

PRESIDENT'S REPORT on ALUMNI WEEKEND
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Good Morning and Welcome Home! I am delighted to stand before you and share with you the good news of the College of Saint Elizabeth. It has been a great year.

Before I get started, I'd like to introduce you to the leadership team. I hope that during the day you have the opportunity to meet them and learn more about their work. I know that they are anxious to hear about you and your time at the College.

First, I think most of you know Vice President of Student Life, Katherine Buck. Kathy is finishing 27 years at the College. Sally Cleary is the Vice President for Institutional Advancement. Sally will begin her third year with the College in July. Next is Alex Scott, Vice President for Enrollment Management. Alex is finishing his second year. The newest member of our team is Mick Fescocoe. Mick joined us in January as the Vice President for Finance and Administration. Unfortunately, Dr. Monique Guillory, our Vice President for Academic Affairs was not able to join us today. Besides being our new VP for Academic Affairs, Monique became a new mom in February and as a result has a family commitment today that could not be changed.

I would also like to take time to thank Debra Martin, for her leadership of this weekend's events and the Institutional Advancement Staff, especially Robyn O'Sullivan for their support of these events.

As I shared, it has been a very good year so let me share some of the highlights. I'll start with Academic Affairs ...

Dr. Guillory, the Vice President for Academic Affairs has formed a strong, cohesive academic, leadership team, including Dr. Anthony Santamaria who is the Dean of Arts and Sciences and Dr. Patricia Heindel who is the Dean of Professional Programs. They have worked together for this past year. I am pleased that much has been accomplished.

One of the first initiatives Dr. Guillory and here team tackled in the fall was the development of a new advising model. The new model assigns freshmen an advisor who will stay with them through the sophomore year. In most instances, the advisor is the faculty member assigned to teach Element I which is the first course in our four year general education program. The goal of the model is to build strong relationships between the students and their advisors, providing an important connection to the College and focused attention on career goals and course selection.

At the end of the sophomore year, students will transition to discipline specific advisors to be provided discipline-specific career advice and major course planning. To support upper division advising, the *Faculty Advising Manual* has been revised and all faculty are being provided with training in advising which began during a week of faculty development in May.

As a companion to the new advising model, Dr. Guillory introduced third week assessments in all freshman and sophomore level courses. This is based on best practices that purport that mid-term is too late to intervene with a student who is facing academic challenges. We will now monitor the outcomes of these interventions to determine their impact on retention.

After a year of development, this fall, all FTF students will be enrolled in pre-set schedules. The purpose of the pre-set schedules is to place students in courses that support intended fields of study. There will be three tracks for students, one for those interested in the natural sciences, one for students interested in professional programs and one for students whose interests are mostly in humanities and arts. The presets are structured to develop learning communities, align students in courses that support their interests, and to maximize enrollment in courses foundational to all students in the preset tracks.

Retention remains a significant focus for Academic Affairs. The goal for FTF retention is 90%. Although a “stretch” goal, we believe with attention to student advising, this goal is possible. FTF retention in 2015 was 71% this is up 2% from the preceding year.

In addition to the focus on advising and scheduling we are creating a program very much like the state funded program for students who demonstrate financial, social or academic need funded by the state called EOF. Based on careful analysis of our FTF, we find that the highest dropout rate is in the group of students whose academic profile mirrors EOF students, however, for some reason, they do not meet the criteria to be admitted into the program. Our data demonstrate that we are highly successful with EOF students. Their persistence and graduation rates exceed the population of students who are fully qualified to be admitted to the College. So, we are now taking what we have learned from EOF and making available many of the components of the program available to EOF students. Most important will be providing intrusive advising.

This year we hosted two program specific accreditations: Food and Nutrition and Teacher Education. Although we have not received final reports from either accrediting agency, the exit interviews were favorable. We are now preparing for the initial accreditation of the Psy.D. program.

New program development has occurred in social work which will open to students in fall 2017, and in actuarial science and broadcast media. The latter two will open in fall 2016.

