



State of the College Address

President Jeremy Travis

November 9, 2015

Dear colleagues:

Every year at this time, the John Jay College community comes together to take stock – to step back from the day to day of our lives to think about the State of the College. This is always a time for reflection – for looking back at the history of the College, the distance we have travelled, the challenges we have overcome together, both the progress and the setbacks. It is also a time for looking forward – for thinking about the future of John Jay, the opportunities ahead and potential for realizing the full extent of our unique mission of “Educating for Justice.”

This year, as we take stock of the State of our College, we must face a sobering reality. It is, in the immortal words of Dickens, the “best of times and the worst of times.” Simply stated, in terms of our core academic mission, the caliber of our students, the quality and dedication of our faculty, the creativity of our staff, our position of prominence in the world and on the national stage, and our relevance to the public discourse on the challenges of justice, the College has never been stronger. Yet, at the same time, we face profound challenges. One overriding reality is that the latest round of budget cuts has cut deeply and has put our College’s financing model at risk. To this reality we must add the fact that our faculty and staff continue to work without a contract, five years after the last contract expired. This state of affairs has sapped the energy of our institution; I add my voice to those who hope that we will shortly have a resolution of the contract disputes so we can move forward. Given these realities, my task today – somewhat different from earlier State of the College addresses – is to speak frankly about the challenges ahead and to share my thoughts on what it will take to put our College on a solid footing for the next fifty years.

In discussing our financial and other challenges, I do not intend to detract from the progress we have made. On the contrary, we should celebrate the strength of our College and take pride in our accomplishments. The John Jay story is a great story. With the hard work and dedication of people in this room, and our many friends beyond these walls, we have brought John Jay to the top ranks of colleges within CUNY and indeed across the country. Our transformation to a senior college, with strong liberal arts majors, and faculty who excel at teaching and at scholarship, has earned us top rankings from national organizations and students alike. We should all be proud of this record. But these successes should not mask the hurdles we face.

Before going any further, let me quickly get to my bottom line. I have no doubt that we can succeed in meeting our financial challenges. We have a strategy that will put John Jay on a path to a strong future, one that will allow us to fully realize our potential. But it will take lots of hard work, more sacrifice, additional support from the University and other partners, and continued investment in strategies that will expand our revenue sources. As we look ahead toward the next five to ten years, we can see the emergence of

a modern John Jay, with a diversified revenue base and a national and global profile quite different from the College we see today. But we must actively embrace this future - otherwise we will not achieve the stability necessary for John Jay to thrive. Today I hope to sketch out that vision and to invite you to help your College build that future.

Let's start with some basic facts. As was true of every institution of public higher education, John Jay was hit hard by the financial crisis of 2008. We had to reduce the number of staff, hold faculty lines vacant, cut expenses and put many of our dreams on hold. Then in fall 2011, thanks to the predictable tuition initiative proposed by Governor Cuomo and supported by the New York State legislature, we began a five-year program of annual tuition increases. This additional revenue allowed us to hire new faculty, fill vacant staff lines, and launch new programs. Although we have never fully recovered from the fiscal crisis, we were well on our way.

This year, however, two things happened that have stalled our recovery. First, in a departure from prior practice, the state did not provide the financial support to the University needed to cover our mandated costs. This translates into a \$51 million reduction in the CUNY budget. This in turn translates into a three percent reduction in the John Jay budget – or \$2.7 million. Second, the state has informed the University that any salary increase associated with a resolution of the PSC contract would have to be absorbed by the University. We project that this will require an additional \$1.8 million reduction in our budget.

These were two significant setbacks for our plans for a balanced budget. Other colleges may have reserves that would allow them to absorb cuts of this magnitude, but John Jay has not been able to assemble reserves of this magnitude. We have therefore resorted to additional cuts to close our budget gap this year. Everyone in this audience knows that these budget cuts have been painful, particularly since they come on top of other belt-tightening measures we have endured in recent years. We now have fewer staff – about 50 positions are now vacant. When we decided to fill vacant positions that are needed, we have imposed hiring delays. We have cut the number of college assistants. We will be holding more faculty lines vacant. We have reduced expenses, once again. The recent financial news has not all been bad news. I am pleased to note that the University has been helpful, with a modification of our revenue target and decisions to advance energy savings and fund maintenance costs for the new building. We are grateful for this support, without which the cuts would have been more severe. As a result of these cost cutting steps and financial supports from the University, we have submitted a balanced financial plan for this year. But for the out-years, when we can expect additional reductions, our budget is not balanced.

