



State Universities
of Massachusetts

COP Remarks on Behalf of the State University System to the Board of Higher Education

Bunker Hill Community College
October 23, 2018

Introduction:

Good morning Secretary Peyser, Chairman Gabrieli, Commissioner Santiago and members of the Board of Higher Education. Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with my first state university system update as Chair of the Council of Presidents this year. I would first like to begin by thanking President Fred Clark, for the work he did last year as COP Chair to strengthen the working relationship between the DHE, BHE and our State Universities. In particular, I'd like to thank Fred for his collaborative efforts with our colleagues at the community colleges last year. I look forward to continuing and building upon that effort.

I am also pleased to welcome and recognize the new members of the board including the new student representatives to the BHE. *UMass should have a new segmental representative...*

National Recognition:

I'd like to begin this morning by highlighting some recent national rankings received by our state universities.

Shamelessly, I'll start with Mass Maritime Academy's recognition in TIME'S Money Magazine as the third best return on investment in Massachusetts and ranking in the top 25 colleges and universities ROI in the entire country. Several factors have led to the Academy's high ranking, including, our high annual salary of graduates, our high graduation rate, and our relatively affordable tuition and fees. This emergence onto the national stage has been in development for over a decade. We at the Academy have built upon our core values requiring students to participate in either co-op or internship programs and creating a culture of campus civic engagement. While we are proud of the financial success of our alumni, we are equally as proud of success our students have becoming leaders in their communities and professions.

The state universities are also proud report that a recent study by the University of Southern California's Race and Equity Center found that five of our state universities led the nation in terms of black student access and success at four-year public universities and colleges. Of the 506 public institutions included in the study, the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA) was the top ranked college in the entire nation based upon the metrics included in the study. These metrics included the black student share of

enrollment, black student graduation rates, and black-student-to-black-faculty ratios. Other state universities who ranked in the top 50 included, Fitchburg, Framingham, Salem and Bridgewater State Universities. While we have much more work to do to close achievement gaps, create more inclusive environments on our campuses, and improve graduation rates for under-represented populations, we are very proud of the work we have been doing the recognition we have received from this report.

Increasing Access to Underserved Populations:

The state universities are committed to fulfilling our mission to provide a high quality and affordable post-secondary education to the students of the Commonwealth, particularly for underserved communities.

This summer, Westfield State University, in collaboration with Holyoke Community College and the Springfield Public Schools launched a regional partnership to develop STEM field teachers in underrepresented populations. Working with the DHE and the National Science Foundation, the goal of this program is to recruit and diversify the STEM teacher pools and to serve Latino and black students. The program will work within the MasTransfer program and will provide \$20,000 scholarships as well as academic advising to graduate students with STEM degrees and obtain a STEM teaching license, with intention of returning to teach in the Springfield Public Schools. It is hoped that MassTeach will serve as new national model for recruiting, training and retaining STEM educators.

At MassArt, their ARTWARD BOUND program is a free, four-year college access program that prepares 9th-12th grade Boston-area students interested in art and design with the artistic, academic, and life skills needed to thrive in college and beyond. The program was established in 2011 to address the lack of equal access to arts education and cultural institutions for low-income neighborhoods in Boston. In 2018-2019, 43 students are enrolled in the program, and 101 students have already completed the program. A full 100% of Artward Bound students complete high school, and 90% go on to college; seven Artward Bound graduates are currently enrolled as MassArt undergraduate students.

System-wide Collaboration with the Community Colleges

In an effort to call attention to the strong correlation between public higher education and economic health of the Commonwealth, I am pleased to report that the State University Council of Presidents and the community college council of presidents are working to build upon our already strong relationship between the two segments. Working with the past chair of both COPs, the presidents from both segments met jointly to explore ways to partner more closely in an advocacy campaign. As you are well aware, the state universities and community colleges collaborate together on numerous initiatives – cost saving measures and efficiencies; on-line education; the Commonwealth Commitment; DHE initiatives; and legislative advocacy. We are now partnering on a collaborative effort to share our successes to larger audiences across the Commonwealth. This message, which President Clark and President Kennedy shared with you this past January, is important for policy makers, business leaders, and the general public to understand. Both Councils of Presidents look forward to working with the department and this board to promote our public college and universities throughout the academic year.

Thank you, and as always, we encourage you to visit any or all of our campuses. We welcome the opportunity to show you the great work that we do at your state universities.