Social work will be an accredited program. We are engaged in the necessary work to assure that we are in position to meet the requirements for candidacy which is the first step in realizing accreditation. Dr. Louise Murray will be the first program chair. We have also hired the second faculty member who will be the field placement coordinator. This young scholar is a newly minted Ph.D. From Rutgers who will join the faculty in the Fall.

The actuarial science program which will be a concentration within the math department and a collaboration with MetLife has received the first level approval from the

Society of Actuaries. We are now moving forward with the second level approval which we hope to have completed this summer.

The broadcast media program is a concentration within the Communication's Program and is a joint program with the County College of Morris. CCM has just completed a major renovation of their studios and this collaboration will give students access to the highest quality equipment available and the benefit of completing their four year degree on the campus of CCM where they completed the first two years of their education.

Plans are underway for a master's in public health program and we are also exploring the possibility of adding applied behavioral analysis, physician assistant, undergraduate nursing program and adding college level teaching to the doctoral program in education.

Faculty development was a high priority this year. Many topics have been covered including: online teaching (Quality Matters), Work College, inclusivity, micro aggression, teaching in diverse classrooms/creating belonging, e-textbooks, LinkedIn, advising, co-education, and finding useful online resources for innovative classroom instruction. Faculty also participated in a training session on the novel, *The Namesake*, which has been selected as the College's common read for the 2016-2017 incoming freshmen class. Faculty have been encouraged to incorporate themes from this highly acclaimed text into their lesson plans in all disciplines.

We will also planning numerous co-curricular activities throughout the academic year in support of the common read.

The Honors Convocation this year included the Alumnae/i Association Awards Ceremony. In the past, there were two separate ceremonies. We believed that by joining the two events, we would create important synergies. The response to this change has overwhelmingly positive. All students were able to see each other receive significant awards. It created connectedness and communal pride. We especially thank Mary Jane

Meschino for joining us for this important event.

Lastly, the faculty have completed a new set of bylaws which were approved by the BOT in June. This document represents the culmination of almost two years of work.

Enrollment

Like all small colleges, enrollment is a major driver of the financial health for the College. Enrollment growth in part is contingent on an institutional understanding of and commitment to our mission, vision, core values and strategic plan. This year our focus was squarely on these as we implemented the tactics defined in our strategic plan, *Serving Our Mission*.

The enrollment of 29 less students in the Women's College than projected in fall 2015 led to a heightened focus on undergraduate enrollment and retention.

To better coordinate our efforts, weekly, leadership in Academic Affairs, Enrollment Management and Marketing, met with the President to maximize coordination of efforts regarding new program development, retention strategies, and to focus recruitment efforts and strategic use of marketing. These efforts yielded improved communication across units and increased follow up on specific tactics.

I am pleased to share that as of yesterday, first time freshmen deposits are up 50% over this time last year for fall. We will continue to focus heavily on continuing to enroll students until the start of the academic year in August. Male enrollment is 30-35% of the total.

Transfer deposits are also up for the fall and the percentage of males is higher than the first time freshmen.

Graduate and continuing studies applications and deposits are not necessarily meaningful at this point. Traditionally adults make their decision to enroll in College later than FTF. We are excited about a new programming format that we will soon roll out. The

new program, called ED CHOICE is meant to support working adults. The format allows for students to be simultaneously enrolled in on ground or online classes. Students can choose weekly whether they want to come to class on campus or spend a particular week working at home. We believe this format will be a major incentive for enrollment as it supports the busy, hectic schedules of the working adult. In the fall, this format will be available for graduate students in theology and management.

To create an international presence, we signed an agreement with a third-party broker this year that will provide us with the opportunity to offer some of our programs in China. This is important for extending our mission and vision into an important growing overseas market. It aligns with our strategic plan and advances the CSE name.

Additionally, an agreement has been signed with St. Joseph's High school in Hammonton, N.J., to offer CSE courses on site. As shared earlier, we also signed an agreement with the County College of Morris and more recently one with Passaic County Colleges to offer specific programs in collaboration. Finally, we are in the final stages of agreeing in principle to an academic program collaboration model with Fairleigh Dickinson University.

