

December 20, 2018

Hello HW Family,

I hope this communication finds you well. This has certainly been an exciting semester and year at Harold Washington College. We have so much to be grateful for and many successes to celebrate!

Thank you to all who attended the winter connections event on Friday, December 7th. We had an amazing turn out of students, staff, and faculty. Everyone enjoyed themselves and we were treated to wonderful performances by the Joffrey Ballet and our very own HW Jazz Band, showing once again the amazing talent and partnerships we have at HW. We look forward to more celebrations and connections in the new year.

As we end the semester, I find myself reflecting on the many actions, accomplishments, and emotions we've experienced this past year. My reflections have broadened in scope to be inclusive of trends that have occurred in our society and country.

It has been, without a doubt, a challenging year for our country. I am convinced that the emotions we have experienced and felt due to negative rhetoric, anti-inclusivity, and unexplainable tragedies, permeates through our state, cities and into our HW community. Our college is not emotionless, quite the opposite, we are filled with sentiment, and we too feel what others across the country feel, and often we hurt too.

How do we continue to lead, encourage, and support in times when it is hard to stand? As I ponder this question, I continue to circle back to "community" and "relationships".

We don't, nor can we, move past the emotions we feel after any event alone. We need each other. I am proud to work at a college that understands this and is working towards building, and rebuilding relationships with each other and external partners. I'm proud to work at a college where we are culturally relevant and sensitive, where we embrace our differences and work through challenges together. While we may not always agree, we create spaces for open-dialogue, listening, and reflection.

Despite many of the heavy emotions experienced this past semester and year, Harold Washington College continued to make progress and headlines. The commitment we have made to our students and the Healthy Food Market has caught regional attention for our efforts to support students in need of a meal on and off campus. Thank you to the Wellness Center for leading this initiative! Our efforts to expand our brand, to really begin showcasing a comprehensive academic portfolio of programs was seen in various media outlets, showcasing our Aon Apprentice students in business, and highlighting our Dance program with the Joffrey Ballet, telling a broader story of Harold Washington College's programming in the Arts and the many partnerships our students have access to in the loop.

You have also heard about the DePaul Harold Washington Academy that will launch in the upcoming fall semester. This is a one of a kind public/private higher education partnership in the state of Illinois which will benefit many CPS students.

In the new year, the college will continue its efforts to tell its story about our student success, quality programming, partnerships and faculty impact - the great work that our faculty do in the class, but also outside of the classroom, publishing and presenting at various conferences. Additionally, the college will

continue to move forward on its strategic planning efforts. I am grateful to all the staff and faculty that have been volunteering their time to engage in these conversations.

As we enter 2019, I feel it is important for the college to keep working together through several topics that I know emerged this last semester. Topics such as: the placement cut scores, the future and quality of online learning, and the future of our CPS partnership and early college initiatives. I am grateful for our shared governance structure that we have engaged in, so that we can continue to come to the table to address and share our points about various topics.

It is important for us to recognize the momentum we have entering the new year. This momentum is because of all of you, the community you have established here and the relationships we continue to strengthen.

Thank you for all that you do. I hope you find time to rest, reflect, and enjoy your family and friends this holiday season. I look forward to seeing you in the new year.

Happy Holidays!

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