



College Brief

NO. 124 May 22, 2020

FROM: Louis J. Petrizzo, Interim President

SUBJECT: Thank You for Your Dedicated Work During the Spring 2020 Semester

It is an honor to send this communication to you, as we conclude the spring 2020 semester. Working remotely and transitioning in short order to online modalities, was not how any of us envisioned that this time would pass, and it is not how we wanted to address our core educational mission—but we did it. We did it all and we made it work, mostly from home. We all showed some measure of talent in learning on the fly, amassing new skills, implementing new technology, communicating in creative ways. From the outset, our faculty, staff, administrators *and students* were up for this challenge and we all crossed the finish line together. Wiser, stronger and more resilient than when we started. I want to make sure you know how much it meant to our Board and to me, that so many of you were able to be at home as we, and our fellow Long Islanders, attempted to remain safe and healthy during the onset of this pandemic. Naturally, each of us would have preferred to share—in person—all of the festivities and celebrations that typically compose the final weeks of an academic year, but that was not to be this spring. However, we continue to hold out hope that we will be able to host a winter Commencement that honors our 2020 graduates.

We owe a continuing debt of gratitude to our essential staff from within the offices of Public Safety, Plant Operations, Facilities, IT, Human Resources, Payroll, Business and Financial Affairs, Student Affairs, Legal, Networking, and Leadership—who continued to function on campus, arriving each day ready to face whatever circumstances were presented. Their effort to ensure the protection of our facilities and the health and safety of all staff members who needed to work onsite, represents a tremendous, ongoing contribution to our institution.

It was an unforgettable semester, with unprecedented displays of support by colleagues and students alike. We built a newfound appreciation for virtual gatherings, remote means of operation, new technology and online supports, all of which were coordinated in a manner that linked everyone involved with our mission, through thousands of homes spread across all of Suffolk County. I commend everyone for this outpouring of camaraderie. As you can imagine, it was a monumental undertaking and, while we are by no means out of the proverbial woods yet, I must take this moment in time to tip my hat and applaud all of you for the tremendous effort that was clearly made throughout our College and across our community. You have contributed

monetarily to provide desperately needed assistance for our students through our COVID-19 Emergency Fund. You have maintained your professionalism as you have addressed questions and concerns; you have been moved by emotional stories of hardship and struggle, heard complaints and demands multiple times each day. In some cases it may have been hard to maintain a positive spirit and a helpful, caring nature, but you did so consistently and this enhanced the public view of our College each time.

You have all done so much to ensure the seamless and efficient continued operation of the College! It was an inspirational thing to witness during a challenging time. I close with sincere and deep appreciation for all your dedication. Our work continues and our College remains strong because of you.