

**OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR**

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February 25, 2021

Dear Faculty and Staff,

I hope this message finds you and your family safe and well. Mardi Gras this year was definitely different. I was able to unwind and spend quality time with my family. I hope you were able to enjoy the down time as well. I have just a few updates for you.

**COVID-19**

We are continuing to diligently monitor COVID-19 and are strictly adhering to CDC guidelines. Each day anyone coming to a Delgado location must complete the pre-screening tool using the Delgado Mobile App, the paper form, or the QR code. The [Delgado Cares web page](#) includes guidance related to protocols for faculty, staff, students and visitors.

This semester we have contracted with a vendor to institute wastewater testing of the City Park, Charity, and West Bank Campuses, as well as the Jefferson Site. These sites were selected because of the number of individuals at each location daily. COVID-19 can be found in wastewater a week before symptoms are exhibited, and the virus can be detected in wastewater from those who are asymptomatic. This additional layer of surveillance allows the College to make decisions related to closures and to monitor the impact of the virus on the College community.

At the beginning of this semester, we had a slow, gradual return to campus and we are still operating in a staggered, monitored approach. We also had a major push to get everyone tested for COVID-19 before returning. Now, we are advocating vaccination. Phase 1B, Tier 1 allowed nursing and allied health faculty and students and those individuals 65 years of age and older to be vaccinated. To date, a large percentage of students, faculty and staff from these categories have been vaccinated through Delgado referrals. This was a tremendous effort and could not have been done without the dedicated work of Delgado staff and our tremendous healthcare partners at New Orleans East Hospital, Ochsner Healthcare System, and Tulane University.

The state is moving to the next phase of vaccinations. You may have heard the Governor's announcement of the new groups eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine for Phase 1B, Tier 1. This announcement indicated the eligibility of K-12 teachers and staff as of Monday, February 22. While higher education faculty and staff outside of allied health and nursing programs are not eligible at this time, we remain a priority and we are slated to be part of Phase 1B, Tier 2. Please see the following

information from LDH: <https://ldh.la.gov/assets/oph/Coronavirus/resources/Vaccine/Vaccine-Who-Gets-It-Next-FB.png>.

I believe that within the next 3-4 weeks, vaccinations will be offered to higher education staff. Along those lines, I have already begun communicating with our healthcare partners related to providing vaccinations to Delgado faculty and staff, and they have all agreed to assist. More information about how this will be done is forthcoming. However, Delgado Community College will not become a vaccination site. In an effort to know the number of faculty and staff needing a vaccination, Human Resources is sending a survey to all Delgado employees. Please take time to complete the survey, as this will allow us to know exactly how many of us need the vaccination so that our partners can request a sufficient supply.

We will continue to prepare for higher education faculty and staff vaccinations in the next round of COVID-19 vaccine administration. To support this effort, the Board of Regents has asked that institutions survey institutional faculty and staff in order to determine their willingness to receive the vaccine. The timeline is critical so we ask that you complete the survey that will be sent out by Human Resources later today upon receipt.

## **Enrollment**

We currently have 12,301 students enrolled. This is a 9.1% decrease compared to this time last year. Because of COVID-19, decreased enrollment appears to be a national trend for many community colleges; however, there are community colleges that are seeing an increase in enrollment. Of course, this semester we have our mix of two Minisessions (4 weeks) and two Minimesters (8 weeks). We are seeing tremendous interest from students for these compressed terms. For the second Minimester, classes begin March 16<sup>th</sup> and for Minisession 2, classes begin March 29<sup>th</sup>. There is still time to register, so please use your social media platforms to spread the word.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Round Stimulus Funding**

As part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) will provide emergency grants to eligible students. Students are required to meet the eligibility requirements as set forth by the federal government. Details can be found on the [Delgado Cares web page](#).

Funds will be disbursed on a weekly basis via Bank Mobile to eligible students starting the first week in March. Please note that this date may vary by institution and is dependent on the College having first received the federal allocation of HEERF II Grant funds. Pending receipt of the College's allocation, Delgado students who meet eligibility requirements are scheduled to receive refunds on Friday, March 5<sup>th</sup>.

## **SACSCOC Fifth Year Review**

Delgado's Fifth Year Interim review is a regular, normal component of the College's continued reaffirmed status with the Southern Association of Schools Commission on Colleges. The Fifth Year Interim Report is submitted as a mid-way progress update between our last reaffirmation in 2016, and our next reaffirmation in 2026. The report is due to the Commission, September, 2021, and contains several key elements, including: a final evaluation and impact report of the College's current Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), *The Right Path*. Additionally, the College is required to complete a Compliance Audit addressing many of the standards included in the 2018 *Principles of Accreditation*. The final report will go before the SACSCOC Board of Directors for approval and action.

### **Strategic Planning**

We are in the initial phase of the College's strategic planning process. The Strategic Planning Team is reviewing data from previous years, while also assessing and analyzing our progress toward the 2017-2021 Strategic Plan goals. The process for creating the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan will be a transparent one and every effort will be made to ensure input at all levels.

### **Centennial Celebration**

The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration of Delgado Community College's opening in the fall of 1921 is now being planned and announcements are forthcoming regarding commemorative activities and special events. As the countdown continues toward this milestone, we look forward to recognizing Delgado's rich history and commitment to serving our community for over a century.

### **Expansion and Improvements**

Students, employees, and visitors to our campuses are seeing a variety of projects underway to expand our capacity and to improve our facilities. At the City Park Campus, the iconic front entry façade of Delgado Hall is being renovated. Additionally, we are in the process of confirming the date of the groundbreaking for the Nursing and Allied Building, which will be located on the City Park Campus. At the West Bank Campus, construction is moving forward for the new Advanced Technology building—a new landmark for the Algiers community and those we serve on the West Bank. Also, on the West Bank, the River City Site is introducing diesel technology training to its technical and workforce program offerings.

### **Awareness and Marketing**

Kudos to the Communications and Marketing team for winning five awards in the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Education Digital Marketing Awards competition. Two of these were Gold Awards, one Silver Award, and two Merit Awards. One of the Gold Awards was for our COVID-19 response; the Silver Award was for Delgado Online marketing. They were selected by a national panel of higher education, marketing, and advertising professionals. Delgado's work was recognized for excellence among schools including Texas A&M, Syracuse University, and Clemson University, as well as our local partner, Xavier University.

Congratulations also to Rick Schwab, Senior Director of the Delgado Maritime and Industrial Training Facility, who has been named to the New Orleans City Business Power 20 list of the most influential people in the regional port and maritime industry.

We continue to overcome obstacles and excel in spite of circumstances that are beyond our control. Thank you for all that you do each and every day to ensure that Delgado Community College remains true to its mission!

Sincerely,

Larissa Littleton Steib, Ph.D.  
Chancellor