



You Belong!
ccsj.edu

May 15, 2019

Dear Alumni,

On the heels of the Feast of St. Joseph the Worker, May 1, and at the end of an academic year, it seems fitting to recognize and celebrate the hard work of others, some of the accomplishments of the year, and the work ahead. Last year, I started a tradition of writing a *St. Joseph Letter* to the college community to share some of the great work to position the college for the future. This year, I share a *St. Joseph Letter* with our alumni.



Enrollment growth is a first priority at the college. While graduate enrollment continues to be a challenge at a time when there are many opportunities for entry level jobs in the area, the applications and registrations for traditional undergraduates are significantly ahead of last year. This past year, we developed new materials for prospective students, hired a new SVP for Enrollment, Marketing and Athletics, retained an ad agency to help with marketing strategy, improved the website, purchased an electronic platform to help manage communication with prospective students, and developed a more user friendly online application. These are positive steps forward that will have an impact on enrollment, and we are starting to see benefits from these initiatives. We are cautiously optimistic for fall 2019, but there is still much work to do over the summer. Thanks to all alumni who refer a student. Each student makes a difference, and CCSJ can make a difference for each student.

Lack of residence halls has been a perceived or real challenge to recruitment and retention. Recently, I signed a master lease to accommodate up to 48 students in a new apartment development at the corner of 119th and Indianapolis. The Illiana apartment building will be available in fall 2020, and will provide apartment style living for entering students. This arrangement helps manage financial risk while serving an important challenge to growing enrollment. A residence hall has been an ongoing topic of discussion and was part of the 2014-2016 strategic plan, so this is an important step forward.

This coming year is an important year for Calumet College of St. Joseph. In March 2019, the College submitted its systems portfolio to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and a team of peer reviewers will visit campus in March 2020. In March 2019, we also approved an addendum to the strategic plan, *Foundation for the Future*, which focuses our attention on key areas: Helping Students Learn, Connecting Students with Stakeholder, Cultivating a Positive Work Environment, and Building Financial Strength. We have worked with our local communities to become a resource and asset in efforts to make our Whiting/Hammond area a

desirable place to live and study. Crimson Joe, our new mascot, will also work hard to further community engagement, promote school spirit, and gain name recognition. All of the above help to lay the foundation for a stronger institution.

Calumet College of St. Joseph has long been a resource for our region, providing a liberal arts education with a career focus. I am often in conversations that revolve around workforce development in Northwest Indiana, and the projected demand for jobs. Significant faculty conversations occurred this past year around pathways to degrees and careers. There are discussions underway about new programs in technology and healthcare, as well as an accelerated program in education. The Public Safety program has launched courses utilizing distance learning technology with plans of expanding into new markets, and the Education department is also exploring online delivery to facilitate learning. We continue to connect to our local industries and organizations to see how CCSJ can be a resource in meeting their needs.

I have the privilege of seeing students, hearing their stories, and witnessing their hard work. We have conference champs, national qualifiers, and NAIA scholar teams at CCSJ. I get to sign dean's list letters and sit in on presentations and speeches by our students. Humanities Fest was a particularly moving experience as I heard personal *underdog* stories. I admire the students who step out of their comfort zone, which ultimately builds their confidence in what they can do. The work of students in our community is enhancing our reputation and visibility, and I recently witnessed and confirmed the value our class projects have for local organizations. After all, we are the educators and workers, but our students are the future.

We are working hard to share our story and build support to further our mission. There are positive indicators that CCSJ is in the hearts and minds of those that have been touched by our mission. Our mission was so evident at our Trustee's Scholarship Gala. There was great energy in the room, and I heard from many guests that the students' speeches and those of our alumni were moving and endearing. With a new venue, we have greater capacity, so I thank all of you that attended and/or supported the event and encourage you to mark your calendars for April 25, 2020. It will be our 55th annual gala – a great milestone!

April is always a long month on a college campus with faculty and staff focused on student support, retaining students, and graduating soon-to-be alumni. As alumni know, our faculty are so dedicated to supporting students. I must take a moment to recognize one such faculty member and the passing of Dr. Allen Brown: a man, mentor, and faculty member who enriched the lives of many. Dr. Brown made his mark on many students and alumni and we hope to continue his legacy by supporting future criminal justice majors.

I am grateful to be at Calumet College of St. Joseph at this particular time in its history. St. Joseph the Worker is a reminder of the great work we have done and can do -- together. I thank all of you for your support.

With gratitude,



Amy