To support enrollment and increase our technological capacities, we implemented our own Customer Relations Management (CRM) system this academic year. This is one part of improving our digital interaction with prospective students.

Finance and Administration

As I already shared, Mick Fescoe joined us early this year as the Vice President for Administration and Finance.

As one of his first initiatives, we assessed our bookstore operation. As a result of the assessment, the decision was made to move to an electronic vendor. Students will now purchase all course texts through an electronic vendor - eCampus. We will retain a

small school store which will sell College related items (T-shirts, hoodies, etc.), sundries and food items. The store will be managed by our new food vendor.

We recently selected a new food vendor, Parkhurst Dining Services. They are a Pennsylvania-based company providing food service to many colleges/universities including Bucknell, Immaculata, Loyola, and Wheeling Jesuit. Parkhurst will invest \$1.2M in renovations to the food service and dining areas.

As part of our annual contract review, we also recently selected a new security contractor who will begin on July 1 – Asset Protection Group. We are looking forward to this new partnership.

The largest construction project on campus this past academic year was the completion of Henderson Hall. The total amount for all renovations in that building to date is \$5.2M. We are v e r y pleased with the outcome.

As all teaching spaces have been renovated, we are now engaged in seeking funds to renovate the restrooms and some office spaces. I do hope that you take the opportunity to see the wonderful upgrades to the biology, chemistry and food and nutrition spaces.

Thank you to those in the room who contributed to these important upgrades. Those classmates who made donations are noted on the plaque at the main entry of the building.

In addition to the major construction, we are attending to many needed upgrades on campus including painting of the gymnasium, removing old phone booths and paneling, removing unnecessary structures to create more open spaces, repainting stairwells, trimming or removing overgrown shrubbery, and creating a permanent chapel. We have also upgraded our lights to more efficient, LED lighting.

The renovations to the locker rooms in St. Joseph's for men's and women's sports have begun. In addition to the locker rooms, we will replace the baskets in the gym, add

padding to the walls, retile the floor in the locker room hallway, and create an outdoor basketball playing area for women and men. We are also planning to add game tables to the Saint Joseph's first floor and extend our weight room into the space that was the bookstore. This is probably a place you want to visit very carefully as we have major construction going on.

Technology enhancements continue to take place. Several of our buildings have realized increased Wi-Fi availability and the entire College has been the beneficiary of increased bandwidth as a result of the HETI – as matching state supported grant program. As a result of these funds, we installed a redundant generator and have begun replacing our phone system with voice over IP (VoIP). With the remaining funds, we are focused on placing cameras on four of our buildings for external monitoring near the entrances. Again, special thanks to those of you who contributed to this grant program.

Work in information technology has been significant this year. Under the leadership of Margie Rohr, there is renewed energy and focus on a number of projects. The most important of these is the upgrade of our campus computing software and the education of key personnel on the strategic use of many functions which we did not use in the past.

As we experienced a better than expected year financially, after six years of no raises, we are providing our regular employees with a 2% bonus.

Institutional Advancement

The major activity for Institutional Advancement this year have been the rebranding activity and initiating the campaign to fund the strategic plan. Rebranding began last fall with the engagement of all constituencies. *Second Melody*, the branding firm, began their research by interviewing all college constituencies: faculty, staff, administration, students, alumni, prospective students and members of the external community. The information gleaned from

these interviews provided the foundation for the first round of visual images representative of what the firm heard. Five visual representations were presented to members of the Rebranding Committee, the Cabinet, and constituent focus groups. As a result of this input, the firm reworked the more favorable elements of the initial designs.

Following this activity, four new designs were presented to the Rebranding Committee, members of the President's leadership team and student focus groups. The four designs were then shared with faculty, staff and students via a survey. Forty-five full-time faculty, 85 staff and 216 students completed this final survey. Based on these data, a decision was made regarding the visual representation. The new logo launch will be in July – so please, stay tuned. I am pleased to share an important achievement for the Marketing and Communications area. We were recently notified that the College has been awarded a 2016 American Web Design Award from Graphic Design USA in NYC for web redesign. I hope that you enjoy the website and receiving the monthly electronic newsletter. If you are not receiving it, please see Debbie Martin or contact Tanya Sorce and update your alumnae record.