Last year, when we saw this new reality coming into focus, we started to develop a multi-year strategy that will put John Jay on a sounder financial footing. Today I would like to

discuss the pillars of this strategy. I note at the outset that our plan does not count on additional assistance from the state. In fact, we will continue to advocate for that support. We can hope for additional tuition increases and for maintenance of effort funding, both of which will be requested by CUNY, but we must face the reality that we cannot count on that assistance.

The first pillar of our plan: We have been in active discussions with the University about new ways to increase the revenue at John Jay College. While those discussions are underway I prefer to be circumspect about the details of our proposals, but they share a common trait – they start with the recognition that the transformation of John Jay to a senior college has provided an enormous financial benefit to our community college partners while John Jay has experienced a significant financial loss. We think there are creative ways to protect John Jay’s financial posture as we complete our journey to full senior college status. We expect to resolve our discussions with the University in the very near future.

The second pillar of our strategy is to expand our enrollment base. The simple truth is that we must increase our enrollment in order to merely survive. If, however, we want to thrive, we must significantly expand enrollment. Fortunately, over the past few years, we have invested in strategies to reach into new enrollment markets. We have launched John Jay Online. We have expanded our course offerings during the winter and summer sessions. This year, we have launched our international student recruitment initiative. Let me speak about each of these briefly, and then announce a new initiative to reach a new student market.

John Jay Online represents a critically important part of our future. Following a change in leadership, John Jay Online is now running at full speed. The new director, Judy Cahn, has established a faculty advisory committee to guide the development of new programs. Following the lead of our faculty, we are now working on certificate programs in modern policing, law enforcement leadership and investigative psychology. These will all be offered next semester. Other certificate programs in cybersecurity, corporate social responsibility and writing are in the planning stages. Of particular importance for the future of the College, given our mission and brand, John Jay Online is also working with our faculty to launch the Masters program in Criminal Justice online in fall 2016. With new funding from the University to provide intensive faculty development opportunities next semester, this is an exciting time. Interested faculty will learn about new and emerging technologies and how these tools can be adapted to improving student learning in their online programs. Stay tuned for announcements about this initiative.

Our efforts to increase course offerings during summer and winter paid off handsomely last year. Because we offered 28 more courses last summer, we were able to realize

\$700,000 in additional revenue. Imagine that we had not provided those courses and needed to cut that amount from our budget. I thank those faculty members who offered new courses, but must also urge the chairs of our academic department to do more. We have set a goal of raising an additional \$300,000 this year. This translates into an additional 15 courses. In the coming weeks we will be working with our faculty and department chairs to make sure these courses – and more – are available. Even if we achieve this goal, we will remain significantly behind the CUNY senior college average for summer and winter courses, so there is room for growth.

Finally, we are now actively engaged in expanding our international student enrollment. We have set a goal of 164 international students this year, an increase of 20 over last year. In the years to come, we will aggressively expand our international recruitment efforts. Of all students attending higher education institutions in the United States, four percent are international students. For John Jay, if we simply reached the national average, this would translate into 600 international students. I have no doubt we will reach that national average. Look at Baruch: Our sister college now has 1,600 international students. The John Jay brand is so strong, our programs are so attractive to students around the world, and our home in New York City is such a magnet that we can easily imagine John Jay as a global destination college. We need to embrace, not shrink from, this opportunity.

I am pleased to announce today a new program under development that will reach a new market of potential students. We are calling this the “Weekend College” at John Jay. Think of it this way: We have dozens of classrooms that sit empty on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. We believe there is a market of potential students, many of them adult learners, who would be interested in participating in programs of study that are offered entirely on weekends. Some of these courses can also be offered online so that we can offer flexible programming to meet these students’ needs. We will put together a planning group shortly to develop the Weekend College and will be announcing these plans in the coming months. This is an exciting new venture that expands our reach into a new market, while maximizing the utilization of our current physical plant. It holds great promise for increasing enrollment and thereby helping to close our budget gap.

There is one more important strategy to increase enrollment – to improve the retention rates of students already at John Jay. We have achieved some important successes in this arena – our first year retention rate has increased from 76.7% to 78.9% in between the entering classes of 2009 and 2013. But there is more we can do. We are honored that the Robin Hood Foundation chose John Jay as the first four-year college to test the principles developed in ASAP, the impressive community college program that has seen significant improvements in graduation rates. Our program, called ACE (“Accelerate,

Complete, Engage”) will test new strategies to improve retention. We have committed to seeing big changes in this critical metric of student success.

Each of these initiatives is important. Taken together, they represent a strategy to save the College. Let me be very clear. Increasing enrollment is everyone’s business. For every additional 100 students we enroll, or retain, we bring in \$700,000 in revenue. Let me repeat this equation: 100 students bring in \$700,000. It is clear that we cannot rely solely on enrollment growth to close our budget gap – hence the importance of our discussions with the University. But we must recognize that enrollment growth is an important pillar of our strategy.

