

Suffolk County Community College

College Brief

NO. 94 April 1, 2020

TO: The College Community

FROM: Louis J. Petrizzo
 Interim President

SUBJECT: Thank You to the Community

I am writing to you today to say “thank you” for all you have done to support our students and each other during this time of uncertainty. Like true New Yorkers, we are at our best when we need to rally, and rally we have over the course of the past several weeks. Our strength and spirit as a community were on display for all to see, through hours of conversation, training, testing, decision-making, and negotiating, leading up to our transition to online instruction. The speed of the onset of this global pandemic demanded creativity and resolve, and, once again, our community stepped forward for our students and our institution.

During this time, faculty made outreach to students, engaged in online practice classes, and completed online training with support from the Center for Innovative Pedagogy. Student Affairs, Information Technology and ETU teams prepared for the deployment of hundreds of laptops and secured “hotspots” for students without internet access at home. We now offer tutoring and student services remotely, inclusive of communications support that has been enhanced through dedicated emails that target delivery to professional staff. Employees from across the College have volunteered to call students in an effort to keep them engaged and to reassure them of their importance to us. The College’s Coronavirus webpage is updated multiple times each day and is keeping all members of our community informed with the latest changes as they occur. I would also like to recognize those members of our Public Safety and Plant Operations staff who continue to function onsite, safeguarding our campuses and protecting our work environment pending our eventual return to the College.

The actions implemented here at SUNY Suffolk should make all of us proud. We have successfully transformed instructional delivery, advanced our use and comfort with new technologies, communicated details about forthcoming change in a timely way, and transitioned our support services to yield the very best attention and response to the concerns and issues brought forth by our students and our employees. Our collaboration has enabled us to maintain the remote operation of our institution with a new staffing design born of necessity. It is important that I take this opportunity to recognize the total dedication exhibited by everyone to address the demands that were placed on us during this historic moment.

Thank you for maintaining your focus and professionalism as we continue to deliver teaching and provide learning. Your flexibility and concern as educational leaders, ensures that our College will meet the expectation of bringing value to our students every day. I look forward to the days and weeks ahead when we will see how our mutual work was able to meet the needs of our students.

While the immediate transitional steps to remote learning and remote operation have been successfully completed, it is important for me to state that we still have a long road ahead of us. The immediate future requires many difficult decisions to be made if we are to navigate the economic impact that will certainly stem from this health crisis. I know we will do our absolute best to face these uncertain times as a community.

Thank you for all of the work you have and will put forth on behalf of our students, as we continue our efforts to keep Suffolk the leading community college within the SUNY system.