Marketing and Communication has also just completed a promotional video for international recruitment featuring current students, alumni and administrators. It will be available for use later this month. They are also busy completing the College magazine. It will be released soon with stories about our students, the College and some of our alums.

Our funding raising efforts are focused on supporting our strategic plan. The effort has been named, *Transforming a Legacy*. I am pleased to share that to date, we have \$2,525,000 in gifts and pledges toward our 2020 goal of \$15.2M. Within the past two weeks, we have secured our first \$100,000 alumni pledge toward a goal of securing 20 alumni gifts of \$100,000 each to achieve a \$2 million targeted effort for alumni giving.

The Gala which continues to be our major fundraiser for scholarships was once again very successful. The return on the Gala was over \$110,460. We were able to honor two alumnae

at the event - Dr. Judy Banks – class of 71 and Dr. Michele O’Shea class of 92 both physicians who are employed by the Atlantic Health Care System.

We are in the final phases of this year’s Annual Fund which will close on June 30th. Our goal is \$1M. As of this week, the total funds raised in gifts and pledges is approximately \$800,000. We have just a few weeks to meet our goal. WE NEED YOUR HELP. I ask that all present who have not contributed to please make a gift and for those who have if you find that you are excited about the progress your alma mater is making and you have the capacity that you make an additional gift. Be sure that we will put it to good use.

As many of you know, we leverage many of our facilities, but most especially the beautiful Annunciation Center. Our spaces are highly sought out for conferences and events. The rentals provide important revenue for the College. I am pleased to share with you that for the third year in a row, we have exceeded our projected income in this area.

In the area of grants and contracts, we have also exceeded our goal of \$250,000. As there are still a few grants still under consideration, we anticipate additional success.

Alumnae/i Relations continues to engage our alumni in important activities. This winter, a lecture series, *Meet the Mystics*, was conducted over four nights. Attendance by alumni was small, but all those in attendance were deeply grateful for the opportunity to be engaged with a talented group of faculty and Sisters of Charity authors and scholars.

In a new effort to engage our alumni, we have been successful in supporting fifteen alumni from around the U.S. to represent the College as delegates at other university and college presidential inaugurations. The response from you, our alumni, has been overwhelmingly positive. Those who have participated have vocalized their pride in representing their alma mater at these important events.

The College was honored to host the Ocean/Monmouth County Chapter presentation of Adriana Trigiani, a screen and book writer. Approximately 100 alumni and friends were in attendance in March in Dolan Hall.

There are now 21 alumni who have been prepared to assist with admissions' events. These talented individuals are excited about being part of the College's recruitment efforts. It was a busy travel year with alumnae/i events being held in Ocean/Monmouth and Bergen County; Houston, TX; Williamsburg and Alexandria, Virginia; Jupiter, Florida and in Connecticut. We are excited by our progress and looking forward to more events.

In addition to major events, many visits were made to individual alumnae and friends of the College.

Student Life

In the area of student life, there is always a good deal of activity. We are particularly proud of conferring 378 degrees including seven doctoral degrees. It was a beautiful day and very exciting for our graduates and their families.

There have been significant activities in student life this year, many focused on the strategic plan and goals related to co-education. One of the most significant activities which we believe will have a large impact on recruitment is the development of the *CSE Promise Program*. This program "guarantees" a paid internship to a graduate who maintains a 2.7 GPA; participates in all the required activities including workshops on career preparation and graduates in four years. The "promise" is for those graduates who meet the criteria and are not employed or in graduate school within six months following graduation. This "brand" promise is something we are especially proud of. We believe that students who follow the program and meet the requirements will all find opportunities after graduation with the assistance of the Center for Experiential Learning's, Career Center.

