



# Board of Trustees Report



January 25, 2022

Dr. David M. Johnson, President



Let me begin by saying that I appreciate everyone who has demonstrated a genuine commitment to heading into the Spring 2022 academic term with a renewed sense of hope and purpose. We are all well-aware of the challenges that we continue to face, so please know that the dedication, circumspection, and sacrifice that you are bringing to bear on behalf of our students and each other does not go unnoticed. With that said, I want to start by sharing with you some of the positive and exciting things that have transpired in the past few weeks.

On Friday, December 17, Tauheeda Anderson, who serves as the Project Manager for Merritt College's Umoja Sankofa Program, took the opportunity to connect with the faculty, staff, and students at Castlemont High School in East Oakland. In addition to distributing PPE, "Merritt Swag Bags," and apprising everyone of the resources and support available to students participating in Sankofa (counseling, book vouchers, financial support, etc.), Ms. Anderson was addressed the questions students had about our many academic programs. Based upon the feedback she received, the Castlemont students were most interested in Merritt College's Allied Health Programs (particularly radiologic science, EMT, and nursing). What was most exciting, however, is that we were able to get a commitment from the Castlemont coaches that they would constitute a cohort of dual-enrolled student-athletes to pursue a pathway in the health sciences starting next fall semester.



I am very pleased to share with you that Merritt College was one of four institutions credited with contributing to a report published by the Ronald W. Walters Leadership and Public Policy Center at Howard University. Titled, *Engaging College Students in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Law Enforcement*, and funded by the Community Policing Development Grant from the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing

Services, the report identified best strategies for incorporating diversity, equity, and inclusion approaches to transform recruitment policies for law enforcement agencies. Given the reputation of our Administration of Justice program, and the reach of our faculty (particularly that of our recently retired department chair Ms. Margaret Dixon), Merritt College was asked to convene student focus groups to talk about student perceptions of policing, police-community relationships, and law enforcement careers. The final report detailed the focus group findings and summarized students' suggestions for mending and strengthening police-community relations and recruiting young people (particularly students of color) to professions in law enforcement. Our contribution to this effort was summed up by the Director of the Public Policy Center in this way: "Without the participation of the focus group volunteers from Merritt College, we would not have been able to conduct this critical study."

*Merritt College puts students first. Though our rich educational programs, we foster a culture of equity and inclusion that empowers students to achieve their greatest potential and make meaningful contributions to their respective communities and our global society.*



In closing, I want to give a warm welcome to some of the folks who are new to the Merritt College Family (or new to their positions)!

Maria Valencia, Admissions & Records Clerk

Stephanie Le, Financial Aid Specialist

Joan Pinkney, Staff Asst/Business Office

Pheng Kim, Custodian

Stefani DeVito, Health Services Coordinator

Kevin Sibucan, Chemistry Instructor

We look forward to you doing amazing things for this college and the Peralta District!