These are difficult times, especially for the most vulnerable among us. Many of our students who were already living at the edge of homelessness and food insecurity, while experiencing all of the accompanying psychological impact that these uncertainties have, are seeing their worst fears come to pass. Last week, we shared information with students on how they can apply for emergency aid from the COVID-19 Student Assistance Fund that we set up with support from many of you. We kept the eligibility criteria at a minimum because we understand how important it is to be able to retain one’s dignity as one asks for help. The stories they shared are harrowing. That most students manage to persist this semester is a testament to their resilience. We are more committed than ever to see our students complete through graduation this year and over the next three years, for those beginning their studies at GCC. The impending economic downturn does not bode well for anyone without a college degree. We know that, on average, college degree recipients make $1 million more over their lifetime than those without. This pandemic brings a renewed urgency to support our students. If you can, please make a gift to support GCC students. Your gift will help GCC continue to offer critical programs in a variety of disciplines. In the words of one of our students, “GCC is like family. It’s more than just attending classes; it’s a community that you can call home.”

Stay in Touch
• Donate online at www.gcc.mass.edu/give
• Send a check to: GCC Foundation, 270 Main Street, Greenfield, MA 01301

Ways to Give
Learn more at www.gcc.mass.edu/foundation
foundation@gcc.mass.edu

 SCC relies on community support to continue changing students’ lives for the better and to help our region stay strong. Ways to Give

How You can Help
Compassion for each other helps us make it through this public health crisis. If you can, please make a gift to support GCC students today. Your gift will help GCC continue to offer critical programs in a variety of disciplines. In the words of one of our students, “GCC is like family. It’s more than just attending classes; it’s a community that you can call home.”

Did you attend GCC? Alumni Association membership is free! Connect with other alums, and stay up to date on alumni and college events. Join now at www.gcc.mass.edu/alumni
• Like us on Facebook

More Than Ever Your Support Matters

Scholarship Awards Update

Thanks to the generosity of this community, the GCC Foundation has awarded 228 students scholarships totaling $290,610 since July 1. During this challenging time, scholarships are more important than ever to help students afford their education and balance work, school and family needs. In response to public health guidelines regarding social distancing, we made the difficult decision to cancel this year’s Scholarship Awards Ceremony. It is sad to lose this opportunity to recognize our students and share their accomplishments. However, scholarships will be awarded this year and we are deeply grateful that community members continue to support GCC students. If you are interested in being more connected to our Scholarship Awards, please contact Nance Rifanburg at rifanburgn@gcc.mass.edu or 413.775.1600. This year we received a $100,000 grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to help support students who are graduating in May, June and July. These grants will support 275 students to complete their degrees.

New Date for Golf Tournament
The 30th Anniversary Striving and Driving for GCC Scholars Golf Tournament planned for May 18th has been postponed until Monday, September 21st out of concern for public health and safety. The event is critical to help raise scholarship funds for GCC students. For information contact Nance Rifanburg at rifanburgn@gcc.mass.edu or 413.775.1600.

Doctoral Degree

The GCC Foundation has been awarded a doctoral degree by Eastern University. The doctorate in Educational Leadership is the degree of Doctor of Education (Ed.D.). It is an advanced degree in educational leadership and prepares individuals for positions of administrative leadership in educational settings. The program is designed to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to become effective leaders in educational institutions. This degree is recognized as a terminal degree in the field of educational leadership and prepares graduates for positions of administrative leadership in educational institutions. The program is designed to equip students with the necessary skills and knowledge to become effective leaders in educational institutions. The program is offered online, providing flexibility for students who are working professionals and cannot attend traditional campus-based programs.

SPRING 2020

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Supporting Students Through the Crisis

A College Goes Virtual

“The month of March has been a whirlwind and the last two weeks have been quite intense for everyone!” Dean of Students Anna Berry opened her email to the student body, sympathizing with all they were going through in the pandemic. Thanks to the work of teams across the college, in less than two weeks, GCC students can now access remotely all the support services they used to receive on campus. Peer Tutoring, Library services, Academic Advising, IT help, and Counseling and Disability Services, just to name a few. Peer tutors help with classwork using the online video platform Google Meet, email, or phone. Even Student Activities are continuing programming virtually. Knowing help is available promotes optimism during tough times. Berry reflects, “The resiliency that our institution - both employees and students - will develop as a result of this can’t be understated. This has forced all of us to think in different ways. Things that we couldn’t imagine before, we’re having to make work and we’re seeing good things come out of it.”

