



# CONNECTICUT COLLEGE

Katherine Bergeron  
*President*

Dear Members of the Connecticut College Community,

Today we launch a new academic year with the celebration of the College's 102nd Convocation at 4:30 p.m. on Tempel Green. I am writing to invite all of you to attend — students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends — in order to welcome our 495 new students, 15 new faculty members and postdoctoral fellows, and 30 new staff members to Connecticut College. John McKnight, dean of institutional equity and inclusion, will give the Convocation address, "Sky and Sea." A pre-Convocation performance by the student band Heironymous Mosh will begin at 3:30 p.m., and an all-campus picnic will follow. I look forward to seeing you there.

With the official end of summer, I would like to bring your attention to some important work that took place on campus over the past three months and acknowledge those who made it happen.

## CAMPUS FACILITIES

In what was one of the busiest summers in recent years, our facilities staff undertook a large number of projects to enhance safety, improve access, and address other visible and invisible aspects of the College's buildings and infrastructure. Among the most significant were:

- a roadway connector from Tansill Theater to Winthrop Hall, along with new sidewalks and lighting, to enhance safety and improve the connection of the east central campus buildings to the north campus. interior and exterior renovations to Unity House to create new engagement opportunities for our students, staff, and faculty of color and to enhance the building's capacity as a campus social hub.
- an elevator and new seating in Oliva Hall to improve accessibility, as well as repairs to the gallery floor and exterior entrance of Cummings Arts Center.
- conversion of 40 singles in Morrisson House to two-room doubles to foster greater community among first-year students.
- a major re-routing of underground steam lines behind the College Center at Crozier-Williams to improve heat efficiency and access to north campus.

In total, almost 40 different jobs were tackled in the last three months. My thanks go to Rich Madonna, vice president for finance and administration, and Jim Norton, director of facilities management, along with the entire facilities staff, for managing this work with such dedication and skill. We are planning an event to mark the re-opening of Unity House and the campus connector later in September.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING

Equally ambitious was the work undertaken to advance the College's new strategic plan. October

2016 will mark a full year since we began the collective work of planning for our future. This summer commenced the third and final phase of that process. Two committees worked in tandem to clarify what was needed to achieve the goals and objectives articulated by the Strategic Planning Committee in May. First, Deans Abby Van Slyck and Jefferson Singer convened a summer working group focused on the resources needed to support the new Connections curriculum. And second, Rich Madonna brought together an [Implementation/Action Planning Group](#) (IPG) to work out the resource implications for the remaining goals. It was a heroic task, and both groups are to be commended for the substantial time and effort they devoted right up to the last weeks of summer. I am now in the process of reviewing the recommendations. We will be organizing open forums in the coming weeks to share a more complete plan with the campus community, before bringing it to the Board of Trustees in October.

As we embark this week on one of the major objectives of the plan — the launch of Connections with the Class of 2020 — I am particularly indebted to the work of these summer planning groups. I would like to take this opportunity to thank publicly all who took part:

Members of the IPG: Rich Madonna, vice president for finance and administration (chair); Victor Arcelus, dean of students; Mary Calarese, director of financial planning; Christine Chung, Jean C. Tempel '65 Associate Professor of Computer Science; Jeffrey Cole, associate dean of the faculty and professor of anthropology; Jane Dawson, Virginia Eason Weinmann '51 Professor of Government and Environmental Studies and director of the Goodwin-Niering Center for the Environment; Jennifer Fredricks, professor of human development and director of the Holleran Center for Community Action and Public Policy; Noel Garrett, dean of academic support and director of the Academic Resource Center; David Jaffe, professor and chair of theater; John McKnight, dean of institutional equity and inclusion; Chris Penniman, director of instructional technology; Darryl Phillips, associate professor of classics; Fran Shields, Katherine Wenk Christoffers '45 Director of Athletics and chair of physical education; Jefferson Singer, dean of the College and Faulk Foundation Professor of Psychology; John Nugent, director of institutional research and planning; and Lisa Lombardo, senior assistant to the vice president for finance and administration.

Members of the Summer Working Group on Resource Allocation for Connections: Jefferson Singer, dean of the College, and Abigail Van Slyck, dean of the faculty (co-chairs); Cheryl Banker, senior associate director, Office of Career and Professional Development; Mary Calarese, director of financial planning; David Chavanne, assistant professor of economics; Jeffrey Cole, associate dean of the faculty and professor of anthropology; Makayla Grays, assistant director of institutional research and planning; Christopher Hammond, associate professor of mathematics and associate dean of the College for curriculum; David Jaffe, professor and chair of theater; Marie Lalor, associate director of residential education and living; Nancy Lewandowski, departmental assistant, sociology; Sabrina Notarfrancisco, assistant professor of theater; John Nugent, director of institutional research and planning; Beth Rezendes, associate registrar for operations; and Catherine Stock, Barbara Zaccheo Kohn '72 Professor of History and director, American Studies Program.

#### NEW HIRES

Summer 2016 also saw the arrival of a number of new staff in leadership roles. John McKnight began his post as the new dean of institutional equity and inclusion in July. Within the Office of the Dean of the College, Emily Morash was appointed interim associate dean of the College and dean of first-year students, and Persephone Hall became the new Hale Family Director of Career and Professional Development. The dean of the faculty appointed Professor of Chinese Amy Dooling associate dean of global initiatives and director of the Global Commons. The Office of Student Life welcomed Geoff Norbert as the new assistant dean for student engagement and new student programs. Erin Duran joined the Office of Institutional Equity and Inclusion as the new director of the LGBTQIA Center. And the Office of Financial Aid welcomed Katie May as a new associate director. We are fortunate to have such a talented group of new leaders working on behalf of the community.

#### RECOGNITION

Let me conclude with a few final summer achievements. In the area of fundraising, the Connecticut College Fund ended up surpassing its \$5.7 million goal to reach a total of \$5.9 million, a new College record. I am particularly grateful to our current and former trustees for the role they played in stimulating the growth of this year's fund, which supports all aspects of the College.

The College also received two major grants in support of the Connections curriculum: a grant of \$800,000 from the Christian Johnson Endeavor Foundation, and a grant of \$750,000 from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Both will underwrite expenses associated with the program's development over the next three years. The curriculum itself garnered external attention in essays published in [Inside Higher Education](#) and the [Chronicle of Higher Education](#).

The work of the Joy Shechtman Mankoff Center for Teaching & Learning at Connecticut College was highlighted in [The New York Times](#) in June in an essay about the efforts of colleges and universities to improve undergraduate teaching. And, just last week, the [Associated Press](#) ran a photo essay featuring several images of the renovated Shain to illuminate the changing nature of college libraries. That story ran in 185 papers in 11 countries, reaching a potential audience of 100 million readers.

It is gratifying to see the people, programs, and resources of this College being recognized for their excellence. My best wishes to you all as we embark on another productive year together.

Yours,



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President

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