MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT
JANUARY 2019

Colleagues,

Welcome back to campus. I hope you each enjoyed rest and relaxation with families, or maybe some Mele Kalikimaka and more after a busy and productive fall semester. Welcome back, as well, to a new milestone year --- June 3, 2019 marks 90 years of proud history for our academy, established through an act of California Assembly.

As we return to campus, our federal government remains in deadlock over agency funding. The immediate impact has been the cancellation of USCG exams, which are scheduled annually during the first week of classes for our graduating seniors --- now delayed until the week of March 4. All six state maritime academies have been affected by this shutdown, and despite our mutual, active efforts with the National Maritime Center and personal intervention by the U.S. Senate, we have no recourse but to wait. I’ll keep you informed on our next steps as this situation unfolds in D.C.

Meanwhile, back in California, we inaugurate a new governor and install a new legislature --- with great anticipation for stronger funding for higher education. The CSU Board of Trustees submitted its largest request for new funding ($554M) in my time as your president. Chancellor White’s 2019-20 Support Budget Message articulates a compelling case for such a bold request.

OK, maybe you’d like to forget all that and begin the new year with a smile --- you can start by reading the latest edition of Cal Maritime magazine. I am routinely heartened, though not surprised, by the incredible scope and impressive accomplishments of our faculty, staff, cadets and graduates. You will no doubt recognize many of our alumni in the magazine’s stories, and you can rightfully take great pride in their accomplishments because you helped educate, train, and develop them! Thank you again for your gifts of time, talent, service, sacrifice and care --- every day --- to our academy and our cadets.

WHAT HAVE I BEEN UP TO?

December took me to Long Beach twice: the first time to attend our bimonthly Chancellor’s Leadership Council (COT) meeting. Topics of discussion were varied, but relevant:

1. System-wide economic and social impacts of the CSU;
2. Deliberations of the CSU Admissions Advisory Council;
3. Current challenges with Cal State Apply
4. CSU-wide response to the newly-proposed regulations from the U.S. Department of Education;
5. Catastrophic leave for campuses affected by wildfires; and
6. Campus classroom utilization.
My second trip was to address about 60 Port of Long Beach employees during their monthly “Leaders Luncheon” on the future of maritime education. This port creates countless employment opportunities for our graduates, whether they work directly for the port or in the hundreds of businesses that conduct work there. They were enthusiastically supportive of what we are doing to keep our academy relevant amidst change and disruption in the maritime profession.

I also attended --- and thoroughly enjoyed! --- the Wind Generator Project Competition; visited the USCG Pacific Area Commander; met our campus and community at our annual Holiday Party (thank you Enterprise Services!!); consulted with our WASC accreditation team; joined a large alumni group for lunch on campus; met with the Vallejo City Manager, bade farewell to interim CIO Phoebe Kwan, completed my two-year term as chair of the Vallejo Education & Business Alliance (VEBA), and joined many of you on campus to honor Steve Kretta for 35 years of service to Cal Maritime. By the way, Steve handed off the “Ancient Keelhauler” privileges to Pat Hollister, who now holds that title as the longest-serving employee at our academy.

Following up on prior information on energy and sustainability, I remain engaged on bringing opportunities for renewable energy to our campus infrastructure. This month we’ll conduct an e-waste collection, begin a major water conservation effort by replacing a significant portion of campus water infrastructure (commodes, faucets, shower heads, etc.) in cooperation with the City of Vallejo Water Department, and begin participation in “RecycleMania.” Be on the lookout for announcements from Sheikh Nayeem, our Energy and Sustainability Director.

**WHAT’S GOING ON AROUND CAMPUS?**

**Shared Governance**

Our Academic Senate, in partnership with the Provost, will be hosting former interim Provost Dr. Gary Reichard on campus this month to help us improve shared governance. Senate Chair Tom Nordenholz and the Senate Executive committee are coordinating the visit and will provide details soon.

**Downtown Anchor Center**

The newly leased building at 253/255 Georgia Street in downtown Vallejo is now in operation and is available to every department for conferences, offsites, retreats, department meetings and community activities. While program development for community and extended education is underway, Enterprise Services will begin offering tours of the Anchor Center this month for anyone wishing to visit. Please contact AVP Mark Goodrich to schedule your visit.

**Campus Wayfinding**

Navigating around any campus, even a small campus like Cal Maritime, can be daunting for first-time guests, local vendors, parents, and even folks who’ve been here awhile! This spring, we’ll begin campus information sessions and outreach as the design firm WRNS approaches the start of Phase I of a multi-year wayfinding and signage effort to help visitors successfully navigate our campus.

**Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) Accreditation Visit**

Every great university relies upon peer review to sustain excellence and to foster improvement. Our academy is no different. The pending accreditation review in March 2019 follows a similar visit in 2011 --- eight years ago. We welcome this review — which complements specific,
dedicated, recurring program reviews by ABET, IACBE and the USCG – for it is another opportunity for us to engage with higher education peers to share and explore best practices. Associate Provost Graham Benton will communicate the WASC visit specifics as we get closer.

Edwards Leadership Development Program

Commandant David Taliaferro and the company commandants, alongside Student Affairs staff and faculty leaders, report that the program review conducted throughout the fall semester will be delivered to campus by the end of this month. I look forward to reading the report, understanding assessment insights and recommendations, and moving forward with implementation of improvements. As the only state maritime academy with this type of dedicated leadership development program, our commandants are trailblazers on a hugely important mission. And so I urge our strong support to this effort and join in on the great work that lies ahead in refining this program and strengthening both the quality and experience for our cadets.

NEW PEOPLE & NEW TALENT

Inherent in the work we do is the fundamental principle that, as a university, we are a people institution --- and I am routinely encouraged that we go the extra mile to hire bright, talented, and hard-working individuals to help us achieve our mission. Here are a few new faces since the start of the school year.

- Natalie Boe, Athletics
- Marynesa Espanol, Custodial Services
- Cody Lewis, Administrative Computing
- Jeffrey Soriano, Port Security Guard
- Ryan Scheidemanl, Career Services
- Albert Retamar, Food Service Operations
- Khaoi Mady, Academic Technology
- Han Lu, Culture & Communications
- Margaret Ward, Marine Transportation
- Christine Hafen, Marine Transportation
- Louis Solana, Marine Transportation
- Bryce Lewis, TSGB

TELL ME SOMETHING GOOD!

And as we extend a warm welcome to those who are new to Cal Maritime, we must also celebrate those who have already dedicated many years and professional talent advancing our mission.

Congratulations to Steve Kreta who is retiring after 35 years of service to Cal Maritime, including 5 years as Vice President for Student Affairs, 2 years as Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, 16 years as Academic Dean, and 12 years as faculty member (including serving as Department Chair and Faculty Senate President). And as of January 1, Tuuli Messer-Bookman retired after 24 years providing quality instruction to our cadets in the Department of Marine Transportation, as well as lead instructor for USCG license preparation for our cadets.

We wish both Steve and Tuuli the very best --- and repose --- for years to come!

Thomas A. Cropper
President