Back in September, in my first President’s College Council Report of this academic year, I began my remarks by highlighting the fact that student success was a cornerstone of our new Strategic Plan, *Many Voices, One Vision*. It is fitting that, for my last President’s Report of 2011, I again begin my remarks with a focus on our collective efforts in supporting student achievement.

In response to the recent developments within the State of New York and The City University of New York regarding tuition, I sent an electronic message on December 2 to all of our students in which I reiterated our steadfast commitment to providing an affordable, high-quality education at the College of Staten Island. In 2010-2011, the College helped to facilitate nearly $49 million in need-based grant aid for our students, and awarded more than $240,000 in CSI student scholarships raised through private, philanthropic sources. The College remains vigilant in meeting the financial needs of our students. I am pleased to announce that CSI’s Third Annual Celestial Ball held earlier this month succeeded in raising over $500,000 for student scholarships and support. The Celestial Ball was highlighted by a short video presentation, *Raising Scholarships, Transforming Lives* [Link], featuring several CSI students and scholarship recipients. The students’ remarkable and moving stories, recounting how the generosity of others helped them to remain in school and excel in their academic studies, truly embodies the core mission of our institution. I want to thank the Division of Institutional Advancement and External Affairs, the Celestial Ball Committee, Committee Chairs, and the many others whose contributions ensured the overwhelming success of this event.

The College’s excellence in cultivating philanthropy was recently recognized at CUNY’s 28th Annual Kickoff and Awards Presentation, and the Ninth Annual Chancellor’s Circle Recognition Ceremony, for its fundraising efforts during last year’s CUNY Campaign for Charitable Giving. CSI received two awards: the Goal Buster Award, presented to colleges that equaled or surpassed its previous year’s fundraising goal, and the Extra Mile Award, given to colleges that increased the number of contributors who participated in the campaign. I want to again thank the Division of Institutional Advancement and External Affairs and the College’s Building Captains who spearheaded last year’s campaign. Most of all, I want to thank the faculty and staff who have so generously given back to those in need within the community and at the College through their donations. I would like to remind everyone that this year’s CUNY Campaign for Charitable Giving will conclude on Friday, December 16. Gifts to the campaign may be made online through the Campaign Website [Link], and any questions may be directed to designated Building Captains or the Division of Institutional Advancement and External Affairs.
On December 8, Student Government President Kevin Storberg and I participated in the second annual Presidents’ Forum, which provided an opportunity for all students to ask questions of the College’s leadership concerning any and all issues related to their collegiate experience. Both Mr. Storberg and I addressed questions covering a wide variety of topics including tuition, financial aid, Library facilities, CUNY’s Tobacco-Free Policy, and many others. This open forum is part of our ongoing efforts over the last four years to meet with students and engage them in discussions that are integral to the continuing process of finding new ways to help students reach their goals. I want to thank Kevin Storberg, the Student Government, and the Division of Student Affairs for their assistance in facilitating this invaluable opportunity for meaningful dialogue and discourse.

Significant progress continues to be made concerning our major institutional initiatives. On December 5, Dr. Carlos Vargas-Aburto, Chair of the Middle States Reaccreditation Team that will be conducting the evaluation of our institution, made a preliminary visit to the CSI campus. Dr. Vargas-Aburto met with the College’s Middle States Steering Committee Co-Chairs, Steering Committee members, student representatives, and others, and provided valuable feedback concerning the draft of our Middle States Self-Study. The Steering Committee and other members of our College community continue to make suggestions regarding the Self-Study draft, and it is anticipated that the document will be finalized shortly. The Self-Study will form the basis of the evaluation by the Middle States Team, which will be conducting its formal visit to the College in the spring.

We also continue to make progress concerning our new Strategic Plan, *Many Voices, One Vision*. CSI’s new Faculty Center for Professional Development and the additional professional development funding for faculty, HEOs, and other professional staff were derived directly from the goals and recommendations set forth in the Strategic Plan. The Institutional Planning Committee will be meeting shortly to discuss an Implementation Plan, which will provide details concerning the actions, responsibilities, timelines, resources, and assessments needed to advance other goals and recommendations set forth in the Strategic Plan.

In closing, I hope that you have had the opportunity to view the holiday greeting that I sent to all faculty, staff, and students this week by electronic mail. Let me say again, that I wish you and your families an inspirational holiday season, and a new year filled with joy, good health, and prosperity.

Sincerely,

Tomás D. Morales, PhD
*President*