We are fortunate that Bob Troy has joined our College as Vice President for Enrollment Management. He is appropriately very cautious in his projections for enrollment in the future. But our challenge now is to out-perform his projections. Just do the math. If we double our enrollment in John Jay Online, we will realize \$570,000 in additional revenue. If we simply meet the CUNY senior college average in terms of summer enrollment—for summer 2013, the latest data we have—we will realize about \$1 million in additional revenue. If we bring our international student enrollment to the national average, we will bring in an additional \$5.5 million a year. If we create a Weekend College that brings an additional 100 students, we will bring \$700,000. We have our work cut out and this enrollment growth is all possible. To reach these goals, we will need everyone’s support. This is a time for all hands on deck.

Let’s take a step back from the numbers and the budget implications of increasing enrollment. The overarching reason to implement these strategies is not financial, it is educational. Offering more summer and winter classes is good for students who wish to graduate on time. Expanding our reach through online programs advances our goals of enhancing access to a John Jay education. Bringing more international students to John Jay extends the reach of our educational programs around the world and enriches our community life. Bringing more adult learners to John Jay reflects the recognition that the desire to attend college sometimes comes about later in life. The educational life of John Jay will be enriched by these programs.

As we work together to boost enrollment, we should take pride in the College that we have created. John Jay continues to garner accolades. As you know, we have recently been ranked by Washington Monthly as #4 in the Northeast for Best Bang for the Buck. This is in addition to other remarkable rankings, including #3 Best for Vets by Military Times, #1 for best value in criminal justice in the country by bestvalueschools.com. Our MPA program has been ranked among the top five, and our criminal justice doctoral program is ranked number 10 by US News and World Report. Then, just last week, the Economist ranked John Jay as Number One among the CUNY senior colleges for our students’ success in post-graduation earnings. This ranking is particularly gratifying:

our students outperform predictions in terms of their income – surely one of the best possible outcomes of a John Jay education. This is a true education for justice.

Affirmation of our success comes from other quarters as well. Year after year, according to surveys of CUNY students, our students consistently rank our services first or second across the university. This year, because of the successes of our faculty and research centers, John Jay now ranks number four among all CUNY colleges in grant funding, bringing in a record \$23.5million, a three year average 40% higher than the previous three year average. John Jay faculty also rank fourth among all senior colleges in scholarly productivity. Our faculty are increasingly recognized as leaders in their disciplines. Our doctoral program in clinical psychology has just received its first seven-year accreditation from the American Psychological Association. These accomplishments – and many others – are a tribute to our remarkable faculty.

The John Jay openness to development of new programs has been recognized widely. In addition to the ACE program I mentioned a moment ago, we have been selected by the Robin Hood Foundation as the first four-year college to implement the Single Stop program which will provide hundreds of thousands of dollars of financial benefits to our students. The de Blasio administration turned to John Jay to develop the APPLE Corps, a pipeline program to develop the next generation of law enforcement personnel. A consortium of industry leaders is working with John Jay to develop a similar program for students interested in cybersecurity. The Pinkerton Foundation, the Tow Foundation, and other private donors, including several of our Trustees, have invested in innovative academic fellowship programs that serve as bridge between the classroom and the world of work.

Finally, the University last week announced that John Jay received two grants under the Strategic Investment Initiative. One, for \$656,500, will allow us to create digital portfolios for our students so their academic and extra-curricular achievements can be highlighted for prospective employers. The second, for \$750,000, will allow us to expand our online programs by supporting intensive faculty development and augmenting our recruitment and marketing strategies. Then, to top off a week of good news, we learned that John Jay is the only senior college selected for a three-year grant at about \$100,000 a year from the JP Morgan Chase Foundation and CUNY. This will support the development of a dual admission, joint degree program in Computer Science and Information Security between John Jay and five community colleges. We will design this program in close consultation with a consortium of industry partners, thereby creating career opportunities for our students and research opportunities for our faculty.

All of these successes are possible only because of the hard work we – you, the faculty and staff – have done to raise the quality of the core educational experience for our

students. Our General Education program, our suite of exciting new liberal arts majors, our comprehensive approach to advisement, our focus on student engagement – all of these have brought John Jay to a place where we are truly standing at the head of our class.

