

September 2020
Letter to the Campus

Dear College Community,

Fifty-six years ago this month, the State University of New York approved the establishment of Kingsborough Community College. As a lighthouse serves as a navigational aid, we continue to be a beacon of light for students throughout Brooklyn and beyond, who will use education to improve their lives and the lives of others. Academic year 2020-21 provides us with one more opportunity to make a difference for our students. You have all risen to the occasion by recruiting, advising and enrolling students; working to ensure that classes were ready to be taught online and the business of the College continued seamlessly; preparing our facilities; participating in professional opportunities; engaging in scholarship activities; and hopefully resting from a very demanding spring semester and rejuvenating for year ahead. Our spring pivot has morphed into changes in the new academic year. And in the words of the late Ruth Bader Ginsburg- “real change, enduring change, happens one step at a time” and I am glad to step in to this new academic year by your side as we continue to navigate uncharted territory.

Thank you to the members of the KCC Forward Committee (especially co-chairs, Professor Ryan McKinney and Dr. Tasheka Sutton-Young, Professors Maureen Fadem, Scott Cally and VP Ed Rios) and all the faculty and staff who in big and small ways contributed to the development of a [plan](#) that will ensure our health, safety and business and academic continuity. We are currently in Phase 1 of our plan and will continue to have a minimum presence on campus. We ask that you continue to follow the protocols for requesting entry and coming to campus as we are required to submit reports on the number of people on campus. VP Rios will also be sending regular updates to the campus on facility-related matters.

With distance learning and remote work comes an increase in emails. To ensure that communication regarding important COVID-related matters stand out among the many emails that you receive, a dedicated email (KCC.COVIDResponse@kbcc.cuny.edu) has been created. While you can email questions to this email, the College protocol with regards to reporting symptoms, a positive COVID test result, or potential contact with a COVID-infected person must continue be followed.

Colleagues, as you know, our current condition with regards to the pandemic, distance learning and remote work has resulted in new mandates and responsibilities. If you attended Convocation, you are aware of the tremendous amount of work that is being undertaken in every area of the College, not just to carry us through this time, but to take us to greater heights. To ensure that we continue to deliver on our academic mission, and with the resignation of Dean Cathy Leaker, I am pleased to share that Dr. Stephanie Akunvabey will assume the position of Interim Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs. Dr. Akunvabey earned a Doctor of Education-Higher and Postsecondary Education at New York University. She also participated in the Diversifying CUNY’s Leadership program, and the Harvard Institutes for Higher Education- Management Development Program. Provost Russell will share a more detailed description of Interim AD Akunvabey’s responsibilities in a separate communication.

I know there was concern about the effect of ECP positions on the College budget. We remain mindful of our resources, and as such the Assistant Dean position has no significant impact on our budget. We continue to operate on monthly operating allocations from CUNY. We are awaiting city and state budget

clarity which is predicated on what the Federal Government does with economic support for local and state governments, this coupled with the enrollment shortfalls experienced across the community college sector, are variables that will have an impact on our FY21 allocation.

As you know, our next Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) Self-Study evaluation will take place in 2024-2025. There has been no pause on MSCHE expectations, or our work in ensuring that KCC meets all the Standards and Requirements of Affiliations. We are fortunate that we continue to engage in this work under the leadership of VP Fox. In addition, last week, Provost Russell, VP Fox and I participated in MSCHE Town Halls. I want to share the following salient points:

1. Assessment plans and data are important. Equally important is the use of assessment results to drive improvements or validate practices.
2. Assessment must be even across the institution. Both academic and administrative assessment should be occurring.
3. Institutions overwhelmingly fail to meet the following [Standards](#), which lead to findings of non-compliance or follow up visits: Standard 2 -Ethics and Integrity; Standard 3- Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience; Standard 5 -Educational Effectiveness; Standard 6 - Planning, Resources and Institutional Improvement and Standard 7-Governance, Leadership and Administration

More information about our Strategic Planning and MSCHE efforts will be forthcoming from VP Fox. To ensure we keep the lines of communication and information open, each Vice President will be sending out regular communications to update the College on their Division's progress toward key goals and other pertinent information. In addition, we will be hosting a series of monthly 'Community Chats' via Zoom with the college community to talk about areas of concerns, issues and ideas. The schedule is as follows:

- October 13, 2020 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm (Staff)
- November Date TBA (Faculty)
- December Date TBA (Faculty and Staff)

Despite our challenges, the College continues to stand head and shoulders above its peers in student outcomes. Most recently Niche.com ranked Kingsborough the second best community college in New York and #115 of 853 community colleges in the nation. We also placed well on a number of other lists. However, the best list I saw this past month was the list of comments from students and alumni in response to a post about our Niche.com ranking. They commented:

- My first CUNY college. Great environment!
- Just graduated with my masters from NYU. KCC is still my absolute favorite. Class of '16.
- Best community college education I received here. KBCC Alum '14.
- My college.... I have a lot of good memories from that place.
- You guys will always be no.1 in my book! 
- The best CUNY ever thank you!!! Class of Spring 2020 
- I love Kingsborough Community College.
- If u want your dream to come true as an immigrant, go to Kingsborough first.

Colleagues, here's to making 12,892 (Matriculated, College Now, Adult and Continuing Education and Workforce Development) dreams come true this year.

All the best for the new academic year,

Schrader