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To: The John Jay College Community

Re: Welcome Back

The new academic year at John Jay has officially started. I'd like to offer a warm welcome to our returning students, faculty, and staff. We're excited to see you again and eager to support you in everything that you do. And, I'd also like to extend a special welcome to our first-year and transfer students. You're now a member of our John Jay family, and we're here to help you in any way that we can. Please take full advantage of our upcoming [Weeks of Welcome events](#), each one designed specifically to enhance your experience at John Jay.

We've already started the academic year off right with a fantastic Faculty Development Day held on August 26. This event allowed our esteemed faculty members to explore new ideas and practices, while also reconnecting with each other before the semester officially began. For the first time, students participated in some of the presentations. I applaud our faculty's unwavering dedication to our students' educational experience. The continued success of our students is directly linked to the hard work and commitment of our faculty.

This semester we proudly welcomed 2,037 new freshmen and 2,001 new transfer students into our community. At Convocation on August 26, 475 students attended the ceremony. Looking out into a packed audience at the Gerald W. Lynch Theater, I saw a beautiful mosaic of diverse faces representing a wide array of backgrounds, experiences, ethnicities, and ages. I watched as our alumna, New York State Assemblywoman Catalina Cruz '05 spoke about her experiences as an undocumented immigrant and student, and her drive to assist marginalized populations. I know that our new students saw the possibilities of their own futures represented in her remarkable story. Hearing from some of our new students about their aspirations and dreams bolstered my firm belief that we are educating the future leaders of our communities, our country, and our world.

I'm a firm believer that to reach your ultimate goals, you have to look at where you've been and understand where you currently are. That's exactly what we did at this year's Academic Kickoff on August 27. With the help of John B. King Jr., President and CEO of The Education Trust and former U.S. Secretary of Education, we were able to celebrate our successes as a community and pause to reflect on the year to come.

I look forward to seeing everyone on September 24 and 25 when we'll be holding our third annual [Smart on Crime Innovations Conference](#) at John Jay. At the conference, we'll continue to raise deep questions around criminal justice issues, all in the hopes of moving the needle further towards a smarter, fairer, and more effective criminal justice system. And, as a proud Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI), I encourage everyone to participate in the many events scheduled for [Latinx Heritage Month](#). There will be more events posted for the month, and throughout the year, that help our community explore and embrace what it means to be an HSI.

Everyone at John Jay has so much to offer. Please continue to support each other, inspire each other, and be fierce advocates for justice. Best wishes for a successful fall semester.

Thank you,

Karol V. Mason
President