



February 19, 2015

## College Council President's Report

Good afternoon.

Although the spring semester is well underway, and we had a special meeting of the Faculty Senate last month, this is the first College Council meeting of the semester so allow me the pleasure of welcoming everyone back.

For those of you who may have wondered if I am the type of person who looks at the glass half-empty or half-full, I would like to read you a quote from spiritual teacher and writer, Gary Zukav, author of *The Dancing Wu Li Masters*, a description of the new physics and winner of a National Book Award in Science. He wrote a piece in "The Blog" on *The Huffington Post* in 2011 entitled "*Solstice Joy*":

*"The winter solstice has always been special to me as a barren darkness that gives birth to a verdant future beyond imagination, a time of pain and withdrawal that produces something joyfully inconceivable, like a monarch butterfly masterfully extracting itself from the confines of its cocoon, bursting forth into unexpected glory."*

For those who, like me, similarly look at the glass half-full, I look forward to the "*unexpected glory*" that awaits us once this "*barren darkness*" of winter has passed.

Much like the winter solstice, the CUNY and CSI budget also elicit varying perspectives. From the glass half-full perspective, as I have discussed with you previously, the College has been very successful with its State capital funding requests, which we anticipate will continue into this upcoming budget cycle. CUNY has included the next project phase of our Interdisciplinary High-Performance Computing Center as one of its FY2016 State Operating Budget priorities. Additionally, following last year's banner year in City Reso-A capital funding when approximately \$2.6M was awarded to the College, which included funding for a media culture screening room, we have submitted numerous additional City Reso-A funding requests for FY2016 for new capital projects to support the College.

We recently held our annual Legislative Forum on January 30 at the College at which representatives from every elected official representing our Borough, as well as the New York City Controller's and the Governor's office, attended. Our recent successes in funding are a direct result of the strong relationships we have cultivated with our elected officials, which have allowed us to make our compelling case concerning why the College of Staten Island - its faculty, staff, and students – are so worthy of support and investment.

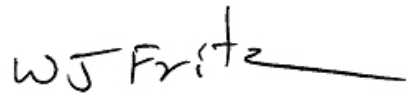
Although we are part of "The City University of New York," as a senior campus, our operating budget comes entirely from the State. Our property and our buildings are owned by the State, our critical maintenance dollars come from the State, and the State funds almost all of our construction projects. Historically, our only access to City money has been through Reso-A capital funding requests and special initiatives. This year, for the first time, we will be receiving operating dollars from the City for participating in the Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP) initiative.

From this perspective, there are challenges. In the FY2016 State Executive Budget for senior colleges, funding is flat from last year. Unfortunately, flat funding really means a loss of \$40 to \$60 million to the senior colleges because fixed costs such as salaries, fringe benefits, utilities, and other costs rise each year.

Next week, I will be traveling to Albany to advocate, not only for our new Interdisciplinary High-Performance Computing Center, but also to lobby, consistent with the CUNY "Gold Sheet" of funding priorities, for salary step increments, fringe benefits, restoration of critical maintenance dollars, and most importantly funding for a new collective bargaining agreement for our faculty and staff.

As President, I remain steadfast in my commitment to continually advocate for all available resources to support our faculty, staff, and students, and advance academic excellence and success at the College of Staten Island.

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

