

### **President's Report to the College Council**

Good afternoon.

As many of you are aware, on March 31, the New York State Legislature enacted a FY2015-2016 budget. There were some important improvements in the operating and capital budget support of CUNY, including additional investment in some innovative programs that strengthen educational opportunities for students.

Specifically, the FY2016 State-enacted budget for the senior colleges totals \$2.336 billion, an increase of \$77.9 million (or 3.5 percent) over the current year. The increase of \$77.9 million includes:

- \$12.0 million for completion of college performance improvement plans;
- \$3.9 million for SEEK;
- \$0.5 million for CUNY LEADS;
- \$0.5 million for the Joseph S. Murphy Institute;
- \$0.25 million for the graduate pipeline program at The Graduate Center; and
- \$60.8 million in increased tuition revenue pursuant to the existing rational tuition plan.

With respect to capital expenditures, the budget provides for:

- \$103 million for critical maintenance; and
- \$55 million for the third installment of the CUNY 2020 Challenge Grant Program.

Unfortunately, and of critical concern to CUNY and CSI, the State budget did not provide for:

- monies to fund our collective bargaining agreements;
- “maintenance of effort” to address mandatory costs; and
- a new rational tuition plan.

However, we still have a small window of time over the next two months to advocate for this funding in the upcoming legislative session. As President, I am doing all that I can to support a new collective bargaining agreement for our faculty and staff. I will continue to work with CUNY to lobby our State representatives until a resolution is reached.

This past Wednesday, Barbara Bowen, President of the Professional Staff Congress, visited the College to discuss the status of the State Budget and the CUNY collective bargaining agreements. I want to thank George Sanchez for also inviting members of the administration to attend the meeting. This open invitation is symbolic of the idea that we are all in this together, united in the goal to achieve fair collective bargaining agreements for all of our dedicated and accomplished faculty and staff to ensure that we can continue to provide the greatest academic opportunities for our students.

Despite our State budget challenges, this has been an outstanding academic year due to your hard work and dedication. I believe that the entire campus is working together to make CSI an even greater institution. We have a record number of faculty and student national awards, increased faculty scholarship, greater recognition within CUNY and the Staten Island community, and increased national rankings – all of which are key goals of our *Strategic Plan*. I am committed to lobbying for resources so that the faculty, staff, and students can continue this momentum.

In closing, I leave you with the thoughts of two poets and orators, the first by Chief Joseph, leader of the Nez Perce: *“I have heard talk and talk, but nothing is done. Good words do not last long unless they amount to something...”*

The second is by Edgar Allen Poe from his poem “Eldorado”:

*‘Over the Mountains*

*Of the Moon,*

*Down the Valley of the Shadow,*

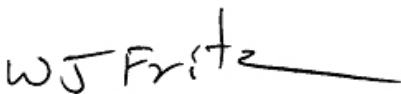
*Ride, boldly ride,’*

*The shade replied,—*

*‘If you seek for Eldorado!’*

I think what these individuals are saying is that in uncertain times, we need to press ahead, to continue to seek the Eldorado of our institutional Mission and of what our campus can become. We should not settle for mere talk.

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

