of these projects, a Big Data Consortium initiative spearheaded by CSI and The Graduate Center, was awarded \$15 million. The Big Data Consortium will build on New York City's growing technological innovation strength to establish programs in data analytics. With this funding, CSI will develop the CUNY Center for Big Data Business Analytics, which will be housed in our 2M building. This project, along with the ten classrooms and two office suites already planned, will now be combined as a single construction project. This means that within approximately the next 18 to 24 months, we will have about 70 percent of the second floor of 2M renovated for the new School of Business.

The IHPCC and the 2M building represent some welcome answers to our interdisciplinary need for space. As some academic departments move into the IHPCC and 2M, vacated areas will create new available space on campus. Additionally, this past spring, the Office of Continuing Education and Professional Development relocated its main offices and classrooms to a satellite campus on Merrill Avenue. This move has freed up the equivalent of ten classrooms on our main campus, which represents more than ten percent of our total available classroom space. We will continue to engage in strategic campus planning to meet the academic needs of the College.

On the same day we received the great news about CUNY 2020, the Commissioner of Empire State Development approved our StartUp NY Designation Plan. The Plan, which officially recognizes CSI as a tax-free zone to attract start-up or "high-tech" businesses to the College, will potentially expand our footprint to

the burgeoning neighborhood of St. George where we will be able to provide academic programs in support of the College's Mission.

We also received news that \$2.45 million in City funding, also known as Reso-A monies, was allocated to the College from the City Council and Borough President. This funding is earmarked for the construction of a Media Culture Screening Room, lighting and bleachers for the soccer field, and for the IHPCC.

Clearly, CSI continues to face significant challenges concerning institutional resources. We are constantly reminded that there is no City funding in our operating budget, and reflecting a national trend, State financial support of higher education is waning.

Within this context, the allocation of funding this summer from external State and City sources is remarkable and unprecedented. Along with the College's current \$20 million comprehensive campaign, pursuant to which we have already raised \$14.5 million, we are demonstrating the College's ongoing commitment to find all available revenue streams to support the resource needs of the faculty, staff, and students, and to advance the academic excellence of the College.

Chancellor Milliken has made it clear that if we are going to maintain the quality of our CUNY institutions, we will need to increasingly look to friends, alumni, and affiliated foundations for support. As I said to you in my remarks to the College Council last September, your personal support could help tremendously in this effort.

We are focusing on attracting named gifts, i.e., professorships, labs, classrooms, departments, schools, and buildings. At every Board of Trustees meeting, the other senior campuses have named gifts on the agenda, and they use these gifts to help prioritize their construction projects within CUNY. We need to do the same.

I am talking to a number of prospective major donors, but many inquire about our own commitment. They take the measure of internal giving as an indication of a commitment to, and belief in, the institution. I have challenged all of the administration to join me in giving, and we have 100 percent participation. I now need your help. If I could report to our friends that 100 percent of the College Council membership gives to CSI, we could leverage this participation into millions of dollars in resources for the College. You can give to our unrestricted operating funds, your favorite scholarship, a building fund, or any other institutional cause. Any amount, large or small, counts toward our effort.

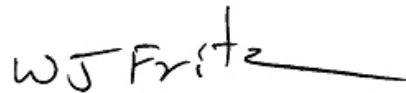
On July 30, Chancellor Milliken made his first visit to the College. He met with me as well as with faculty, staff, and student groups. Following these meetings, I accompanied the Chancellor on a walking tour of the campus, during which I had the great opportunity to show him the uniqueness of our 204-acre campus and to discuss with him our significant infrastructure challenges. He immediately perceived our uniqueness and expressed hope that we will become a destination campus for students around the country and throughout the world who want to come and study in New York City.

This surge of summer activity at the College has continued into the fall semester in the context of ECP searches led by the search for the new Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. On September 11 and 12, Dean Alex Chigogidze and our search consultant, Dr. Jessica Kozloff, met with faculty groups, governance groups, and faculty and staff at two town hall meetings to start developing a list of attributes that will be used to evaluate candidates and to receive thoughts and recommendations about the composition of the search committee. On Tuesday, I informed the faculty and staff by email that, based upon the feedback we have received, I have already decided to accept one major recommendation by faculty to appoint Dr. Christina Tortora, Professor of Linguistics in the English Department, to serve as co-chair of the search committee with Dean Chigogidze.

I will be meeting with the co-chairs very shortly to review all of the feedback and recommendations received to date to finalize the composition of the search committee. Dr. Kozloff will be returning to campus on October 7 and, along with the search committee co-chairs, will meet with the search committee and continue consultation with campus constituents.

We are also in the process of conducting searches for the Vice President for Institutional Advancement and External Affairs, Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs, and the Dean of Business. The Provost, search committee chairs, Vice Presidents, and I will keep you updated as they progress.

Thank you.

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

William J. Fritz, PhD
President

