

January 21, 2022

Colleagues:

I hope this end-of-workweek note finds you well. Throughout my relatively brief time on campus, I learned that folks appreciate hearing from the administration about various projects and initiatives. My Friday email communications have sought to increase both transparency and to facilitate communication—I hope those intended benefits outweigh the costs of a flooded inbox!

Although much of my time has been inward focused, meeting with various campus constituents, this week proved slightly different. In addition to my usual meetings with cabinet members, direct reports, and individual members of our campus community, this week I also had the opportunity to meet with sundry partners from within and beyond Staten Island. I was pleased to see a robust turnout for the kickoff event launching 2022 as “The Year of Willowbrook” and to meet with local elected officials, including the new Borough President, Vito Fossella, as well as State Assemblyman Michael Cusick and New York Councilmember David Carr. Later that day, I enjoyed a lengthy conversation with leaders from the other senior colleges to discuss how we can leverage the newly proposed State budget to our benefit (more on that in a few), and my week continued with important conversations with colleagues from both the Middle States Commission for Higher Education (MSCHE) and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). It is clear that the College of Staten Island has an impact and a reach far beyond our campus, and our reputation is strong in those quarters. As proof of that, and as covered more deeply in a related press release, the campus was recently selected as **one of only 15 nationwide** to participate in the American Association of State College and University’s (AASCU) prestigious Transformation Accelerator Cohort! This will allow us to further our institutional commitment to providing access to transformational educational opportunities for all our students, while closing equity gaps for those from marginalized communities.

I remain cautiously optimistic that Governor Hochul’s proposed budget will bode well for higher education in general and for CSI/CUNY, in particular. We will be exploring opportunities to leverage the good news contained therein (including \$1.5 Billion for CUNY and SUNY over the next five years and the elimination of the “TAP gap” in an even shorter timeline) for the betterment of our campus. In coming weeks, I and other members of the CSI/CUNY administration have meetings with local elected officials, representatives in Albany, and others to lobby for much-needed funding and other support. I am also meeting with student leaders, various collective bargaining units, faculty governance representatives, and the Alumni Association to hear their concerns and inform our approach.

As the new term rapidly approaches, I remain committed to providing the support and assistance that all members of our community seek...and deserve. The Office of Academic Affairs, led by the Provost, and members of our Enrollment Management and EDUCares teams, are monitoring registrations, adjusting course offerings, and being as flexible and nimble as possible in an effort to serve our students while also adhering to University and other guidelines. I appreciate the frustrations of not knowing specifics until late in the process and appreciate the patience that you

have all shown as we work toward a resolution that is equitable and consistent with public health directives.

I want to close with a brief acknowledgement for all the members of our campus community who have been active throughout a two-year pandemic, and who have managed to keep the campus afloat despite snowstorms, power outages, the challenges of remote work and learning, and various other issues. Your work is noted and, like each of you, it is valued, and it is valuable. Thank you.

Stay safe,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Timothy G. Lynch". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'T'.

Timothy G. Lynch, Ph.D. (he/him/his)
Interim President, College of Staten Island