

September 7, 2018

Dear Faculty, Staff and Students:

It is my pleasure to welcome everyone – new and returning – to the College of Staten Island and a warm welcome to the CSI family.

This promises to be an exciting year for the College. We are in the second year of our five-year Strategic Plan; last week *Forbes* said that we are one of America's Top Colleges (yet another accolade from a national publication); we've just won a grant to work with education institutions in Japan to advance online learning; and, one of our graduate students was recently awarded a Fulbright.

I hope you are familiar with the six priorities of *Opportunity to Ascend*, our new Strategic Plan, which was developed with input from across the College community. All of our efforts going forward will be oriented around these priorities: Student Success, Global Engagement, Borough Stewardship, Destination Campus, Scholarship-Driven Education, and Resource Management. I'm pleased that we're making strides in all of these areas. Above all, our students are succeeding: CSI is actually ahead of comparable CUNY colleges for graduation rates and in other areas. And we deliver value for our students' investments: In 2018, the College was ranked 19th on the list of Top 100 Most Affordable Universities in America.

It's also an exciting time because we're making real progress toward being a Destination Campus. You will see a number of projects reach their completion by the end of September, particularly plaza reconstructions in front of four buildings: 1N (Computer Science), 2N (John Marchi Hall), 5S (Nursing), and 3S (School of Education). Many other projects are at various stages across campus and reflect our commitment to providing a functional and attractive campus environment.

Our campus is a thriving community, with new and exciting activities taking place almost daily. Keep your eye on the College's CUNY events calendar page (<http://events.cuny.edu/c/college-of-staten-island/>). CSI Today (<http://csitoday.com/>) reports news and information almost daily and our social media (http://csitoday.com/social_media/) is updated frequently. You are part of a community of people engaged in extraordinary research and pursuits, from the performing arts to the sciences, from athletics to zoology. We plan to introduce a new College newsletter soon, too, which will report on many of these stories.

Our athletics program continues to get stronger and stronger, with nearly all of our teams ranked #1 in CUNY pre-season polls. We have introduced men's and women's indoor and outdoor track this season for the first time and four new coaches are guiding our women's basketball, track and cross country, women's soccer, and tennis teams. Importantly, the College's participation in NCAA Division III athletics is helping us recruit, retain, and graduate very high-achieving students. Our student-athletes graduate faster with higher GPAs than the student body at large. They go on to prestigious medical schools, law schools, and graduate programs, and work at top firms and serve in the most prestigious not-for-profit organizations. I hope you will come out to show your Dolphin pride – game reports and team schedules are posted at (<http://www.csidolphins.com/>).

Despite the financial issues with which we are all familiar, the state of our College is strong. I am confident that it will grow even more so over the coming semester and year – as long as we continue to work together on our common challenges.

In closing, I wish all of our incoming and returning students, faculty and staff great success this semester and throughout the academic year.

Sincerely,

William J. Fritz
President