

January 20, 2023

Colleagues:

I hope that this note finds you well and I am sure that you share in my excitement as the Spring 2023 term approaches. I write with updates about recent activities and developments, which you may find of interest.

The past few weeks have been dominated by a theme of “partnerships.” I have been busy working with various folks on and off campus to better position the College of Staten Island to take advantage of its unique role as the only provider of public higher education in the borough. To that end, Provost Steiper and I traveled to the newly refurbished Richmond University Medical Center to establish pathways for our nursing students (whom we recently celebrated at their [biannual pinning](#) and candle lighting ceremony) to expanded career opportunities at their facility. Such pathways are a key element of the New York City Future of Workforce Training Taskforce, of which I was a mayoral appointee, and form the basis for linking education with career preparation and workforce development. Colleges provide multiple pathways to economic empowerment and social mobility, and we must embrace this important aspect of our mission.

Of course, we can and will do this while remaining true to our commitment to academic excellence. This was evidenced most recently by a series of workshops facilitated by Professor Wilma Jones of our Faculty Center, and attended by over 130 of our colleagues, who sought to share best practices while learning more about how we can best engage with our students. Such commitment to teaching excellence and pedagogical innovation demonstrates the attention our scholar-teachers (and staff) devote to retention efforts, and I thank you all for your continued efforts on this imperative. This was followed by a visit from President Munroe and Provost Wong of BMCC, where we discussed building pipelines to our academic programs: the conversation focused on removing barriers to matriculation and smoothing the transition from community college to senior institution, with planned growth in several areas. This, like discussions with Kingsborough and Guttman Community Colleges previously, is consistent with our strategy to make CSI, committed as we are to student success, the premier transfer destination within CUNY.

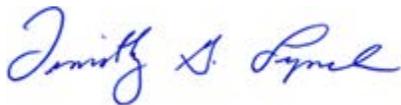
In addition to conversations with other academic institutions, I had several good meetings with local and other elected officials. I attended a townhall with State Senator Andrew Lanza, and had wonderful conversations with him and others—including City Councilmember David Carr and State Assemblyman Mike Tannousis—about the role that the campus can play in the Staten Island economy, and the ways in which our legislative partners can assist us. Later that week, we hosted newly-elected State Senator (and CSI and Verrazzano Honors program alum!) Jessica Scarcella-Spanton for her swearing-in ceremony. At that event, I was able to chat with Senator Charles Schumer, Representative Nicole Malliotakis, and others (including State Assemblyman Charles Fall, City Councilmember Kamillah Hanks, and Borough President Vito Fossella) about how we can best transition CSI from “the best kept secret in higher education,” to a shining example of the transformative power of public higher education. These conversations bode well

for February 3<sup>rd</sup>'s Legislative Forum where I will continue to advocate for increased funding from city, state, and federal officials. Wish me luck!

Speaking of funding...in late December the campus received word of a mid-year adjustment to our financial plan. Working closely with the Budget Committee of the College Council, CFO, and AVP Carlos Serrano and I were able to make significant progress and meet our projected target—a two percent reduction-- with minimal impact on our operations. Unfortunately, at a subsequent Council of Presidents Meeting, campuses were told to expect additional cuts in coming years, so this exercise will be ongoing. I will continue to work collaboratively with campus stakeholders to navigate this situation and will provide regular updates through our governance structure mechanisms.

Thankfully, the latest enrollment projections for the Spring semester exceed our anticipated FTE and headcount for this term, so we may be able to withstand these and subsequent adjustments while avoiding the negative impact other campuses anticipate. While these are challenging times for sure, I remain convinced that the value proposition of a CSI education is matched only by the return on investment that we provide to our graduates. Working together I am sure that we can attract, enroll, and retain a diverse student body that will serve our collective communities well.

Until next time,



Timothy G. Lynch, Ph.D. (he/him/his)  
Interim President, College of Staten Island  
The City University of New York  
2800 Victory Blvd, SI, NY 10314  
718.982.2400