

January 22, 2018

Dear Trustees,

Last week brought the milestone of my fourth year working together with the District Board of Trustees, staff, faculty and students of FSCJ. As I reflect upon these past four years as president of FSCJ, I am affirmed by the critical accomplishments we have shared, inclusive of:

- The somber reconciliation of the Federal Financial Aid issues, requiring correction of numerous internal processes and payback of millions for erroneously reported and awarded funds
- Ushering the College out of probation imposed by U.S. Dept. of Education as an additional consequence for the financial aid crisis
- Leading FSCJ to a successful 10-year re-affirmation from regional accrediting body Southern Association of Colleges and Universities as an accredited institution of higher education
- Building transparent and productive relationships with media
- Creation, implementation and completion of first 3-year community/college strategic plan and subsequent implementation of second 3-year strategic plan
- Improvement in equity of learning environments created by “One College” as opposed to competing and inequitable regional campus structure
- The Aspen Institute College Excellence Program recognizing FSCJ nationally as one of the top 150 community colleges in excellence for student success twice consecutively
- Creation of the FSCJ Promise financial support program for Duval and Nassau County graduates to graduate debt-free – first of its kind in the state of Florida
- Garnered legislative support with subsequent construction of medical simulation and virtual reality teaching labs on North Campus
- Increase of student retention rate from last Fall to the current Spring of 77%, up from 68%
- Securing \$38.8 million in federal, state grants during 4-year time period

Throughout these four years, courageous decisions have been made for the greater good of the institution and the viability of FSCJ long term, given its essential importance within our community. Surely none of the decisions were the easy way out and in fact, some such as the Enterprise Business Management (aka ERP) System should have rightfully been made ten years ago to allow our students to interface with technologically current systems, create transparent access to data, and allow the business systems of the College to interface in a contemporary fashion.

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I am proud of the work over the last four years that FSCJ leadership, faculty, staff and students contributed to the revitalization and building of the community of Jacksonville. This work has been intentional in:

- Creating safe environments for critical and difficult community conversations such as the Rashean Mathis "Bridging the Divide," Community Relationships with Law Enforcement, HRO, TEDxFSCJ...to name but a few
- The first ever FSCJ student housing project and culinary arts cafe at 20 West Adams – the Downtown Immersion Project
- Creating the first FSCJ Center for Civic Engagement, co-located on campus as well as within the Jessie Ball duPont Center in the urban core of Jacksonville
- Advocating for diversity and inclusion in all community conversations, not only with membership, but in voicing perspectives within the Chamber, non-profits, business and industry, and community boards
- Working with employers to strengthen program advisory boards, responsive curriculum and pipelines for a skilled workforce
- Being a key partner with JAXUSA in recruitment of business and industry

My integrity, purpose, passion and vision have been the cornerstones with which I have walked hand in hand with our students, employees and community. The pivotal progress that FSCJ has made collectively through the hard-working efforts of our faculty, staff and administrators serves as a point of accomplishment and pride. As a change agent my focus has been bringing us to the present from a broken system of four years ago centering on access, equity, diversity and quality education.

This reflection time has also paved the way for visioning of the future. Looking forward, I have made the decision to retire from FSCJ at the end of this semester. Therefore, in the spirit of providing reasonable notice for a smooth transition, I share with you my intended retirement date of May 31, 2018. Indeed, the work of this complex institution will continue into the future due in large part to the intentional and firm foundation created through our important work together. May FSCJ continue to thrive and serve as a beacon of hope and possibility for all within our community.

Most Sincerely,

Cynthia

Dr. Cynthia A. Bioteau
President
Florida State College at Jacksonville