

**City Council Budget Hearing Testimony**  
**Dr. Guy Generals, President of Community College of Philadelphia**

To Council President Darrell Clarke and Members of Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to meet with you here today. While it's great to see all of you virtually, I hope we can gather (safely!) in person soon.

I join you today to discuss our continued partnership in the upcoming fiscal year as we all navigate this critical time. It's no secret that the past few years have been incredibly challenging for many of us. But at the same time, our College community has adapted and persevered, and celebrated some really exciting achievements. I look forward to sharing some of those accomplishments with you today in order to provide context around how your support of Community College of Philadelphia helps our students and our city in tangible ways.

For example, I am speaking to you just a few days before we celebrate our first in-person Commencement ceremony since 2019. This Saturday, approximately 1,700 students will walk across the stage at the Liacouras Center and accept their diplomas. The resilience and enthusiasm displayed by these students despite all the difficulties they've faced is truly inspiring. Many of these students will be transferring to four-year institutions or entering the workforce right here in Philadelphia, working hard to improve this region we all love. Not only is this a testament to these diligent students, but also to the faculty and staff who were able to adapt and pivot in ways to ensure students' needs were still being met.

We're also getting ready to cut the ribbon on our new Career and Advanced Technology Center in West Philadelphia. This state-of-the-art facility, set to open this fall, will feature career programs for in-demand fields like automotive technology, advanced manufacturing, and entry-level health care. Besides providing hands-on training so students can pursue family-sustaining careers, the CATC will also offer space and technology for public use – so that the surrounding community can also take advantage of this unique resource.

And we continue to expand accessibility and supports to students who need them most. In recent weeks, we celebrated the grand opening of our second property as part of our Shared Housing Program with the Philadelphia Housing Authority. As a result of this partnership, we have been able to offer low-cost housing less than a mile away from main campus to 16 students, prioritizing those who have had experience in the foster care system. We also recently announced the expansion of the Octavius Catto Scholarship, which we first launched last year in partnership with the City of Philadelphia. Now, even *more* individuals will have the opportunity to attend the College tuition-free, and receive access to wraparound services to help them succeed. And these are only two of the most recent initiatives designed to support students who need assistance.

So, we are asking you to help us keep this momentum going.

With your support, we can continue to create the positive change this city needs and deserves during this time, and lift up those students who are eager to give back to their neighborhoods. We believe that our team has created a budget that is reflective of the reality we all face, while embracing the opportunity that awaits us. We look forward to reviewing it with you.

Thank you again for your continued partnership and support of the “City’s College.”

### **The College’s Response to COVID-19**

The College has continued to be flexible in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, with 60 percent of our courses being offered online this summer. If trends continue the way they indicate they will, we plan to continue to operate in a hybrid mode, while offering more face-to-face classes including hyflex modalities. Hyflex learning provides students the flexibility to decide whether they want to meet face-to-face or take classes online. Students will be able to determine the modality that is most convenient and beneficial for their learning.

The College has also received more than \$108 million in federal aid as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, Higher Education Emergency Relief, or HEERF, funding was broken down into institutional and student expenses. Institutional expenses included technology, professional development and training, and additional costs associated with the transition to virtual learning. Student expenses could be used for books and supplies, transportation, food, housing, health care and child care. The College’s Board of Trustees also elected to use some of the funding to pay off hundreds of student balances so that students who were at risk of being dropped for nonpayment could continue to stay enrolled in courses and further their learning.

The College also supported students by loaning more than 1,100 laptops to students who needed this technology.

### **2022-2023 Budget Request and Proposal**

The College is not requesting additional operating dollars for FY 22-23, and is appreciative of the \$50.1 million allocation from the City of Philadelphia for this fiscal year, an increase of \$2 million from the last fiscal year. Since FY 17-18, the College has been able to avoid an increase in tuition and fees for students, many of whom have been financially impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Nor did the College lay any employees off as a result of the pandemic. As our city continues to recover from the pandemic, ensuring the College is able to provide affordable educational opportunities that will help revitalize the city’s workforce is more important than ever.