We have prepared with great detail for the introduction of male students to the campus. Over the past year, we have reviewed our curriculum, engaged the campus in conversations about moving to co-education, reviewed/revised our visual messaging on

campus and in publications, prepared for male athletics, made important revisions to women's sports in support of Title IX and reviewed all of the student life programs and activities including health services, campus ministry and housing. We believe we are ready. Career services, academic internships and service-learning were reorganized into the Center for Experiential Learning. This change was made to enhance the activities of these strongly affiliated student support areas.

Strong student-centered programming occurred throughout the year. With the creation of the dedicated space in Saint Joseph's for student activities, hiring of a new Director for Student Engagement and the creation of student leadership office space next to the office of the Director, we are excited about future planning. I can say without hesitation, this year was a very productive year given the new Director's first year in the position. Most events she planned were very well attended. We are looking forward to adding and recreating events as we move into the next academic year and the addition of male students.

Campus Ministry also had a year of strong programming. The creation of the Chapel in Henderson Hall was particularly important as it is a visible reminder of our Catholicity and is an important space for worship. This space has created new enthusiasm for student-led masses. In addition, students have come forward and requested specific spiritual activities and we have been able to respond to these requests.

Our campus ministry Director also plays a major role on the Mission Council, which is a cross campus constituency group engaged in assessing our application of mission across units. She is working with that group to develop a Vincentian leadership program. Finally, Abby Cimorelli, the Director has been instrumental in strengthening the relationship between the students and the Sisters of Charity as well as increasing activities between the College and the Sisters such as the Retreat for Busy People offered during lent. She is also working with the Baptist Church in Madison to develop a mentoring program for our women students.

Residence subscription continues to run between 70-75% of our undergraduate

traditional student population. This is high as the average of students who live on campus across the nation is closer to 30%. We are currently advertising for an assistant life director. Finally from the residence perspective, we are doing some infrastructure improvements in the O'Connor Residence Hall.

Physical and mental wellbeing of our students is a priority. Like many higher education institutions, we continue to see increasing mental health diagnoses. Much is being done to educate students about the warning signs of potential problems. We are also well prepared to intervene when such issues arise. To provide additional support to students struggling with mental health issues or who are experiencing emotional distress, we successfully added the services of a CSE PsyD intern in the Counseling Center.

Additionally, in support of our commitments to student health, we were happy to join the Codey Mental Health Initiative by supporting the mental health stigma free campus initiative.

Given a variety of very public campus events nationally, we have paid particular attention this year to various aspects of living in a diverse environment. To build on the work completed this past year, there are efforts underway to create "talking circle" leaders among students to begin to deal with some of the issues confronted regularly on our campus as they relate to living in an inclusive community. Students are working with staff to plan and implement the training. There is a rumor that Vice President Buck will be on a camping trip for some of this training.

You will soon hear about Fall Fest – we hope that you will plan to join us as this year we will have many activities on campus. One of the events will be a hospitality tent for our alums on the Saturday, October 22nd. We do hope that some of you will join us. We are anticipating a good turnout for the various activities and sporting events throughout the day.

Middle States

Major for the College is year was the hosting of the decennial Middle States decennial visit. The visit was conducted in April. It was the culmination of three years of self-study. We received a very good exit report and were commended on several areas including:

- The administrative efforts to improve communications and increase transparency in decision making.
- Embracing change and beginning the transition to a fully co- educational institution.
- Making extremely difficult decisions over the past three years in transitioning to a co-educational institution, reducing faculty and staff size, and implementing a new strategic plan to support financial stability.
- Intentionally engaging in re- envisioning the College of Saint Elizabeth and realigning its resources to support the mission.
- The faculty in particular were commended for their commitment to student success.
- and for the quality and model of our General Education Curriculum

I hope that you are as proud of your alma mater as I am of her. Daily we live our core values of integrity, social responsibility, leadership and excellence. There is much good work being done. We are on a path to support many generations of future students who like yourselves came here with a dream for the future. Although I can go on and on about all the good work being done by the CSE family on behalf of our students, I will stop here and give you the opportunity to ask me questions. Thank you!