Our challenge going forward is to project the image of the new John Jay onto a larger canvas. In simple terms, we have a marketing opportunity. In order to attract more and better prepared students to our College, we need to launch a unique advertising campaign that gets the word out that John Jay is a hot college. Today, we start that campaign. Over the past several months, we have been working with our colleagues at siegelvision, the company created by our Trustee Alan Siegel, to design an advertising campaign to attract new students – and other supporters – to John Jay. The challenge we gave to Alan and his colleagues was simple: to design a campaign that would capture our distinctive mission, engage issues of justice, speak to the young generation and, since we have a tight budget, could be mounted with minimal investment.

Our goal is simple: to attract and retain more high-achieving students from the New York area and beyond, nationally and internationally. In a few moments I will show you the first four ads designed by siegelvision. We intend to put these everywhere on our campus – but more importantly to encourage our students, faculty, staff and alumni to share these messages on social media. We hope these are on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. We will have contests for students to share their favorite ad. Ultimately we hope to place these ads in conspicuous places throughout the City. We want to create a buzz that something special is happening at John Jay and, for people interested in social justice, that this is the place to go to college.

Our primary audience will be young people considering their college choices, both graduate and undergraduate. We are launching this campaign today because next Sunday, November 15, is our undergraduate Open House.

We want our prospective students to experience the energy and passion that we have for John Jay – and for our mission of educating for justice. If they can see themselves as fierce advocates for justice, we want them to consider John Jay. And our students will carry the message. To the best of our knowledge, this will be the first recruitment campaign in higher education to be launched primarily on social media, carried into the cyber world primarily by our students, but also enlisting our alumni, faculty and friends.

The results of the creative work by siegelvision are simply stunning. They conducted focus groups with John Jay students and found that students generally pay no attention to advertising, but when they saw these ads, their attitude changes. They said, “That is my college. That is who we are. That is what makes us different.” The students in the focus groups wanted to start taking photos of the ads, posting them on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, and sharing them with their friends. We had to hold them

back, until today – when you will see them outside in the lobby ready to get the word out about John Jay.

Look at these . . . each one captures the essence of John Jay.

THIS IS THE YEAR FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE.

THIS IS THE PLACE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE.

JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

POLITICAL SCIENCE
CRIMINOLOGY
FORENSIC SCIENCE
LAW & SOCIETY
PHILOSOPHY
SOCIOLOGY
HUMANITIES & JUSTICE

FIERCE ADVOCATES FOR JUSTICE
jjay.cuny.edu

CUNY The City University of New York

OTHER COLLEGES PROMISE TO HELP YOU PURSUE A CAREER.

ONLY ONE COLLEGE PROMISES TO HELP YOU PURSUE JUSTICE.

JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

POLITICAL SCIENCE
CRIMINOLOGY
FORENSIC SCIENCE
LAW & SOCIETY
PHILOSOPHY
SOCIOLOGY
HUMANITIES & JUSTICE

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CUNY The City University of New York

SOME JOHN JAY GRADUATES WORK IN HUMAN RESOURCES

OTHERS WORK TO FIGHT HUMAN TRAFFICKING.

JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

POLITICAL SCIENCE
CRIMINOLOGY
FORENSIC SCIENCE
LAW & SOCIETY
PHILOSOPHY
SOCIOLOGY
HUMANITIES & JUSTICE

FIERCE ADVOCATES FOR JUSTICE
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CUNY The City University of New York

GO TO A BUSINESS SCHOOL AND PURSUE MONEY.

GO TO A PERFORMING ARTS SCHOOL AND PURSUE FAME.

COME TO JOHN JAY AND PURSUE JUSTICE.

JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

POLITICAL SCIENCE
CRIMINOLOGY
FORENSIC SCIENCE
LAW & SOCIETY
PHILOSOPHY
SOCIOLOGY
HUMANITIES & JUSTICE

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These ads will soon be everywhere ... on our campus, in cyberspace, on social media. In the next phase of our campaign, we will put them in public spaces around the city to convey the excitement of the new John Jay. I encourage everyone here to follow the lead of our students – to spread the word, to take pride in John Jay, to become fierce advocates for the College.

Next year when we gather again for the State of the College, we will see the results of our work. We will see the successes of our recruitment efforts, our expanded reach into the world, and our new retention strategies. Granted, we will have a difficult year ahead as we tighten our belts once again – something that is difficult when at the same time we are investing in the plans that build the foundation for the modern John Jay. But because of those investments, and because of the extraordinary work of our faculty and staff, and because our students have faith in us, our future is bright and significant progress is within reach.

I thank you for everything you do for the College – for your forbearance of the tough times, for your embrace of these new initiatives, and for your contributions to the remarkable story of this College that today is poised for great things in a stellar second half century. Your efforts have been truly heroic. John Jay stands in your debt.