A recent economic impact study conducted by Emsi also demonstrates the value of the College, showing that the College added more than \$631 million in income to the

Philadelphia County economy in FY 19-20. This amounted to the support of more than 7,500 jobs. In addition, for every one dollar spent on education, students gained \$5.90 in lifetime earnings. Therefore, an investment in the College is a sound investment in the future of the region.

### **Capital Improvement Updates**

As previously mentioned, the College looks forward to opening its new Career and Advanced Technology Center (CATC) in West Philadelphia this fall. Ayanna Washington has been named the facility's Executive Director, after previously serving at the College as the Director of its Career Connections department. The 75,000 square foot facility at 48<sup>th</sup> and Market streets will serve the City's workforce needs, housing programs like our new Toyota T-TEN Automotive Technology degree, Medium and Heavy Truck Technology, Welding, Certified Production Technician, Nurse Aide Training and National Entry-Level Dental Assistant. It will also offer community space, featuring an innovation hub for small businesses and entrepreneurs, which will house the College's popular Power Up Your Business initiative funded by the City.

The College's revamped Library and Learning Commons (LLC) has also integrated the services of the Library, Learning Labs and Student Academic Computing into one location with the latest technology. The LLC includes multimedia and technology rooms, a study lounge, multi-use spaces for individual and group study, and a collaborate makerspace where students and faculty can gather to develop creative projects. A student-run Saxbys café is also expected to open in the space this fall.

### **Shared Housing Program with Philadelphia Housing Authority**

The Shared Housing Program was officially announced in May 2021. The partnership has provided for the renovation of two Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) properties to provide safe, affordable housing opportunities to College students (with a focus on those who have experience in the foster care system). In total, the program can accommodate up to 16 students, who will never pay more than \$125 per month for rent. The College, in addition to donations from the Berwind Foundation, is paying for the furniture for each unit. In April 2022, the College officially cut the ribbon on the second property, located less than a mile away from main campus at North 11 Street.

In addition to housing, students are paired with a Shared Housing Program Mentor who provides wraparound support services to ensure that they stay on track at the College, including connecting them to: academic advising, tutoring, career readiness supports, and assistance with tuition assistance and accessing emergency funds. Students also enter a "stability plan" once they begin the program so they can eventually find housing upon graduation.

In order to be eligible for the Shared Housing Program, students must meet the following College eligibility requirements: be a College student enrolled in at least six

credits; be Pell-eligible; meet the definition for “housing insecure”; be in good standing at the College; and be eligible for public housing per PHA guidelines.

### **Expansion of the Octavius Catto Scholarship**

Since the introduction of the initiative in 2021, the College has welcomed more than 500 Octavius Catto scholars. And in April of 2022, the College and the City jointly announced the expansion of the scholarship. Now, in addition to first-time, full-time College students, the following Philadelphia residents are *also* eligible for the Octavius Catto Scholarship: students transferring from another institution who have earned up to 30 credits; returning Community College of Philadelphia students who have not been registered for classes for at least 12 months and meet all other eligibility requirements; and/or students who have graduated from a high school outside of the City of Philadelphia.

Idris Washington became the first Catto scholar to graduate last year, and the College looks forward to even more scholars graduating as part of the Class of 2022. Success coaches will continue to work with students to ensure that they are also receiving the supports they need outside of the classroom (such as housing assistance and child care) so that they can succeed.

Catto Scholar Patrick Ulied-Lieu champions the scholarship opportunity, and wants prospective students to be aware of it, saying, “Being a part of the Catto Scholarship has further enhanced my stay at CCP; it has provided me with financial relief, [and] backed me up with dedicated professionals that wish to see me succeed.”