Food Pantry in a Pandemic

Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, more than one-third of GCC students identified as food insecure. Thanks to generous community support and dedicated college employees, the GCC Food Pantry was efficiently stocked with a wide variety of perishable items such as bread, milk, cheese, meat as well non-perishables. Now that many students have lost jobs as workplaces reduce staff, food insecurity has increased while the pantry has had to eliminate in person services. Fortunately, GCC staff prepared for this scenario in early March. Jan Ross, Assistant to the Dean of Humanities and Food Pantry volunteer reports, “Natalie Feliciano, (GCC’s Laboratory Science Office who volunteers as Food Pantry manager) immediately put together "Grab & Go bags.” Judy Raper, Associate Dean for Community Engagement, sent out an email to all students connecting them with local food security resources and inviting them to email if they still had need. The team partnered with Director of Public Safety Alex Wiltz to develop a curbside pickup system, eliminating the need for person-to-person contact. Jan says, “We really believe in our students and we want to do whatever we can for them.”

For more information email: foodpantry@gcc.mass.edu

“...I am a student at GCC & just wanted to send positive vibes and healthy thoughts to whomever is reading this! Thanks for all that you do!! Because of your work, students stay hopeful & on track. You are so loved and appreciated today!!”

Posted by a student on GCC’s Facebook page on March 28

From Henhouse, Refrigerator, and Mailbox the Dean Reaches Out

Guitar playing, poetry-writing Dean of Humanities Leo Hwang is much-appreciated at GCC. At the start of the pandemic crisis, he created a series of short Facebook videos to make sure students knew about services still available at the college. The first shows him standing out in the woods near his home waving with the message, “I hope you are hanging in there and just want you to know that we are all here for you!” The next six videos appeared almost daily as students had to adjust to an all-virtual college experience.

We have a view from inside the hen house as Leo reaches in to collect an egg and delivers a message about the technology lending library where students can borrow computers and Wi-Fi hotspots.

Next we’re inside the refrigerator as Leo opens the door telling us that the GCC Food Pantry is still distributing food. In another, Leo’s face appears in a half-circle of light at the bottom of the screen. We’re inside the mailbox as we hear that the GCC bookstore is still open for online orders. About the videos Leo explains, “I wanted to do it in a way that was friendly and that felt like it was from Franklin County and maybe a little bit humorous.”

We are here to help.

Yves Salomon-Fernández, Ph.D.
President, Greenfield Community College

President, Greenfield Community College

With gratitude,
Yves

aspection, we also know that there are fewer and fewer jobs that offer a family-sustaining wage without a college credential. While we support our students, we also continue to support our community. As one of the anchor institutions in our region, GCC stands in support of and in solidarity with others lending a hand. We have donated food and supplies to local hospitals, nursing and group homes, and other providers. Many of our nursing faculty have gone back to the trenches, and students enrolled in our allied health and nursing programs are also on the front lines.

As an institution, we are planning our return to a world that will be different from the pre-COVID-19 environment and we want to be ready to serve. Last November, when the theme of our Foundation’s Annual Meeting was Building a More Resilient Community, a global pandemic was not among the adverse events we had in mind.

What we are seeing through all of this is that our communities are coming together, and we join them in working together in service of the greater good.

Please take good care of yourself and of your loved ones. Hold on to your optimism. Hold on to your belief in humanity. I will hold in my thoughts and prayers those of you impacted by this pandemic. Let us count our blessings each day and give thanks for those in and outside of the healthcare sector who are keeping us going, caring for us, and keeping us healthy and safe. Drop a line from time to time at president@gcc.mass.edu.

With gratitude,
Yves

Yves Salomon-Fernández, Ph.D.
President, Greenfield Community College