

**Remarks from Ellen Kennedy, President, Berkshire Community College;
Chair, Community College Council of Presidents
Delivered at Massachusetts Board of Higher Education Meeting—May 1, 2018**

Good morning,

I had hoped we would be celebrating a trifecta in Boston Sports this morning...but two out of three isn't bad!!!

What a day to be on the Middlesex campus. Thank you President Mabry and Cierra for welcoming us so warmly.

Thank you to the Board for this opportunity to share some thoughts alongside our good colleague and friend President Clark. We have one more opportunity to do so in June.

I begin with Mt. Ida. We have engaged in addressing the needs of Mt Ida students. A number of our community colleges have majors that align with Mt Ida's programs. Here is one example...

President Patricia Gentile shared...

North Shore Community College has been actively working with the Vet Tech students from Mt. Ida to help them complete - we participated in the recruitment fair to provide North Shore residents with support and help. In addition, North Shore Community College has been working over the past several months with funeral service employers on the North Shore in an advisory committee to create a Funeral Service Associate Degree. It had been in the College's tactical plan for FY19 to bring the new degree to the Board for implementation in the fall of Academic Year 2020. That timeline has been accelerated in light of Mt. Ida's abrupt closure. The college is working with the Massachusetts Funeral Directors Association to move the preceptor approach to this degree to completion.

I understand that Cape Cod Community College is also working on a mortuary program.

A number of Massachusetts Community Colleges have reached out and participated in on site transfer events and we offer support to the leadership of Mt. Ida.

Students must be first as the Commonwealth's education community moves quickly to address their needs. We are also concerned about the over 200 employees, faculty, administrators and support staff, who will lose their jobs. We know these individuals have devoted quite possibly their entire careers to Mt Ida students. We encourage these employees to bring their talents and commitment to students to our colleges.

Thank you for listening to the personal stories and professional perspectives of those impacted or concerned about the Mt. Ida closure at last week's AAC meeting.

In early April, over 300 faculty and staff came together for the 15th Massachusetts Community College Teaching, Learning and Student Development Conference. This was an excellent opportunity to share best practices, hear from a national speaker, David Yeager who spoke to Grit, Performance and the Growth Mindset. Dr. Yeager gave us some excellent and practical strategies to improve the student experience and student outcomes. We spent a day immersed in improving outcomes for our students.

The Budget...we were grateful for the support we received from the House of Representatives. All fifteen of our campuses, however, are struggling with addressing the needs of our students with a 1% increase in our appropriation. We realize the competing fiscal needs of the Commonwealth and that every sector could defend why greater investment in their particular sector will, long term, reduce expenses. We make a similar argument. For Massachusetts to continue to be competitive in the knowledge economy we need to ensure the longterm viability of public higher education. Most of our students remain in Massachusetts, pay taxes, and add to the vitality of our communities. Perhaps we could collaborate on a study of the projected impact of Massachusetts public higher education institutions on the Massachusetts economy?

We also hope to see the MCCC DCE contract for our adjuncts settled quickly. We are preparing for negotiations with our MCCC full time faculty and we acknowledge the hard work and dedication of all of our faculty.

We are very concerned that PIF grants were not funded in the House Budget. PIF grants are what allow us to innovate and disrupt. These are critical dollars. We will support DHE efforts and work with our respective Senators and we hope the Board will do likewise. It will take our concerted efforts to ensure the PIF funds find their way into the Senate proposal and make it through conference committee.

This is the season of celebration. Later this week we will honor the 29 Who Shine, 29 accomplished, savvy and successful students who epitomize public higher education in Massachusetts.

A few weeks ago, we celebrated the Massachusetts All Academic Team for the national Phi Theta Kappa Honorary Society. The event was held in the House Chambers in the State House. 34 students were honored for their academic and community accomplishment...three students also received special recognition awards: one student from QCC received two awards - the New Century Transfer Scholarship and the All-USA Top 20 Scholarship, another student from Middlesex was honored as the New Century Workforce Scholar (a new scholar designation awarded this year).

Commencements, honors and scholarship events, nurse pinnings, this is the moment we live for.

I wanted to acknowledge national recognition given to several of our Presidents and a campus...

President Pam Eddinger, Bunker Hill Community College, was elected Chair of the Board of Directors for Achieving the Dream

President Lane Glenn, Northern Essex Community College, was selected as the National Pacesetter of the Year by the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations.

North Shore Community College has been designated a Bronze Seal Campus in the "ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge." This recognizes the percentage of NSCC students who voted in the 2016 General Election - 50-59 percent! North Shore was the only Massachusetts community college in the national awards categories and the college points to its long standing civic engagement activities and extensive service learning programs.

We also congratulate President Christina Royal, Holyoke, for her appointment to Governor Baker's Commission on Digital Innovation and Lifelong Learning.

We inaugurated two of our Presidents, James Vander Hooven, Mt Wachusett, and Luis Pedraja, Quinsigamond in the last few months, and we look forward to the inauguration of President Laura Douglas, Bristol Community College on May 31st.

You will soon be taking up the recommendation of Massasoit Community College's Board of Trustees for a new President there. We thank Interim President Bill Mitchell for his great work this year. Greenfield Community College will bid adieu to President Bob Pura, in late June after 17 years at the helm. The search for the next President at Greenfield is moving quickly.

We want to celebrate the recent \$2.4 M gift to Framingham State University to establish full scholarships for two students annually. The Mancuso Scholarship recognizes the importance of the Humanities in today's economy. It also helps students connect their humanities and social science degrees to career paths. Being able to critically think, collaborate with others, and communicate are just some of the abilities that allow the Massachusetts economy to flourish. As these are shared values with the Massachusetts Community Colleges, we congratulate President Javier Cavallos and his campus on this excellent news.

We also celebrate the inauguration of the new teaching kitchens at Holyoke Community College, located in downtown Holyoke, rejuvenating a neighborhood. I sincerely hope you can make a trip to see this space. Holyoke Community College and Springfield Tech, under the leadership of Christina Royal and John Cook, have continued their shared work, demonstrating for the rest of us the effectiveness of major collaboration. They worked with MGM to establish the Massachusetts Casino Career Training Institute and are well on their way to meeting the employment needs of the MGM Casino when it opens later this year.

President Clark will speak at greater length on this but I wanted to mention that a few weeks ago, Presidents' Clark, Keenan, Gentile and I traveled to Rowan University in Glassboro, NJ to learn more about collaborations taking place between Rowan University and Rowan College of Gloucester and of Burlington. Innovative efforts are underway including a 3 + 1. Rowan College of Gloucester students were living on the Rowan University campus, taking classes on both campuses. We are intrigued by the ways they are collaborating, the ways they are addressing work force needs in NJ and the way that Glassboro has been reinvented. We will continue our conversations and efforts to strengthen graduation/completion outcomes.

President Clark will also speak about the concept of higher education Consolidation that has been making news of late. I wanted to remind the Board that the average community college commute is 8 miles, 8 miles. It is critical to the Massachusetts economy that our colleges and universities serve our local communities.

I think President Clark may mention the trip he and President Douglas took to Cape Verdi.

We wish Bill Hart a speedy recovery and we thank Gretchen Manning for her leadership.

Thank you for your kind attention.

.....