Fellow Scholar Afshan Khan, originally from Pakistan, agrees. Set to graduate this June with a degree in Health Care Studies, Afshan says, “Overall, the Catto Scholarship is the whole package. I don’t know what I would have done without it.”

### **Dual Enrollment Programs**

The College continues to prepare high school students for college life with its various offerings of pre-college programs, which include: dual enrollment, Advance College Experience, the Jr. STEM Academy, Gateway to College and Parkway Center City Middle College. Approximately 90 students from the Commonwealth’s first middle college, Parkway Center City Middle College, graduated in May 2021 with both their associate degrees in liberal arts and high school diplomas. The second cohort of approximately 110 students will graduate this coming May, with a total of 132 dual enrollment students graduating overall.

### **The Fight for Equity**

The College continues to prioritize diversity, equity and inclusion efforts, and has publicly pledged to become an anti-racist institution. After this announcement in 2021, a

small committee was formed to review proposals, interview consulting firms, and make a final selection related to the firm that would lead this work. Gold Enterprises, LLC was selected to create our anti-racist curriculum. During the fall 2021 semester, Dr. Gold and her team conducted several listening sessions with the College community, including faculty, staff and administrators. Separate listening sessions were held with the Federation, the Cabinet and the Board of Trustees. The curriculum was built and is being finalized. The curriculum contains five modules including: Antiracism Fundamentals; Intra & Inter-Group Perspectives; Antiracist College as an Organization; Antiracist Leadership; and Antiracist Pedagogy. Antiracism Fundamentals will be required training for all employees and Antiracist Pedagogy will be required training for all full and part-time faculty. A soft launch of the training will occur this summer, with official implementation taking place this fall.

This work coincides with the College adding a sixth pillar addressing DEI to its Strategic Plan. Specific targeted outcomes related to this work include expanding the role of the President's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council and ensuring that requests for proposals reach vendors from typically underrepresented groups.

In addition, the College's Enough Is Enough teach-in series has continued. This series, open to the public, examines issues disproportionately affecting Black and brown communities, such as: gun violence, violence against the transgender community, gerrymandering, health care disparities, and more. Each session features a panel discussion moderated by an expert in the field. Most recently, Laura Coates, senior legal analyst at CNN, moderated a session on gerrymandering and redistricting.

The College is also continuing to investigate ways to combat declining Black male enrollment. It allocated \$1 million in summer of 2021 to address this issue; key actions included the creation of an aggressive recruitment plan for Black and brown males, including the hiring of a designated Admissions recruiter and community outreach specialist; expanding the I Am More: Reentry Engagement Program; and coming up with the curriculum for a course for justice-involved individuals. As a result of these efforts, enrollment in the College's Center for Male Engagement, geared toward men of color, has jumped by 24 percent, while enrollment in I Am More has tripled for fall 2022.

### **Civic Engagement**

The College's #CCPVotes initiative remains popular. Student-sponsored activities this semester included on-campus voter registration and panel discussions on topics like how to get involved in politics and who's on the ballot. Students also had the opportunity to become a Campus Vote Project Democracy Fellow or volunteer. Thanks to these and other efforts, I was named the 2021 Standout College President by the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge.

In addition, the College's partnership with the Philadelphia Center for Gun Violence Reporting has brought stories of gun violence – and how they're reported on -- to the forefront. In particular, the Credible Messenger Reporting Project empowers those

who've been impacted by gun violence to help report on root causes, lived experiences and possible solutions from the community perspective. Credible messengers are paired with advanced professional journalists to learn from each other and leverage their combined authority to produce and distribute news reports.

### **Additional Services for Underserved Populations**

There are many other ways the College serves traditionally underserved populations, including first-generation, low-income, and underrepresented students, and has worked even harder to enhance supports for these students in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The College continues to field requests through its CCP Cares initiative, which launched right before the pandemic began. CCP Cares manages requests from students in immediate need, aiming to respond to students within a single business day. Requests range from students needing assistance with paying their bills, and students facing food and housing insecurity, to students needing assistance with registering for classes and financial aid.

