



College Council

October 24, 2019

Good afternoon and welcome.

I think everyone is aware of the proposed contract agreement between CUNY and the PSC. The PSC is describing the contract as historic. The contract provides for 2% retroactive raises for 2018 and 2019 and 2% increases each year up to and including 2022. The contract also includes significant increases to adjunct pay. I am pleased that this is on the way to being resolved as I support a fair wage for our hard-working faculty, staff, and adjuncts.

I've sent three messages out this semester regarding the budget in order to keep the campus apprised of our financial situation. In the last message I noted that we finished, FY 2019 in the black, something that was not entirely clear when we met in September. In my October 3 memo, I described this year as a \$2.5M to \$5.0M challenge. While our budget plan has not yet been accepted by CUNY, they are finding ways to help us out and I believe the actual number will be lower than this.

Last month I mentioned the funding from Borough President James Oddo and Councilman Steve Matteo, for a Genomic facility. We had a kick-off event on September 27<sup>th</sup> with a number of elected officials to celebrate this great addition to the Biology Department with a long-term goal of getting approval from CUNY to operate this as a Center. I am excited by the opportunity for students and faculty the ability to conduct genome sequencing and analysis to search for genetic

variations in DNA that may cause the development or progression of diseases or conditions such as cancer, drug addiction, and autism.

Just last week NYC announced that we were selected to be one of the colleges to participate in CUNY 2x Tech - described by the Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives, J. Phillip Thompson, as “*an initiative to build the next generation of world-class industry professionals in today’s ever-evolving tech landscape.*” This initiative will provide valuable resources and support to meet the ambitious goal of doubling the number of graduates with tech degrees. Additionally, the initiative will significantly advance student career success and employment outcomes as well as drive economic development on Staten Island as we continue to build a vibrant tech ecosystem in the borough. Importantly, it provides funding for several positions including 2 faculty lines, adjuncts, tutors, and an NTA.

This weekend we will be celebrating the naming of the Lucille and Jay Chazanoff School of Business. Obviously, this gift will provide tremendous support for the School of Business. What’s not always apparent is how this gift will help other areas. The Chazanoff gift has already inspired other gifts – such as a \$50k gift to Nursing. Importantly, the quadrupling of our assets since 2012 now gives us access to resources with our investment fund. The Deans, the Advancement Office and members of the Administration will be meeting with the Senior Vice President for Philanthropic Strategist Institutional Investments & Philanthropic Solutions at the Bank of America who specializes in working with nonprofits to develop solutions and strategies to assist them in pursuing their mission and goals. This is a great opportunity for the College to further expand its fundraising efforts and put us in a much better position with non-tax levy resources. We have three priorities and three teams: 1) raising money to support academic affairs led by the deans; 2) raising money to meet our obligations for providing athletic scholarships; 3) a focus on fundraising from our 72,000 alumni – currently our giving rate hovers around 2% and needs to increase to at least 10%.

Last week we met with CUNY's Albany legislative affairs team and representatives from CUNY Central to discuss our significant infrastructure needs. This was a well-timed meeting considering the brief, but inconvenient power outage we had early in the week due to a faulty feeder from Con Ed.

As you are all aware, this was the second time this semester we had an electrical outage and both times the issues was beyond our control. Power on Staten Island is always a problem and has been a problem for all major institutions on the Island including the hospitals. The same day of the incident I had an unrelated meeting with Councilman Matteo and raised the issue with him.

The good news is that within the next 2 weeks, DASNY is setting up a construction kickoff meeting for a new substation. It's anticipated that the submittal, procurement and construction phase of the new substation will take 18 to 24 months.

The new substation will ensure greater continuity of power with three feeders, which will transmit electricity from the substation to buildings on campus. The current substation has two feeders, which will be connected to the new substation.

However, the new substation will not totally protect us from power losses on the Island outside of our control. I think it's important for the College to move in a different direction of sustainable energy. I am currently discussing ways of establishing a micro-grid on campus – either solar or co-gen – so that we can have a new revenue stream and to be energy self-sufficient, consistent with our SI community priorities of making SI more self-sufficient in the event of a disaster.

You'll be hearing from Charles Gomes in a few minutes, but I just want to highlight some of the good news coming from our recruitment efforts. Since May of this year, we've had over 100 recruits visit the campus – nearly ten times the usual number. The profile of those student

athletes who have visited is an average SAT score of 1140 and a 3.1 GPA. They come from Argentina, Panama, Brazil, and across the country. Over 40 of the visits have been from out-of-state/international students, so I am greatly encouraged by these numbers, especially when you consider that our DII application was not accepted by NCAA until July of this year.

In some meetings I've heard people ask about the expense of running the St. George site and I will be sending out a memo specifically on the financing of St. George. However, a rough summary of the financials shows that it costs us slightly more than \$1M to operate, including rental, staffing, cleaning services, and security, and we generate about \$3.0M in revenue. The real question is: how many of the more than 1,000 St. George students would have been here anyway and how many represent increased enrollment? From our earlier studies, I think about two thirds represent new enrollment and a third of the students we would have had anyway. It is a little more complicated than just looking at individuals as we know that many of the students report that they are taking three classes when they would have only taken one at Willowbrook alone. I am confident that St. George is making money for us and this year would have been even tougher without it. Also remember that St. George is primarily an access initiative designed to make it easier for some of SI's most vulnerable population to have access to higher education.

Thank you,

William J. Fritz

President

