

City Council Budget Testimony
Jeremiah White, Jr., Board Chair, Community College of Philadelphia

To Council President Darrell Clarke and Members of Council,

Thank you for this opportunity to speak with you today on behalf of Community College of Philadelphia.

Amidst the challenges and changes caused by the pandemic, the College continues to move forward and enable residents to fulfill their educational goals and succeed in their careers. Our partnerships with the city are integral in helping citizens, and we thank you for your amazing support and collaboration.

Initiatives like our Catto Scholarship, which was recently expanded to serve more students, are providing the assistance and support individuals need to earn a degree and gain opportunities that are open to those with higher education credentials. Our partnership with the School District allows the College to offer dual enrollment initiatives where high school students to earn college credits, and some can earn an associate degree as they graduate high school. We will be celebrating graduates from these initiatives on May 7, along with so many other individuals who have persisted to reach this moment in such unprecedented times.

As the only community college and open enrollment institution in Philadelphia, we are here for learners of all ages and at all stages. Our offerings extend to professionals who need career advancement, high school students who can get ahead and gain career insight, adult students seeking a degree or career change, and students who just graduated from high school. We serve a diverse student body who also has diverse needs. With your continued support, we can keep expanding our opportunities and helping residents create a better future for themselves, while advancing Philadelphia as a whole.

Our institution also strives to help neighborhoods improve and grow. Our new Career and Advanced Technology Center in West Philadelphia, which opens this fall, will provide a state-of-the-art facility where residents will find training for in-demand careers in transportation, health care and advanced manufacturing; entrepreneurship resources; and high-tech spaces for public use. While the facility will attract individuals from across Philadelphia, we will engage the surrounding community and work with residents to bring more sustainable growth to the area. The completion of the center is just one of the College's projects that has advanced over the past two years, a testament to the dedication and fortitude of the College's leadership, faculty and staff.

The expertise and dedication of our faculty and staff have shined a light on the College on other ways. Our innovative program and student service offerings, and unique methods of building student success, also work to raise our national profile, and perhaps develop best practices that will benefit other community college students. Our CCP Votes initiative, which involves student volunteers, helps inform potential voters

about the importance of voting and having their voices heard; provides details about candidates and polling locations; and assists in voter registration. Our high student voter rate, and our efforts, have gained national attention, along with a recent national award bestowed to one of our staff members from the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations. Our institution strives to be a national leader in excellence, and to support our students – and all students – in every way possible.

The Community College of Philadelphia Board of Trustees fully supports this year's budget proposal and with that, the vision for the future of the institution. We are glad that Mayor Kenney has reappointed several members on the Board, so we can continue to support this vision we believe in, and are looking forward to welcoming new members who will bring additional skills and insight.

The College community looks forward to fulfilling our role in furthering the success of our city.

I thank you all of you for your time today.