The Keystone Education Yields Success (KEYS) program assists students who receive public assistance (TANF and SNAP) with academic support and resources from within and outside of the College.

Child Care Access Means Parents in Schools, or CCAMPIS, thanks to a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, provides \$833 per month per student during the academic year to satisfy the child care needs of Pell-eligible students with children. By helping to pay for child care costs, this initiative helps lower-income student-parents manage the costs of child care and attending college, helping many students who otherwise may have left school to graduate. There are currently 55 students enrolled in CCAMPIS, with 10 graduating this weekend.

Student May Yaghnani recently testified before the state Senate Democratic Policy Committee, discussing the importance of CCAMPIS. She shared, "I became very close to dropping out and giving up on my dream of getting a college degree, that is, until I heard about this amazing program at CCP called CCAMPIS. CCAMPIS helped by paying for child care for my children, and the administrators of the program helped me find facilities of my choice close to my home. I can now drop my children off to the childcare center on the way to class and pick them up on the way home. Thanks to this program, I am in a better place academically, emotionally, and free from the stress of finding a daycare or someone to babysit for me every time I have class. Thanks to CCAMPIS I can focus on my education without worry."

### **Workforce Development**

To round out my testimony, I would like to provide an update on the ways the College is working to prepare students for family-sustaining jobs. We know that in Philadelphia,

there is still a large gap between current workforce skills and available jobs. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing unemployment issues, especially among men and women of color, and led many small businesses to close.

I am proud to say that our programs to develop and support local businesses have flourished during the pandemic, operating virtually at a critical juncture. Power Up Your Business is one such program that has been particularly successful. The College-led initiative provides education, training and targeted assistance for the small businesses that serve as drivers in the neighborhood economy. The initiative's Store Owner Series includes free workshops on topics such as social media strategy, financial management, understanding City taxes and other areas. The Peer-based Learning Experience is a 12-week, cohort-based small business boot camp that provides training and coaching support during and for one year after program completion.

New initiatives include the Power Up Global Series, which offers curriculum in Mandarin Chinese, Spanish, Korean, and Russian; the Industry Best Practices series, which provides deep dives into different industry sectors like child care and restaurants; and the Community Startup Accelerator, designed to support businesses being launched at home during the pandemic.

Since launching in 2017, the Store Owner Series has had more than 600 participating businesses and nearly 1,000 workshop attendees. Eighty-three participants were part of the Community Startup Accelerator, and 31 businesses thus far have participated in the Spanish Global Series.

Participants rave about these programs. Carmella Lanni, co-owner of V Marks the Shop, says, "Being a graduate of Cohort 14 in Power Up was a highlight of 2021 for me. I learned so much from the classes and workshops, especially around areas of finance and operations. My mentor and business coach really gave me 'food for thought' during each mentoring session. I was able to really take a step back, identify opportunities, and set goals to find ways to grow and improve my business. COVID-19 hit us hard. I honestly feel that if it weren't for Power Up that I wouldn't have the wherewithal to keep pushing and rebuilding my business."

In addition, the Goldman Sachs *10,000 Small Businesses* program at the College continues to provide small area businesses with the tools and professional supports they need to develop a strategic and customized growth plan that will take their businesses to the next level. Applications are now being accepted for the 28<sup>th</sup> cohort, which will begin this fall.

The College's Division of Workforce and Economic Development also offers other training and educational programs. Continuing professional education and career training are offered in the following areas: health care and wellness; technical training; software and technology; workplace and professional skills; small business management; and personal enrichment. Contract Training provides customized training programs for employers, while Corporate College brings credit courses to companies.

Again, I thank you for your leadership.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dr. Guy Generals". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Guy" being more prominent than the last name "Generals".

Dr. Guy Generals  
President, Community College of Philadelphia