



Fall 2020

Joliet Junior

College

President's

Report

Community Impact



Together
We are JJC

In this time of uncertainty, here is what I am most certain of: Joliet Junior College is a resilient institution.

I asked our campus community at the start of the fall semester to make a pledge with me. We pledged that we would lead our interactions with compassion and respect for students, for colleagues and for ourselves. In a time of great volatility and pain, this mindset has nurtured a spirit of support that will propel Joliet Junior College and its community through this time.

The college's future-focus mindset remains strong. We have managed the impact of the pandemic while continuing the development of a new allied health program, cultivating additional resources and support for students to persist in their education, and ensuring the growth of our equity initiatives. As the nation's first public community college, this is in our DNA. We enter this new era with conviction in our mission and trust in you, our partners. Our collaboration now will shape the JJC of the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Judy'.

Judy L. Mitchell, Ed.D.

President's Column

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**Dr. Amy Gray,
Vice President of
Academic Affairs**

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought to light an even more pronounced need for respiratory therapists. That's why JJC is pursuing adding an Associate of Applied Science degree in this field, says Dr. Amy Gray, Vice President of Academic Affairs.

"Growth in the elderly population has led to an increased incidence of respiratory conditions such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and pneumonia, and of course, COVID-19 has further intensified the situation," says Gray.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment of respiratory therapists is projected to grow 21 percent from 2018 to

2028, far exceeding the average for all occupations. The role of a respiratory therapist includes examining patients with breathing or cardiopulmonary disorders, consulting with physicians to develop patient treatment plans and monitoring patient progress.

"We have begun to research curriculum and design a laboratory and classrooms for this program, which would be housed in our Health Professions Building," says Gray.

She adds the space would feature a dedicated simulation lab. JJC will seek programmatic accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs.

Meeting
Demand for
Community
Health





The economic downturn resulting from the pandemic has made paying for college a difficult prospect for incoming and current students. For Kim Dawid, a diagnostic medical sonography student, JJC's Student Emergency Fund helped her stay in school.

"Switching to online learning in the middle of the semester was difficult. The Student Emergency Fund helped me by providing assistance with food and gas. It helped my family, especially during the pandemic when resources were limited," says Dawid.

The Student Emergency Fund, established in 2004, helps students facing short-term financial setbacks complete their courses. Students in

need of food, transportation, books and sometimes tuition receive the assistance they need to stay in school. Without the help of the Student Emergency Fund thousands of students may have never completed their education.

The fund raised \$7,000 in its first year and in total has raised over \$250,000 to assist students in need. This year alone, \$32,186 was raised to aid students during the pandemic. More than 90% of the donations come from JJC employees.

Angie Kaysen-Luzbetak, Dean of Student Success, manages the fund. When she's informed of a student's situation, she says it's important to let them know JJC cares.

Supporting Students in Need

\$250,000

The total amount raised
for the fund since its
inception in 2004.





**Dr. Escortina Ervin,
Executive Director**

Your role is new to the college, how will this position expand JJC's commitment to diversity?

This position will serve as a champion for diversity, equity, inclusion and compliance for faculty, staff and students while also overseeing diversity-related compliance and accountability functions. I want to create a safe place for faculty, staff and students to talk about their feelings, concerns and ideas.

Why did you choose to come to JJC?

My passion for diversity, equity, inclusion and education completion attracted me to this opportunity at JJC. I am a visionary leader with more than 20 years of corporate and higher

education experience. I have spent my personal life heavily engaged in the community, including working with under-resourced youth and families.

What new initiatives are you working on this semester?

My goals include establishing collaborative relationships throughout the college to gain support in the implementation of JJC's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan. I plan to work with key stakeholders to determine innovative ways to hear students' voices and understand their unique needs. It's my goal to give back, especially to young minds and the disadvantaged by helping them reach their goals and experience success.

Fostering a Welcoming Environment for All

Dr. Escortina Ervin

Executive Director
of Diversity, Equity,
Inclusion and Compliance





Devin Snow,
Agricultural
Sciences

Devin Snow sees no reason not to apply for funding assistance when there's a chance it could help lower her education costs. So when she heard about JJC's Smart Start Scholarships and the \$500 it would provide, the 18-year-old from Flanagan submitted an application.

"It is better to say you tried and didn't get it then wonder if you would have gotten it if you filled it out," says Snow, who is studying agricultural sciences.

This fall, the JJC Foundation awarded a total of \$100,000 to 200 incoming freshmen through its Smart Start scholarships. It's part of a unique blend of assistance to

support students amid the COVID-19 pandemic through financial support and educational resources.

Through the CARES Act, federal legislation that was approved by Congress and signed into law in March, JJC awarded over \$534,000 in funding this summer to 550 students impacted by the pandemic. From March to August, the college also provided 73 laptops to students through its free loaner program to support remote learning.

At a time of economic uncertainty and disruptions to operations, JJC is maximizing assistance to keep students on track with their education and career goals.

Maximizing
Funding
Support Amid
a Pandemic





Giving Back

Smart Start Scholarship:

Funded by the Foundation

\$500 each

200 student recipients

\$100,000 distributed

CARES Act:

1,503 student recipients

\$1.7 million distributed

Laptop Loaner Program:

73 total loaned out

“This funding has helped me with getting classes and books for the fall 2020 semester.”

– Devin Snow
Agricultural Sciences



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JUNIOR COLLEGE
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