



September 22, 2023

Colleagues:

I hope that you have been enjoying the lovely late summer weather, and as the calendar turns to fall I write with information and updates that you may find of interest.

This week was one of engagement and reflection. On Sunday, I was pleased to join several of our colleagues at a memorial to celebrate the life of former faculty member, Irene Deitch. We gathered in the Green Dolphin Lounge to hear stories of the impact that Dr. Deitch—who taught in our Psychology Department for more than four decades—had on her colleagues and on our community. What I found most inspiring were the words that came from former students, who benefitted from the mentorship and support—including annual graduation awards and scholarships—that she provided. The day concluded with a bench dedication along the Willowbrook Mile and an opportunity to socialize at an informal reception: it was a lovely tribute and I thank the members of our Office of Institutional Advancement, as well as members of the Psychology Department, and the CSI Foundation, who planned the event, and of course our Dining Services and Facilities teams for the special care they put into their work to help make this event successful.

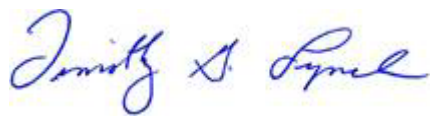
Speaking of Advancement, this week I also had the pleasure of meeting with the CSI Foundation Board of Directors, as we gathered for our first in-person meeting since before the pandemic. In addition to the usual updates about campus operations (including the fact that we surpassed our fall enrollment targets and that our sidewalk replacement project is proceeding ahead of schedule), we heard from our investment advisers and discussed the slate of fundraising activities planned for the fall. In addition to CUNY's annual Giving Tuesday campaign, we will reinstate the annual President's Appeal, and there are a series of other events (a Friends of CSI Literary Luncheon, for example) that we hope and expect will establish a culture of giving and philanthropy at the College. The Board is committed to supporting this initiative as the monies raised are used, among other purposes, to provide emergency grants to students who experience changes in their personal situation and allow them to continue their studies uninterrupted. We heard from appreciative students for whom such aid made the difference: there is no greater incentive to give than this.

The great weather this week encouraged me to get out of my office and onto our lovely campus. I was impressed by the improvements made this summer on various projects (and we had a lengthy presentation from DASNY about future ones), especially with painting projects and lighting improvements. I had the opportunity to tour some of our “back end” spaces too—it is often forgotten how much work occurs by folks who are routinely “behind the scenes.” For example, my tour included a look at all that is happening in our Information Technology department—they are the first ones we call when issues crop up with our computers or phones, but for the vast majority of our time they are often unnoticed and underappreciated, precisely because of the incredible work they do to ensure everything is functioning as it should. So, a big thank you to CIO and AVP Patty Kahn and her team for the work that they do, from generating reports to supporting faculty, staff, and students with myriad issues.

This week also brought the first College Council and Faculty Senate meetings of the academic year, and I was—as always—appreciative of the candid and constructive conversations that occurred there. The Senate welcomed a new executive board (Professors Susan Smith-Peter, Lisa Manne, Valerie Forrestal and Zaghoul Ahmed) and the administration looks forward to working with them and is grateful for the contributions of their predecessors (Professors Jane Marcus-Delgado, John Wing, Susan Imberman and Deborah DeSimone). Shared governance is alive and well at CSI and we are committed to making sure that it remains that way!

Following these meetings, we were treated to the opening of a new exhibit in the CSI Art Gallery, “Kate Horsfield: Attempt to Form,” co-curated by Professors Cynthia Chris and Siona Wilson. I met the artist and several other notable figures from the community at the opening reception (and there were bagpipes!); the exhibit is thought-provoking and I encourage you to check it out.

Until next time,



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