

April 8, 2022

Colleagues:

Another eventful week is in the books! Fresh off the good news conveyed by our Middle States team, I was buoyed to discover that we are now in “Spirit Week” and there is certainly much to be proud of here at CSI. As the weather warms and the campus is in bloom, I think it important to recognize the many positive things that we have to celebrate here at the College. Just this week, I had the great good fortune to participate in my first P&B (Personnel and Budget) Committee meeting, where I learned firsthand about some of the amazing accomplishments of our faculty colleagues. I am awestruck at their scholarly and creative accomplishments, and the level to which these inspired and inspirational professors engage our students in their work. I look forward to seeing further evidence of this at the upcoming Undergraduate Research Conference.

This week, I met with representatives from the New York Community Trust (NYCT) to discuss opportunities related to workforce development on the Island. NYCT is committed to providing training opportunities for underserved populations, a noble and notable goal that meshes with CUNY’s mission of access and opportunity. I am optimistic that CSI can continue to play a leading and transformative role for all members of our local community, and partnering with agencies such as NYCT is but one way in which we can advance on several important initiatives. I also participated in a full-day Council of Presidents meeting, where I learned of important and ongoing efforts in the realms of cybersecurity, and in student recruitment and retention. With reaccreditation accomplished, it is time to have frank conversations about enrollment and develop strategies to attract new populations while also providing meaningful and impactful experiences for those who are currently here.: this will be a major focus moving ahead. And while we are a forward-looking institution, we also pay homage to our past, as evidenced by the most recent installment in our ongoing “Year of Willowbrook” commemoration. On Wednesday evening, that programming continued with a poignant discussion facilitated by Ronnie Cohn, who led a conversation about what happened after the institution closed, and what the future looks like for those with intellectual, cognitive, and developmental disabilities. Our legacy is to be more than memorialists, but to continue serving as advocates for social justice.

I also had productive and candid conversations with our governance leaders (the Executive Committee of the College Council), the Department Chairpersons, and the Institutional Planning Committee. It is important to tap into the I knowledge borne by these and other colleagues, and I am committed to ongoing discussions with them on myriad matters as we look to the future of CSI. It is important to be strategic and intentional in all that we do, and the involvement of so many stakeholders in setting the course for the future of CSI is important and imperative. To that end, on Friday I met with our dedicated Academic Advisers to discuss ways we can better leverage their positions to advance student success, a conversation that continued when I subsequently engaged with our CUNY colleagues to discuss transfer-related topics as part of the University’s “Academic Momentum 2.0” initiative. As 34% of CSI students begin elsewhere,

we would be well-served to cultivate this population of students by removing obstacles to matriculation, credit accumulation, and degree completion. My week ends with a Saturday trip to the State Capital, where I and other CUNY administrators will continue our lobbying efforts for increased support for public higher education through our annual caucus activities. While the budget has not as yet been finalized, we remain guardedly optimistic about what the future holds, and I will certainly communicate any information should it become available. I look forward to seeing many of you at the upcoming Spirit Week festivities!

Wishing you the best, until next time,

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